



# Penwheels

For Escapees Writers . . . Published or Not  
Fall, 2011

## MUSINGS FROM THE EDITOR:

*"Experience is an author's most valuable asset;  
Experience is the thing  
that puts the muscle and the breath  
and the warm blood  
into the book he writes."*

~ Mark Twain

Being a *most-of-the-time* Traveler/RVer creates a very different experience.

We have often commented that we know more people and know Yuma, AZ better than we know the city of our mailing address (Lethbridge, Alberta, Canada). I was raised in Lethbridge and swore that I would never come back.

We moved here when we started on the road ten years ago. We are about one hour from the Montana border and about an hour from the Rocky Mountains and the Waterton-Glacier International Peace Park – an ideal location for us.

*Lesson: Never say never!*

Most activities take a break for the summer. It's difficult to join activities or meet people when we are only here for the summer. I do belong to a Book Club that goes all summer and I went to my first meeting of a writers group just a few weeks ago.

OMG – what an experience!

Firstly we met in a pub – good for conversation, eh? There was no way of hearing each other above the din. Honestly, I understood so little of what they were talking about. One young fellow writes about *vampires*; they obviously have known each other for quite a while; they all communicate through Facebook; I felt like a total outsider.

*Lesson: Maybe I'm more out-of-touch than I thought I was*

It's good to have Escapees and Penwheels to keep me grounded.

*Thanks and Enjoy!*

*Lynne Benjamin*

### **This issue:**

- What's Gone on between Then and Now
- "100 Word Submissions"
- New Members
- Contributors
- *I've been published* – Bragging Rights!
- BLOG List

### **Prompt for the "100-Word Submission" for the Winter, 2011 Issue:**

#### ***I Remember . . .***

Send hard-copy submissions to:

Lynne Benjamin c/o Joanne Alexakis

140 Rainbow Drive #4093

Livingston TX 77399-1040

Soft copies to: [2firststep@gmail.com](mailto:2firststep@gmail.com)

Submission due date: September 1, 2011

## What's Gone on between Then and Now

### ***Jojoba Hills writing group – Contributed by Alice Zyetz***

Just a reminder that our Jojoba Hills writing group starts again in October.

We've been dark through the summer.

Wednesday mornings from 10am to 12 noon in the card room.

Everybody is welcome. We do 10-minute writings in response to a prompt and then share with each other.

Lots of laughs and an occasional tear.

### ***Penwheels BoF Meeting: Escapade 2011 – Contributed by Barbara A. Bowers, SKP # 77439***

Six people met in Gillette, Wyoming, for the Penwheels BoF meeting held August 29, 2011.

#### ***Current Penwheels members***



Jeannie Winniford  
(SKP #81050)



Barbara Bowers (SKP #77439)

Four people joined the BoF at the Escapade

#### ***New Members***



Nancy Cullinan  
(64632)



Chris Guld  
(101167)



Vicki Andreotti  
(97968)



Judy Howard  
(105429)

Introductions were made by telling a little about our writing history and goals. The writing interests listed on the sign-in sheet included: blogging, journaling, reporting, poetry, fiction, memoirs, articles for newsletters, publishing, family history and stories, and future and present books/novels.

We finished the hour by doing a 10-minute writing exercise using the prompt, "I Remember". Everyone shared what they had written and was encouraged to send a copy to the Penwheels newsletter. Hopefully, those will be shared in a future issue.

#### ***New Members***

#### ***Welcome All!***

Vicki Andreotti SKP # 97968  
Nancy Cullinan SKP # 64632  
Chris Guld SKP # 101167

Judy Howard SKP # 105429  
Bruce Siff SKP # 20703

**Announcement from our Membership Volunteer – Joanne Alexakis**

**The Penwheels BOF newsletter is offered online – paperless as well as hardcopy!**

- Register on the Penwheels electronic bulletin board (<http://groups.yahoo.com>)
- *Online only* newsletter subscribers receive 6 issues (1 1/2 year's worth)
- *Hard copy* newsletter receive only 4 issues - sent to you via snail mail.

