



# ABILENE WRITERS GUILD

## KEEPING MEMBERS IN TOUCH

ABILENE WRITERS GUILD.ORG KTALLEY1963@GMAIL.COM



### Thanksgiving Memories

Each year as I turn the calendar page to November, I am overwhelmed with thoughts and emotions - disbelief that another year has almost passed, pleasure at the promise of crisp fall mornings, fleeting feelings of dread at the approach of long nights and possible wintry weather, nostalgia for the carefree end-of-year family activities of my youth, a joyful anticipation of the not too distant celebration of Christmas followed by the panicked realization that I am not prepared, and especially the warm memories of childhood Thanksgiving days.

For me November ushers in a period of thankfulness and gratitude. Thanksgiving is a time to hit the pause button to slow our day-to-day worries and reflect on our blessings. It is easy to give thanks and be grateful when life is good. When we are faced with challenges it is more difficult to remember that the Apostle Paul wrote, "In everything give thanks." We should focus on the good in our lives, the people we love, what we can control, the positive things we can do, and the ways in which we can make things better. The more we concentrate on the positive, the more grateful and happier we are.

My childhood Thanksgiving memories provide a warm, peaceful feeling that makes it easy to be thankful. They come from times at Grandmother's house surrounded by family and friends who would

otherwise be alone. Until my sister was born when I was twelve years old, I was the only granddaughter and that gave me the privilege of helping Gramma on Thanksgiving morning before the others arrived. I learned to spread the tablecloths evenly and fold the napkins just so. I carefully arranged the heirloom china plates and rubbed each piece of silverware with a soft cloth. I painstakingly spooned fruit salad from the dishpan-turned-salad bowl into the crystal stemware and carried them one-by-one to the dining room. Each little task was an expression of love and giving to my family. While working I listened to Gramma's talk of earlier Thanksgivings and learned her recipe secrets. Her words and her generous spirit helped me to know my place in the family and later in the world. We learned the pleasures of sharing as we prepared heaping plates that my older brother and cousin would deliver to shut-in neighbors. Those early Thanksgiving days were in a long ago past, but the memories remain vivid and treasured.

I hope that each of you carries memories that help you know the serenity of a grateful heart. The gift of giving thanks is that it magnifies our blessings and expands our ability to be a blessing to others.

Happy Thanksgiving

Mary Berry  
AWG President



**Iris Williams:** BRAGS: I am answering this email from Eureka Springs, AR on the eve of my eldest granddaughter's wedding. SAG: I have not written anything but emails and Bible Version comments. And some of them were pretty good.

**Sharon Ellison:** BRAGS: Sharon is watching the mailbox daily for Annual Contest entries!!! Send yours in!!

**David Dodge:** BRAGS: It's been a while since I've felt like doing anything. They are trying to get my heart back in rhythm. If I do anything, like walk a few feet, it gets pretty high. Got my latest book order, they sure do a good job. Also have started another, ain't writin' fun? At least I can do that from time to time.

**Chuck Weber:** BRAGS: I am joining a writers' group called Spilt Ink. They share and correct stories, then collate from all members and publish a collection by multiple authors.

**Marguerite Gray:** BRAG: My novel Wait for Me will be released February 9, 2021.

**Kay Talley:** BRAG: Spending hours compiling a picture book for a Christmas present for my daughter which chronicles her family's month-long camping trip through 9 National Parks including Zion NP, Grand Canyon, and Bryce. Many of the pictures have a Bible scripture that correlates to it.

**Marla Polk:** BRAGS: My book, *Grief Survivor, A Love Story* is set for release November 15. This is the story of a life being rebuilt. Brutally honest with flashes of dark comedy, this daring look at grief was written to encourage you and to prove, if I can survive, so can you. Check it out at <https://www.amazon.com/dp/B08KNW8WRT>



**Iris Williams:** I'm reading Ted Dekker's *Waking Up To the Way of Love*. I just finished his "*Blink of An Eye*" for the 2nd or 3rd time.

