



ABILENE WRITERS GUILD

NOVEMBER 2021

KEEPING MEMBERS IN TOUCH

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Thanksgiving Thoughts

When the fourth Thursday in November approaches, Americans begin preparing for the Thanksgiving holiday. In their kitchens cooks assemble ingredients for an extravagant feast, football fans check television schedules for kick-off times, and shoppers salivate in anticipation of the early “Black Friday” sales. How far these activities have wandered from the original reason for the day!

Historians generally agree that the first Thanksgiving in the New World took place 400 years ago during the fall of 1621. The previous November a group of 102 Pilgrims had arrived in New England aboard the Mayflower. Because the harsh winter weather precluded beginning construction on a permanent settlement, they spent an arduous winter on the ship. In the spring the 50 starving survivors that included only four women planted gardens and began building homes. Squanto, a member of the Pawtuxet tribe, who had had earlier contact with English seamen, instructed the settlers on planting corn, tapping maple trees, catching fish, and avoiding poisonous plants. He also parlayed a peace between the colonists and the local inhabitants, the Wampanoag tribe.

When the first crops were gathered, the colonists planned a “harvest celebration” to give thanks to God. Providential holidays – fasting during difficult times and days of feasting and celebrating to thank God in times of plenty – were traditional with the English. A letter dated December 1621 written by colonist Edward Winslow provides details about the occasion. The feast included corn and vegetables grown from seeds brought from England,

native plants such as cranberries, grapes, and walnuts and fowl and fish. About 90 members of the Wampanoag tribe attended and contributed five deer to the three day feast that was held sometime between late September and mid-November.

In succeeding years colonists held locally celebrated days of thanksgiving from time to time, but there was no national holiday. In 1789 George Washington issued the first proclamation by the national government for a day of Thanksgiving. Many northern states continued the observance in subsequent years, but it was little known in the South.

The push to establish Thanksgiving as a national holiday was led by editor and writer Sarah Josepha Hale, whose best remembered work is the nursery rhyme *Mary Had a Little Lamb*. For 17 years she lobbied presidents and other government officials and wrote countless letters persuading them to establish a national celebration. Abraham Lincoln finally heeded her request in 1863 and set the last Thursday in November as Thanksgiving Day. In 1939 FDR moved the celebration up one week in an attempt to increase retail sales during the Great Depression, but his action was met with resistance and two years later he signed the bill naming the fourth Thursday in November as Thanksgiving Day.

On this 400th anniversary of the First Thanksgiving let us all resolve to honor the original reason for the holiday and make it a day of genuine gratitude for our blessings. Happy Thanksgiving.

Mary Berry
AWG President



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: Darla McCloud (2023)
Program VP: Sharon Ellison (2022)
Secretary: Linda Gordon (2023)
Treasurer: Gail McMillan (2023)
Board Member: Chuck Weber (2022)
Board Member: Mary Ann Smith (2022)
Board Member: Kay Talley (2022)
Alt. Board Member: Carolyn Dycus (2023)
Monthly Contest Coordinator: Linda Gordon



Time is Running Out

**Get Your Entries in Now
Annual Contest**

Open to anyone age 15 and over.
Officially opens October 1

Accepting Entries through

November 30

Don't let your hard work go to waste.



So grab a cup of coffee, whatever writing tools you use, and let your creativity flow.



A Season of Giving

New Horizons of Abilene was thrilled to learn that once again this Christmas season, AWG will donate personalized journals and pens to children served by the organization. A journal and pen together with a poem written by our own Chuck Webber will be wrapped in a holiday gift bag and tagged with the child's name.

Gail McMillan is coordinating the project. In order to insure that the gifts are comparable and that each is appropriate to the age of the recipient, she will purchase all the gifts. Please bring your cash donation toward this project to Gail at the November meeting or you may mail it to Gail McMillan, 419 Meadow Lane, Abilene, TX 79602.

New Horizons serves children who have been abused or neglected through therapeutic residential treatment, foster care, adoption, and youth counseling.



WHAT AWG READS

Carolyn Dycus – Reading: This brand new book, *More Than a Womb, Childfree Women in the Hebrew Bible as Agents of the Holy* by Lisa Wilson Davison.

Suanna Davis – Reading: *Devotional Classics* from Renovare.

Mary Berry - Reading - I finished the 900+ page *Autobiography of King Henry VIII*, by Margaret George. Written in the first person as Henry's journals, the fictional account is based on the results of 15 years of meticulous research and provides a sympathetic look at a monarch who is usually portrayed as excessive and egotistical. A fascinating read. It led me to another book by the same author, *Mary Called Magalene*, a carefully researched, but fictionalized history of Mary Magdalene.

Linda Gordon – Reading: *Love Does* by Bob Goff.

Lou Mougín - Reading: Ron Goulart's *Groucho Marx Mysteries*.