**Renewing your Penwheels BoF newsletter subscription is easy!**

**Hard Copies** - Expiration date is noted on your mailing label – Please send an \$8.00 check made out to **Penwheels** to:  
Joanne Alexakis, 140 Rainbow Dr. #4093, Livingston TX 77399.

Receive on-line notification of expiration date- (**make sure your email address is up-to-date**)

***The cost is \$8.00 for either method of delivery.***

***Contributions -“100 Word Submissions”***

**Prompt: *My summer was . . .***

***My summer was . . . Hawai'i! - Contributed by Joanne Alexakis, SKP # 19367***

- ✓ First-time visit, Big Island, family affair: 2 brothers, niece
- ✓ 5 hour flight, timeshare apartments, Jeep Wrangler rental
- ✓ Tropical Botanical Gardens, Akaka Falls, steaming Kilauea Volcano, lava tube tunnels
- ✓ Hilo Hattie Hawaiian shirt for hubby; Puka beads, floral-print shorts, sleeveless flowered tops for me
- ✓ Grilled Ahi, white rice, Tropical Dream ice cream
- ✓ Beautiful blue ocean, surf pounding the shore, beach umbrellas, turquoise mock-tankini, silver swimsuit cover-up, suntan–no burn!
- ✓ Snorkeling, deep sea fishing boat, bright vibrant multi-colored fishes, eel hiding in underwater coral, Black Sand beach, Green sea turtles
- ✓ Bar-hopping, Hula dancing girls, sunsets
- ✓ Mahalo thank yous, Aloha spirit

***My summer was . . . Contributed by Delbert Ashby, SKP # 67666***

As the summer of 2011 progressed, I reflected on the blessing of having my mother still alive and in good health. Then I read a medical article proclaiming that lifting hand weights for 15 minutes a day, three days each week, for three months, you would add 12 years to your life. These two things tied together because my mother, at her 90<sup>th</sup> birthday, started using one pound weights in each hand. Soon, she was lifting 10 pounds in each hand, simultaneously, and still does. She is now headed for 99, still lives alone and is sharp of mind. Try it!

***Contributed by Lynne Benjamin, SKP # 86190***

***The summer of 2011 was . . .*** a little yucky; a little exhilarating; and a little amazing.

The weather started out cold and snowy; we lost a close Escapee friend to a horrific traffic accident; we renewed valued old friendships; and one of my editors sent me a Press Pass to do research for an article in the Spring.

It felt like a lifetime happened in those few short months. BUT - damn - I can't take losing another friend!!

***Booked (into the library), but not Booking (around the track)***

***Contributed by Barbara A. Bowers, SKP # 77439***

The summer of 2011 was literary. The local library offered reading contests for all age levels, from read-to-me tots to adults. For every three books, magazines, or audio books checked out

and completed, one was able to put his or her name in a drawing for an MP3 player, an e-reader, or other prizes. I read eighteen books in June and fifteen in July. Although I have always enjoyed reading and was excited about the competitive aspect of the experience, I am not sure that it was the best for my health, as I did not do much physical activity.

This summer has been really weird, sometimes good, and sometimes strangely bad. Think I'll be happy when 2011 actually ends.

***My summer was . . . Contributed by Pete Gray, SKP # 80765***

Health issues can have a devastating effect on a summer's enjoyment.

My wife, Grace Guido, has had an array of challenges that have curtailed our activities.

I had a touch of flu.

There were a few highlights, however:

- one of my photos appeared on the cover of June/July Escapees Magazine,
- an operation on Grace's knee was successful, and
- a bathroom remodeling.

We still anticipate participation in an RV Rally in September and a return to Texas in October.

The past recedes into alterable memory — a new season invokes new hopes.

