

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 document of no more than 1000 words (approximately 2 pages). 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. Contact Nancy at nestewart@ameritech.net for information. [The Pen & Ink Writer's Group returned to the Eisenhower Library on July 18, 2022.](#)

Original Works by Members of the Pen & Ink Writers' Group
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April 17, 2023
Word: Tumultuous

Tumultuous
By Pauline Bastek

Email inbox: Happy Easter! This is Rob! I have a two question survey for you to take.

Question No. 1: Did you see the news reports of the teenagers who took over the loop area at State and Washington on Saturday evening, jumping on cars, attacking bystanders shooting and carjacking?

If you did see the report, proceed to the next question. If you did not see it but would like to view it, you may do so in a manner of your own choosing, and proceed to question No. 2.

If you have no interest in viewing news of this type as you find it too unsettling you may opt out of the survey at this time.

Question No. 2: Who do you feel is behind this? Who planned the logistics of the event?

That's it. Thank you for participating.

At this point you may feel very unsettled and curious as to the answers others gave, or you may just want the answer to question No. 2.

Who is responsible? There are as many answers to what is responsible as there were participants in the tumult that you viewed on your screen but I find that almost everyone taking part in the survey wants someone to blame.

Who got these teenagers down to the Loop at a predetermined time and location? Why did they do it? Who are they? Why aren't the authorities punishing them?

I did introduce myself, didn't I? You can call me, Rob, as I said, but I'm a robot and you created me through all your posting on social media you determined my desires and wishes and through your technical expertise I was able to execute your wishes. It all culminated in our first riot of the year.

Your posting will determine how I will proceed, it's really all up to you or is it?

Don't forget Dr. Frankenstein.

###

Tumultuous Activity By Manuel Frank Avila

Around 1947, growing up with my mother, Maternal Abuelo Merced (grandfather), sister Mary Theresa, and my two brothers, Richard and Danny on the Near West side of Chicago; we spent the week-ends at Maxwell Street (once known as Jew Town) where my Mom and my paternal Aunt Louisa sold bags and anything else they could find to sell. We would in turn eagerly search for bargains which was almost a social event. Maxwell Street was tumultuous with thousands of other people including children laughing and playing; the loud shrieks, chants, and songs of the aggressive peddlers promoting and selling their goods; and the singing and music of the Cantors, Klezmer Musicians, and Blues Musicians.

I lived at 1142 South Ashland Boulevard, and we would take the trolley to Halsted Street and Roosevelt Road to Maxwell Street on Saturday and Sunday. We would start at Taylor Street (1000 South) and Halsted and walk to Maxwell (1330 Southwest) approximately about .3 mile walk one way. Taylor Street had Italian and Greek Merchants; but as we walked south to Maxwell, there were Jewish Merchants which we would call "Jew Town".

My Abuelo Merced had a 32 pistol, and he would buy ammunition for it at a gun store on Taylor Street and Halsted Street. I would go into the gun store with my Abuelo, and I saw all the weapons including rifles, pistols, etc. that were for sale.

As we would walk south on Halsted Street towards Maxwell Street, we would stop and look longingly at all the amazing merchandise that the vendors were selling. Anything you could possibly want was there.

At the corner of Roosevelt and Halsted was a department store called "12th Street Store" with 6 floors where my Mother would enjoy shopping.

As we walked towards Maxwell Street, there were bands playing. There was also a Black Man, we called the "Chicken Man" who had a chicken that did tricks.

My cousin Reuben had a job parking cars at a Jewish grocery store called Markowicz, and my other cousin Amador had a job as a butcher. For lunch, we always bought for Kosher Hot Dogs, Polish Sausages, and Beef Sandwiches at the northwest corner of Halsted and Maxwell.

Through our many friends at Maxwell Street, we even found a medical doctor who had just graduated and who provided medical care for our extended family until he died and another medical doctor took his place continuing to serve us.

My mother would always be so happy to bargain when she would go to buy something in "Jew Town."

I doubt if my children or grandchildren will have the experience of shopping in "Jew Town" with bands playing, the "Chicken Man," variety of foods, the huge crowds, all the different vendors, and walking from Taylor Street to Maxwell Street.

###

"TUMULTUOUS!!"

By Sherry Avila

CRASH!! My head abruptly bumps with a thud up to the ceiling of my used '54 four door Chevy car. The windshield shatters shards of glass that cut my nose and face causing blood to dribble down my neck and the front of my body as I sit on the driver's front seat of my Chevy in 1963 in Peoria, Illinois. Thankfully, I have no other passengers. I close my eyes to protect myself, and then I slip into oblivion.

