

BIG COUNTRY WRITERS

NEWSLETTER OF THE ABILENE WRITERS GUILD—MARCH, 2017

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Workshop Time!

Has all this warm weather gotten you in the mood to do some digging in your garden or flower beds? I have been doing some of that. I love how so many flowers have popped up in flower beds all over town, and have you noticed how many fruit trees have leafed out and are actually blooming? It's amazing, however it doesn't appear as if our trusty old mesquites have joined the crowd just yet. Sure hoping we don't get a freeze and lose all the fruit off those trees.

Speaking of joining the crowd, I hope YOU will join us on Saturday, March 25, for our annual workshop, luncheon and awards presentations. We are looking forward to a fun program this year from Rickey Pittman. You can learn more about him in this Newsletter or check out his website at www.bardofthesouth.com.

Rickey has been a judge for us in the past, so he is not exactly a stranger to AWG. He is not even a stranger to Abilene because he attended ACU. Please make plans now to be with us for a fun program, then enjoy some great food and learn who won in our annual contest held between Oct. 1 and Nov. 30, 2016! I can keep a secret, but I am really ready to share the names of the winners and honorable mentions with all of you!

Look at the Workshop information in this Newsletter and pre-register. You may pay at the door, however we would appreciate knowing you are coming, so please contact Gail McMillan at the phone number listed in the Newsletter. Leave a message if necessary. Remember, our workshop, luncheon and awards are open to everyone,

so invite a friend. Door prizes will be awarded throughout the morning!

Hope you have all adjusted to Daylight Savings Time by now, too. Some years that seems easier for me than others. The springing forward part is hardest for me. How about you? Honestly, I wish it would stay one way or the other. Just my personal opinion, for what it's worth.

I hope you have heard some of the radio spots David Dodge put together concerning our Workshop. Thank you, David, for your great work and contribution to AWG!

Enjoy the nice weather, folks, because this is West Texas, after all, and we never know what tomorrow will bring as far as our weather is concerned. Get out and dig in those flower beds; plant some new things; give it a try... and that goes for your writing, too. We have monthly members-only contests from January through August, so open up those computers, dig out those ideas and plant them on a page. You won't even get dirt under your fingernails!

Looking forward to seeing you March 25!!

Sharon Ellison

AWG President

Luncheon Fare

The yummy reason to attend the AWG Workshop and Luncheon is the meal! AM Dycus' smoked pulled pork is well-known in Abilene. The traditional meal includes home cooked beans, potato salad, and his crunchy super-slaw. Brownies will be offered for dessert.

This lunch to remember will be served as a savory, delicious exclamation mark to the annual workshop!

It's Workshop Time!
March 25 – 9:00 a.m.

BRAGS AND SAGS

Lou Mougín sold a new comic story to AC Comics, which he has not worked for before. Sags: Taxes.

Carla Kerr was in NYC for a week at the Red Hat Convention. When she returned, she had a role in a Murder Mystery Dinner Theater Weekend at the Lodge in Cloudcroft, NM. The upshot of all this is she hasn't done much book reading this past month. She has been preparing "Hidden Figures" by Margot Lee Shetterly to give a book review to the Alamogordo Library Book Club.

Suanna Davis wrote and presented a 10-page paper that is part of a series on the complexities of defining genre, particularly in regards to science fiction, fantasy, and romance. She was asked to submit the series as a single journal article for publication, so is now needing to make the 3-part series work together well.

Jo Cox is still rewriting her book, *Creation's Parables*. Readers have responded favorably to the new version. Sags: too busy to get to the rewrite most days.

Barbara Loyd was notified that her nonfiction piece, "Reunion After Drought," will be published in an Askew Press anthology.

Carolyn Dycus visited the house her great-grandfather built in Del Rio, but, she did not see inside.

WORKSHOP SPEAKER

Rickey E. Pittman, the Bard of the South, is a storyteller, author, and folksinger. He was the Grand Prize Winner of the 1998 Ernest Hemingway Short Story Competition. Originally from Dallas, Texas, Pittman presents his stories, music and programs at schools, libraries, organizations, museums, historical reenactments, restaurants, banquets, and Celtic festivals throughout the South. He has four music CD's: *Bard of the South* (2011), *The Minstrel Boy* (2012), *A Lover's Ghost* (2012), and *Osceola & Foster* (2013).

WHAT AWG READS

Lou Mougín: *King Kong vs Tarzan*, by Will Murray.

Suanna Davis: *Silence Fallen* by Patricia Briggs and *Operation Alpha* by Justine Davis.

Jill Henderson: *Touchstone* by Laurie R King and *American Gods* by Neil Gaimen.

