

Eight Years and Counting

By Marilyn Reeves

The first meeting I attended of the Windsor Gardens Writers Group I was scared to death. I hadn't written anything other than letters home since high school, so I just sat there and listened. Then I realized that, while I couldn't write as well as some of the people there, I knew I could at least write as well as a few, and I was inspired!

The topic for the following week was 'Jewels' and I decided to give it a try. So, for my very first piece, dated September 21, 2009, I wrote that the real treasures in my life were not jewels but my memories. Not exactly Pulitzer-worthy, but it was a start. And it was the beginning of a whole new chapter in my life. Week after week I began looking forward to Monday mornings. Listening to all the stories written by the other members, and being assigned a new topic to write on for the following week. I experimented with poetry, I experimented with prose. Fiction and non-fiction – sometimes biographical, sometimes not. But I was writing. And I loved it!

Over the years I have written over 400 pieces inspired by topics suggested by the members of the Writers Group. Often an idea will come to me in a flash and I can hardly wait to get back home to start writing. I have been forced to pry open the doors of my past that had previously been sealed: things I used to do, places I've been, people I used to know. But if my first attempt at writing on a given topic seems too self-indulgent, too pedantic, too trite, I will often delete it and try again. Sometimes I can barely patch enough words together to fulfill the assignment. But there are times it's as if some other Source is whispering in my ear. The words just flow through my fingers and I feel that I've created something worthwhile that I'm eager to share.

I am always amazed at the variety my fellow writers present on a given theme. Some delight me with their humor, others teach me things I didn't know, while still others give me insight into the varied paths they have walked and the challenges they've faced throughout their lives. The more I listen to their stories the more I care about them, individually and collectively, and I am grateful to be included among such an inspiring group of friends.

Come rain or shine, as long as I can find my way over to the Aspen Room on Monday mornings, I plan to keep on showing up at the Writers Group, for as many more years as I've got coming. Because I'll always look forward to listening to those amazing people who inspire me to write.