***My summer was . . . Contributed by Terry Hager, SKP # 48315***

Summer of 2011. Quebec, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Newfoundland. Lobster and lighthouses, foggy drives and misty harbors, nesting Northern Gannets and bald eagles, dolphins and the Bay of Fundy's dramatic tides, moose pizza and icebergs, happy hours with some of our best friends.

Oops! Wrong road, long time till a turnaround.

Stop! Moose and her calf. No oops!

Oops! Another wrong turn. Long wide driveway for turnaround.

Double oops! Driveway newly sealed. Tracks from my rig.

Write out a check.

Memories to last till long after we hang up the keys.

***My summer was . . . Contributed by Doris Hutchins***

Babysat for my Great, Great, Grandson Chance, with my wrinkled old hand holding his smooth newborn hand.

He is now eleven months old and I eighty plus.

Amazing to watch him grow and observe the similarities; between picking up cereal with his tiny finger and how I have a time trying to pick up my needle, my off-balance walking and he having the same problem learning to walk, pushing his cart around and me pushing my walker, he is walking up and down stairs and I am still faltering.

Seems as a person ages, they revert back to younger years.

***My summer was . . . Contributed by Marianna Nelson, SKP # 45711***

An 8-day tour in the Canadian Rockies fulfilled my most urgent bucket-list dream. Having twice missed the opportunity when Bruce and I were motorhoming, this year we decided to go all out (\$\$\$) and do it.

Flawlessly organized by the Rocky Mountaineer Company, our tour included the following:

- two days riding the Rocky Mountaineer train from Vancouver to Banff

- three days riding coaches driven through the Rockies by knowledgeable guides
  - two exciting “flightseeing” helicopter rides over glacier-covered mountains
- The hotels gave us their best room each night (the RMC told them Aug. 18<sup>th</sup> was our 55<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary). Plus, on the big day, a chilled bottle of champagne awaited us in our Lake Louise room. Even the weather was great (must have been Lynne’s doing).

***My summer was . . . Contributed by Helen Taylor, SKP # 295***

My book, “Grandma's Other Life” is finished and available on Amazon.com. I plan to be at Quartzsite in January and/or February for the book signing opportunities. It sure sounds like fun and something new for me! My daughter, Rhoda, who contributed to the book, will be going to Q with me. My part-time paying job that I've had for a couple years or so, working one day a week, has grown some. They've added a couple more days each month, and it now takes me another day just to recuperate from working two days in a row. Woe is me!

**Prompt for the “100-Word Submission” for  
the Winter, 2011 Issue:**  
*I Remember . . .*

***I’ve Been Published – Bragging Rights!***

*Let Us Know About Your Current Publications*

- Your Name and SKP #
- Title of Piece
- Magazine or Book and Date

- **Margo Armstrong, SKP # 47139**
  - Ta ta! I finally managed to format my latest eBook "For Women Only - Traveling Solo in Your RV, An Adventure of a Lifetime" and upload it to the Nook eBook section of Barnes & Noble (and Kindle Amazon). If anyone needs assistance with the ePub format I am happy to answer questions. Just email me, ARMSTRM at IX.NETCOM.COM
- **Lynne Benjamin, SKP # 86190**
  - *RVing Across The Border, Snowbirding 101, RV West* (E-Column)  
[http://www.rvwest.com/index.php/snowbirding\\_101/article/rving\\_across\\_the\\_border](http://www.rvwest.com/index.php/snowbirding_101/article/rving_across_the_border)
  - *Four Corner Canyons*, RV Lifestyle Magazine, Vol. 40 No. 2, / digital copy, page 40  
<http://rvlifemag.dgtpub.com>
  - *I am Canadian! Escapees Magazine*, September/October 2011, page 8
- **Barbara Bowers, SKP # 77439, editor, *The High Flyer***, Christian Fellowship C-BoF's newsletter

