



BIG COUNTRY WRITERS

NEWSLETTER OF THE ABILENE WRITERS GUILD—FEBRUARY 2018

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Hello, February!

Goodness, here we are in February! Do you know anyone born on February 14? I do. I personally know three women who were born on February 14. Two of them were even born the same year in the same hospital, right here in Abilene, and we have all been friends since we were children. The other woman is somewhat younger than my other two friends, but what a “sweet” day to be born. Pun intended. I’m sure there must be some men born on February 14, too, but I don’t know any of them. Do you?

For a very long time, writers have been writing stories, poems and songs to celebrate St. Valentine’s Day. Hallmark and American Greetings have surely made small fortunes on all the Valentine cards sold in February, not to mention the florists, candy makers and jewelers. Do you have a special tradition for Valentine? I’d love to hear about it. If you entered this month’s members-only contest, perhaps you wrote about that very thing. Your family would probably enjoy your story or poem.

There was great participation in our January members-only contest, so we are hoping the same thing happens in February and in each month through August. If you entered the January contest, kudos and high-fives to you! Keep up the good work.

If you missed our January meeting, you missed a very fun time hearing Joe Specht discuss songs and stories about Abilene as well as hearing Greg Young strumming his guitar and singing some of those songs Joe talked about. Those two guys made a great team and provided a fun, informative, entertaining, interesting and enjoyable

Think Ahead

Are you willing to be an active member of AWG? New officers are needed by April.

evening, and some of us even sang along.

I’m looking forward to seeing you at our meeting on February 22. We will have another great program and the subject will be marketing your stories and/or your books! Anna Faktorovich is the Director and Founder of the Anaphora Literary Press and has written extensively. She moved from Brownsville to Quanah, Texas, in December. She has taught at the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley, Edinboro University of Pennsylvania, and Middle Georgia State College. She will have much to share, so invite a friend or neighbor.

Please remember if there is bad weather or ice on the streets, we will not meet because we want each of you remaining safe. But if the weather is nice, come enjoy the program and visit with other AWG members. We have been happy to gain several new members recently, including Brandon Davis, a returning member who has been missing for a few years. Welcome back, Brandon!

I will be giving Valentine cards and who knows what else to my grandchildren and their parents on the 14th. What about you? Did you receive flowers, candy, or cards, or did you give some to loved ones? Either way, it’s a win-win situation. Happy February, everyone. May your hearts be blessed!

Sharon Ellison

AWG President

No Workshop This Year

Please plan to attend our regular meeting
March 22 at 7 pm
where we will announce the
winners of our Annual Contest
and have a special guest speaker!

BRAGS AND SAGS

Lou Mougín is writing on his *Frankenstein* and the comics history book. He is "FINALLY" getting *FOXFORCE #2* near publication. However, the anthology that accepted one of his stories went under. He is trying to publish it himself as part of an ebook.

Carla Kerr has a role in a Murder Mystery Dinner Theater.

David Dodge has started another book, #5 in the *Settling the West* series. However, he is pondering taking it in another direction.

Ann Swann received two Honorable Mentions from *Writer's Digest's Self-Published Book* awards. One went to *Takers: Apocalypse in Eden* (her horror novel), and the other went to *Stevie-girl and the Phantom Pilot* the first book in her *Phantoms* ghost story series. "Oddly enough, the judges sent me their critiques and *Takers* had three 5s (the top score) and a 4 and a 3 (they didn't care for the interior layout and the back cover matter). On the other hand, *Stevie-girl* received all 5s...which makes me wonder just what it takes to actually WIN?"

Carolyn Dycus has repented of poor use of time on FaceBook, so she wrote a historical post with photo on her FB homepage about her immigrant great-grandfather.

Jo Cox has not been writing on her book, sigh. But, she did write an obituary for her mother.

Online Faith Forum

Loretta Fulton is asking for submissions to her website, www.spiritofabilene.com. These can be meditations, reflections, poems, short stories, human interest stories, or pieces about upcoming events with a spiritual angle.

Send submission, plus a photo and short description of yourself to editor@spiritofabilene.com

WHAT AWG READS

Lou Mougín: *Future Noir: the Making of Blade Runner* by Paul M. Sammon. *The American Miracle: Divine Providence in the Rise of the Republic* by Michael Medved. *Howard the Duck* by Ellis Weiner, "as good as the movie wasn't!"

