



BIG COUNTRY WRITERS

NEWSLETTER OF THE ABILENE WRITERS GUILD—MARCH 2018

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AWARDS TIME!

Daffodils, grape hyacinth and narcissus... just a few of the flowers blooming in my yard. Mercy sakes! How can it be March already? I have even heard some of you folks have fruit trees blooming. But how about the mesquites? Around here, we have learned to watch them for real signs of spring.

Another sign of spring is AWG's Annual Contest awards! Join us on March 22, at 7 pm for an evening of fun, laughter, refreshments and awards! AWG member Tate Ellison will present our program. Entries have all been received from the judges and you don't want to miss the fun of learning who won in each category. I do so enjoy getting to share that news with everyone each year! And in case you are interested, there will be door prizes awarded throughout the evening. Come and bring a friend as we encourage each other in our writing endeavors.

In reviewing my calendar, I notice many other things happening in March. Daylight savings time arrived March 11. Have you adjusted to it? St. Patrick's Day was March 17. Hope you wore green and didn't get pinched! First day of spring: March 20. Palm Sunday is March 25. Good Friday is March 30, and the first day of Passover is March 31! (Which means Easter is on April 1 this year.) I'm sure your calendars are full of other fun, interesting things. Perhaps some of those things will jump start your thinking about writing a rhymed or unrhymed poem for our April members-only contest in honor of National Poetry Month. Go ahead... give it a try, even if you don't consider yourself a poet.

Think Ahead

Are you willing to be an active member of AWG? New officers are needed by April.

Looking ahead, at our April meeting I will enjoy announcing the winners of our first Children's Writing Contest! There were 101 entries: 55 poetry; 56 short story. We will once again have a fun program, refreshments, awards, and door prizes. Mark your calendars now for Thursday, April 26!

Something to ponder: I ran across this tidbit the other day. A person wrote to an editor and said: "I enjoy writting. I need to writte for you and make money. Tell me how." What do YOU suppose the editor said? If I were the editor, my likely response (as I tossed it into file 13) would have been: "First of all, learn to spell the words writing and write."

We all make spelling mistakes now and then, but if you are contacting an editor, you should make absolutely certain you spell all your words correctly, and that you already have an idea about the why, when, where and who of writing for that publication. Please don't expect them to give you lessons. That's one of the reasons AWG was established: to encourage fellow writers. But, nowhere in the Bylaws does it say we will do the work for you. Just sayin'.

Check the mesquites and your flower beds and write!

Sharon Ellison

AWG President

Something Different This Year

Please plan to attend our regular meeting
March 22 at 7 pm
where we will announce the
winners of our Annual Contest
and have a special guest speaker!

BRAGS AND SAGS

Lou Mougin has two stories in the latest FEMFORCE, another horror story in THE CREEPS “their art and concept boggle the brain,” and the 2nd issue of FOXFORCE underway. However, he is still battling finances while working on Frankenstein 2 and the comics history book.

David Dodge’s new book *Dutch Weaver*, is published and on Amazon.

Coy Roper finished the movie script he has been working on: *The Martyrs*. He has sent it to the copyright office to get the copyright registered.

Mary Berry has two articles in the latest issue of *Doll Castle News* magazine. “One is about a doll ministry here in Abilene.”

A Letter to AWG

Thank you for thinking of me after my mother died February 4. The Donation from the club to the Alzheimer's Association is greatly appreciated.

Jo Cox

Our Life Members:

Stewart Caffey, Nancy Masters, Laura Thaxton, Dr. Clyde Morgan, Alice Greenwood, Keith Thomason

Members gain the status by gift from the membership as a whole, by paying a one time fee of \$600, by receiving the honor as a gift from another, or by reaching the age of 90 while a member of AWG.

Our Officers:

- President: Sharon Ellison (2018)
- Executive VP: David Dodge (2019)
- Program VP: Barbara Rollins (2018)
- Secretary: Carolyn Dycus (2018)
- Treasurer: Gail McMillan (2019)
- Board member: Suanna Davis (2019)
- Board member: Linda Gordon (2019)
- Board member: Kay Talley (2018)
- Board member: Coy Roper (2018)
- Alt. Board member: Mary Ann Smith (2018)
- Newsletter editor: Jo Cox
- Monthly Contest Coordinator: Linda Gordon

WHAT AWG READS

Lou Mougin: *Hit Men* by Fredric Dannen, a very readable account of the music industry promo business, legal and otherwise.

