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## OUR THOUGHTS

# WRITING IS A PROCESS

This month Nancy Patterson introduces us to Susan Santangelo (Page 20), who has written a mystery peopled with baby boomer retirees. Many of us dream about writing a book, but Susan has actually done it. Her work has yet to be published, but the process of how the writing evolved is what is intriguing about her story.

When many of us would have felt overwhelmed, discouraged or misdirected, Susan continued to wrestle with the work. Her determination and her flexibility when things weren't working is admirable. We salute her.

So, should you be trying to hammer

out your own masterpiece this winter, be emboldened by the truth: it's hard work, but worth it.



Erin C. Healy

### Correction

On another matter, due to a designer error, the ending of the third honorable mention poetry winner, "Before the Storm and After" by Carol Amato, was cut off. We reprint it here in its entirety, with our apologies to Ms. Amato and our readers.

*Erin C. Healy*

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## Before the Storm and After

BY CAROL A. AMATO, BREWSTER AND JAMAICA PLAIN

The sheets begin to gather the wind, their bleached rigormortis ghostly white now beaten soft and alive by the sudden freshening blow from the north.

The spanking clean colors follow: turquoise towels; blue pin-striped shirts; tie-dyed Ts; trousers break-dancing to the syncopated rhythm of the pulsing gusts.

Pinched like the others by their paired captors the silk panties nevertheless escape, a black bird flying over the flapping line secured tentatively by the wavering gray posts as old as driftwood.

The underwear somersaults across the diminishing dunes and onto the barrier beach that guard the white-whipped sea.

Someone shouts, "Take in the clothes!"

Later, as the slanted rain pelts the clapboards the two of us turn toward each other reconciled, and slide to sleep in between crisp sheets redolent of beach grass, sea breeze, and rosa rugosa.

In the morning after the storm the discovery on the beach of black silk and the titillating surmise of passion.



## MONEY & MARKETS

# SLASH CAREERS

Piecing jobs together

Some people can respond to the question "What do you do?" with a single descriptor. "I am retired," or "I am a nurse," or, for the fortunate, "I am independently wealthy."

For many others, however, summing up the source of their livelihoods isn't quite so simple. They are part of an emerging population that patches together several professions or vocations into a single career. In her book, "One Person/Multiple Careers: A New Model for Work/Life Success," former lawyer/author/journalist/speaker/writing coach Marci Alboher popularized the term "slash" to refer to those whose can't answer as succinctly as a "teacher" or "accountant" could.

Anne Hartman of Truro is an example of someone who employs a bit of punctuation when explaining her worklife. "I am a career consultant/business owner/real estate salesperson," she says.

"You can use slashes to describe my life, or hyphens, but there's no way that it can be summed up in just one word."

Hartman left a full-time job as a partner in an outplacement firm to move to the Cape and start her own business called Working Differently, which provides non-financial planning for retirees and non-retirees.

"I've worked with a lot of people who have retired from an occupation but who have decided to re-invent their professional lives. This might include volunteer work, entrepreneurship or turning a hobby like painting or writing into a part-time or full-time career," she says.

After running Working Differently from her wooded home located in the Cape Cod National Seashore, Hart-

man felt ready for a change.

"I realized I was really alone and that I needed to be in my community," she says. "I've always been interested in real estate, so I went and got licenced and now I work at Atlantic Bay Sotheby's four and a half days a week. I still write the newsletter for

Working Differently and now I just wrote an e-mail to my former employer offering them one day a week."

Alboher says this sort of fluidity is typical in slashes. "These people are going after multiple careers simultaneously. They've taken the notion of moonlighting and turned it on its head. Whereas moonlighting was something you might be ashamed of, slashing now has cachet," she says.

To be successful though, takes flexibility. Hartman explains that people in the arts have traditionally been willing to take on side jobs to support their dreams. "My niece is an artist," she says. "And she also works at an arts foundation in addition to maintaining a studio." For her and others like her, this decision is not met with much surprise.

But when you are a professional and add something

new, or a retired person taking on a different job, many people can assume that you are doing it strictly for financial gain.

"And some are," Alboher says. "Especially in this frightening economy, people are having to be more open to different kinds of work. When I first wrote the book though (in 2007), I was talking to more people who were slashing to gain fulfillment rather than financial gain."

"I did it more for a sense of accomplishment," says Herb Shahzade of Falmouth when asked why he



Beth Seiser

**THEY ARE PART OF an emerging population that patches together several professions or vocations into a single career.**

PLEASE SEE **SLASH**, PAGE 6

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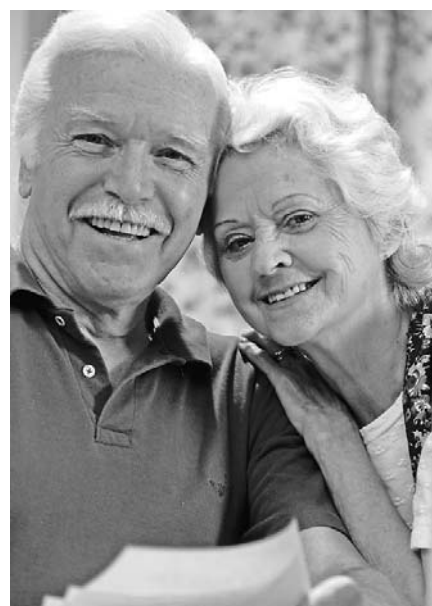
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## Slash

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

launched a new business after a successful career as a manufacturing engineer. Shahzade, an amateur classical guitarist, developed The Guitar Suit, a microfiber sheath intended to be "worn" by the guitar during practice to prevent dings and scratches.