Carla Kerr: *Mother Tongue* by Demetria Martinez. "Although I am over half way through it, I'm still not sure where it is taking me or why we are reading it."

Mary Berry: *The Nightingale* by Kristin Hannah (set in France during WWII) and am plodding through a re-read of Jane Austen's *Sense and Sensibilities*.

Carolyn Dycus: *To Be Where You Are* by Jan Karon (latest in Mitford series). *Fresh Air* by Jack Levison.

FEBRUARY PROGRAM

Anna Faktorovich, Ph.D. is the Director and Founder of the Anaphora Literary Press. Recently she has taught college English at the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley. Previously, she taught for three years at the Edinboro University of Pennsylvania and the Middle Georgia State College. She has a Ph.D. in English Literature and Criticism. She published two academic books with McFarland, two poetry collections with Fomite Press and Anaphora, two historical novels, two fantasy novellas and has written and illustrated a children's book.

She has been editing and writing for the independent, tri-annual Pennsylvania Literary Journal since 2009, and started the second Anaphora periodical, *Cinematic Codes Review* in 2016. She has presented her research at the MLA, SAMLA, EAPSU, SWWC, BWWC and many other conferences. She won the MLA Bibliography, Kentucky Historical Society and Brown University Military Collection fellowships.

Come enjoy hearing her discuss the fine art of marketing!

Writing Contests

Glimmer Train Press

Fiction, Short Story
Deadline: February 28, 2018
<https://glimmertrainpressinc.submittable.com/submit/103267/jan-feb-2018-short-story-award-for-new-writers-contest>

Hidden River Review of Arts & Letters

Fiction, Novel, Short Story
Deadline: June 30, 2018
<https://hiddenriverarts.wordpress.com/hidden-river-review-awards/vanwertguidelines>

Nelligan Prize for Short Fiction

Deadline: March 14, 2018
<http://coloradoreview.colostate.edu/nelligan-prize/submission-guidelines/>

Bristol Short Story Prize

Deadline: May 1, 2018
<https://www.bristolprize.co.uk/>

Ploughshares Emerging Writer's Contest

Fiction, Nonfiction, Poetry
Deadline: May 15, 2018
<https://www.pshares.org/submit/emerging-writers-contest/guidelines>

Flannery O'Connor Award for Fiction

Deadline: May 31, 2018
<http://www.ugapress.org/index.php/series/FOC>

John Steinbeck Short Story Award

Deadline: November 1, 2018
<https://www.reedmag.org/submit>

James Knudsen Prize for Fiction

Deadline: December 31, 2018
<https://bayoumagazine.org/writing-contests/fiction-contest-guidelines/>

75 Words Flash Fiction

Deadline: March 18, 2018
<http://www.fanstory.com/contestdetails.jsp?id=104656>

From the AWG Board

Tell us your ideas for programs!

Call for Submissions

The Ocotillo Review is a literary nonprofit magazine open for submissions January 15th through March 31st.

Contributors are paid. You can find more info @ www.kallistogaiapress.org.

Ocotillo Review has recently acquired publication rights to the iconic Texas Poetry Calendar.

Members Only Contest

Send in your entries to win prizes and really good critiques by judges. For guidelines, see page 4 of this newsletter or the AWG website abilenewritersguild.org

Returning Member

Brandon Davis of Abilene

New Members

Sarie Jones of North Richland Hills
Jayne Cummings and Casey Wilson of Abilene

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 (2019)
Program VP: Barbara Rollins (2018)
Secretary: Carolyn Dycus (2018)
Treasurer: Gail McMillan (2019)
Board member: Suanna Davis (2019)
Board member: Linda Gordon (2019)
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 - 2018

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	Ice, Fresh Starts, Power Outages	Poetry – 50 lines or less Fiction – 1,000 words or less
FEBRUARY	Hearts, First Love, Cards	Poetry – 50 lines or less Non-Fiction – 1,000 words or less
MARCH	Mandatory prompt words: Left, Bark, Fly, Seal, Cover	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	Summer Nights, Reunions, Flowers	Poetry – 50 lines or less Fiction – 1,000 words or less
AUGUST	Mandatory prompt words: Light, Refrain, Stoop, Lash, Gold	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.

Fourth Thursday Together
February 22 – 7:00 p.m.

The Fine Art of Marketing
Anna Faktorovich

ABILENE WRITERS GUILD

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