

St. Charles woman can help you preserve your life story

"Gone but not forgotten" could be the motto of Rosanne Gulisano's business, through which she offers workshops on writing memoirs. If you've been thinking about getting your personal history down on paper, check out her workshop at 1 p.m. Sunday at the St. Charles Township building, 1725 Dean St.

Q. Why should we write our memoirs?

A. This is important because without doing this, a person is literally forgotten within two generations. No one knows you, or what your daily life was like.

It's also a guide for future generations: what to do and not do.

Personally, I am most interested in the human interest stories.

Q. What will take place at this upcoming workshop?

A. I will talk about the who,



Rachel Baruch Yackley

A conversation with ...

you've written.

The workshop is scheduled for two hours.

Q. How often do you lead these programs?

A. As often as someone wants to hire me. This month I have 10 workshops. Some seasons are busier than usual; spring is best.

Q. On average, who comes?

A. Any age is welcome. I would

what, where, when and why of memoir writing, and how to get started and stay motivated. Organizational materials will be handed out. There will be a short practice writing session and time for sharing what

Rosanne Gulisano

Born: Chicago

Resides: St. Charles

Family: Husband, Matt; daughter Carla Wittstock and her family live in Wayne.

Occupation: Owns her own business, Lifestories: Creating a Memoir.

Little-known fact: "I used to be a member of a Sweet Adeline chorus. Now I sing in the St. Patrick's Church choir."

definitely say my audience is on the high side of 50, more than on the low side of 30. But I also get students and mothers.

I do workshops for clubs, service groups, junior colleges, and park districts.

Q. Is there much difference between writing your own memoirs and writing someone else's, like a parent's?

A. The process is similar. (When working on someone else's) you can interview them, make notes, make recordings. If you're into technology, you could put it on a DVD. My thoughts on that are that pen and paper are timeless. And the interviewer has to be a good listener, a good note-taker, and ask good questions.

Q. How long have you been writing?

A. I've been writing since 1999, and speaking since 2001. I started writing with a women's group in Winnetka. When we moved here, I started a group, here.

Someone suggested I start doing workshops, and so I started my own business. I really

believe this is important.

Q. Can you offer some tips for readers who want to get started writing a memoir?

A. I usually recommend breaking the project down into smaller bits. Write a timeline, broken down by decade. Set a goal and a strategy, and stick to it. Make a list of your favorite things, like movies, teachers, games. Pull out old photos and write descriptions of the scenes and what is happening.

This is not scrapbooking, although I love to do that, too. The difference is you're writing a story about photos instead of a few lines. You're feeling your stories, so the stories don't get lost over time.

To learn more, grab a notebook and pen and register for her workshop. Sponsored by the St. Charles Heritage Center, the

fee for this workshop is \$10 for center members and \$15 for nonmembers.

Registration is required. Call the Heritage Center at (630) 584-6967, or stop by its museum at 215 E. Main St. in St. Charles. Hours are 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday, and noon to 4 p.m. on Sunday.

Interested in learning more? Check out Gulisano's new class offered at Waubesa Community College (www.wcc.cc.il.us) titled "Lifestories: Creating a Memoir for Future Generations," a noncredit course offered through the Community Education department.

Local history buffs, if you'd like to contribute to a local community memoir, call the St. Charles Heritage Center to learn about the new Memory Book project.