**Sharon Ellison:** I recently read *Promise Me* by Harlan Coben. While I felt like it got off to a slow start, I plodded on. By the time I was midway through the book, I couldn't put it down. A great who-done-it!

**Chuck Webber:** Nearly finished with Ken Follett's Century trilogy – about 3000 pages. His work is very good and historically fairly accurate.

**Mary Berry:** Reading Therese Anne Fowler's *A Well-Behaved Woman*. It is a fictional account of American heiress Alva Vanderbilt set during the Gilded Age. Although sometimes reading like a romance novel, it is a portrait of a woman ahead of her time.

I also spend at least three hours each day reading aloud to my husband; we've gone through eleven books in the Jack Reacher series by Lee Child.

**Marguerite Gray:** *Reading Bride* by *Blackmail* by Debbie Lynne Costello and *Waverley* by Sir Walter Scott.

**Kay Talley:** Reading *A Lady's Dilemma*, a prequel to Sherrinda Ketchersid's *Lord of Her Heart*. It is a short story (39 pages). If you like Christian medieval romance Sherrinda's writings are a sure bet.

**Carolyn Dycus:** Reading *Genesis* this year, with the prehistoric recording of our "beginnings" so have checked out Madeleine L'Engle's young adult book *Many Waters*, regarding an amazing fictional account of Noah's story. APL has two volumes of L'Engle's "Kairos Novels" beginning with *A Wrinkle in Time*, which includes *Many Waters* in a list of eight of her cosmic, bending-of-time novels.

## *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: 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



*Happy Thanksgiving*

## COUNT DOWN TO ANNUAL CONTEST

Don't let it slip up on you

Work on entries today

Mail them right away

DEADLINE  
November 30



## GRANT AWARDED



The AWG Board is pleased to announce the receipt of a \$500 grant from the Abilene Cultural Affairs Council, HeARTS for the ARTS and the City of Abilene. The grant will go toward our Annual Contest and Workshop. Thank you to Sharon Ellison and Nancy Forbis-Stokes for handling the application process.



## *Just a Friendly Reminder*

*This time of year it is so easy to get caught up in the busyness of the holiday season that we forget to do some of the things that would bring joy to some others. Please support the AWG Christmas project by sending your gift by way of check to*

*Gail McMillan*

*419 Meadow Lane*

*Abilene, TX 79602*

*The children will be so glad you did.*

*And so will you.*



## **CHRISTMAS SERVICE PROJECT**

Forty children (ages 5 to 17) who are served by New Horizons, an organization ministering to children through counseling, adoption, and foster care, will be the recipients of AWG's 2020 Service Project. New Horizons has indicated that they will be thrilled to receive journals and writing implements, an appropriate gift from a group of writers.

Because of restrictions imposed upon us during this pandemic, it will be more efficient if members would donate cash rather than items to the project this year. This extra effort on your part will make Christmas a little brighter for a child and may even encourage a budding writer. Gail McMillan, who is in charge of the project, will purchase items so that gifts to each child will be similar.

Please send your cash donation to

**Gail McMillan**

**419 Meadow Lane**

**Abilene, TX 79602**





## ABILENE WRITER'S GUILD ANNUAL CONTEST 2020-2021

### General Information:

[AbileneWritersGuild.org](http://AbileneWritersGuild.org)

1. Open to any person age 15 or older.
2. Entries **must** be postmarked **between Oct. 1 and Nov. 30, 2020!** Entries posted earlier or later will NOT be accepted and will not be judged, nor will fees be refunded.
3. Categories with fewer than 5 entries are not eligible for prizes but may be critiqued, and, if possible, they may be added to another category for judging.
4. See categories, descriptions, maximum lengths and entry fees on page 3. Do **not count the title** of your entry in your final word count.
5. All entries must be your original work, unpublished as of October 1, 2020. 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 annual contests may be re-entered and **any** AWG monthly members-only-contest entry is eligible if it fits the category. Use font size 12. No fancy fonts! Text should only be on one side of each page.