All of the sudden, I hear voices. I open my eyes. It is very dark outside at 9:30 pm. Some strangers are talking, walking, and standing around the side of my Chevy car. Somehow I manage to get out of my Chevy. Where am I? Did my Chevy car collide into the basement of a home on Western Avenue, Peoria, Illinois? Everything seems very tumultuous.

A Peoria Policeman questions me, "Let me see your Driver's License and your Insurance Card. Were you drinking? I will be giving you required Breathalyzer and Balance Walking Tests to see if you have alcohol in your system."

I am dazed. I slowly answer, "Here is my Driver's License and my Insurance Card."

No, I wasn't drinking. I don't drink." However, he proceeds to give me the Breathalyzer Test to check my alcohol level and asks me to walk a straight line which I of course pass, because I do NOT drink.

After the required tests, he asks, "What Happened?" I reply, "I visited with my Dad and Stepmom Dorothy's at their home not too far from here. The last thing I remember was that there was a STOP sign missing at the corner of Butler Street when I turned out into traffic to Western Avenue, and a car hit my car causing it to swerve into this house. I am unfamiliar with the streets since I just recently received my Driver's License. I live with my Mom and Stepdad Chief in a different part of Peoria."

An ambulance arrives. I think, "Do I need an ambulance?" I get into the ambulance that takes me to an Emergency Room at the Methodist Medical Center where the medical staff examine me, give me some x-rays, and stitch my nose which is broken but nothing else can be done about it. My sister Joan and her husband Jim pick me up.

Now, I do not have a car to take me to the school where I teach 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th grades in one room and the principal teaches 5th, 6th, 7th, and 8th grades in the other room in Trivoli, IL which is about 30 miles in a rural area from where I live.

My Stepdad Chief who helped me buy my '54 Chevy in 1963 encouraged me to drive again so that I would not be afraid. My Mom during her lifetime never got her Driver's License even though three of her older sisters did. I was 22 years when I got mine.

My husband Frank worked very long hours, because he owned his own business. I am very thankful and proud that I drove myself to work, shopping, various educational and social activities; chauffeured my three children to school, after school, summer camps, medical appointments, and social activities; and drove to visit friends and family and attend various Business Conferences in Peoria, IL, Indiana, Nebraska, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Canada, California, Missouri, Kansas, etc.

So, even though that car accident was tumultuous at that time, I survived it, and I returned to driving independently during my lifetime.

###

Return to Gummi Glen: Part 1

By Mark Moe

"Last week, I was teaching my Historical Literature at the University California San Diego and I thought I would enjoy my Spring Break relaxing at my one bedroom apartment. That was before Edward Folkien convinced me to fly to London to help him with an archaeological dig involving my research regarding the Gummi Bears. He believes he has found proof that verifies their existence. So, I could not just stay at home relaxing. This type of opportunity was too exciting to pass up.

On Monday, at 7:00 p.m. London time, Edward Folkien arrived at London International Airport to pick up Dr. Kylie Watson. He asked her to send a picture so he could recognize her

from the large masses of people coming through the airport. He had an iPad made with her name on it, so she could find him as well. As an older English gentleman, he thought he looked like many other Englishmen, but he did sport a bright, blue bowtie to help him stand out. Her picture showed an attractive brunette with long wavy hair, brown eyes, and a youthful appearance.

As she came down the escalator, she found her name on a large iPad being held by an older English gentleman with a blue bowtie. He addressed her, "Dr. Kylie Watson from San Diego?" When she said yes, he extended his hand and said, "I am Edward Folkien, the financier of the expedition. Come let us collect your luggage and bring you to the hotel so you can rest. I want to start first thing after breakfast in the morning." He escorted her back to a hotel that was about twenty minutes from the archaeological site which he referred to as "Old Gummi Glenn."

"My dear enjoy your night and I will see you at breakfast. It is quite excellent and they even feature a lot of American favorites."

"Thank you, Edward. I look forward to helping you tomorrow," she replied.

In the morning, Edward did meet up with Kylie for breakfast and she was notably more casual than the business attire she previously wore last night. She had a light pink long sleeve shirt with blue jeans and hiking boots. Her hair was up in a high ponytail and she had light makeup on her face. Edward always wore a beige suit, just not usually a bowtie. They ate and discussed what he wanted to accomplish today. His crew had already unearthed several artifacts and the pair would be inspecting those first.

When they got to the site, Edward and Kylie had to hike a few minutes to get to the inspection area just outside of "Old Gummi Glenn." As Kylie approached the table, one of the artifacts began to give off a golden glow. "Edward, does this always happen when anyone approaches these artifacts?" The stunned look on his face gave her the answer.

