

The truth is...we gather on the Third Monday of each month to practice our writing skills. We listen and share in each other's work. We are small in number and our commitment is strictly to produce and foster creativity among our members.

We started in July 1999 and consist of adults that enjoy writing memoirs, commentaries, essays, poems, and/or prose. Our simple method each month is to use a pre-selected word or phrase as the basis of a story, an idea, an opinion, a derivative of, or an implied essence of and write a 1 to 1 ½ page document. We share our stories, comment, and in that way build up our writing skills through practice and presentation. The atmosphere is friendly and supportive, and the feedback is gentle.

Curious? Always wanted to try writing for fun, entertainment, or even profit? Come visit with us at any of our open meetings. Bring a sample of your work. Sit in and see what we do. If you like it, join us every month and become a member.

**Original Works by Members of the Pen & Ink Writers' Group
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October 2019 selection – Sunset

**Sunset
By Val Collins**

I've always known that sunsets are my favorite time of day. In spite of the fact that sunset denotes an ending, to me it also suggests a satisfying closure. It heralds the closedown of the day, a day that has been filled with activities, chores, interactions, duties, appointments and the like or simply a day of nothing much happening. The daily cycle has once again been completed giving way to rest and repose. Peace and tranquility now ensue and hopefully the sense of a job well done satisfies the soul.

The slow and steady progression of the setting sun is a powerful and positive testimony to the miracle of earth's creation and the Great Creator. The visuals of this event are gifts indeed and if allowed will move us into a sublime and wondrous state of mind. The color dance is executed with perfection, never the same and always exciting to anticipate with great expectation. What color wheel will be presented? Perhaps the blues, purples and reds will blend into miraculous combinations filling the sky with bursts of hues that delight. Or reds and yellows and orange might fill the firmament and bathe our earth space in warmth that fills our beings with delight and gladness. Then all the sweet colors and hues blend together to create yet another color kaleidoscope that pleasantly lingers and furthermore feeds our being. What a show to behold! It

is ours for the taking by simply and purposely halting all activity and quietly, peacefully allowing the wonder to enter our senses. It is healing. It is peace inducing. It is comforting.

When life becomes full to overflowing with problems that cloud the mind and disturb the peace a lovely linger at sunset is a superb antidote. Allow your mind to become absorbed in the exquisite beauty and wait patiently as the color play slowly unfolds. Travel far away to places unknown of tranquility and quietude. When maneuvering through the mire of grief and loss I found that heading to the sunset was a soothing comfort. I'd eagerly look forward to this daily event knowing that the dearly departed were now a part of this miracle of nature.

I bid all to take part in this meditative activity. It is pleasant, restorative and free! It takes only the effort of showing up at the end of the day with a willing heart and mind.

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Sunset at Carver's Cove By N. Stewart

It was twenty years since we sat side by side on this old, weathered bench at Carver's Cove and watched a sunset over the waters of Green Lake. We watched as the descending fiery golden sun changed the colors of the sky from blues and greys to vivid pinks, reds and bright orange. We watched until a hand seemingly reached up from the horizon and began pulling a shade down over the sun, leaving darkness in its place. It was much like that twenty years ago when we sat on this very same bench, observing similar sunsets.

Carver's Cove back then was a B&B located at the far east end of the lake. For many years this became our special vacation place – a home away from home - where we felt comfortable and welcomed. In addition to being a B&B, it was also a traditional Wisconsin Supper Club that served fabulous dinners.

In the evenings, we either sat at a table window and watched as the sun set or we would finish dinner and then walk the pier to water's edge. We would cuddle up on the bench at the very end of the pier, listening to the waves roll into the shore, and wait for the display of color. Each sunset was different and the colors varied from night to night, but was always beautiful in its uniqueness. Some nights were overshadowed with clouds and it merely got dark with little or no color showing. After a display, we would return to the restaurant for a nightcap at the bar with the owners and staff.

Nothing lasts forever and Carver's was no different. The old building, housing the B&B and restaurant was torn down one fall. Four condos were planned to replace the old tired building the next spring. The new construction didn't happen, however, as the U.S. economy weakened and construction loans suddenly became unavailable. The property owners lost everything, the B&B, the Supper Club, and their dream. The bank got it all.