Judy Ware: *River Road* by Charles Martin.

Penny Klostermann: *The Knife of Never Letting Go* by Patrick Ness. It's science fiction and very interesting.

February Monthly Contest Winners

THEME: Pets Love Mail

Poetry – 50 lines or less

Non-Fiction – 1,000 words or less

1st Poetry, **Sheryl Nelms** "Eating Dirt"

2nd Non-fiction, **Sylvia Forbes**
"Greetings to You"

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 (2017)
Program VP: Barbara Rollins (2018)
Secretary: Carolyn Dycus (2018)
Treasurer: Gail McMillan (2017)
Board member: Jill Henderson (2017)
Board member: Iris Williams (2017)
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

Members Only Monthly Contest - 2017

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: 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).

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	Snow, Celebrations, Peace	Poetry – 50 lines or less Fiction – 1,000 words or less
FEBRUARY	Pets, Love, Mail	Poetry – 50 lines or less Non-Fiction – 1,000 words or less
MARCH	Mandatory prompt words: Star, Clear, Channel, Spare, Harbor	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	Summer, Ice cream, Swimming	Non-Fiction – 1,000 words or less
JULY	Off and On, In and Out	Poetry – 50 lines or less Fiction – 1,000 words or less
AUGUST	Mandatory prompt words: Handle, Snap, Column, Green, Turn	Flash entry: Fiction or Poetry 100 max using 5 prompt words

Flash Fiction/Poetry use 5 mandatory prompt words, or close form and meaning.

Examples: Oil = oiled, oils, oiling, oiler, oily not spoil or foil; boat = lifeboat;
speak = unspeakable, not spoken; place = placement; defect = defection or defective.

****Registration Information****

Abilene Writers Guild 2017 Workshop and Luncheon

Saturday, March 25, 2017

Location: First Baptist Church, 1333 North 3rd St., Abilene Texas
Enter the Dining Room door nearest North 2nd and Hickory

Workshop Speaker 9:00-12:00 AM: Rickey Pittman
"Bard of the South"

Workshop Registration opens at 8:30 AM on **March 25**. Workshop begins at **9:00 AM**.
Lunch starts about noon followed by the contest awards ceremony

The AWG annual workshop and luncheon is open to all who are interested, regardless of whether or not that person entered the annual contest, is a member of the Guild, or is even a writer. All our monthly meetings and workshop speakers are professionals in their fields from around the country, and their information is fresh and informative.

Come join us! We would love to meet you!

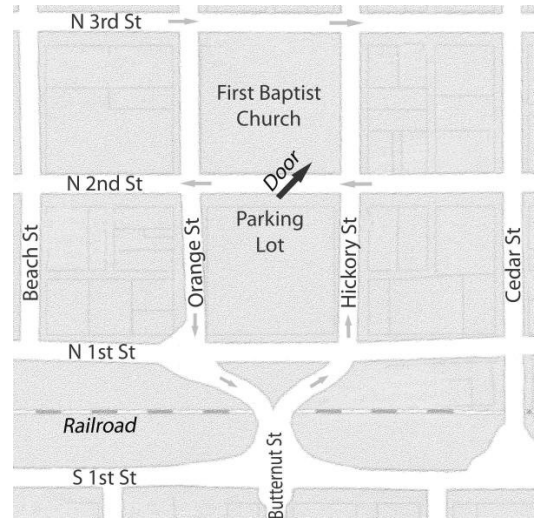
You may mail a check to either address below, or make your reservation by phone and pay at the door.

Call Gail McMillan at 325-529-3885 or 325-338-0348
(leave a message if necessary)

Make Check or Money Order payable to
Abilene Writers Guild

Gail McMillan
419 Meadow Lane
Abilene TX 79602

Abilene Writers Guild
P.O. Box 2562
Abilene, TX 79604



This Project is supported by a grant from the Abilene Cultural Affairs Council, HeARTS for the ARTS, the Abilene Arts Alliance, the City of Abilene, and the Texas Commission on the Arts.

Cut and mail form to above address

AWG Workshop / Luncheon Registration Form

Your Name: _____

Phone: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____

Number of WORKSHOP AND LUNCHEON reservations
Number of WORKSHOP ONLY reservations
Number of LUNCHEON ONLY reservations
(Luncheon reservations accepted until **March 23, 2017**)

_____ x \$ 40 each = \$ _____
_____ x \$ 30 each = \$ _____
_____ x \$ 12 each = \$ _____
TOTAL enclosed = \$ _____



No Thursday Meeting

It's Workshop Time!

March 25 – 9:00 a.m.

ABILENE WRITERS GUILD

P.O. Box 2562
Abilene TX 79604