



# BIG COUNTRY WRITERS

NEWSLETTER OF THE ABILENE WRITERS GUILD—MAY 2018

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## May I?

May I tell you how thrilled I was (and still am) about our April meeting? Not only did Penny Klosterman give us a great program, but having all those children there was like a breath of fresh air! I hope you thought so, too.

It was SUCH fun to pass out all the awards for first, second, third, and honorable mention places in the poetry and short story sections of our first children's writing contest. If you were not with us, we passed out awards to children ages 9-10 for poetry and short stories, then to children ages 11-12 for the same categories. All in all, there were 33 awards given. A total of 101 children entered our contest this year, so the judges had a big job to do.

The evening reminded me a little of those old Art Linkletter TV shows where he would always say, "Kids say the darndest things!" That happened when one little girl asked Penny a question during the Q&A part of Penny's program. You remember her question, right? She politely raised her hand and asked, "Are you gonna be much longer?" I loved the laughter her question elicited, and Penny handled the question with the grace of a seasoned school teacher, which, of course, she is... or at least she was.

May I tell you how grateful I am for your AWG Board who all pitched in and provided refreshments not only for our March meeting but also for our April meeting? Thank you all very much! I am not certain who was actually

more excited about our last meeting – the children who were going to receive awards or the Guild members. Perhaps it was a tie! But it was wonderful to have so many parents and even a few grandparents there, along with some of their teachers, to cheer on the children's accomplishments.

May I remind you that your annual dues are due this month? \$25 for a year. Best deal in town, and as a member, you have a chance to enter our monthly members-only contests. You have three more months in which to enter: June, July, and August. Do as one of the young girls in the children's contest did: she submitted 11 poems! You are not limited to only one entry in the members-only contest, so why not send in two or three?

May I remind you that we will vote on new officers at our May meeting? I may not be there because I will have had surgery on May 16, but I am certain our current Vice President can handle things very well if I am absent. Plus we will have a very interesting guest speaker, so plan on being with us.

I feel as if I have been playing 'mother may I' in this article. Have you noticed? Well, if I may, I would like to thank you for your support of and attendance at AWG, and I'll be seeing you soon.

**Sharon Ellison**

AWG President

## Dues are Due

\$25.00 single membership  
\$35.00 family membership

Mail checks to:  
Abilene Writers Guild  
P.O. Box 2562  
Abilene, TX 79604

## Think Ahead

New officers will be voted in at the May meeting. You can still nominate someone not on the list.

## BRAGS AND SAGS

**Sharon Ellison** received a copy of *Superplan: A Journey into God's Story* by Chris Clayman, which she helped edit. She is also using *The Grass is Green Enough*, which is a journal with writing prompts, to help write her feelings and fears, during her latest "journey" with breast cancer. Prayers appreciated.

**Lou Mougín** has been working on *Frankenstein 2*. He has a story out in the latest CREEPS with more scripts turned in. But, he still has not finished *Frankenstein* or the editing for his comics history book.

**Phyllis Allen** brags on her grandkids, "What else?" One grandson is in NFL developmental camp and another is graduating and on the Dean's List.

**David Dodge** is writing the autobiography of an immigrant man from Burundi, Africa. "It wouldn't be as challenging if I could speak Kirundi, or he could speak better English." He is also 18,000 words into another book and just received his 8<sup>th</sup> heart stint.

**Mary Berry's** article was the feature for the current issue of *Doll Castle News* magazine. She also completed and submitted an article that the editor had requested some time ago. However, she has too many non-literary projects (and a demanding yard) that have cut into her writing time.

**Jo Cox** has built a deck for a friend. She is very glad she remembered this newsletter, but has done very little else. "One item off the Bucket List!"

## MAY PROGRAM

Daina Jurika-Owen is a former refugee resettlement professional and is an academically trained folklorist. A native of Riga, Latvia, Jurika-Owen lives in Abilene. She is the author of a new book, *Ten Cultures, Twenty Lives*.

Come hear her discuss this book and the stories in it. Visit her website, [www.amayabooks.com](http://www.amayabooks.com) or her blog at [spiritofabilene.com/tag/daina-jurika-owen/](http://spiritofabilene.com/tag/daina-jurika-owen/)

## WHAT AWG READS

**Lou Mougín:** Ellery Queen, Sherlock Holmes, and *The Best and the Brightest* by David Halberstam.

**Phyllis Allen:** *The Hand I Fan With* by Tina McElroy Ansa.

**Suanna Davis:** the zombie series *Black Tide Rising* by John Ringo. "Really good. Four books and an anthology of short stories."