- **Jaimie Bruzenak**, SKP# 19361,
  - *The Woman's Guide to Solo RVing and Retire to an RV: The Roadmap to Affordable Retirement*, ebooks formatted for Kindle/Nook/iPad devices, Pine Country  
<http://www.rvlifestyleexperts.com/rv-books/ebooks/>
  - *Minnesota's Mesabi Trail: Gateway to Mining, Hockey and the Boundary Waters*, Routes at RoadTripAmerica, <http://www.roadtripamerica.com/forum/content.php?894-Minnesota-Mesabi-Trail-gateway-to-mining-hockey-boundary-lakes>
- **Terry Hager**, SKP # 48315, *Escapees Magazine*, the cover of June/July, 2011 issue

### Resources, Tips and Reviews

- *Submitting a query to Magazines – Contributed by Jaimie Bruzenak* SKP # 19361  
 Before submitting a magazine article, writers should always check their writer's guidelines. Sometimes those are not online. Another place to get information about a magazine, their readership and type of articles they run is by reading their media kits. There will be all sorts of demographic information plus a description of the type of information they provide. The advertising calendar can give you clues about the focus of particular issues so you can slant your story to match. Next time, take a look at their section on advertising and get insight into the publication.  
 For the full article which appeared in the June 25, 2008 issue of Writers Weekly, see [http://www.writersweekly.com/this\\_weeks\\_article/004767\\_06252008.html](http://www.writersweekly.com/this_weeks_article/004767_06252008.html)
- *"The Beginner's Guide to Ebooks"* is now priced at \$0.00 at Amazon:  
<http://www.amazon.com/Beginners-Guide-Ebooks-ebook/dp/B005CLDN88/>  
 This might not last for long so if you would like to learn more about ebooks, their formats, and how to read them get over to Amazon and download this quickly. And tell your friends... I'd love to move as many copies as possible while it's free.  
 I hope you like it and this one's on me: <http://www.amazon.com/Beginners-Guide-Ebooks-ebook/dp/B005CLDN88/> After reading it, if you have time, I'd love it if you can leave a short review at Amazon.  
 Gary McLaren, WorldwideFreelance.com  
 P.S. If you don't have a Kindle you can still read this using Amazon's free Kindle App for PC. If you have a Nook ebook reader you can also find this at B&N Nook Books. (*Editor's note: This was sent to me in an e-mail Aug. 30<sup>th</sup>*)

### ➤ **Amazon ebooks – Contributed by Jaimie Bruzenak SKP # 19361**

If you are considering selling an ebook on Amazon - or are curious as to how it works - this blog entry by my stepdaughter is a must-read



<http://www.epublishingworks.com/articles>. It basically explains pricing, commission and how much you can/will make. Click on The 99¢ eBook: Boom or Bust? (Editors note: this article is accurate as of September 1 but Amazon is constantly changing elements of their programs)

Nina Paules is the founder of eBook Prep, a full service eBook design firm that caters to the busy author working on a budget. eBook Prep connects e-reader savvy readers with their favorite authors' backlists and authors with a bright new source of royalties. Learn more at [www.ebookprep.com](http://www.ebookprep.com) and [www.epublishingworks.com](http://www.epublishingworks.com)

**Book Review – Contributed by Joanne Alexakis, SKP # 19367** (*New Penwheeler Bruce Siff [brusif@juno.com](mailto:brusif@juno.com) has written a novel he would like other PWers to read and hopefully give guidance about putting his story on Kindle. Please contact Bruce to help him out.*)

**Novinski's Vendetta by Mason X. Tyler**

This novel begins with a young man born in 1929 who grabs opportunities that life presents to him. From selling newspapers on a street corner to amateur radio to service in WWII in Japan, the author sketches through the life of Tom Norrin who works for the United States Intelligence Agency. Tom repairs teletype and wireless telecommunications equipment in U.S. strongholds all over the world. He also does some double agent spying for this foreign affairs department while dodging undercurrents of political revolution.

A continuous thread runs through the story as our hero contemplates carrying out a family vendetta first declared by his great great grandfather. A surprise ending!