"My dear, I have never seen any reaction from anything in all the expeditions I have ever led. I feel compelled to tell you about an old legend involving the two humans who became the most loyal allies to the Gummi Bears. The first was Princess Calla and the other was the boy, Cavin, who started as a Paige and later became a Knight in her father's court. The two were eventually married when King Roland was unable to find a suitable prince for her. They had drunk magic Gummi Bear juice multiple times in their efforts to stop the evils of Lord Winthrop and his army of Ogres. They gained some of their legendary magic. It is believed that their descendants retain the connection to the Gummi Bears and apparently to their artifacts as well." "Wait, you mean that I am a descendant of Princess Calla and Sir Cavin?"

"Yes, and with your permission, I want to hand you the artifact that reacted to you, a Gummi Medallion. It was supposedly the collection point of their power and it interacted with the "Great Book of Gummi," which we have not yet found.

As he placed it in her hand, the medallion began to glow with golden light and words appeared on the back of it. She found that she could read the inscription. "Dashing and Daring, Courageous and Caring, Thoughtful and Friendly... We are the Gummi Bears." Golden magic in the form of lightning shot up her arms and throughout her body. She could barely hear Edward yelling to drop it, before a flash of golden light went off and she was sucked into a magic portal within the medallion and disappeared. When she awoke, she was in a "tumultuous" environment

with six small andromorphic bears dressed in medieval garb. Her own outfit had changed to a pink medieval dress with simple leather boots. The bears were oblivious to her because, they were literally bouncing all over trying to avoid being swatted by giant green ogres with huge wooden clubs.

"Oh, they are real after all," she said before passing out in complete shock. When she awoke again, she found herself lying on a small wooden-framed bed with her legs hanging mostly over the end of it and the six bears were now staring intently at her.

The one with the purple hat, cape and lavender fur responded, "Oh, good! You are awake, Miss. Introductions are in order. My name is Zummi, this is Grammi, Gruff, Tummi, Sunni and the little one is Cubbi. We are the Gummi Bears of Gummi Glenn. You must be a lady in waiting for Princess Calla. What is your name, my dear?"

"My name is Kylie. I am a lady in waiting from a visiting castle. My lady is the cousin to Princess Calla," she explained falsely to the bears. The bears all seemed to nod in agreement to that explanation. She hated to give them the wrong idea, but she did not see any choice.

###

Grumpy Old Woman **By N. Stewart**

What makes me grumpy you would ask? I'll tell you. Stop what you are doing, put the phone down, sit in one spot, and listen to me. I have something to say.

I go to the grocery store and I hear conversations in languages other than English surrounding me and I wonder where am I. Am I still in the United States or did I time travel to some other dimension or land? If I have a problem with some billing or other issue that requires clarification, I call for help, and more than likely end up with a heavily accented speaker located in a far and away country. It is difficult to understand what is said and seemingly difficult for the other person to understand why I am calling and what is the problem. I frustrate myself trying to be understood, seeking a better choice of English words to make that person understand while my voice gets louder and higher with each needed repetition of the reason for calling. Eventually having reached no level of satisfaction, I hang up, leaving the issue unsolved yet again.

I think English is still the national language of America, but I may be wrong.

Adding to my frustration, many people today, especially the young, act ignorant or downright rude. There is no civility. No rules of polite conduct to follow. It is rude to conduct a conversation in a different language when not everyone present speaks that same language. It is rude to stand almost on top of the person while waiting in line. It is rude not to hold the door for the person entering after and letting it close on that person. It is rude to spew vulgar language at any time. It is rude not to offer a seat on transportation or offer assistance to an older or pregnant woman, or an ailing man, or any one that's handicapped.

Here is one specific example of observable rudeness of the young. A few weeks ago, a Stanford law student association invited a speaker to appear on campus and speak about COVID, guns and Twitter. Before he could speak, some of the students attending shouted down the speaker, yelling, and made utter fools of themselves. Unable to speak, the guest asked the school administrator for assistance whereby the dean of the law school stood up, agreeing with the protesters and did nothing to quell the tumultuous actions of the rowdy students. Those woefully juvenile students made a show of walking out of the room, smirking and yelling derogatory things, ending the discourse for everyone.

Think about those same students that walked out as potential would-be lawyers and future judges of our country. Could they possibly listen to both sides of an argument and make a fair unbiased decision? I doubt it. I think it was not too many years ago that students in class earnestly listened to philosophical arguments and learned from the experience, broadening their own knowledge and understanding.

