

Tell us what you want to see...

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<i>Have an idea or article for the newsletter...</i>	
Be sure to email the editor and we will do our best to get you published... It is all about sharing the word...	

Every Newsletter has a goal. Ours is to spread encouragement and joy for the art of writing. In order to accomplish this we need to know what you, or wonderful readers, want to see within the pages of this author dialog.

Please make sure to email our [Newsletter Editor](#) so we can explore the topics of interest you would like to see as you continue your personal writing adventure.



Are you the next great author?

The Value of Writing

I use a website called www.750words.com to keep up my daily writing practice. Sometimes I just dump whatever is on my mind onto the pages and other times, I edit or add to my ongoing stories or articles. There are days I wonder why I write at all. I don't see an immediate or instant value to it. And when I think of the word, value, I can't help but think of my friend, Bill Joyce, the publisher of this newsletter. When I first met him at a writers' group, he said, "I want to know if my writing has any value." His intense desire for an answer to this question started me thinking.

What if there is no value in my writing to anyone but me? That's enough isn't it? If I enjoy writing and I find any kind of value or pleasure in writing the words, then that IS enough, right? Yes, but I crave validation that what I do is worthwhile and good (not perfect, but good enough). But if this is my true purpose for writing, I will be disappointed.

There is no way to know who may benefit from the words we write. Oh sure, someone may say, "Wow! I really like what you write." But if I thrive on validation, would I believe they are sincere? Would I still doubt the "value" of what I write? Probably.

The solutions then, is to give myself validation just for my time and effort and not worry about the end result or if what I write will end up in the hands of a person that says, "Well, this is just trash - pure trash." The words I write could just as easily end up resonating with a person who identifies with my writing and finds it useful...even valuable.

Continued on Page 5

Today's Encouragement

Grab a few books on writing...

I prefer Dwight Swain's *Techniques of the Selling Writer* and *Creating Characters*, as well as anything by James Scott Bell. Having a pro explain and show what it means to not use adverbs, "Tom Swifties," and more is paramount to writing something someone might want to read.

Also, I now believe every writer at any stage of the process should read Stephen King's *On Writing*.

[Apr 23, 2012 by Nick Thacker](#)



Summertime Fun

We are looking for stories about summertime to grace the pages of our Newsletter. Submit them to our [Newsletter Editor](#) and join in the fun

This Poem Chirps of Springtime....

The Tree

The knurled and distorted tree reached out each day for the sunlight and began another day of its life. The storm from its childhood had broken its back but the roots would not give in and the tree, bent and broken, continued to grow. Now it used two limbs touching the ground to support its weight. Stooped, it stood in painful memory of its past.

This morning something special was to happen and the tree looked into its branches with marvelous anticipation. There, high among the limbs that could reach for the sun, the four eggs began to hatch and new life burst into the world. Tiny, helpless and loud the new children of the air chirped and screamed for life. Nestled in the broken arms of the tree they were safe.

This morning, all the pain, confusion, grief and daily effort was answered. Standing proudly stooped, the tree held its gift to the world. The poet was right - there is nothing more beautiful than a tree. May each of us grow where we are planted.

**Blessings,
Bill J. - Feb 2000
Picture by Rick Copple**

Project X

The Life of a Mercenary



By
Wrathe W.
Accing

Here is a Book Buddy request...

As I start scribbling out the next adventure, I am wondering if First Person POV or Third Person POV fit my style better. I would love to hear you guys chime in and provide some written ideas, commentary and words of wisdom... Here are the opening lines in both styles for your enjoyment:

First Person POV

Allowing my mind to take in every detail of the room, I made sure all was in order. Habit had become a friend and it was comforting to see that everything in my 'normal person habitat' was prepared for my departure. I wore a set of old man jeans and a flannel shirt of dull browns. They were baggy and well worn adding to my thrifty nature. The final garment, a tattered grey jacket, finished the picture that masked my true identity from the outside world. They saw an old man on a trip to somewhere.

Checking the lock by pulling on the door and waving to the children in the common pool just outside my apartment door were habits that the neighbors came to expect. I ambled, leaning on my walking staff, over to the parking lot. My trusted pickup truck looked just a little bit older and maybe even beat up a little more than me. The door creaked as usual when I opened it and got in.

Third Person POV

He seemed to teeter as he turned to lock the front door to his apartment. Stooped with an exaggerated hump on his left shoulder, the old man leaned heavily on his walking staff as he shuffled towards his dilapidated pickup truck.

Neighbors in the apartment complex knew him to be friendly and outgoing, never complaining about his maladies and always ready to laugh at the antics of the children in the community pool just outside his apartment door.

