



ABILENE WRITERS GUILD

JULY 2021 NEWSLETTER KEEPING MEMBERS IN TOUCH

ABILENE WRITERS GUILD.ORG
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What's In A Name?

In *Romeo and Juliet* Shakespeare asserts that “a rose by any other name would smell as sweet.” That may be true of a flower, but the same may not be said of a literary work. The name of a short story, poem, or novel has a great impact on its success because an enjoyable work might never get read by the public (or by an editor) if the title lacks appeal. A title must grab the reader's attention, be interesting, be appropriate to the rest of the piece, and be easy to remember. It provides the first impression and will forever represent a work to the rest of the world. The importance of a good name cannot be denied, but sometimes coming up with the title for a piece can be almost as difficult as writing it. I have found some tips that may provide inspiration for selecting the perfect title.

A play on words or popular expression can result in a suitable title. Another suggestion is to employ a hidden meaning that is revealed in the body of the work or a phrase from another work that summarizes or describes the story. An easily identifiable and appropriate title results from naming a work after a character, a place, or an event in the story or poem. A title that contains an action verb, a word with a double meaning, or an archetype (a word that acts as emotional shorthand triggering an immediate response) can be compelling. The title can be drawn from a memorable line in the work itself or can embrace humor or quirkiness.

Sometimes even a title carefully selected and believed to be spot-on by the author will get changed by the editor. Did you know the following were original titles for familiar literary works? Does *Mules in Horses' Harnesses* have the same allure as *Gone With the Wind*? *Mistress Mary* might have remained unpublished or unsold, but *The Secret Garden* piques one's interest. Who would pick up a copy of *The Great Gatsby* if it had retained its original title, *Trimalchio in West Egg*? When it was published in 1944, 1984 was a much more intriguing title than *Kingdom by the Sea*. *Of Mice and Men* was to have been titled merely *Something That Happened*. *Atlas Shrugged* is more thought provoking than *The Strike*. Would you rather read a novel called *The Sea Cook* or *Treasure Island*?

An author should make every effort to devise a unique and interesting title that will spark interest, entice the reader to read on, and be appropriate to the mood and theme of the story or poem. A title is not copyrightable, but it should be original.

When a work is completed and has a fitting title, the process of getting it published begins. Sharon Ellison's program for our meeting on July 22 will provide some helpful advice as she presents the what, why, and how of query letters.

Until then, write on...

Mary Berry
AWG President



Marguerite Gray: BRAG: I am writing a short story, *Designs of Destiny*, to be released with my novel in February. 2022.

Hallie Wright: BRAG: I've been focusing on some smaller writing projects to get my creativity flowing again for my book.

David Dodge: BRAG: Wrapping up my current book.

Carolyn Dycus: BRAG: Learning to navigate and use a new document program on MacAir -editing is impressive and useful compared to Microsoft Word! "Learning" is the key word

Cindy Mims: I have a new illustrator for *Chase that Puppy*. I am excited to say that he feels like he will have it ready to send to the publisher by the end of July. I truly thank AWG for giving me the inspiration to write!! After winning first place when I wrote this story, I was inspired to get it published. Thank you so much to every one of you who write and encourage others to write.



Marguerite Gray: Reading: *The Ice Swan*, by J'Nell Cieselski tells the story amid the violent last days of the glittering Russian monarchy, a princess on the run finds her heart where she least expects it. Also reading *The Enchantress Returns* by Chris Colfer – Book 2 of 6 from *The Land of Stories*.

Carolyn Dycus: Reading: *Libertie* by Kaitlyn Greenidge, an unforgettable story about one young Black girl's attempt to find a place where she can be fully, and only, herself; and a children's novel, *The One and Only Ivan*, by Kathryn Applegate (using gorilla's voice- excellent device for all ages), recommended by my 11-year-old granddaughter!

David Dodge: Reading: *The Texas Rangers*, when I can catch a minute.

Reading is a WAY to TRAVEL to PLACES You long to go

Our Officers

President: Mary Berry (2023)
 Executive VP: Darla McCloud (2023)
 Program VP: Sharon Ellison (2023)
 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 (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



Writing Contests
What have you got to lose?



LAST CHANCE
Monthly Contest this
Year
August Contest

Space, soften, sting, sparkle,
sphere
Mandatory Words
Fiction or Poetry - 100 words max
Deadline - August 12



**WE'RE OFF AND
RUNNING AGAIN**

It was so good to see all of those who attended the June meeting.

There are a lot of exciting things being planned in the future. Come see what it's all about.

THURSDAY
JULY 22
ROSE PARK SENIOR CENTER
7:00 pm



Thursday Night's Program

Sharon Ellison

Query Letters

Advantages of Membership

- Encouragement from other members
 - Inspiration at monthly meetings
 - Great tips in monthly programs
 - Members Only Contest
 - Monthly newsletter

Secure your Membership Update Your Dues

\$25.00 Single membership

\$35.00 family membership

Please mail your dues to

Gail McMillan

419 Meadow Ln

Abilene, TX 79602

**Or Give to Gail at the June
meeting**

**If you joined AWG since March
2021 your dues come due next year**

Dream Big READ!

Interesting Opportunities

American Compass Edgerton Essays

**An opportunity for you to share
your perspective on what you
wish others knew about our lives
and how public policy could
strengthen our families and our
community right here in the
Abilene Area**

\$250

<https://americancompass.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Edgerton-Essays.pdf>



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.