

## **Pen & Ink Writers' Group**

**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 © 2016 Pen & Ink Writers' Group**

#### **July 2016 selection – Hair**

##### **My Hair Styles By Elvira K. Castillo**

My hair has had a history of its own. I was born a blonde, and when I was in Kindergarten my hair was cut in a shingle in the back and a barrette or bow kept the hair off my face.

As my hair darkened to a dishwater blonde, it was parted in the center with two long braids. My braids bring back a loving memory of my father braiding my hair before taking me to see "Gone with the Wind" at the Will Rogers Theater on Belmont and Central.

For special occasions, like Easter Sunday or Christmas, Mom would set my hair in rag curls, giving me long skinny locks. I liked my two friends' locks more than mine because they were nice and plump, so one day their mother set my hair with a roller, so I had a nice fat locks, too.

I was a very independent little girl and often insisted on fixing my own hair, prompting one of my grammar school teachers to ask Mom, "What happen to your daughter's hair? It used to look so neat!"

When I graduated grammar school, Mom took me to get a permanent. I remember there were two sisters who had a beauty shop in their basement. I was the only girl in our class with a permanent, and I know Mom meant well, but I would have preferred a softer,

younger look like the other girls. Ironically I gave a “Chalk Talk” at the graduation ceremony which went like this:

“When Grandpa was a little boy, a lot of hair grew on his head, but as he grew older, it seemed to have crawled down to his chin.”

I drew the back of a boy’s head with lots of hair and then a bald head on top of the hair, making the hair turn into a beard.

When I started High School, I still had that awful permanent, but eventually had my hair cut very short and kept this style throughout High School. I actually received compliments from teachers saying how much they liked my hair cut.

In my adult working life, I had many hairstyles, including a page boy, flip, and ponytail. By this time my hair had turned dark brown, so I had it bleached blonde, streaked, or frosted. Eventually, I had the good fortune to go to a hairdresser who styled my hair in the style I actually have to this day -- and that was some 50 years ago. Can you imagine having the same hairstyle that long? Well, it’s true, and what else is true is I decided to cut and style my own hair which I’ve been doing for at least 40 years.

Through the years I’ve received many compliments on my hair. I feel very blessed that I can cut and style my own hair as I’m not a fan of trying to find the right hairdresser to cut my hair satisfactorily. Doing it myself, I only have myself to blame! Besides, now I’m lucky enough to have enough hair to cut and style!

How lucky I  
Am to be able to  
Ideally trim and  
Really, truly style my own hair.

###

### **A Single Strand of Hair**

**By N. Stewart**

Hi Honey, I’m home!”

*There’s that old tired, worn out saying again. Everyday it’s the same thing.  
Thinks it’s cute I guess. “Hi Babe. How was your day?”*

As he walked over to hug her, she noticed a long blonde hair on the shoulder of his dark suit. *Hmmm she thought: What is this? Would never in a thousand years ever expected this. Should I sound like the jealous wife and confront him, screaming and ranting. Or innocently say, “What is this, holding it up so he could see?” Or should I just ignore it and give him the benefit of the doubt? I can’t just ignore it, I want to know. But maybe I should wait a bit as he has never given me a reason to doubt him or his loyalty. He says he’d never betray me for another woman...but then he is, after all, a man.*

*Let's not get carried away here. It's one stray hair that could have fallen from a co-worker - a beautiful, curvaceous, lonely, sexy, young woman (stop that!) - leaning in to view his computer screen, or that "motherly" waitress he always talks about at the coffee shop where he stops in before work. Maybe it is a dog or a cat hair (but so long?) from someone he accidentally brushed up against. Okay, so someone was walking their really big long-haired dog and he stopped to pet the dog, and the dog jumped up, and left a single long blonde hair on his shoulder. Yeah, that's a good one.*

*Come on. Get real. He's not a cheater. He loves you. You've been watching way too many soap operas lately. They have corrupted your mind into suspiciously thinking every man is a cheater and a louse. Wait! What did he just say?*

*"...and then she leans over and kisses me on the cheek.*

*Who's he talking about? Who leaned over and kissed him?*

"I was surprised to see her, coming all the way from Florida to visit. She's staying a few days and I invited her to come for dinner tomorrow or Thursday. If that, of course is okay with you. Which would be better?"

*What is he talking about? I'd better bite the bullet and ask. "Who...Who's coming to dinner did you say and Thursday would be better."*

"My Aunt Sophie. From Fort Myers," he said. "Weren't you listening?"

"Sorry, I was distracted for a minute," she said awkwardly. *You silly idiot, getting upset over a single long strand of blonde hair.* She picked the hair from his suit. *And, it isn't even blonde - it's grey!*

"You change clothes while I fix us a before dinner drink, we can sit, and you can tell me all about Sophie's surprise visit," she said, flicking the long strand of hair into the garbage can.

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**Aviva Nuestros Corazones**  
**By J. Smetana**

Marge asked me if I wanted to go to a rap concert. She knows I love that stuff: Big dumb ugly brain- dead baboons who can't keep their pants pulled up, screaming obscenities for a couple of hours and sometimes as a bonus they shoot and kill each other. What's not to like?

“Who we gonna see?” I asked Marge.

“Biggie and Tupac,” she said.

I thought they were already dead, but maybe this was one of those hologram concerts.

When we got to the venue I saw on the marquee *Iggy and Schupack*. “Iggy Stoooge and Sara Schupack? Are you kidding me?” Marge gave me that “gotcha” look. I remember that look from the night she took me to see my college friend Rondi Reed in a play. The “play” turned out to be something called *The Vaginal Monologues*--the longest night of my life. I handed our tickets to the usherette. She tore them in half and gave me the stubs. Oh how lovely, something for my scrapbook of memories. Sit anywhere? I asked her. “Are ye diggin’ the Ig or backin’ the Pack?” She asked me. I looked at Marge to see if she had a preference but Marge doesn't give much away. What's the difference? I asked the usherette. I already had an idea but I thought I'd play the innocent and hear what the little gal had to say.

Well, it's mostly a hair thing, she said. Iggy is Classic Hippie and Schupack is more of a practical 'do.

We're backin' the Pack, I told her. We're backin' the Pack.

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**What's in a Name**  
**By Susan J. Wilfong**

Back when I was in grammar school  
I had a pet Guinea Pig.  
His long hair was brown and white  
And he didn't grow too big.

His long hair was brown and white  
Always looked unkempt.  
He always ran away from me  
When brushing him, I would attempt.

I thought it would be easy  
To care for this little critter.  
Boy, was I wrong  
Lucky for mom, I'm not a quitter.

These little creatures are messy.  
They're awake all through the night.  
They scratch and chirp and whistle  
And come alive in the moonlight.

He was always hungry  
But he never gained weight.  
Because once he finished chewing,  
He pooped out everything he ate.

Because he was a rodent,  
He loved to chew on wood.  
I would give him popsicle sticks  
Every chance I could.

He loved when I took him in the yard.  
He loved to eat the grass.  
But there was one bad thing with that.  
He always ended up with gas.

Yes Guinea Pigs are messy.  
They're noisy and stinky too.  
Their food bill adds up quickly,  
But hey, what are you going do.

What was the name of my Guinea Pig?  
I think your guess is right.  
Well, his name was HAIRY of course  
And his picture is at the right.