



ABILENE WRITERS GUILD
FEBRUARY 2022 NEWSLETTER
KEEPING MEMBERS IN TOUCH
ABILENE WRITERS GUILD.ORG
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You Gotta Have Heart

That old song *You Gotta Have Heart* has been playing over and over in my head. I suppose it was triggered by the hearts that abound this time of year - red and pink reminders to express your undying love to your special valentine. Our emotions are not alone in being targeted this “Heart Month,” our minds are also bombarded with advice about our physical hearts. PSAs urge us to learn to recognize the signs of a heart attack and to practice healthy habits so that we might avoid one.

All this emphasis on hearts has led me to reflect that another important place for the heart is in our writing. To quote William Wordsworth: “*Fill your paper with the breathings of your heart.*”

If the brain is the source of ideas, what does it mean to write from the heart and how does one do it? Writing is communication, bridging the gap, between two individuals. Whenever we have a conversation with someone, what we bring to it – our attitude, motivations, and choice of words – all have an effect on the person with whom we are talking and on the outcome of the interaction. The reader may not be in our presence, but the end result is the same. We have a connection with another person. If we are writing only from the head, we tend to concentrate on the subject matter and getting

it right. We may be writing to impress others or to prove a point, and it can come across sterile and detached. The focus is on us and what we want to say. The goal is to be heard.

Truly meaningful writing comes from the heart. We should think of our writing as an important conversation with another person. It is vital to be aware of the reason, the motivation, for writing and to respect the reader. Then let words flow from the heart. Our unique voice and personality appear on the page, and our work is authentic. If we share our genuine selves, the connection with the reader is more likely to be effective. Our writing may read more like poetry, and it is more likely to engage and to touch the reader. As an additional benefit we will experience clarity of thought and a deeper sense of satisfaction with our work.

Stephen King summed up what it means to write from the heart. “*Writing isn’t about making money (or) getting famous. In the end, it’s about enriching the lives of those who will read your work, and enriching your own life as well.*”

February is all about hearts – the song repeating in my head says you gotta have it – believe in and love yourself. Now open your heart to the one you love, take good care of it, and pour it into your writing!

Mary Berry
AWG President



BRAGS

and

SAGS

Marguerite Gray: BRAG: *Labor of Love*, Book One in my new Gardens in Time series, released February 15, 2022. Setting--Florence, Italy 1560 in the Boboli Gardens.

Chuck Anderson: SAG to BRAG: Right now it's a Sag, but if it works then it's a Brag. Exploring entry requirements for a few other book/author festivals coming later this year, some have very complicated processes to have your book showcased. Anyone here a member of the Writer League of Texas? If so, I would love to talk to you.

Carla Kerr: BRAG: My days of Chemotherapy are finally over and I'm feeling so much better. We were fortunate in that no one in our large scattered family got COVID. What a blessing from above!

David Dodge: BRAG: I look forward to making the February presentation. SAG: I didn't check my last book after I made some corrections my sweet li'l editor had me make and I had some blank pages. The cover on another has tones of color too close and it made one place look really bad.

Suanna Davis: BRAG: I wrote a first-draft of a picture book about foster care and adoption. I am writing the last chapter of my novel.

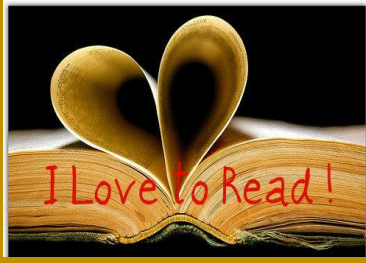
Ron Davis: BRAG: The eBook version of *The Adventures of Space Girl Red*, launched on Amazon on February 14th.

Jo Cox: BRAG: I read and did a quick edit of *Adventures of Space Girl Red* by Ron Davis. It has great characters, active plot, and twists every chapter. This quirky story keeps your attention and keeps you reading. It went digital on Amazon Feb 14.

Lou Mouglin: BRAG: *Joe Computer*, three stories just published by SHUDDER. and CARMILLA, CROM upcoming, and working on another SHUDDER story. SAG: Still need to finish *Frankenstein 3*

Betty Thomason: BRAG: Combining my love for painting with my love for writing, I entered a painting in the Swamp Spectacular Exhibit BREC in Baton Rouge. Requirement was to write a blip describing my painting.





WHAT AWG READS

Marguerite Gray: READING: I'm reading *Once Upon a Wardrobe* by Patti Callahan and *Shadows of Swanford Abbey* by Julie Klassen.

