



Compose Yourself SIG

Memoir Writers

May 2006 Newsletter

The May Monthly Meeting is Monday the 15th at 1:00 in the Sonoran Plaza, Palms Room - Please Join Us

SIG Monthly meetings are the third Monday of the month at 1:00 to 3:00. Location:

Winter months Nov – May In the Sonoran Plaza, Palms Room

Summer months June – Oct In the Grand Computers Clubroom

Thought of the Day – "I don't regret anything I've ever done as long as I enjoyed it at the time." —
Katharine Hepburn, 1907-2003

April Meeting Report

April's monthly meeting had twelve present. The meeting opened with a discussion on self-publishing using a local firm. This followed with a report on a writing class held by Greta Bishop of Bishop Literary Services.

Dana Wall proposed two topics for the ten-minute scribble. One was "A time when you thought you were loved" and the other was "A time when you thought you were unloved." As always, the option was there to pick your own subject on which to write your quick ten-minute draft. After ten minutes of writing, we read our drafts to each other, and members provided the writer with supportive comments.

Four members read articles aloud. They were:

- Dana W. – "Are We There Yet?" About going camping (with family) was fun - getting there was not.
- Bob R. – "Surgeon General Warning: Smoking can be Hazardous to Your ..." (To your what!) It had a hilarious ending.

- Arlene D. – "The Rings" About an endearing story of her parents wedding rings.

- Bob H – "I Think Grandpa is Crazy" About explaining to a grandchild why Grandpa "had to get lost."

Others members responded with supportive comments. With all articles read and the comments completed, the meeting adjourned at 3:00 pm.

Note about summer meetings: June through October the Compose Yourself SIG monthly meetings shall be held in the Computer Club's Classroom.

Disclaimer

By following any of our tips, advice, or recommendations (for software, hardware or otherwise) you agree not to hold Grand Computers Club or any of its members responsible for any problems that may arise in following said advice. All of our tips, recommendations, and information are intended for you to use at your own risk. Although all information given is proposed to be accurate at the time of publication, we make no guarantees; either expressed or implied that the information in this web site is totally error free and 100% accurate.

For Your Consideration – Handy hints for your memoir writing

Many of these hints have been discussed in our meetings and Dana's classes. This article puts many of them together in one place. Enjoy.

The article is from the Sun City Living, May 2006, by Marsha Kay Seff, Copley News Service.

“Don't Wait to Get Started On Your Autobiography”

“Though setting out to write your life story can be intimidating, all you really need is the ability to remember and have the desire to share your story, says personal historian Lois Sunrich of the Story Arts Inc. ‘Memories come from music, jokes, recipes, China patterns, and even cars and tractors. Let your memories inspire you.’

Sunrich and other experts offer the following suggestions for people thinking about writing an autobiography:

- Collect old photos, holiday cards, letters and memorabilia, including military medals, to stir up old memories. Organize your mementos and put them where you can see them while doing this project.
- Be creative. You can even turn an old wedding gown into a cover for your book.
- Sometime, a single photo and one letter are enough to tell the story you want to tell. Or a collage of photos and memorabilia might do the trick.
- If you opt for a book or tape, you can organize by dates, decades, topics, events, turning points or whatever you wish. You don't have to start with ‘I was born...’ and you don't have to include every detail of your life.
- It might help to use a notebook, dedicating a section for each season of your life, including your parents, your childhood, youth, adult years and retirement. Or use an audiotape so future generations can hear your voice. A video recording will allow them to see you as well.
- It also might help to ask someone to interview you.
- If you're still overwhelmed, these words and phrases might help you get started: war, graduation, 16th birthday, allowance, first date, first kiss.
- When writing, use first person and active verbs. Be simple; don't try to impress. Pretend you're talking to a friend.
- A lifetime is made up of a series of short memories; write about one at a time and don't ignore the painful ones.
- Detailed descriptions will help future generations get the picture of the people and things you're writing about.

- Take your time; don't give yourself artificial deadlines.
The most important thing is to have fun doing this project. Along the way, you might learn something about yourself.

RESOURCES

Thinking of writing your own life story? Here's a list of resources to help you get started:
'For All Time: A Complete Guide to Writing Your Family History,' Charley Kempthorne (Boynton/Cook Heinemann, \$15.95).
'How to Write the Story of Your Life,' Frank P. Thomas (Writer's Digest Books, \$14.99).
'Scrapbooking with Memory Makers,' Michele Gerbrandt (Hugh Lauter Levin Associates, \$25).
'The Story of a Lifetime,' Pamela and Stephen Pavuk (Triangle Publishers, \$41.95).
'To Our Children's Children: Preserving Family Histories for Generations to Come,' Bob Greene and D.G. Fulford (Doubleday, \$17.95).
'When Memory Speaks,' Jill Ker Conway (Vintage Books, \$13).
'Your Life Story: Writing the New Autobiography,' Tristine Rainer (JP Tarcher, \$14.95)."

Computer Tool Tips

Keyboard Shortcut: "Windows Calculator"

The Windows Calculator is a little utility that's been available for over a decade's-worth of Windows installments. And, while it's fairly easy to access through the 'Start' menu, it can also be summoned by going to **Start, Run,** and typing **calc.** Click **OK** or press **Enter** on your keyboard to complete this very handy shortcut.

Keyboard Shortcut: 'Ctrl +F'

In most Windows programs (web browsers especially), **Ctrl+F** is responsible for calling the quick find utility. I find myself using it more and more for when I'm directed to a webpage by Google, but can't find the information that it purportedly has. With the **Ctrl** key in one finger and the **F** in the other, I can quickly search for a keyword on the page. This shortcut also works well in Word documents.

Compose Yourself is a Special Interest Group (SIG) of Sun City Grand's Computers Club
Website is [www.grandcomputers.org/Special Interest Groups/Compose Yourself](http://www.grandcomputers.org/Special%20Interest%20Groups/Compose%20Yourself)

Dana Wall, SIG Education Chairman
Marekin2000@aol.com
544-8154

Jim Hale, SIG Facilitator
jhale17@cox.net
546-9711

