



BIG COUNTRY WRITERS

NEWSLETTER OF THE ABILENE WRITERS GUILD—NOVEMBER 2018

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November Notes

So, here we are in November! Hope your month began with as much fun as mine did. You see, I have this great group of friends who decided to surprise me with a birthday greeting. I came home Friday evening about 9:30 and found a **GIANT** greeting covering one side of my front lawn! It was a very colorful birthday wish and quite a surprise. I LOVE that type of surprise, don't you?

All day on Saturday, I would see cars drive by slowly in order to read the sign. A couple even stopped and backed up in order to view it. The mail lady (not mailman) walked up to my front door with a big smile on her face and personally wished me happy birthday as she delivered my mail. The greeting: "Happy 70th birthday, Sharon." There were balloons, a cake, and what looks like fireworks---all on cards and all very glittery---staked in my front yard.

Yes, I am 70, and I don't care who knows it. While I am not quite sure what 70 "should" or "ordinarily" feels or looks like, I'm just going to embrace this new decade with as much gusto as possible.

Years ago, when my mother turned 70, we gave her a surprise party. Everyone was already present when she walked into the room. She stood there stunned as she surveyed the many faces of her old, long-time friends and family as well as newer friends. The entire place erupted in laughter when she asked, "Am I dead? Is this my funeral?" It was pretty priceless.

After being surprised earlier this year with a diagnosis of breast cancer and having two surgeries, I am especially thankful it was caught early and could be taken care of so easily, relatively speaking. I joined a group of women who are tough, encouraging, and survivors, and I am grateful; although, that was one surprise I could have done without.

In other news, our Annual Contest is open, so I hope you are writing and ready to submit entries. This contest ends November 30, so get busy! Please remember our Children's Protective Services Christmas project. Gifts encouraging writing, such as pens, pencils, journals, and dictionaries, will be given to children for Christmas. Bring your gifts, unwrapped please, to our November meeting. If you aren't in the mood to go shopping, please make out a check in any amount to Abilene Writers Guild and give it to Gail at our meeting. She will do the shopping for you, if needed, and will deliver our gifts to CPS in December.

If you know children ages 9 through 12, tell them about our Second Annual Children's Writing Contest! Rules are in this Newsletter and will be posted on our Website. The Monthly Members-Only contest resumes in January, so there will be rules and topics listed for that contest, also.

So much to do! So little time! For now, Happy Thanksgiving and count your blessings!

Sharon Ellison

AWG President

Gifts for CPS Kids

AWG collects money and donations for CPS, Sept-Nov. Recommended items are journals/diaries, pen-pencils, young adult fiction and non-fiction, and games and puzzles. Let's challenge young minds to start on a lifelong journey of writing.

Donations and/or money can be given or mailed to Gail McMillan, 419 Meadow Lane, Abilene, TX 79602. For more information call 325 529-3885.

BRAGS AND SAGS

Betty Thomason's article "Bonnie Parker, A Life Gone Wrong" was published in *The Edwards Plateau Historian*. "Finally!" Her presentation to publish was in 2015.

Mary Berry had a six page article about German dolly face dolls with photos published in the latest issue of *Doll Castle News* magazine.

Carla Kerr's kid brother passed in Texas and she has been helping to tie up loose ends. "He just couldn't quit cigarettes so they quit him. I'm the eldest of four and the only one left."

David Dodge has two books going at the same time. "Where am I going? It's confusing but fun."

Tony Bonar has outlined a new book based on branded operational excellence and sustainability training program. Working title: *The Proficiency Curve*.

Carolyn Dycus enjoyed a visit from a cousin, a writer who lives in London, and who may give her some incentive to write by sharing critiques.

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	(2020)
Executive VP:	David Dodge	(2019)
Program VP:	Kay Talley	(2020)
Secretary:	Carolyn Dycus	(2020)
Treasurer:	Gail McMillan	(2019)
Board member:	Suanna Davis	(2019)
Board member:	Linda Gordon	(2019)
Board member:	Coy Roper	(2020)
Board member:	Mary Ann Smith	(2020)
Alt. Board member:	Mary Berry	(2020)

Newsletter editor: Jo Cox

Monthly Contest Coordinator: Linda Gordon

NOVEMBER PROGRAM

OPEN MIC-NIGHT WITH FOOD

Celebrate Thanksgiving AWG style!

Bring your favorite finger food for a little dinner with friends.

Then the entertainments starts! Delight and encourage fellow members by reading from our works. Do not be frightened off. This is really lots of fun.

We ask that you keep your selection brief to give everyone who wants to participate an opportunity to do so. Limit your reading to **5 minutes**. More time and multiple readings are allowed, depending on the number of participants.

WHAT AWG READS

Mary Berry: *A Man Called Ove* by Fredrick Backman.

Carla Kerr: *Indianapolis* by Lynn Vincent and Sara Vladic. "It is fascinating."

Barbara Loyd: *The Twelve Little Cakes* by Dominika Dery. "A feisty child, Dominika is a truth teller and often in trouble for being honest. Full of wisdom, wit, and courage, I found this book told from a child's perspective hilarious and touching."

