

# The Write Life

Volume 1, Issue 13

December 15th, 2009

## End of the Year Wrap Up

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Well ladies and menfolk, the year is almost over, but that doesn't mean the fun has to end. 2010 is going to be even bigger and better. New content, more events, and more writing than ever before! Join us as we spend 2010 traversing the path of novel writing; from idea gathering, to writing, to revising, and beyond.

So join us next year as we continue to grow and expand.

## Final Events

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Due to weather complications we won't be having another local event until next year. Check out the next issue for more details on when and where we'll have our TGIO party.

## Group News:

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In the interests of "corporate" transparency, I'll be displaying our monthly financials, to help viewers better understand what goes into managing and maintaining our writing group.

Annual Donations to Date:	\$180
Annual Expenses to Date:	\$470
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Total Annual Funds to Date:	-\$290

## What's New:

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### Up and Coming:

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- Upgraded content
- TGIO Party - January
- New Web offerings

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Is your muse burnt out, or overweight? too tired to go chase shiny objects? Try some of our new muse food, patent pending.

### Twilight

No we're not going to talk about that book about sparkling vampires. We're going to talk about that time of night where the sun sets, the world dims, and the shadows come out to play. Twilight is the time of day when anything can happen. The Sun swaps out watch over the world with the Moon. It can also provide all sorts of writing inspiration. The sky is set on fire while the sun sinks below the horizon, and muses are woken up.

Go watch a sunset, or even sunrise depending on your free time. See what inspirations your

muse finds. I've found all sorts of ideas while watching the sun move on its merry way. What do you come up with?

For those who don't have easy access to a twilight time of day, try substituting a real sunset/sunrise with the photo below. It might just jumpstart an idea or two.

### One Worders

Try starting a story utilizing one of the below words:

- Tiding
- Eulogy
- Festive
- Appendix
- Luminous
- Cry
- Toast
- Sprint
- Scrooge
- Extricate

### One Liners

Try starting a story with one of the below sentences:

- Will you be the one?
- I'll remember for the both of us.
- Humor me, and tell me lies.
- The hurrier I go, the behinder I get.
- Cleanliness may be next to godliness, but a proper childhood is divine.
- Did that tree just meow?
- I'm having a conversation with a weasel and that's not even the weirdest activity I've done today.
- Lie to me again, and I'll find a match for those pants of yours.
- I'm not allowed to die; it says so in my job description.
- Just ignore the oncoming train and walk through the concrete wall already.

### Photographic Inspiration



Use the image on the left or right as a starting point for a new story or to help jumpstart a sluggish scene.

Have a photo you'd like to have seen in our newsletter? Email it to [WriteLife@FCWriters.com](mailto:WriteLife@FCWriters.com)

Dog photo courtesy of Becky Gregory



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### **It's The End Of The World As We Know It**

All good things must come to an end, and that includes stories. At some point your characters are going to have to ride off into the sunset, or some equally dramatic gesture as the world you created fades to black.

How do you say goodbye to your characters? Do you leave things off with an ellipses and a question mark? Is there a

sequel in the makings in your mind? Or have your characters retired for good?

Try writing the end of a story, see how your characters feel after everything is **wrapped up**. Perhaps they'll see some loose strings for you to play with earlier on within the story.

### One Worders

Try starting a story utilizing one of the below words:

Alabaster

Hexagonal

Pipe

Litigious

Oppressive

Ochre

Ogre

Graffiti

Report

Kazoo

### One Liners

Try starting a story with one of the below sentences:

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## The Writer's Life - A Day In The Life

Every writer has his or her quirks. Special pens, lucky objects that must be nearby while writing, sacrificial totems to appease the Gods of literature, and so on and so forth.

Each writer is unique, although certain habits may overlap, at least in general. A majority of writers have an addiction to caffeine, sugar, or just plain unhealthy foods.

### Clichés

We have all encountered clichés at one time or another. A character or plot point that just screams: been there, done that, lost the t-shirt. Clichés are a dime a dozen, pun intended, and are generally frowned upon in writing. Unless of course you're purposefully using a cliché, in which case, carry on. The trouble is, after a while anything can become cliché. The more popular something becomes the quicker it becomes cliché, as people rush to imitate and eventually ridicule it. Take the Matrix movie, the first one anyway. Back when cinematography and "bullet speed" were a new and exciting combination. Now using such a technique is considered old hat. This makes our job as writers more difficult and fun at the same time.

