



ABILENE WRITERS GUILD
FEBRUARY 2021 NEWSLETTER
KEEPING MEMBERS IN TOUCH
ABILENE WRITERS GUILD.ORG
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February Musings

Punxsutawney Phil crawled out of his den on the 2nd of this month and upon seeing his shadow predicted that winter weather would last another six weeks. Wouldn't it be wonderful if there was someone who could predict the time that this seemingly unending pandemic cloud hovering over us would finally dissipate? We still have not received word about when the City of Abilene plans to reopen Rose Senior Center for meetings.

We cannot meet regularly until the center is open, but we will be able to gather together on Saturday morning March 20 at First Baptist Church for this year's workshop on copywriting. It promises to be a hands-on experience filled with practical information. Even if writing copy is not in your future plans, the session should provide techniques and hints that could strengthen writing skills for any genre. We will also learn the results of the Annual Writing Contest when Sharon Ellison, chairperson, announces the winning entries. AWG is very grateful to be the recipient of a grant from HeARTs for the ARTs and the City of Abilene that will help to fund this workshop. See the announcement in this issue for details.

Congratulations to Cindy Mims and Chuck Webber for their prize winning entries in the first month of

this year's Members Only Contest. As I write this, the winners for February have not been revealed. Next month's contest challenges you to compose a 100 word piece of poetry or prose using five specified prompts. I hope you will sharpen your pencil or flex your typing fingers, get creative, and submit a prize winning gem ... or two... or three.

In spite of not being able to meet in person the Board members have remained in contact and have met several times by Zoom to carry on the essential business of the Guild. We miss seeing you each month and want you to know that we are available if you have questions, concerns, or suggestions.

We have all been navigating through this unimaginable time "on a wing and a prayer." For some of us the changes in our daily schedules have presented extra time to write, and writing has provided a way to maintain some sanity and a degree of normality. For others the uncertainty of life and enormity of the suffering has interfered with the creative process. Our wish is that soon we will be able to put these days behind us and walk out openly and securely into a bright future filled with words just waiting for us to string them together. Until we meet again, write on.



Mary Berry
AWG President



Marguerite Gray: BRAG: So excited! The final book of Revolutionary Faith—Wait for Me—is released February 9!!

Suanna Davis: Brags: After breaking my leg and needing surgery on Halloween, I am finally walking without an assistive device. I completed Story Storm--coming up with 31 new ideas for picture books in the month of January. I am participating in 12x12, a picture book support group.

Coy Roper: My one-act play "A Quiet Place" (from my book "Nine One-Act Plays") will be presented online in March and will be available after that on YouTube.

David Dodge: BRAG: I have a book started, but just can't stay with it long enough to accomplish much. SAG: I've been spending too much time with doctors and trying to recover that I've not been able to concentrate enough.

Cindy Mims: BRAG: My story I wrote for January monthly contest continues to bring happiness my way! I am excited to announce that I have received and accepted the offer to publish "Chase that Puppy" with Winn Publications.



Marguerite Gray: I'm reading *As Only Mr. Darcy Can* by Laura Hile.

Suanna Davis: I am reading Eva St. John's series *The Quantum Curators*

Carolyn Dycus: Reading the *Letter to the Romans* and interesting support publications on the life of the author, Paul. He was the primary teacher/preacher of the gospel for the civilized Roman world immediately after the death of Jesus. I am drawn to his amazing intellect and physical strength and "likeability" after reading from a host of theologians. The Abilene Public Library is receiving the new book *A Swim in the Pond in the Rain* by Saunders. I'm first on the waiting list! Hope to say I've read it in our next newsletter!

Sharon Ellison: I am currently reading *Bonhoffer*. Thick book; it will take a while; so much information but such an interesting story of his life and legacy.

Mary Berry: I've been reading to gather information for a couple articles I am working on - one about the Dionne Quints and sets of quintuplet dolls and one about Pippi Longstocking and dolls that represent her.

Our Officers

President: Mary Berry (2022)
Executive VP: David Dodge (2021)
Program VP: Sharon Ellison (2022)
Secretary: Carolyn Dycus (2021)
Treasurer: Gail McMillan (2021)
Board Member: Linda Gordon (2021)
Board Member: Darla McCleod (2021)
Board Member: Mary Ann Smith (2022)
Board Member: Kay Talley (2022)
Alt. Board Member: Chuck Weber (2022)
Monthly Contest Coordinator: Linda Gordon



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



March Members Only Contest

Let's all see how innovative we can be and use the following five words to create an intriguing story or a masterful poem in 100 words or less.

play, pattern, peril, point, pride



February Members only Contest

**1st Place – Kay Talley
“Sea of Memory”**

**2nd Place – Chuck Webber
“For K. C. in Prison”**

**HM – Kay Talley – “Bleeding Heart”
HM – Cindy Mims–“Shades of Love”**

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 20, 2021, 8:30 am to noon.

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: \$15

Register: 1) (325) 665-5195. Leave your name & phone number. You may pay at the door on March 20, but please let us know you are coming!

2) ***OR,*** send your name and check for \$15.00 to: AWG, 862 Grand Ave, Abilene, TX 79605.

3) ***Can't decide?*** If March 20 arrives and you want to come...just show up!!

Awards from AWG's 2020 Annual Writing Contest will be also be presented.



The Program and Speaker!

If you have ever been curious about copywriting, what it is and how to do it, join us! If you don't think copywriting is your "thing," you will still gain valuable and useful information about writing. This is a win-win program!

Jen McGahan resides in central Texas. She is a copywriter and content writer who helps people say what they mean without the fluff in order to get the attention and/or sales they want.

She is the author of the 5-star Amazon ebook Find Your Ideal Clients: *The Secret to Irresistible Free Opt-in Offers* and the course *Words That Work*. She helps people make a huge impact and increase online visibility.

As the owner of the digital marketing agency, My Team Connects, Jen has helped businesses make millions of dollars in sales through strategic web content and direct response copywriting that attracts eyeballs, gets clicks and moves customers through sales funnels.

A disciple of copywriting greats, Jen has personally mentored with some of the best in business to build her writing chops. Besides being obsessed with copywriting and persuasion techniques, she loves hiking, alternative health modalities, books, and the Texas Hill Country. Her background includes engineering sales at a semiconductor equipment company in Silicon Valley, freelance magazine article writing, and publishing poetry. She is mother to three funny kids and is a licensed massage therapist!

Members Only Monthly Contest – 2021

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: Submissions received any time after the 12th of the previous month, but due by 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.

MONTH	THEME	CATEGORY
JANUARY	Beginnings, Hope, Surprises	Poetry – 50 lines or less Fiction – 1,000 words or less
FEBRUARY	Love, Friendship, Memories	Poetry – 50 lines or less Non-Fiction – 1,000 words or less
MARCH	Mandatory prompt words: <i>play, pattern, peril, point, pride</i>	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: <i>space, soften, sting, sparkle, sphere</i>	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.