Jo Cox – Reading: *The Divine Conspiracy: Rediscovering Our Hidden Life in God* by Dallas Willard. It is a bit thick and wordy, but the information is insightful and rich.



BRAGS & SAGS

David Dodge – Brag: Trying to get a couple of books edited and out before long. Sag: Having trouble trying to get my first book as a hard cover that Amazon now offers.

Lou Mougín - Brag: Getting the 2nd comics history book ready. Sag: Thinking of lost friends.

Suanna Davis – Brag: Doing a NaNoWriMo novel set in post-apocalyptic Mesopotamia. Working on a close-to-final edit of Creation's Parables by Jo Cox. Sag: Presently behind on my word count.

Jo Cox - Brag: Suanna and I are plugging along with this last revision's edit.

Carolyn Dycus - Brag: I want to brag on Abilene Public Library, which ordered a new title I had inquired about. Not only ordered this book, but notified it had arrived and was being held a few days for me to be the first to check it out!

COME LET'S

CELEBRATE

It may be difficult for us to think about celebrating without food, but we have so much to be thankful for and

CELEBRATE

We've worked diligently with our writings throughout the year.

Let's share with others what we have accomplished by reading something we have written.

Thursday November 18 is the last meeting of the year so come – let's

CELEBRATE

ETHOS LITERACY

PRESENTS

3rd Annual Short Story Contest

Prizes:

Best in Contest - \$250

Best Youth Prize

14 years and younger - \$100

4 Best of Category - \$100

Peoples Choice - \$100

Submission Fee - \$10

Submission Deadline

January 31, 2022

Website

<https://www.ethosliteracy.org/short-stories>



NO MEETINGS IN DECEMBER



THERE WILL BE A NEWSLETTER

ABILENE WRITER'S GUILD ANNUAL CONTEST 2021-2022

General Information:

AbileneWritersGuild.org

1. Open to any person age 15 or older.
2. Entries **must** be postmarked **between Oct. 1 and Nov. 30, 2021!**
3. Categories with fewer than 5 entries are not eligible for prizes but may be critiqued if judges agree.
4. Categories, descriptions, maximum lengths, entry fees: page 2. Do **not count the title** in your word count.
5. All entries must be your original work, unpublished as of October 1, 2021. 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; Times New Roman preferred. Type on one side of page.
6. **Each entry** must have a **separate cover sheet** . **Upper left corner:** your name, complete address, phone number and email address. **Upper right corner:** category and number of words or lines. *Space down to middle of page and center your title on the cover sheet.*

First page, Poetry and Flash Fiction entries, categories 1-4: **Upper right corner: category and number of lines or words.** Double space down and **Center the TITLE of your entry;** double space down again and begin. **Single space only! DO NOT PUT YOUR NAME ON ANY PAGE OTHER THAN THE COVER SHEET!**

First page, Prose Categories 5-8: **DOUBLE-SPACE these,** with one-inch margins. **Upper right corner:** type category and number of words. **Do not count your title** in the number of words. Double space down, **center your title, double-space down again and begin manuscript.** On all following pages: type entry title and page number in upper right corner. **Author's name goes ONLY on the cover sheet.**

Mail Entries Only: **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 and fill in the registration form or facsimile thereof. If you want your entry/entries returned, please provide a SASE with **adequate postage**, otherwise your entry will be discarded on or after **May 31, 2022.** (Hint: 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 same.

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 2022, and will be published on our Website by April 15, 2022. Prizes will be mailed to winners who cannot attend the Workshop. Please check our website and/or newsletter for

location, date, time and other details of the March 2022 Workshop. Entries will be available for pickup immediately following the Workshop.

You may also bring entries to AWG's October and November meetings if you are in the area.

Rules p. 2

Prizes: Categories 1,2,3,4, Categories 5,6,7,8

First Place	\$ 70	\$100
Second Place	\$ 45	\$65
Third Place	\$ 25	\$35

_____ cut here _____ or copy this entry form _____

ABILENE WRITERS GUILD 2020-2021 CONTEST ENTRY FORM

MAIL TO: S. Ellison, 862 Grand Ave, Abilene, TX 79605 Email questions to:
AWGWrite@gmail.com

Your email address: _____

Name: _____ Street Address: _____
_____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Make check or money order payable to: Abilene Writers Guild

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

of entries in Categories 5-8 = _____ X \$10.00 each ----- \$ _____

Grand Total \$ _____

AWGs Annual Contest 2021-2022 Categories, Fees, Maximum: # Words/Lines Entry Fee

1. Poetry, Rhymed	any style	50 lines	\$7
2. Poetry, Unrhymed	any style	50 lines	\$7
The five prompt words must be used in Categories 3 and 4:*			
*3. Flash Poetry: <i>starlight, search, heart, obsequious, texture</i>		100 words	\$7
*4. Flash Fiction: <i>conglomerate, kerfuffle, stable, totality, crapulous</i>		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

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