We have the ability to rethink old ideas, or breath new life into something old. Or come up with something entirely new. The power of the pen is in our hands. We just have to be bold enough to use it. The best method I have found for sidestepping a cliché is to write them in during the first draft of a story. Once I've written the first draft, I have a better concept of the overall look and feel of the novel. Then in the second pass I can tweak the clichés into something new and exciting that fits with my characters and the story.

It doesn't always work, sometimes my characters cling to the clichés and refuse to let go even when I threaten them. If my characters are feeling that stubborn then I either point out the clichés until it's blatant, or I toss my characters into horrible situations as revenge. By making the clichés so obvious, they gain a parody level of humor. And tossing characters into spiked pits of plot-filled doom can help the story along and make me feel better at the same time.

It also saves me some time and sanity during the first draft. Trying to think of something witty and clever during the first draft almost never works for me. I inevitably think of a regular cliché that fits, and leave it at that until I better understand the characters and plot I'm working with. You can't rush clichés, otherwise they will just become more blatant and harder to remove later.

I've learned that the John Smiths and Jane Does of the writing

Each issue features an article or two on the various eccentricities and excitements of the writer's life.

We also give tips and tricks of how to survive the dangers involved with being a writer, from dealing with lack of sleep, how to handle distractions, getting past the First Draft, and more.

world tend to be built from clichés, which can cause all sorts of troubles for writers. Most of my characters start off as clichés and after I toss some zombies, aliens, or threaten them with explosions the clichés tend to wear off or get scared away, revealing a workable character. Just keep tossing stuff at the characters until they either die, or change into something more interesting.

Once your characters start interacting with the world you've created for them, and evolving their personalities in order to survive, you'll find the clichés tend to fade away. Over the course of a couple years I have evolved my characters from lumpy blobs of character goo, to beings that can stand up on their own and even tie their own shoes without help. At least the ones that wear shoes anyway. You have to give them a starting point though, and I've found clichés to be the easiest foundation to lay in a first draft.

The thing is it takes time, dedication, and effort to weed out the clichés. There is no de-clichéer machine available to do the work for you. As a writer you have to do the dirty work yourself. But without that knowledge and experience, we as writers would not be able to create believable characters otherwise. We would be stuck in perpetual ruts of: Boy meets Girl, Boy loses Girl, Boy wins Girl back, meteor crushes Boy and Girl. Well maybe not that last part, but you get the point.

So play with those clichés, see what your mind can make of them. We are the writers of the future. It's up to us. So let's show the world what us writers are made of, and just what our characters are capable of. We are the literary entertainers of society, so let's get writing. Those clichés won't create themselves.

By Charles J. Muir

The Fairfield County Writers Group of Connecticut was originally created in the last age of November, 2008. Founded as a regional chapter of National Novel Writing Month, FCWG grew into a local community of writers who are committed to writing not just in one month of the year, but every month of the year.

Whether a full-time, part-time, or hobby writer, we accept any and all who enjoy crafting words.

Come register for free. and learn more about our group. We offer a forum, chat room, local events, and even writing gear.

Website:

<http://www.FCWriters.com>

Literary Director Email:

[Administration@FCWriters.com](mailto:Administration@FCWriters.com)

Technical Director Email:

[TheWebMaster@FCWriters.com](mailto:TheWebMaster@FCWriters.com)



Fairfield County Writers Group

Fairfield County  
Connecticut



## Brought To You By:

The FCWG is currently managed and maintained by [Charles J. Muir](#) of New Canaan, CT. As the Literary Director for FCWG he oversees the day to day operations of the writing group and act as Regional Municipal Liaison for the Fairfield County chapter of National Novel Writing Month.

All of the back-end and behind the scenes work is done by our incredible Technical Director, [Calvin Williams](#) of Brooklyn, NY. Calvin single-handedly ensures that the website and all its components work as smoothly as possible.