**BLOG List**

**Lynne Benjamin**

- <http://firststep-andlifegoeson.blogspot.com/>
- <http://lynnefred-winter.blogspot.com/>

**Barbara Bowers**

- <http://blessed-b.blogspot.com/>

**Jaimie Bruzenak**

- <http://blog.rvlifestyleexperts.com/>

**Carolyn Harris**

- <http://blog.seattlepi.nwsourc.com/lynscircle/>
- <http://travelingnewzealand.blogspot.com/>
- <http://wednesdaywoman.livejournal.com/>

**Kay Kennedy**

- <http://boomersrememberhistory.blogspot.com>
- <http://portablewritingnewsletter.blogspot.com>
- <http://freelancewriter.booklocker.com>
- <http://travelingwithinky.blogspot.com> (the cat's travel BLOG)

**Barbara Kaufmann**

- <http://www.onewordsmith.blogspot.com/>

**Patty Lonsbary**

- <http://www.glotours.blogspot.com>

**Bess McBride**

- <http://www.rvromance.com>

**Darlene Miller**

- <http://rvchuckles.blogspot.com>

**Marianna and Bruce Nelson**

- <http://www.otr.studio221.net>

**Betty Prange**

- <http://www.PrangeDePlume.blogspot.com>

**Beth Ramos**

- <http://www.rootsandroutes.us>
- <http://www.peaceandgood.us>

**Elaine Seavey**

- <http://www.elaineseavey.wordpress.com>

**Contributors to this issue of the Penwheels Newsletter:**

**Joanne Alexakis**

**Margo Armstrong**

**Del Ashby**

**Lynne Benjamin**

**Barbara A. Bowers**

**Jaimie Hall Bruzenak**

**George Bruzenak**

**Doris Hutchins**

**Terry Hager**

**Jade Jackson**

**Marianna Nelson**

**Helen Taylor**

**Jeannie Winniford**

**Alice Zyetz**

## **PENWHEELS**

An Escapees RV Club Birds-of-a-feather (BOF) group for RVers interested in writing of all kinds. Some are published and some are not. The purpose of Penwheels is to establish a support network of RVing writers for sharing information, discussion, critiques, and socializing in person, snail and electronic mail.

Penwheels is published four times a year. Subscription is \$8 (USD) per year. In order to belong to any SKP BOF group, you must be a member in good standing of the **Escapees RV Club**. You may contact the Club at 1-888-757-2582.

**Editorial submissions** are best submitted via e-mail to: [2firststep@gmail.com](mailto:2firststep@gmail.com)

Or snail mail to:  
Lynne Benjamin  
c/o Joanne Alexakis  
140 Rainbow Drive #4093  
Livingston TX 77399-1040

### **Writers-in-Residence**

\* Jojoba Hills Writers Group  
SKP Jojoba Hills RV Resort  
Aguanga, CA 92536  
Alice Zyetz [youshoulda@aol.com](mailto:youshoulda@aol.com)

\* North Ranch Writers Group  
SKP North Ranch RV Resort  
Congress, AZ 85332-0039  
Helen Taylor [htaylor295@gmail.com](mailto:htaylor295@gmail.com)

\* Park Sierra Writers Group  
SKP Park Sierra  
45323 Park Sierra Dr.  
Coarsegold, CA 93614

### **Penwheels Volunteers**

**Editor:** Lynne Benjamin

#### **Membership:**

Joanne Alexakis  
140 Rainbow Drive #4093  
Livingston TX 77399-1040  
[joannealex@earthlink.net](mailto:joannealex@earthlink.net)

**Yahoo E-Forum:** Alice Zyetz

**Travelling Library:** Jaimie Bruzenak

**Printing & Mailing:** Beth Ramos

**Historian:** Doris Hutchins

## **PENWHEELS**

Beth Ramos  
900 Spring Park Street #303  
Celebration, FL 34747

**FIRST CLASS POSTAGE**