



ABILENE WRITERS GUILD

DECEMBER 2021

KEEPING MEMBERS IN TOUCH

ABILENEWritersGUILD.ORG KTALLEY1963@GMAIL.COM

A Christmas Wish

I came across this poem in my mother's desk when my siblings and I were sorting through her belongings soon after her death. Mama's annual birthday poems written to her children and grandchildren were eagerly anticipated and treasured in our family. She was also known and appreciated as an amateur poet among her circle of friends who often requested one of her little rhymes for some special occasion. This piece is different from the light, often humorous, verses that she offered to us. The narrative provided me an intimate glimpse into her heart. The older I get, the more I can appreciate the sentiments expressed. Mama wrote for herself and for her close friends, but I know she would not mind my sharing her thoughts with you.

The Final Gift

She sat alone this Christmas Eve,
A lady, old and gray.
She felt the silent stillness
In a special, peaceful way.
Her solitary vigil
On this blessed holy night
Held no despair or sorrow,
As one would think it might.
She reminisced past Christmases,
Her mind alert and strong;
Her memories lilting gaily
As the tempo of a song.
She lived again the carefree days

Of Christmas, as a girl;
Of late-night church attendance
And the mad gift-giving whirl.
With awe, her mind's eye pictured
That first sweet Christmas day,
When, hand in hand with husband,
They watched their child at play.
Her recollections carried her
Up to this quiet eve, and
She gave thanks for the Christ child
That Mary did conceive.
In silent prayer she offered Him
Her one gift of the year - -
A "Thank You" for the life she'd led,
Both bittersweet and dear.
She prayed that she might join Him
On this dawning Christmas day,
And offer her eternal love
To Him, who'd shown the way
For her long and happy life on Earth
Up to the present day.
He heard her prayer and answered.
She softly slipped away.

As we celebrate the season with joyful activities and happy reminiscences of Christmases past, let us remember that the greatest gift of all was given to man on that long ago blessed Christmas morning. My wish for you is peace and joy on Christmas and throughout the year.

Merry Christmas
Mary Berry
AWG President





Our Life Members

*Stewart Caffey, Nancy Masters
Alice Greenwood, David Dodge*

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: Mary Berry	(2022)
Executive VP: Darla McCloud	(2023)
Program VP: Sharon Ellison	(2022)
Secretary: Linda Gordon	(2023)
Treasurer: Gail McMillan	(2023)
Board Member: Chuck Weber	(2022)
Board Member: Mary Ann Smith	(2022)
Board Member: Kay Talley	(2022)
Alt. Board Member: Carolyn Dycus	(2023)
Monthly Contest Coordinator: Linda Gordon	



ETHOS LITERACY PRESENTS

3rd Annual Short Story
Contest

Prizes:

Best in Contest - \$250

Best Youth Prize

14 years and younger -
\$100

4 Best of Category - \$100

Peoples Choice - \$100

Submission Fee - \$10

Submission Deadline

January 31, 2022

Website

<https://www.ethosliteracy.org/shortstories>



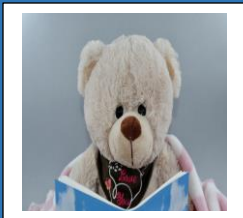
With Thankful Hearts

We are indeed thankful that adequate funds were collected to purchase enough journals and pens to give one each to about forty children at New Horizons.

Several of the AWG Board members met to prepare each journal with a personal touch.

A big thanks goes to Chuck Webber for adding a special touch with his poem and to Gail McMillan for overseeing and organizing this special project.





WHAT AWG READS

Mary Berry – READ - *Cloud Cuckoo Land* by Anthony Doerr is a masterfully interwoven tale with five main characters set in three very different time periods (the 15th century, the present, and the future) all connected through an ancient Greek tale. It is part fantasy, part historical fiction, part sci-fi and all storytelling.

To quench my thirst for history and historical figures I have just begun Ron Chernow's *Grant*, a 900+ page biography of Ulysses S. Grant.

Suanna Davis – READ - *Divine Conspiracy* by Dallas Willard.

Lou Mougin – READ - *Counter Culture* by David Platt and a short story collection by Max Allan and Barbara Collins.

Chuck Anderson – READ -, *Mortal Engines*, trilogy by Philip Reeve
Strugatsky brothers (Russian), *The Picnic*
Started rereading Dantes *Inferno*, *The Divine Comedy*, but I stopped as I found it very boring.

Kay Talley – *Now that Faith Has Come: A Study of Galatians* by Beth Moore.



BRAGS & SAGS

Suanna Davis – BRAG - I completed National Novel Writing Month.

David Dodge - Amazon (KDP) now Offers hardback for your paperback books. I have my first book coming and will try to bring it in February.

Lou Mougin - BRAG - Comics history book publication getting nearer.
SAG: It's not published yet.

Chuck Anderson - BRAG - Author's booth at Abilene's first ComicCon Dec. 4th and 5th.

BRAG - High School English class is using one of my short Science Fiction stories.

Monthly Writing Contest

The monthly members only contest will resume in February. Get a jump on it with your creativity.

The rules to enter are on the following page. Let's all get active with our writing skills and set goals to write more.



Members Only Monthly Contest – 2022

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. Judge's decisions are 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: Submissions may be sent any time after the 12th of the previous month, but no later than the 12th of the contest month.

Enter by Email Only: Send documents as attachments and 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 cover sheets 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 entries or **line** count for poetry. (*Do not count the title when determining 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.

Members Only Monthly Contest-2022

MONTH	THEME	CATEGORY
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JANUARY	No contest this month	Extra writing time for February
FEBRUARY	Winter, Nature, Milestones	Poetry – 50 lines or less Non-Fiction – 1,000 words or less
MARCH	Mandatory prompt words: tear, color, wind, sort, drift	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	Home, Travel	Poetry – 50 lines or less Fiction – 1,000 words or less
AUGUST	Mandatory prompt words: project, double, shine, top, way	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.