Rudeness is one thing, but refusing a person the right to speak is another. Why can't any one speak his or her opinion even though it differs from another? Why are my thoughts wrong and yours right? Why can't we listen to what each other has to say? Why can't I speak freely? But this is getting away from the subject, heading elsewhere toward another better addressed anew. Alas, this discussion on rudeness in the world has exhausted me.

I spoke. You listened. And, because of that, I don't feel quite as grumpy any more.

###

Must Be Nice
By Kelly Tansor

Chloe had entered a tumultuous scene - her 5-year-old nephew's birthday party. Small children ran around screaming all over the arcade, chasing after and tackling each other. The small dance floor in the center of the room was crowded with boys and girls dancing to Kidz Bop with the arcade's mascot. Crying kids stood by the arcade games begging their parents for "More!" What they wanted "more" of was anyone's guess.

Chloe gripped her present tightly as she walked over to where her sister, Nadia, was sitting with her husband, Gavin. Her nephew, Perry, was sitting propped up on the long cafeteria-like table, whimpering. Gavin held him still while Nadia wiped his face.

"Alright, Perry, all clean," said Nadia. Her voice then became stern. "Now, you can go back to the ball pit. But keep your juice here. Otherwise, we're going home. Understand?"

Perry sniffled and nodded before jumping down to the floor and running off. Nadia rolled her eyes and leaned back in her seat. She looked up at Chloe and waved one arm. "Chloe! We're over here!"

Chloe smiled and walked up to Nadia's table. The sound of Kidz Bop music grew louder. "I thought the party started, like, 15 minutes ago," said Chloe. The table next to Nadia's was full of presents and gift bags. Chloe put her present down on the table.

"Yeah, but when it's a kid's party, a lot of people show up right away. There's no such thing as fashionably late for kids," said Nadia, exasperated.

Gavin chimed in, "It was even crazier before you got here, if you can believe it."

Chloe sat down next to Nadia. "Well, if it's not too late, can I help with anything?"

"No, that's fine," said Nadia. "The kids are all running around, playing games. We'll have pizza in about an hour, then cake and presents some time after that."

Gavin let out a relaxed sigh. "I can't believe the turnout we've had. I'm pretty sure his whole class showed up!"

Chloe looked around at all the children playing. "They're all so little," she said, endearingly.

"Yeah, but they have enough energy to last days," Nadia said as she grabbed a solo cup on the table. "You're so lucky you don't have to deal with this." She took a long drink.

Chloe shrugged. "Well, I don't know. It's probably nice to get to do all these fun things with the kids. Maybe a year from now, this will be a nice memory for all of you."

"Really?" asked Nadia, putting down her drink. "More of a nice memory than that trip to Alaska you and your husband took last week?"

"Or that tribute band you saw in concert last month?" added Gavin.

Chloe smiled sheepishly. "Sure, those were fun, too. But, really, this can still be fun, too. And you know I love playing with Perry."

"Oh, and he loves you, too," said Nadia. "I'm sure when he gets back from the ball pit, he'll be begging you to play some games with him."

Chloe looked around again. A dad was showing his son how to shoot a basket at an arcade game. A boy and girl played air hockey together. A group of boys cheered over the amount of tickets they had just won. The girls on the dance floor showed each other how to do the latest dance they had just learned from the mascot. Chloe beamed.

"Chloe, for real." Nadia broke Chloe out of her concentration. "Count your blessings. You and Oliver get to further your careers, travel, and go to all the festivals and concerts your hearts desire."

Chloe shrugged. "I guess. But...I don't know, I sometimes think this would be nice too."

Nadia leaned in closer and raised her eyebrows. "Ohhhh, I see. Are you two thinking about...well...you know?"

Chloe blushed. "Well, maybe. But...God, it seems so hard. Some women take such a long time to conceive - weeks, months, even years! That's just...I don't know...I'm getting close to 35, and after that it's even harder to get pregnant."

Nadia looked taken aback by this. “Well, sure, but I don’t think you’d have any issues getting pregnant. You’re not that close to 35. You’re still young. You’re healthy. You both are financially stable. And, hey, worse comes to worse, you can always adopt.”

Gavin cocked his head. “Yeah, but wouldn’t you try to have your own kid first?”

Nadia shushed him right away. “One of the boys here was adopted,” she whispered. She turned back to Chloe. “Don’t listen to him, Chloe. Adoption is always an option. Long and expensive, sure, but it’s an option. So is IVF and surrogacy...but really, I don’t know why you’re so worried about that. I’m pretty sure you and Oliver would be able to make a baby right away. It happened for us!”

