

CELEBRATING YOUR ACTIVE LIFE

# PRIMETIME

# CAPE CO

FEBRUARY  
2009 \* FREE

## MIDLIFE WRITING

The process,  
the publishing

---

Deb-u-plants  
New varieties  
for 2009

---

Home: simplify,  
organize

In this issue:  
**Money  
Matters**  
Advertising  
Supplement

# Writing

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 23

couples may have trouble adjusting to changes in their daily living schedule, particularly in the type of marriage in which the husband went to work and the wife stayed home to care for the children. When all of a sudden that husband is always underfoot, it can cause tension. It's a huge adjustment."

Her book has changed a great deal from her original plan. In tandem with her husband, Joe, who is also a writer, Susan had started out writing a mystery about a married couple facing retirement. They agreed that she would draft the first chapter, to give him some idea of the way she thought the book should go. While she was writing, he would work on technical areas of the book. The plan was that when the first chapter was done, Joe was to write the second. After taking turns writing chapters, the couple would write the final segment together.

That approach didn't work, however. Susan wrote the first chapter and gave it to Joe to read. Instead

of hunkering down to produce the second chapter, Joe said, "This is really good. Why don't you write the second chapter, while I give my effort more thought?" And so it went, with Susan writing the chapters and Joe remarking how much he liked them. She says that when she'd gotten the same response after writing the fifth chapter, she realized that Joe wasn't going to write any of the book. She attributes the unexpected outcome to their difference in writing styles. "He's a reporter, which means he deals in facts. I'm a fiction writer, and I make it all up."

At that point, Susan was left with a woefully incomplete manuscript. "My entire concept of a he-said-she-said book was gone," she says. She put

the manuscript away for about six months, then in 2005 she took it out and reread it – and liked it.

At that point, the book contained about 4,000 words, she says. She then wrote more, which brought her to about 10,000 words. "I got stuck after getting up to 10,000 words, and I put the book away again. On New Year's Day in 2006, I woke up and said 'I'm going to finish that book.'" By Easter of that year, she had completed the beginning and end of a new draft. "On that Easter Sunday, I rewrote the original ending, but I hadn't consciously worked out the

new ending; the idea simply jumped into my head," she says.

The draft still lacked the 60,000 words that would make up the mid-

**In tandem with her husband, Joe, who is also a writer, Susan had started out writing a mystery about a married couple facing retirement.**

## Quickhits

### Sisters In Crime

**Origins:** founded in 1986 by a group of women, including noted crime author Sara Paretsky

**Membership:** 3,400 people, including authors, readers, publishers, agents, booksellers, and librarians; 48 chapters worldwide

**Services:** networking opportunities, advice, and support for mystery writers

**Web:** www.sistersincrime.org

dle of the book. She says that at that point, something unusual happened: The book's characters took over and helped her complete the manuscript. She says she was having so much fun writing the book that she didn't want the effort to end. Along the way, "The

PLEASE SEE **WRITING**, PAGE 38

# A RECESSION PROOF GIFT

AT A TIME OF FINANCIAL UNCERTAINTY, A CHARITABLE GIFT ANNUITY BENEFITING CAPE COD HEALTHCARE COULD BE SAID TO BE A "RECESSION PROOF" COMMITMENT.

Transfer cash, securities or real estate to ultimately benefit Cape Cod Healthcare (*Cape Cod Hospital, Falmouth Hospital or the Visiting Nurse Association of Cape Cod*) and receive a lifetime of reliable payments while also strengthening the future of healthcare on Cape Cod.

#### CHARITABLE GIFT ANNUITY BENEFITS INCLUDE:

- ✓ Guaranteed fixed payments for one or two persons.\*
- ✓ Substantial income-tax deduction.
- ✓ Partially tax-free income for a period of time.

\* Rates ranging from 5% (age 60) - 9.5% (age 90) depending on age at the time of gift transfer.

For a personalized example, please call Nancy Leanues at 508-862-7627 or email nleanues@capecodhealth.org.

*A Charitable Gift Annuity is the perfect gift plan to consider during any economic climate.*



## YOUR CAPE HOME



STEVE HEASLIP/CAPE COD TIMES

**Beth Patkoske, owner of Simplify Professional Organizing, shows off a client's newly organized closet. Her goal is to help people be able to maintain the organizational system once they're on their own.**

# ORGANIZING

### Establish a system

BY KIMBERLY WEBB

**About the author**  
Kim Webb lives in Sandwich with her husband and their two teenaged children. She is a graduate of UMass Dartmouth with a BS degree in accounting. After enjoying the past 10 years at home with her children, she has decided to forgo a potentially lucrative career as an accountant in order to pursue her dream of becoming a writer. Kim is a runner who has completed three marathons and enjoys competing in many local road races. She also enjoys kayaking, summer days at the beach, and traveling with her family.