**Mary Berry:** *I've Escaped This Month* by Lee Child and James Patterson.

**Carolyn Dycus:** *Wisdom Jesus: Transforming Heart and Mind* by Cynthia Bourgeault. "It is about Centering Prayer, but my favorite centering reading is *When the Soul Listens* by Jan Johnson."

## April Members Contest

### Unrhymed Poetry:

- 1st - **Barbara Loyd**  
"On the Lam-A Sestina Poem"
- 2nd - **Rickey Pitman**  
"Chanson"
- HM - **Loretta Walker**  
"After a Heart Attack and Two Strokes"
- HM - **Barbara Loyd**  
"Fried Chicken-Refried"
- HM - **Sheryl Nelms**  
"Picking Tomatoes"

### Rhymed Poetry:

- 1st - **Kay Talley**  
"The Words that Wrote the Song"
- 2nd (tie) - **Casey Wilson**  
"Texas Sunset"
- 2nd (tie) - **Yvonne Nunn**  
"Evocative Terrestrials"
- HM - **Mary Berry**  
"Wildflowers"
- HM - **Suanna Davis**  
"Tall -Tale Reality"
- HM - **Coy Roper**  
"Recess at the Animal School"

# AWG's 2018 Children's Writing Contest Winners

Congratulations to the children, their teachers, and families for making this a great project!

## Poetry, ages 9-10:

- 1st - Claire K. "My Pet Pig!"
- 2nd - Mason M. "Mouse's Death"
- 3rd - Peyton C. "Sweet Talk"
- HM - Miles H. "My Dog Jack"
- HM - Mason M. "Mac & Cheese"
- HM - Mason M. "Ice Cream"
- HM - Jeremiah S. "Summer"
- HM - Cannyn C. "Where I Want to Go"
- HM - Caroline B. "Route 66"

## Poetry, ages 11-12:

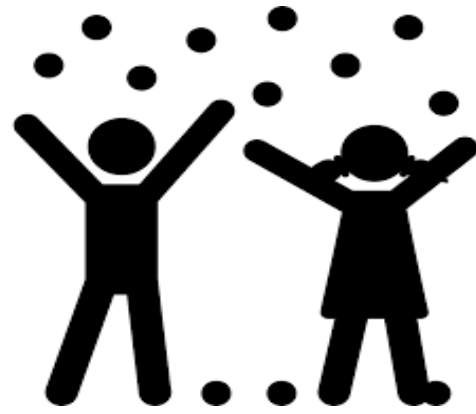
- 1st - Brooks B. "Life of a Baseball"
- 2nd - Jaquaylon H. "The Dance"
- 3rd - Ryder M. "The Soccer Star"
- HM - Travis J. "Kyrie Irving"
- HM - John M. W. "A Baseball Game"
- HM - Bryce V. "I Love America"
- HM - Vincent D. "At the Beach"
- HM - Lahna H. "The Soccer Game"

## Short Stories, ages 9-10:

- 1st - Ben G. "Baseball Dreams"
- 2nd - Willie M. "The Robot"
- 3rd (tie) - Lilyana M. "My First Weeks with my Puppy"
- 3rd (tie) - Riley L. "Stormy Nights"
- HM - Luke R. "Bobby Jones"
- HM - Kayser S. "Dish Dude, the Origin"
- HM - Dustin H. "What I Want to Be"
- HM - Madison B. "Gizmo"

## Short Stories, ages 11-12:

- 1st - Hunter A. "Basketball Dreams"
- 2nd - Julia C. "Out on the Slope"
- 3rd - Eden J. "Christmas On The Move"
- HM - Cynthia D. "Christmas with Kate"
- HM - Ayden D. "Abilene Braves"
- HM - Connel C. "The Magic Man"
- HM - Brooklyn K. "Fall"
- HM - Cason G. "The Craziest Freestyle Skiing Contest Ever"



## 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

## AWG Volunteers needed

For the Write and Illustrate Your Own Storybook session of the Children's Art and Literary Festival (CALF)

Assist children, 7-12 years old, in writing and illustrating their own children's book.

**Where:** Grace Museum, downtown Abilene

**When:** Fri June 8 and Sat 9, 4-5 PM

**Email** Carolyn Dycus [dycus62@msn.com](mailto:dycus62@msn.com) to sign up to work the festival.

**Find out more:** [www.abilenecac.org/calf](http://www.abilenecac.org/calf)

## 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](mailto: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  
May 24 – 7:00 p.m.

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Daina Jurika-Owen

**ABILENE WRITERS GUILD**

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Abilene TX 79604