Today, like many before, he was observed by children in the pool and a passing neighbor or two. The note stuck into the clip by the front door had the name Harry written in plain sight. The maintenance man would see it and would know that the old man had gone to see his ailing sister in Oklahoma once again. He would check on the apartment every few days for his friend, Poppy. That is what the kids called him and he always smiled when he heard the moniker.

One thing I knew about normal, was allowing those around me to expect my departure as ordinary. I could be gone three days or four months and they had to consider it just another outing for old Poppy. The maintenance guy would find the note in the clip by the door and know that I went to see my ailing sister up in Oklahoma. He would check the apartment every few days or so and add to the level of normal within my small community.

When leaving on a trip, I carry a satchel crossed over my shoulder so that I can walk with my staff unobstructed. If anyone looked into the worn leather open topped bag, they would see a few shirts and maybe some underwear poking up from the bottom. It always held the same contents. It was a prop, as were so many of the attributes seen by any who cared to watch an old man getting into his truck and depart.

The drive held to a pattern for the first few miles. West away from the apartment and then in a northerly direction towards the interstate highway system that would eventually funnel its traffic out of Texas and into Oklahoma. I also began the process of transformation, no longer a tottering old man but an observant driver making sure no one followed my progress, doubling back at odd intervals and stopping to pick up groceries and other stuff to assure I had left my normal life behind. By the third stop, which included topping of the gas tank, I was sure I had once again avoided detection.

Once outside the complex, he headed west and then began to drive in seemingly erratic patterns stopping frequently and watching the cars all around him. After a third stop, topping off the gas tank, he took the ramp for Interstate 35W north and began to rapidly put miles between himself and his normal life.

Traffic quieted and he found a pace that controlled his environment, taking the time to shed the grey jacket with its prosthetic hump. The pants and shirts would also need to be changed but that would have to wait for the next stop. For now the two cups of coffee and the bear claw, purchased during his frequent stops, took precedence.

He smiled, thinking about the laughter of the children playing in the pool and the fun they had with the bubbles he bought them last week. Harry wasn't that cranky when two of the young ones decided it was a good idea to dump the contents of their plastic jars into the pool. And Mary-June provided both men with hot dogs from the grill with her special homemade mustard. He loved his little apartment, even if it meant playing the part of the tottering old man.

Passing the Oklahoma welcome center, it was time to think about the new assignment. Stopping at the next rest stop, he completed his transformation. With the removal of the old man jeans and flannel shirt replaced by sturdy clothing, the old man vanished replaced by a lean warrior ready for battle.

Getting onto Interstate 35W, I concentrated on putting miles of pavement behind me, drinking the two cups of coffee and eating the bear claw purchased on my surveillance stops. I also squirmed out of the tattered jacket worn by the old man and pulled out the leather jacket from behind the bench seat of the pickup.

A Rangers ball cap covered the grey hair, not a prop but a hereditary fact, and the transformation from old man to lethal warrior began. The pants and shirt had prosthetics adding 30 pounds to my lean frame, but they would have to wait until the next stop to be replaced. For now the jacket removed the shoulder abnormality and I sat up straight in the seat staring forward concentrating on my next assignment.



Wrathe W Aceing is a pseudonym and an anagram created to remove celebrity from the author and place it on the central message of this and other books contemplated. The “e” is silent. So is the warrior. But the vigilance, while

silent, is real.

In my last conversation with the author, he indicated his prayer was that someday dark soldiers would not be necessary. On this and the underlying message of the story I place my credence of the author’s good character.

Please send your commentaries to bill.joyce@vismgt.com. All input is greatly appreciated and I look forward to hearing from you. ***VOTE - POV1st or POV3rd - Winning Votes will get a signed Editors PFD version of the finished story***

The Value of Writing Continued

So to Bill (and to myself) I say, “Yes, absolutely there is value in your writing. The value is in the effort, the passion, and our intent to “get 'er done” (*excuse the borrowed cliché*) no matter what becomes of the end result. When we are gone (not to be morbid) we run out of the right to stumble over the choice of our words, make countless edits even though we may end up not particularly pleased with the end result and discover those rare and elusive moments when our words flow like water over a dam; smooth, crystal clear and miraculous. As writers, we take the risk and that’s all I want. There is no failure when we write; to fail is NOT to write.

So later on tonight, I’ll be writing at least 750 words on www.750words.com for my unbroken streak of 155 days straight and having written over 140,572 words since I began last year. I pat myself on the back and treat myself to a bowl of chocolate ice cream.

By Carol Factor

Hey - write to me and I will write back! carolfactor1@gmail.com



Poppy's Pantry

A Cookbook made with
giggles and grins

By r.e.joyce

Monthly Recipe Adventure

We have begun a yearlong cooking adventure to create a cookbook that is - fun.