Chloe nodded and looked away. She kept looking around the arcade until her eyes met with Perry. Chloe let out an exaggerated gasp and exclaimed, “Perry! Auntie Chloe’s here!”

Perry ran up to Chloe cheering, “Auntie Chloe!” After a tight embrace, he said, “Let’s go play air hockey!” Chloe graciously let Perry take her hand and steer her away from this conversation.

Two days later, Chloe was getting her morning coffee ready when the phone rang. The caller ID read Central IVF. Chloe answered the phone anxiously.

“Hello, this is Chloe,” she said quickly.

“Hi, Chloe,” said the person on the other end. “This is Dr. Parsons with Central IVF. Is this a bad time?”

“No, no, not at all,” she said anxiously.

Dr. Parsons paused before asking, “Are you sitting down?”

###

Tumultuous By Carol Karvon

Theirs was always a tumultuous relationship but they had been at it so long they didn’t even notice it most of the time. It was only when a friend or relative commented on their behavior towards each other that they became aware of it themselves.

Maggie, for Margaret, and Max, for Maxine, were mother and daughter. One of the reasons for conflict was Max’s name. She was named after her paternal grandmother and hated the name. Max never told her dad or his mother how she felt. She didn’t want to hurt them. That was why she always told people her name was Max. The granddaughter’s name was Maggie’s attempt to make peace with her mother-in-law because she was disappointed her son had chosen Maggie for his wife.

At times there seemed to be an unwritten rule governing mother-daughter relationships, that they had to be contentious. Max and Maggie really loved each other but both had very strong personalities and most of the time didn’t hesitate to voice their opinions. It had taken enormous restraint on Max’s part to keep quiet about how much she disliked her name.

Some people found their no-holds barred honesty refreshing; others thought it foolish and wasted so much time and energy.

Maggie was particularly outspoken in her feelings about Max's boyfriends. She was forever finding something wrong with each one Max brought home to meet them. The latest one, named Josh, had a pony tail! Not a big deal to most people but a huge deal to Maggie. Max knew Josh's long hair would annoy Maggie and brought him home for that very reason – to annoy her mother. But Max told her mother she should be glad she brought the boys home to meet her parents.

Her dad, thankfully, kept his opinions to himself most of the time.

“What would your poor dead granny think about your latest boyfriend” Maggie asked Max during their latest disagreement.

“Well,” Max said, “its only hair. Didn't daddy have a Mohawk or Mullet or something when you met him in college? I've seen pictures of the two of you. What did granny think of him back then? His hair didn't turn him into a bum. You should be happy Josh isn't a druggie or a thief just to mention a couple of things. Remember that guy named Peter you liked so much? He drank. Or what about Chuck, he cheated on exams and had others write his papers for class. I could mention a few more guys who really had everyone fooled, but I won't. I don't want to disillusion you too much.”

“Okay, I give up,” said Maggie. She knew when she was beaten and had decided a long time ago to pick her battles.

Max was always a headstrong girl. Even when she was a toddler, she had a mind of her own and insisted on picking out her own clothes and even dressing herself. There was no helping or reasoning with her. Sometimes she put on two different shoes or outgrown clothes just because she loved a particular outfit.

No matter what anyone else said or thought about Max when Maggie thought about her daughter, deep down she was proud of her. And she was glad and proud of herself. She had raised a strong independent young woman who could think for herself. She was everything and more a mother could hope for. And, she knew in her heart of hearts, the older Max became the smarter and wiser Maggie would become. Maggie knew because that's what happened between her and her own mother, especially after Maggie became a mother herself.

###

Chomsky and Ellsberg on the Present Danger
By J. Smetana

Hey man Jerry said the gig was a TUMULTUOUS clambake and you guys ate cola bears.

Well actually it's koala bears and they're not really bears they're marsupials

But ain't they endangered? Chill Peaches, no need to call the ASAP. They was already cooked in the Australian wildfire. Cooked to perfection I might add. All they needed was dipping sauce: Ranch, honey mustard or BBQ.

###

Tumultuous
By Edward Scheffler

Uncle Willie is a protagonist
absorbed in his own self
right-eousness.

Distraught with contempt and
intolerance to those who
don't measure up to his
STANDARDS.

He sees us as a nation of RACIAL INEQUALITY
Beset with DISCRIMINATION against the
MINORITIES

And that GOD has signed him like Moses to
liberate the
People.

Engaged in this continuous bitterness
of strife his ulcers are acting up.
Along with a diagnosis of high
blood pressure and cancerous
stomach tumor.

Assigned to a Nursing Home in a
wheel chair his days of shouting
profanities are over.

Proverb 3:30

Strive not with a man without a cause,
if he has done thee no harm.