Gail McMillan: *Dutch Weaver* by David Dodge. The latest in the Settling the West Series.

David Dodge random reading from a couple of sacks of paperbacks sitting around.

Carla Kerr: *The Stowaway* by Laurie Gwen Shapiro about Billy Gawronski, a young man who stowed away on Admiral Byrd's ship on an expedition to the South Pole. It is well written and an exciting adventure, which, by the way, is a true story.

Carolyn Dycus: *Dutch Weaver* by David Dodge. The latest in the Settling the West Series. “I don’t want to put it down. The plot thickens from the beginning. A bonus: Large Print.”

Barbara Loyd: *Flight to Safety*, by Barbara Loyd, her memoir. It was chosen for the Empowered Women anthology to be published by *Chicken Soup for the Soul* soon.

Ann Swann: *Bodies and Blueberries (Jams, Jellies, and Murder Book One)* by Donna Walo Clancy. “It's a nice cozy mystery.” Also, *Barrie Hill Reunion* by Lisette Brodey “It's a very snarky college-literary-group reunion story.”

Mary Berry: *All the Light We Cannot See* by Anthony Doerr. It is a Pulitzer Prize winner.

February Members Contest

- 1st - **Bailey LeRoux**, prose
“Valentine's Day - A Memoir”
- 2nd - **Sheryl Nelms**, poetry
“Valentine's Day Party”
- HM - **Sheryl Nelms**, poetry
“English Tea Roses”

Members Only Monthly Contest - 2018

Exclusive: For current members of AWG only. All entries eligible for Annual Contest. **No fees!**

Judging: Judges are professionals who may or may not choose to critique entries. Choice of winners is final. If there are fewer than four entries per category in double category months, categories will be combined. Six entries per month are required for judging.

Prizes: \$20 first prize and \$15 second prize. You are encouraged to attend the meetings to pick up your check. Otherwise they will be mailed to the physical address provided.

Pay careful attention to all guidelines

Deadline: Early submissions received at any time, but by the 12th of the contest month.

Enter by Email Only: Send document in Word format only. Subject Line should state: **AWG Contest and "Month"** (e.g. January). Entries will be returned to the email on coversheet. Warning: some devices may not transmit document correctly, thus disqualifying entry. AWG will respond within five days. It is entrant's responsibility to verify and resend.

Send to: avg.entry@yahoo.com

Mix & Match: Submit up to 3 entries per month. Enter poetry, prose, or both. Blended themes are acceptable. Must be original work unpublished at deadline (includes Internet posts).

Cover Sheet Format: Each entry must include a **separate** cover sheet. Center entry title on page. **Top left:** author's name, physical address (to mail prize check), telephone number, and email. **Top right:** Chosen month of entry, word count for Prose and Flash or line count for poetry (*do not include title in line or word counts*).

Entry Format: *Do not include author name on any page.* Minimum one-inch margins; prose double spaced; poetry single or double spaced. **First page:** center title at top, double space then start text. **Other pages:** entry title at top right with page number.

MONTH	THEME	CATEGORY
JANUARY	Ice, Fresh Starts, Power Outages	Poetry – 50 lines or less Fiction – 1,000 words or less
FEBRUARY	Hearts, First Love, Cards	Poetry – 50 lines or less Non-Fiction – 1,000 words or less
MARCH	Mandatory prompt words: Left, Bark, Fly, Seal, Cover	Flash entry: Fiction or Poetry 100 max using 5 prompt words
APRIL	National Poetry Month NO THEME	Rhymed or Unrhymed Poetry 50 lines or less
MAY	National Short Story Month NO THEME	Fiction – 1,000 words or less
JUNE	AWG Non-Fiction Month NO THEME	Non-Fiction – 1,000 words or less
JULY	Summer Nights, Reunions, Flowers	Poetry – 50 lines or less Fiction – 1,000 words or less
AUGUST	Mandatory prompt words: Light, Refrain, Stoop, Lash, Gold	Flash entry: Fiction or Poetry 100 max using 5 prompt words

Flash Fiction/Poetry use 5 mandatory prompt words, or close form and meaning, like: Oil = oiled, oils, oiling, oiler, oily **not spoil or foil**; boat = lifeboat; speak = unspeakable, **not spoken**; place = placement; defect = defection or defective.

Fourth Thursday Together
March 22 – 7:00 p.m.

Annual Contest Awards

ABILENE WRITERS GUILD

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