**On January 1, 2022, the**

 Shenango Valley Pennwriters

 will change their focus and will be known as the—

 Talent can take a writer only so far. It is craft that enhances talent and liberates creativity, which in turn, results in completed, marketable works.

 Over the months of the COVID pandemic, switching from in-person to online meetings forced us to type our word and writing challenges, feedback, and emails, all of which required diligent self-editing. Getting and giving such feedback and having email or on-screen conversations and discussions proved extremely worthwhile because our ability to communicate with the written word improved not only our writing but also forced us to think and express ourselves more clearly.

 As a result, we, the members of the Shenango Valley Pennwriters, have changed our focus. As of January 1, 2022, we will become, in Area 1, the Shenango Valley Pennwriters Craftmasters group.

 Below are the elements we have decided are crucial to us and our writing in order to succeed as writers:

1. Quality will be promoted over quantity. The primary focus is on learning the craft, devices, and techniques of writing quality fiction and nonfiction (be it an essay or a poem or a saga) and telling a story exceptionally well, regardless of the genre.
2. We seek like-minded Pennwriters members to join us, particularly the 1 in 60 writer who is truly serious about writing well and telling a story well, regardless of whether or not they seek traditional publication, to self-publish, or to enter contests, etc. We know from experience that personal enrichment has its own rewards and benefits.
3. The SVP was founded in 2008 and our meetings continue to be held on the third Saturday of each month online. Since we don't want to miss the meeting-in-person aspects of the writerly life, after we make the switch to being an online, craft-focused Pennwriters group, we will hold a few in-person meetings. Those in-person gatherings will be at our home base of the Community Library of the Shenango Valley, Sharon PA. We plan to use Zoom in conjunction with those in-person gatherings, thus connecting with those who cannot travel to the meeting in person.
4. Monthly word and writing challenges (which often coincide with a discussion or the book or movie review sessions) will continue. These are fun and they stoke the imagination and spark creativity but are done on a strictly volunteer basis. Feedback will only be given if requested. Sometimes, these prompts yield a short work for submission to a contest or paying market. Since we emphasize learning and to learn a writer needs to practice what they're learning, it may be the following month for something to be turned in for feedback. Which leads to our next goal–
5. Every email, WIP (work in progress) or an work for feedback that is sent by SVP-C members reflects the writer’s writing ability, so proofreading carefully is a must (no hitting that send button until the post makes sense and the punctuation and spelling have been corrected). Only the very best of our efforts, which have been self-edited to the best of our abilities, warrant posting for feedback. That doesn't mean members can't write drafts of ideas or scenes, but draft works and ideas are often set aside, *forever unfinished*. To excel, we need not only be producing writers but also ones who can consistently complete work. Completed short works improve writing. Long works for feedback (i.e., anything over 750 words or three double-spaced pages) will be scheduled and shared via One Drive which will not take up valuable meeting time.
6. Being part of SVP-C means being proficient with MS Word and its features, particularly tracking comments that are used for feedback and for posting work to One Drive, which is a Microsoft Word "cloud" feature— and there is a free download for it available online. Why Microsoft MS Word? Because that word processing program is the one most publishing houses use, and most writers have Microsoft Word on their computers. SVP-C members may volunteer and offer feedback on completed or Works In Progress (WIP) when a member posts them on One Drive.
7. At our monthly meeting, we will allot time for discussing, reviewing, and studying craft how-to books, plays, TV shows, and movies in regard to the various aspects, specific techniques, or devices of quality storytelling. Since we all have different tastes in what we view, no one is asked to see any particular movie—nor does anyone have to go to a movie theater or watch a TV program or movie. Yet, we want to look at those visual presentations for their storytelling. It's about what screenwriters know that we writers should know about story and storytelling.
8. Besides providing answers, advice, recommendations, enlightenment, and encouragement, we address questions on the writing life and other aspects of being a writer or about the publishing industry.
9. A webpage has been set up for our use and for perspective Pennwriters to view, which will provide this and additional information, contacts, and member bios.

So, Pennwriters, if learning and writing well appeals to you, we invite you to join the Shenango Valley Pennwriters Craftmasters by contacting:

Catherine E. McLean

Shenango Valley Pennwriters Craftmasters Group Leader

catherinemclean00@gmail.com

SHORT BIOS — CURRENTLY ACTIVE MEMBERS –not to be published on the website until 2022 – to include pictures

Catherine E. McLean — author, writing instructor, workshop speaker. Writes lighthearted tales of phantasy realms and stardust worlds.

Founding member of SVP in 2008. [www.writerscheatsheets.com](http://WWW.WRITERSCHEATSHEETS.COM) [www.catherineemclean.com](http://WWW.CATHERINEEMCLEAN.COM)

 E-mail: catherinemclean00@gmail.com

Mike Mann — Became a Pennwriters member in 2019. Writes fantasy. The first contest he entered was the 2020 Pennwriters Short Story Contest—and he won it.

Marc Stewart — A man of words, a poet, a memoir and short story writer, lightly published, is an advocate of learning and writing the best prose he can. A founding member of SVP in 2008, he has won second place in the Pennwriters Annual Poetry Contest.

Peter Pesavento — Became a Pennwriters member in 2020. He is a nonfiction writer who landed a six-figure book deal with Hachette

Stephen Greene –- A screenwriter at heart, short story writer – bio incomplete

Michelle Mueller –- A new Pennwriters member – bio incomplete

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