Twenty years later the property remains unsold. It is a vacant lot with mowed grass and evergreen trees at the back of the lot that block the noise from the county road. The pier and

bench remain, overlooking the lake. We knew we were trespassing on the property but didn't think anyone would care if two middle-aged people sat on the bench to watch the sunset.

The sun sank below the horizon, sending out one last blast of color before releasing day. The trees, the shoreline and a few birds still circling were silhouetted against the sky. Soon the patterned coppery sun glow, reflecting upon the water dissolved itself and the water turned murky and foreboding. Darkness came quickly then and surrounded us. It was time to leave. The show for this night was over and together, hand in hand, we left the property, leaving Carver's Cove behind, but taking our fond memories with us.

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Sunset on a Clear Day By Pauline Bastek

Watching the sun set on a clear day in Maui from the third floor lanai of our condo, facing East, hoping for the bright green flash, just before it sinks beyond the horizon and hearing someone blow a farewell to it into a conch shell says it all.

We then finish our Mai Tai's and begin our dinner almost always, grilled Ahi Tuna, why mess with perfection. I try to do this every year in January or February to see the whales when they return.

Some years I foolishly let other things get in the way, after what happened a few years ago, even the long flight and iffy winter weather in the Midwest are no deterrent. Ten days of Maui sunsets and I can deal with buyers, sellers, tenants, etc, etc, etc., as they say in a play, the name of which escapes me. The name of the play featuring the song "Sunrise, Sunset" flashes like the green light in Maui at sunset whenever I hear, Sunset, Fiddler on the Roof, and reminds me that the beauty of the sunset is the end of the day.

We were on a senior field trip to see a performance of "Fiddler on the Roof" at the Paramount Theatre in Aurora, having enjoyed a nice lunch at the Casino. We took our seats and sat looking at the marvelous Rococo artwork in the theatre and checking our programs to see if we recognized any of the actors from previous performances. Suddenly EMTs were rushing down our aisle, stopping just four rows ahead of us. The woman in the aisle seat was helped up and the EMT stood to work on her companion.

It soon became apparent that this was a case of too little too late, a gurney was wheeled down the aisle. The sound system came on announcing a temporary delay in the start of the performance due to a medical emergency.

Being seniors, all hoped for the best but were prepared for the worst. How those EMTs ever got her out of her seat and strapped and covered on the gurney with a minimum of confusion and out of the theatre, I will never know. I congratulate them and bless them.

They departed to be followed by a cleaning crew to do the necessary maintenance on the seat. All told the play was delayed less than 45 minutes. Death is messy; life goes on.

We enjoyed the play and when they sang, “Sunrise, Sunset,” there wasn’t a dry eye among those of us in attendance who were aware of the reason for the delay. We found out later, the deceased was undergoing treatment for cancer. We did not begrudge the confusion her departure caused. What better way for a theatre goer to go than to pre-empt a curtain call.

We can’t all go in as dramatic fashion but all sunsets don’t have a green flash either. We can all hope and enjoy the sunset of our lives.

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Alto Para Metal Tocar La Bocina

By J. Smetana

I was at Nookies trading barbed witticisms with Joyce Saxon when my ‘phone rang. Yellow, I answered. Yeah listen man this is Peaches are you coming over tonight to watch Bowling for Dollars? Yeah Peaches when have I ever missed a Wednesday? Do you even have to ask? Well you did miss that one time seven years ago...Oh, was that the day I was captured by Chinese communists and held for ransom after effecting a bold rescue of Icelandic schoolchildren while fending off a shark attack with only a Crate ampersand Barrel bottle opener as weaponry? Was that the day, Peaches? Jeez, I meant to apologize for that. How can I ever make it up to you? And why are you calling me and not that knucklehead Jerry? He’s usually the one who destroys my breakfast vibe. Yeah well Jerry’s out celebrating his SUNSET years at least that is what he said. So, what’s that supposed to mean? He’s smoking weed and playing the penny slots at Rivers Casino? Yeah, I guess so.

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