We would love to have you participate in this adventure.

Each month we are going to include a new recipe being developed in our test kitchen. (Location of the test kitchen is kept secret - even from Poppy... We believe it is somewhere under the pile of dishes he forgot to do...)

Your task, if you wish to participate is to:

-  Try the recipe and comment - help us make it better and add a family story or two to the adventure.
-  Take a picture of your competed dish and send it in as a jpg file...
-  Or add a recipe of your own and become part of the cookbook!

All proceeds of Poppy's Pantry and Grandma's Cupboard will be donated to North Texas Children's Hospitals.

Poppy's Pantry Recipe Listings

#	Recipe	Main Ingredient	Meal Course	Occasion / Holiday	Season
1	PP r.e.joyce Apple Pie		Desert		Fall
2	PP Cranberry Runaway		Garnish	Thanksgiving	Fall
3	PP Slow-Cooker Pot Roast	Beef	Main		
4	PP Irish Soda Bread		Bread		
5	PP Piggy in the Pot	Pork	Main		
6	PP Chicken and the Piggy	Chicken	Main		
7	PP Texas Beef & Bean Chili	Beef	Main		
8	PP Spicy Stuffed Peppers	Beef	Main		
9	PP Picante Brunch Quiche	Eggs	Breakfast		
10	PP Burger in a Sundae	Beef	Main		
11	PP Sweet and Savory Beef Stew	Beef	Main		
12	PP Gastronomic Gobbler	Turkey	Main		
13	PP Thanksgiving Piggy	Pork	Main		
14	PP Chili Piggy Dressed for the party	Pork	Main		
15	PP Skillet Pork Chop Dinner	Pork	Main		
16	PP Pork Chop-Apple-Bean Packets	Pork	Grill		
18	PP Poppy's On-ends	Beef	mult-use		
19	PP Poppy's Italian Song Sauce	Beef and Pork	Main		
20	PP Peppered Pork Medallions in Tangy M	Pork	Main		
22	PP Poppy's Mac Surprise		Main		
23	Chris 20130910 Best Ever Cheese Cake		Desert		
24	GC Broccoli Casserole 20130910	Broccoli	Side Dish		
25	GC Cream Cheese Rollups		Desert		
26	GC Frenchy's Sweet Surprise Breakfast	eggs	Breakfast		
27	GC Grandma's Italian Baked Garlic Bread		Garnish		

Have a recipe to add...

We would love to include your favorite receipt in our Cookbook. The tradition of gathering around the table to enjoy good food and good friends is at the center of living a good life.

Feel free to contact us at bill.joyce@vismgt.com and submit your recipe. Let's work together to expand the fun of this wonderful tradition.

Poppy's Pantry



What is in the pot is Love!

The r.e.joyce Apple Pie

The following recipe is for use when the mood strikes, the apples are ripe, and your friends need a little something to cheer up their innards.

Ingredients needed:

- ☞ 1 1/3 plus cups Flour
- ☞ Cinnamon to taste
- ☞ 2 1/2 cups Brown Sugar (Light)
- ☞ 2 sticks Butter (lightly salted)
- ☞ Apples NOTE# 1 GET extra apples OF EACH TYPE (that gives extra for munchkins to nibble on during the preparation).
- ☞ dash of Nutmeg
- ☞ 2 teaspoons Lemon Juice



NOTE #1 - This pie needs three types of cooking apples. Your choice will make a very wonderful difference. One always good apple is Granny Smith, those wonderfully big green apples that add a wonderful tartness to the pie. Macintosh, Jonathan, Rome, Wine Sap, Japanese, etc., etc... Pick the ones that look the freshest and then have fun.

The Pie:

- ☞ Cut up 6 apples into chunks. Split in eighths, peel and core - then dice into about 4-5 pieces - bite size but not same size...
- ☞ Place apples into a large pot, rinse with cold water, drain.

Now add:

- ☞ 1 1/2 cups of light-brown sugar
- ☞ Three good shakes of cinnamon (this is where you become a real chef!!!)
- ☞ Dash of nutmeg (be careful this can get too bitter tasting)
- ☞ Mix these together with large spoon being careful not to crush the apples but making sure all the sugar is "un-clumped". This mixture will make a liquid - wonderfully brown and delightfully delicious. Taste for cinnamon and nutmeg.
- ☞ Now add one stick of melted butter to this mixture and stir in.

- ☞ Carefully add flour a few tablespoons at a time and mix in. This is to bring the liquid to a light gravy consistency. **DO NOT LET THIS GET TOO THICK** it will turn the pie to a pasty cake after baking. Just add a little “sticking” power to the juice so it stays around the apples. *Skip this if you’re scared...*
- ☞ Now squeeze a nice amount of Lemon Juice into the mixture to taste. At this point we are looking for touches of flavor - nothing to take over the pie.
- ☞ Add ingredients into TWO 9 inch pie shells letting them mound as they will. The more you can get in the better. The r.e.joyce Apple Pie is not known for its neatness - it is known for its taste.