Mary Berry: READING: I've been reading aloud to my husband. We are finishing *The Ox-bow Incident* by Walter Van Tilburg Clark, and I can't help but see a comparison between the mob violence in the story and recent events in our *society*.

Carla Kerr: READING: Just finished reading Katie Couric's book, *Going There* and I would highly recommend it to anyone who enjoys a fast paced read without numerous descriptions, which many writers resort to just to fill up pages for a book.

Chuck Webber: READING: *Christianity for the Modern Pagan*, which is a study guide of Blaise Pascal's *Pensees*, with explanatory notes.

Gail McMillan: READING: *A Silver Lining in Every Cloud* by Charles Lynn Russell. This is Local Author's 8th book.

Chuck Anderson: READING: *Epicurus' biography: Epicurus and the Pleasant Life: A Philosophy of Nature*. Remember, "It is impossible to live a pleasant life without living wisely and well and justly. And it is impossible to live wisely and well and justly without living a pleasant life."

Suanna Davis: READING: Finished R.A. Davis' retro science fiction novel, *The Adventures of Space Girl Red*. Presently reading *1177 BC: The Year Civilization Collapsed*.

Jo Cox: READING: *Baby Dinosaurs on the Ark?* by Janet Kellogg Ray. It is written by a scientist who is a Christian. She explains the science in layman's terms with an enthusiasm for discovering and relaying God's creation. Science is not His enemy or ours.

Lou Mouglin: READING: Ann Rule's *the End of a Dream*

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	(2023)
Board Member: Mary Ann Smith	(2022)
Board Member: Kay Talley	(2022)
Alt. Board Member: Carolyn Dycus	(2023)
Monthly Contest Coordinator: Linda Gordon	



Our Life Members

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



**MEMBERS ONLY
CONTEST
MARCH
FLASH FICTION CHALLENGE
MANDATORY PROMPT WORDS
TEAR, COLOR, WIND, SORT, DRIFT**

*AWG's
own*



DAVID DODGE

will present a program this month on self-publishing. He has a slide presentation for us and will answer any questions you might have. This could be an interesting discussion, so plan to be with us February 24 @ 7 PM David is an inspiration to all of us. He and his wife just celebrated their 72nd anniversary. As a writer, he is like the energizer bunny- he keeps on writing books, one after the other!

*Come learn what he has discovered through publishing **NUMEROUS** books, particularly in his*

SETTLING THE WEST

Series



OPPORTUNITIES

**Bellingham
Review**

Literary Awards

Deadline:
March 15, 2022

Entry Fee:
\$20

Cash Prize:
\$1,000

Website:
<http://bhreview.org>

INTERESTED IN

SCREENWRITING

Check out the Opportunities
at

Stage 32 Writers' Room
stage32.com

to find all the things you need
to know to become successful
as a screenwriter.

Find a discounted first month
trial rate at

[\]Stage 32 Writers' Room - Stage 32](#)

Abilene Writers Guild Annual Workshop

This project is supported by a grant from the Abilene Cultural Affairs Council, HeARTS for the ARTS and the City of Abilene.

The place is secured, the speaker is coming and we hope to see YOU!

When: Saturday, March 26, 2022, 8:30 am to 11:30.

Where: Dining room/parlor of First Baptist Church, N. 2nd and Hickory Streets, Abilene.

Coffee and light refreshments will be available. Enter at the southeast corner of the building. There is ample parking near the building as well as just south across the street.

Cost: \$20

Register: 1) (325) 665-5195. Leave your name & phone number. You may pay at the door on March 26, but please let us know you are coming!

2) ***OR***, send your name and check for \$20.00 to: AWG, 862 Grand Ave, Abilene, TX 79605.

3) ***Can't decide?*** If March 26 arrives and you want to come...just show up!!

Awards from AWG's 2021 Annual Writing Contest will also be presented.



Laura Conner Kestner spent 25 years in community journalism before pursuing a career in fiction. Her first novel, *Remember Texas*, was published in 2018, followed by *A Texas Promise* in 2019 and *a Texas Moon* in 2020. She has several more books in the works.

A seventh generation Texan, Laura was born in Fort Worth and lived there 30 years before moving to Central Texas.

She and her husband, John have two daughters, six grandchildren and two great grandchildren. In addition to writing, Laura loves photography, reading, doing genealogy research and studying history. She's a member of the Daughters of the Republic of Texas. She's won several writing awards including a Genesis Award from American Christian Fiction Writers and is a three-time finalist for the Will Rogers Medallion Award.

2022

Members Only Contest

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.

2022

MONTH	THEME	CATEGORY
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.