Iris Williams: *The Handmaid's Tale* by Margaret Atwood. Bible App. "167 day streak this time and 40 perfect weeks (imperfections but the app is forgiving.)"

Darla Mcleod: *The Miniaturist* by Jessie Burton. *The Woman in White* by Wilkie Collins. *The Glass Ocean* by Beatrix Williams.

Carolyn Dycus: *Ford County* an audio book by John Grissom. It takes one into dark places of human behavior. Not uplifting but probably true stories disguised as fiction.

Gail McMillan: *Hold Dear, As Always: Jette, a German Immigrant Life in Letters* edited by Schroeder and Schulz-Geisburg. "This book is dedicated to my great, great grandmother, Henriette "Jette" Geisberg Bruns."

Tony Bonar: *The Message of the Stars* by Max Heindel.

ABILENE WRITERS GUILD'S ANNUAL CONTEST 2018-2019

General Information: Open to any person age 15 or older. All entries must be your original work, unpublished as of October 1, 2018. Publication on the Internet is publication. The work must not have earned a cash award in any previous AWG Annual Contest. However, Honorable Mentions from past contests may be re-entered. Also, AWG monthly members-only-contest entries are eligible. Use **ONLY** font size 12 in Times New Roman or Arial. Type only on one side of each page.

Entries must be **postmarked** between Oct. 1 and Nov. 30, 2018. Entries posted earlier or later than those dates will **NOT** be accepted and will not be judged, nor will fees be refunded. If fewer than 5 entries are received in a category, that category may not be judged; or, if judged, only first place may be awarded.

Please see the **list of categories, descriptions, maximum lengths and entry fees**. The title of your work does not count toward your final word count.

Cover Sheet for all categories: Each entry must have a separate cover sheet.

Upper left corner: your name, complete address, telephone # and email address.

Upper right corner: category and number of words or lines. Space down to center of Cover Sheet and center the title.

YOUR NAME DOES NOT GO ON ANY OTHER PAGE.

CATEGORIES 3-8: Center the title at the top of the first page only. Double-space and begin manuscript. Double-space all pages. **All other pages:** type title of the manuscript and page number in upper right corner. No author's name on these pages!

POETRY: Center the title at the top of the first page. Double-space down and begin. May be single or double-spaced. **Category 1 and 2:** list total number of lines in upper right corner.

Category 9 only: include the number of words.

Other information: Attach payment and cover sheet to each entry with a paper clip. **Do NOT staple anything!** If you want your entry/entries returned with judges' comments, please provide us a large enough SASE with **adequate postage**. Verify at local post office. Entries without large enough return SASEs will be destroyed after April 30, 2019.

Reminder: Entries which do not meet guidelines will be disqualified and entry fees will not be refunded. **Decisions of the judges are final.** Prizes will be presented at a time and place to be decided soon, but no later than March 30, 2019. Please check our website and/or Newsletter for details.

Mail entries to the address on the next page or bring them to AWG's October or November meeting if you are in our area. We would love to meet you!

Prizes

	Cat # 3-7	Cat # 1-2, 8-9
First Place	\$100	\$70
Second Place	\$65	\$45
Third Place	\$35	\$25

Cat #	Category	Description (Do <u>not</u> include Title in Word Count)	Max # Lines/Words	Fee Per Entry
1	Poetry, Rhymed	Rhymed — in any style	50 lines	\$ 7
2	Poetry, Unrhymed	Unrhymed — in any style, stanzas or free verse	50 lines	\$ 7
3	Children's Stories For readers ages 3-8	Can be for pre-school or elementary age readers, but do not have to include both age groups.	750 words	\$10
4	Articles of General Interest—Non personal general information	Subjects: history, people, events, or places (suitable for newspapers, magazines, or journals)	1200 words	\$10
5	Inspiration	May be prose or drama. Does not have to be religious in nature	1200 words	\$10
6	Memoir/Nostalgia	Writing that takes the writer and reader back to a former time	1200 words	\$10
7	Fiction for Adults	Short Stories written for adults, teens, and older	1200 words	\$10
8	Flash Fiction	Must include these 5 words: Adjust, Pretentious, Flabbergasted, Startled, Confirmation	100 words	\$ 7
9	Flash Poetry	Must include these 5 words: Gain, Magenta, Reef, Overwhelmed, Trust	25 words	\$ 7

Mail entries to the address below or bring them to AWGs October or November meeting if you are in our area. We would love to meet you!

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ABILENE WRITERS GUILD 2018-2019 CONTEST ENTRY FORM <http://www.abilenewritersguild.org/>

MAIL TO: Abilene Writers Guild

c/o S. Ellison

862 Grand Ave.

Abilene, Texas 79605

Email Inquiries to:

Or phone

(325) 665-5195

TrLiSo3@hotmail.com

Bonus

If you are not an
AWG member your
entry entitles you to
free AWG
newsletters from
January through
May 2019

Your Email Address: _____

Your Name _____

Your Postal Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Number of entries in Categories 3-7 = _____ x \$10 each = \$ _____

Number of entries in Categories 1-2, 8-9 = _____ x \$7 each = \$ _____

GRAND TOTAL \$ _____

Please Make check or money order payable to: Abilene Writers Guild

Members Only Monthly Contest - 2019

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, but due by the 12th of the contest month.