The Topping:

Mix in a clean dry bowl:

- ☞ 1 1/3 cups of sifted flour
- ☞ 2/3 cups of light-brown sugar
- ☞ This should be combined with a fork, taking out all the sugar lumps, leaving a crumbly but not large lumped mixture.
- ☞ Now add one stick of melted butter and work in with the fork. Here we are going to make a mixture that blends the butter with the sugar and flour and makes a “Crumb Cake” type consistency. Be prepared to add a little more butter or a little more flour as needed to reach the right topping consistency. Its fun and when you’re done it will all somehow fit on the pies. It is best to err on the “more” side.
- ☞ Place this topping on the pies. This will take a little practice but it is best to pick up the pie in one hand, holding it over the topping bowl, and use the other hand to place and “pat” the topping on. Lightly pat allowing it to stick but not breaking up the crumb lumps.

The Baking:

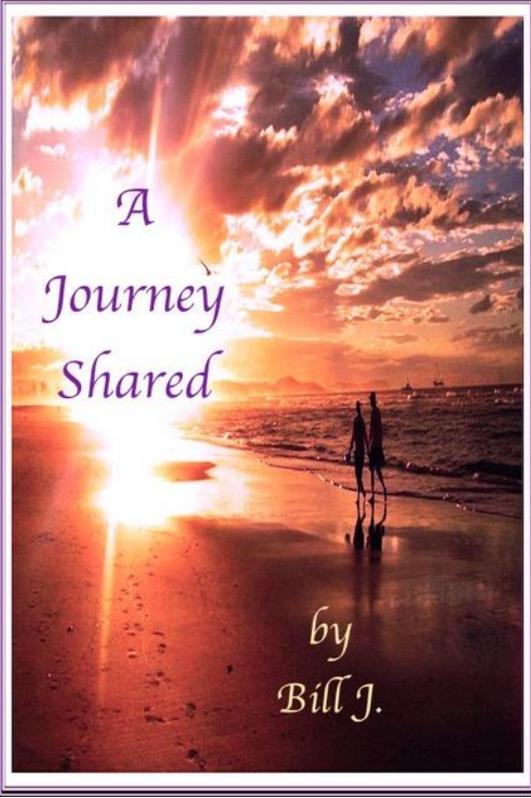
- ☞ Your pies are now ready to bake in a preheated 350-degree oven for about 30 - 45 minutes. Watch the topping and remove when it has begun to brown nicely.
- ☞ If you are going to freeze one, bake it for a shorter period of time (20 minutes) this way you will be able to finish the baking cycle when you take it out without burning the topping.

The Eating:

It is critically important to have munchkins available at the time of eating - at least that’s what Poppy thinks.... However he is quite biased and knows that he can get out of doing dishes if he is playing tickle monster with the bubble butts. Have a wonderful time - Poppy

New Book Announcement from one of our North Texas Authors

<i>Book Title</i>	A Journey Shared		
<i>Author's Name</i>	Bill J.		
<i>Genre</i>	Spirituality		
<i>Short Synopsis</i>	<p>The marvel of the journey with Our Lord is that it never grows old and the constant change and deepening of the love is the most wonderful gift continually given by Our Savior.</p> <p>Having been twice blessed with the God given gift of recovery, I find that my journey continues to uncover a joy of being that is beyond understanding and can only come from a Higher Power Who loves me.</p> <p>The following writings are part of that journey and a way to shout His love from the mountaintop. I hope you hear Him over the din of one walking in His footsteps.</p>		
<i>Where you can get this book</i>	Amazon Paperback	Amazon eBook	Or you can email DreamWriter Press and they will be happy to assist you!





Interesting meetings and other important happenings for authors		
Meeting with Link	Key Topic	Date & Time
South Arlington Creative Writing Social Club	Check Meetup link for topics	<i>Every Monday</i> starting at 6:00pm

Have a meeting you want to advertise that will help our members and advance their writing dreams please contact our [Newsletter Editor](#) and we will review and post as appropriate.
Remember Monthly Conversation belongs to you.

Don't forget to check out our sponsors!

<p>DreamWriter Press</p> <p>A unique publishing service created with the sole intent to help new authors achieve their writing dreams.</p>		<p>CrowdFund Roundup</p> <p>A co-operative network of industry, entrepreneurs and community dedicated to build a transparent CrowdFunding process that will make CR the place to come for startup capital.</p> 
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