Shahzade says that he had the idea for the product more than 50 years ago, but it wasn't until retirement that he pursued it. His Web site was launched just several weeks ago, and now he is exploring ways to make the site more visible.

"I'd always wanted to try it," he says. "And I decided that the product would fill a need."

Alboher says that many people use their former expertise to inform their new careers. As a manufacturing engineer, Shahzade knew how to shepherd an invention from an idea into reality. Hartman says that her skills as a career counselor, which includes listening carefully and helping others realize their aspirations, have served her well in her new real estate career.

Hartman says that former careers can both inhibit and enable you. "If you see your former career as the end-all and be-all, then it might hold you back. But it can really enable you to succeed if you see it as a stepping-off point."

Alboher suggests a two-tiered strategy for those thinking about becoming slashes. "The first thing I say to anyone trying to cultivate an interest into a vocation, is to talk a lot about it. As soon as we start verbalizing things, they start to come true. When your friends or colleagues know that you are interested in something, they start mentioning things to you, or even start to refer to you as a person in that field."

Alboher says that people should start "dating" their new vocation, slowly getting to know it. "Read about it, go to places where people are doing it, either in the real world or online in the virtual world. Go to conferences, blogs, and seminars and then you'll meet people who do this new thing, and you can learn from them."

The second part of the strategy is to jump in with both feet. "Just start doing it," she says. If your dream is to write, write. If it's to paint, paint. And if you don't know how to do it yet,

## Quickhits

**WebLinks**  
Working Differently  
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find out.

"I suggest creating adult internships," Alboher says. "Convince somebody to let you hang around while they do their work. It happens all the time in restaurant work. Many people are interested in learning more about food and wine. On Cape Cod, I could see people interning to learn more about travel and tourism."

She says to expect a period of time that you have to do something for free until you get paid, but that the lessons learned are invaluable.

"Slashing is a way to have multiple streams of income, along with different ways of finding fulfillment and meaning in our careers," she says.

One of the benefits Anne Hartman has experienced by moving into the real estate world, is the sense that she feels more connected. "I think it's true in retirement, and really, for any age, that our bubbles narrow. As people get older, maybe they have some aches and pains, it becomes easier and easier to just stay home. If you have a slash career, you're apt to be out and about in your community, expanding your circle."

"It's really gratifying," she says.

### About the author

*Beth Seiser is careful not to call herself a native: She moved to Wellfleet at the ripe old age of twelve. A graduate of Nauset High School and Hampshire College in Amherst, Beth spent a year in Beijing and a year in Singapore as a Fulbright scholar, and can now order fluently any Chinese dish on the menu. She writes for numerous local publications and her fiction has been included in "A Sense of Place: An Anthology of Cape Women Writers." She is a single mother of two boys, ages four and two, who still occasionally wake her in the middle of the night to remind her to write.*

## TECHNOSAVVY

# THE WORLD'S BIGGEST TECH SHOW

Every year in January, seemingly every computer, electronics, audio, video or other gaming, Internet or telephone equipment manufacturer meets for four days in Las Vegas at the International Consumer Electronics Show (CES). It is the biggest yearly showcase for tech products and the most important trade show for the entire worldwide electronics industry. In the past, the CES is where the first CD player or plasma TV were unveiled to the public.

No industry-changing devices were unveiled at this year's show, but over 2,700 consumer technology exhibitors in 30 different product categories from more than 140 different countries were present.

According to CEA, the Consumer Electronics Association who organizes the show (CES is in its 42nd year), each attendee holds an average

of about 12 meetings a day totaling roughly 1.7 million meetings throughout the four-day event. Although these numbers sound impressive, the 2009 CES was not as busy as in previous years due to current global economic worries and general lack of consumer spending on home and personal electronics over the past holiday season.

Home electronics giant Philips not attending the show for the first time did not help either. They have been restructuring their core business away from consumer electronics and getting into health and lighting equipment instead, specifically



Roger LeRoy

**MOBILE DEVICES, netbooks, wireless home electronics and thin screens were the big hit at this year's show.**

LED or green lighting, and will be licensing their technology products – and name – to different vendors.

There also were some newcomers to the show with Cisco presenting their new line of home networking devices and Verizon being among the biggest new names to attend.

Mobile devices, netbooks, wireless home electronics and thin screens were the big hit at this year's show. Everybody knows about LCD and LED screens, but meet the new OLED screens (organic light-emitting diode): Sony unveiled the world's first OLED TV, a gorgeous 11-inch

screen, only 3 millimeters thick (that's about 1/8 of an inch) costing a mere \$2500. Netbooks are the latest rage in personal computing: these very light, smaller and cheaper laptops are designed to be portable Internet machines, not truly full-fledged PCs, and most already have Webcam, wifi and other convenient features installed.

By the end of this year, every computer manufacturer should offer netbooks with GPS and touch-screen capabilities as well. This is where the industry is going: wireless connectivity everywhere with every device being able to share data with one another while making it simpler and easier for the user. Following Apple's iPhone and iPod success, touch screens will be more prevalent than ever, especially with smaller devices such as cell phones or smart

PLEASE SEE **SHOW**, PAGE 12

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