**O**ften making the top ten lists of New Year's resolutions, getting organized can be a very reasonable goal. Once the goal has been set, the problem seems to be deciding where to begin. Beth Patkoske, a professional organizer, spends her time helping clients set up organizational systems in their homes.

"My goal is getting the client to

the point of maintaining the system we have put into place," she says. Beth, a member of the National Association of Professional Organizers, spent time last year giving free seminars that included organizing tips especially for seniors. She honed her organizational and planning skills in her 12 years working in resort operations and marketing for the Walt Disney Company both in

PLEASE SEE **ORGANIZING**, PAGE 26

## Cadillac Saab of Cape Cod



Cape Cod's only  
Cadillac Saab Dealership



600 Yarmouth Road, Hyannis, MA

508.760.2700

CADILLACOFCAPECOD.COM

TLC ElderCare is now

### SAFE HARBOR ELDERCARE

New name, same great service

**Compassionate, Professional  
and Affordable Homecare  
Serving Cape Cod**

Safe Harbor Eldercare provides affordable, non-medical Companion and Personal Care assistance for individuals and couples who prefer to remain at home and live independently. Our caregivers are trained to assist you with your daily needs.

#### Available Services

- Companionship
- Housekeeping
- Kitchen Duties
- Transportation
- Correspondence
- Arrange Appointments
- Personal Care
- Medication Reminders
- Overnight Stay
- 24-Hour Care
- Holiday Service
- No Contracts
- Flexible Hours
- Many more



www.safeharboireldercare.com

Safe Harbor Eldercare provides personalized care and assistance tailored to meet your specific needs. We facilitate independent living for you so that you can maintain your lifestyle without compromising your home, your friends, or your activities.

Call today for free,  
no obligation in-home assessment.

508-457-1193  
1-866-566-2587

Available 7 days a week  
Fully insured and bonded  
Rich Elliott-Grunes, Owner

## Organizing

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 25

Orlando, Florida and Paris, France. She also uses these skills in her travels, which included an eight-month backpacking trip around the world.

All that experience has taught Beth that it is hard to reach the goal of "getting organized" because it is too vague and overwhelming. Beth recommends starting with a small space that you see every day. For example, when putting away the clean dishes from the dishwasher, do plastic cups fall out onto your head as you try to stack them? Do you have to cram the glasses and mugs into several cabinets because they won't all fit into one? If either of these scenarios sounds familiar, then this would be a good place to start organizing.

Another good place to start is with the pile of mail that keeps growing every day. Once you have a system for sorting each piece as it comes in and putting it in the proper place, then you will eliminate that continuously growing pile.

When Beth works with a client she teaches them the SPACE method of organizing. The first step, the S, is to sort the items. For example, when organizing a kid's playroom, put all the dolls in one pile, all the trucks in another pile, and all the games in another pile. That makes it easy to see how many of each category there is.

This leads to the second step, the P, to purge. With all the items sorted it is easy to see if your daughter has too many Barbies. At this point you need to decide if she is still using the Barbies often and what is a reasonable number for her to have. Get rid of any that are broken or not used. This same idea applies to all the items in your house, such as books, candles, towels, movies, and tools.

The National Association of Professional Organizers says that getting rid of clutter eliminates 40 percent of housework in the average home. So get rid of any items that aren't in great condition, aren't being used, or that you have too many of.

The next step – the letter A in the SPACE acronym – is to assign a home. Find the place in the room where you plan to store the items and see how much space there is. If there is not enough room for what you have, then you either need to find more storage space or purge some items. If you keep similar items stored together in a specific place, then you will always know where to find them and you can quickly evaluate what you have.

After you have assigned a home, the next step, the C, is to containerize. Beth finds that most people start with this step when they want to get organized. They run out to the store to buy baskets and bins and come home all geared up to get to work. The problem with that is you don't know what size

storage bins are needed or where they will go. Using the SPACE method, the items have already been sorted, so you know the size and space requirements.

The last step, equalize, is the key to maintaining the organizational system that has been put into place. When one of the storage bins becomes full, items must be eliminated so the storage space still works.