Enter by Email Only: Send document as attachments 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: awg.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).

**** You may send up to 3 entries and accompanying coversheets in the same email, but all cover sheets and entries must be separate attachments. ****

Cover Sheet Format: **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*). **Title** of entry should be centered midway down the page.

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. Number subsequent pages at the top center or top right.

MONTH	THEME	CATEGORY
JANUARY	New Year's Eve, Winter	Poetry – 50 lines or less Fiction – 1,000 words or less
FEBRUARY	Games, Candy, Friendship	Poetry – 50 lines or less Non-Fiction – 1,000 words or less
MARCH	Mandatory prompt words: Gift, Revelation, Break, Jewel, Blue	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	Independence, Beaches, Weddings	Poetry – 50 lines or less Fiction – 1,000 words or less
AUGUST	Mandatory prompt words: Rain, Letter, Skip, Clear, Disguise	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.

ABILENE WRITERS GUILD'S STUDENT WRITING CONTEST 2019

For ages 9-10 and 11-12

RULES and ENTRY FORM

You do NOT have to be a member of Abilene Writers Guild to enter or win the contest, nor do you have to attend the April 2018 meeting. However, if you enter our contest, we encourage you to come to the meeting to help support and cheer your fellow students in their writing efforts.

Enter between January 1, 2019, and February 15, 2019. Entries received before or after these dates will not be judged.

CATEGORIES, MAXIMUM LENGTHS

1. **Poetry**, rhymed or unrhymed.....maximum 50 lines
2. **Short story**.....maximum 600 words

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS – Do not count titles in the line or word count.

1. **Poems:** may be rhymed **OR** unrhymed in any style. **Limit: Two poems per student.**
2. **Short Story:** If you like to make up fun stories, now is your chance! Give us a beginning, interesting characters, a middle, and a good ending with a maximum of 600 words (which equals about two and one-half typed pages or four and one-half hand-written pages). **Limit: Two short stories per student.**

COVER SHEET: Each entry must have a separate cover sheet with the following:

Your name and age
Category (poetry or short story)
Your school's name
Your teacher's name (If home-schooled, put parent & school name)

Then, go to the center of the page and put the title of your poem or story.

SHORT STORY: Entries may be typed on computer or handwritten. **Center the title of your story at the top of the first page, leave a space after the title,** and begin your story. For second, third, fourth pages, put the story title and page number at the top— **DO NOT PUT YOUR NAME ON ANY OF THESE PAGES!** If your entry is handwritten, please make sure judges can read your writing!

POETRY: Poems may be typed or handwritten. If you hand-write your poem, please make sure judges can read your writing. **Center the title** of your poem at the top of the page, leave a blank line, and write your poem. **Do NOT put your name on this page!**

PROCEDURES: Staple a cover sheet to each entry. Send us a SASE (self-addressed, stamped return envelop) if you don't plan to attend the awards meeting but want your entry back. SASE

NOTE TO PARENTS & TEACHERS: The entries will be judged on content, presentation, and creativity, — not necessarily on spelling and punctuation. We want this to be a fun project for the children. The judges, professionals in their fields, are asked to critique each poem or story, and they may make suggestions about spelling and punctuation. It is our aim to help the children succeed! **Decisions of the judges are final.** Awards will be announced at the April 2019 meeting of Abilene Writers Guild, held at Rose Park Senior Center at 7 pm the fourth Thursday in April.

Awards: First place, Second, Third, and Honorable Mention

Please visit our website, AbileneWritersGuild.org, for more details about Abilene Writers Guild. Entries may be picked up after our April meeting, or we will use the self-addressed, stamped envelope (SASE) to return the entries as long as there is sufficient postage to do so.

Winners will also be listed on our website: AbileneWritersGuild.org by May 15, 2019.

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ABILENE WRITERS GUILD 2018 STUDENT WRITING CONTEST ENTRY FORM

MAIL TO: Abilene Writers Guild
c/o M. Berry
PO Box 1681
Abilene, Texas 79604

Email QUESTIONS To: maberry@hughes.net

Your Name: = **required information**

*Age: _____

School and Teacher's Name or Parent's Name: = **required information**

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

(Parents/Teachers: We only ask for address, phone and/or email address in case we need to contact you for some reason. If you prefer not to include this information, feel free to omit it.)



of Poetry Entries _____

of Short Stories _____

We invite you to join AWG individually for \$25 a year, or two members of a family may join for \$35; however, you do not have to be a member to enter or win in this contest!

Third Thursday Together
November 15 – 7:00 p.m.

**Open Mic Night
And Food!**

ABILENE WRITERS GUILD

P.O. Box 2562
Abilene TX 79604