6. **Cover Sheet** (applies to ALL entries): **Each entry** must have a **separate** cover sheet. **Upper left corner:** your name, complete address, telephone number and email address. **Upper right corner:** list category and number of words or lines. *Space down to middle of page and center your title on the cover sheet.* **DO NOT PUT YOUR NAME ON ANY OTHER PAGE.**

**First pages of entries of Poetry and Flash Fiction:** **Upper right corner:** list category, (Rhy P, Unrhy P, FP or FF), and number of lines or words. **Center the title of your entry,** double space down and begin. Single space only! **NO AUTHOR'S NAME** on this page!

**First pages of Prose Categories 5-9:** Must be typed and DOUBLE-SPACED, with one-inch margins. **Upper right corner:** list category and number of words. Do not count your title in the number of words. **Center your title, double-space down and begin manuscript.** On any succeeding pages, type entry title and page number in upper right corner. **NO AUTHOR'S NAME on any page.**

**To Mail Entries:** **Staple your cover sheet to your entry.** **Attach payment with a paper clip to your entry.** **For multiple entries, be sure your check covers all entries.** If you want your entry/entries returned with judges' comments, please provide a large enough SASE with **adequate postage**, otherwise your entry will be discarded on or after **May 31, 2021.** (Rule of thumb: 1 stamp per 5 pages in a #10 letter-size envelope.) Our judges, professionals in their fields, are asked to critique each entry, but we cannot guarantee they will all comply.

**Reminder:** As in the majority of writing contests, entries not meeting the guidelines will be disqualified and fees will not be refunded. Please follow the rules carefully. **Decisions of the judges are final.** Winners will be announced at our Annual Awards Workshop to be held in March 2021, and will be published on our Website by April 15, 2021. Prizes will be sent to winners who cannot attend. Please check our website and/or newsletter for location, date and time of the March Workshop and other details. Entries will be available for pickup immediately following the Workshop.

### Abilene Writers Guild Annual Contest 2020-2021 continued

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!

<b>Prizes:</b>	<b>Cat # 3-7</b>	<b>Cat # 1- 2, 8- 9</b>
<b>First Place</b>	<b>\$100</b>	<b>\$70</b>
<b>Second Place</b>	<b>\$ 65</b>	<b>\$45</b>
<b>Third Place</b>	<b>\$ 35</b>	<b>\$25</b>

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

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here \_\_\_\_\_

### ABILENE WRITERS GUILD 2020-2021 CONTEST ENTRY FORM

**MAIL TO:** S. Ellison, 862 Grand Ave, Abilene, TX 79605, 325-665-5195  
Email inquiries to: Trliso3@hotmail.com

Your email address: \_\_\_\_\_

Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Town: \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Make check or money order payable to: Abilene Writers Guild

# of entries in Categories 1-4, = \_\_\_\_\_ X \$7.00 each ----- \$ \_\_\_\_\_

# of entries in Categories 5-9 = \_\_\_\_\_ X \$10.00 each ----- \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Grand Total \$ \_\_\_\_\_**

## Abilene Writers Guild Annual Contest 2020-2021

<u>Categories</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Maximum # words/lines</u>	<u>Fee Per Entry</u>
1. Poetry, Rhymed	any style	50 lines	\$7
2. Poetry, Unrhymed	any style	50 lines	\$7
3. Flash Poetry-- <b>Must use these 5 words:</b> <i>mighty, kind, forbearing, texture, cancel</i>		100 words	\$7
4. Flash Fiction-- <b>Must use these 5 words:</b> lucid, tidy, feature, immune, pander		100 words	\$7
5. Children's Stories	Preschool OR elementary age readers	750 words	\$10
6. Inspiration	Any form: prose/drama/religious	1200 words	\$10
7. Memoir/Nostalgia	Take reader back to a former time	1200 words	\$10
8. Fiction for Adults	Short story for adults/teens & older	1200 words	\$10
9. Articles of General Interest*	History, people, events, places	1200 words	\$10

\*non-personal, general information for magazines/websites/newspapers

You may enter as many times as you wish in one or multiple categories!