The SPACE method can really help you to do some organizing on your own, but Beth also suggests using the method with a friend. Make an agreement with a friend to spend a set amount of time (three hours max) organizing an area in your

CONTINUED ON PAGE 27

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 27

home using the SPACE method. Then schedule time the next week to work on her space. Scheduling organizing time with a friend will make you more committed to getting the work done. Working with a friend can be really beneficial when it comes to the purge step, because the friend can help you to evaluate what items should be eliminated.

The purge step seems to be the real problem area for many people. Beth realizes that this is a very personal process that makes people feel vulnerable, so she handles it in a way that is reasonable, yet firm. When her clients have a hard time purging something because they are afraid that they might need it someday, she suggests boxing and storing. Suppose a client loves beautiful wine glasses, but she has more than her cabinets can hold. She can't bear to get rid of any because she knows that someday she might need them. Beth would have her client put the glasses into a box and write on it "extra wine glasses; if not used by January 2010 – donate." This relieves the client's anxiety and the clear instructions eliminate the need to go through the box again. When a year has gone by, she might realize that she didn't need them after all and will donate them.

Another problem a lot of people have is getting rid of items that have sentimental value. Beth realizes that there are emotional issues involved and her calm, rational manner makes purging seem sensible. For special items, Beth recommends using a memory box. Each person in the house should have their own box and when it gets full they must go through the items and decide which ones are most important to keep.

An area that most people would like to get organized is their clothing closet. According to the National Association of Professional Organizers most people wear 20 percent of their wardrobe 80 percent of the time. Due to changing styles and

### Quickhits

#### Organizing help

Simplify Professional Organizing  
Beth Patkoske, owner  
508-394-5280  
www.simplifycapecod.com

#### The SPACE method of organizing

S: SORT your items.  
P: PURGE what you don't want or don't use.  
A: ASSIGN a home for your things.  
C: CONTAINERIZE your items in bins and baskets that accommodate what you're keeping and fit in the assigned space.  
E: EQUALIZE means tossing something when you add something so that the assigned space continues to work.

sizes, people tend to add to their wardrobes but rarely remove items at the same rate. The general rule of thumb is: If you haven't worn it in

the last year, then get rid of it. Beth recommends sorting clothes by item and color in order to see where some purging may be necessary.

Another place where many people have a lot of clutter is the garage. The U.S. Department of Energy reports that 25 percent of people with two-car garages don't park any cars in

there and 32 percent park only one. Once you have mastered the SPACE method, you can use it to organize small sections of big problem areas, such as garages and basements.

Beth says that the most important thing to remember is that "you didn't get to this point in one weekend so don't expect to fix it that quickly."

So, make 2009 the year that you set up some organizing systems in your home, and work on maintaining them. Who knows, maybe this will be the year that the car finally gets parked in the garage.

**Beth recommends starting with a small space that you see every day.**

“  
My goal is getting the client to the point of maintaining the system we have put into place.”

BETH PATKOSKE, OWNER  
SIMPLIFY PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZING

### Enjoy Your Home Again... Mayflower Mobility Makes It Possible

"A Bruno Stairlift will carry you smoothly and safely up and down the stairs of your home."

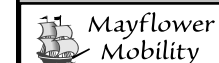
You can retain your independence."

We offer a full line of Straight and Curved - Rail Indoor and Outdoor Stairlifts

Call Mayflower Mobility for a Free in-Home Estimate  
**508-503-1208** or  
Toll Free: **888-449-2004**

Visit our New Showroom,  
Open Daily: Monday - Friday  
127-1 Camelot Drive  
Plymouth, MA 02360

Ask about our Senior Discounts



www.mayflowermobility.com



### If the power goes out will you be ready?

Depend on Guardian Standby Generators for automatic back-up 24 hours a day.

GUARDIAN Elite SERVICE DEALER Cape Cod's Only Guardian Elite Sales & Service Dealer



CCIP  
Cape Cod Independent  
Power  
toll free - 888-887-7448  
ccipgenerators.com



Warm Hearts  
Welcome you  
to Whitehall  
Estate Senior  
Living

Please join us for a

Valentine's Day Celebration with Wendell Crockett & his Magical Keyboard featuring Big Band Sounds of the 30's & 40's.  
Saturday February 14th at 1:30 p.m.

"Our Family is Committed to Yours."

WHITEHALL  
Estate

An Emeritus Senior Living Community  
790 Falmouth Road, Hyannis, MA 02601

508-790-7666

email: whitehallestate-crd@emeritus.com www.emeritus.com

Please contact  
Kristine for lunch  
& a tour 7 days  
a week.

