



BIG COUNTRY WRITERS

NEWSLETTER OF THE ABILENE WRITERS GUILD—JANUARY 2019

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It's a New Year!

Little did I know what was in store for me personally this time last year. Come to think of it, we are ALL in that boat, aren't we?

My plan: sell my big house in 2018 and move into the smaller one which had belonged to my mother. I did not plan to have cancer. Who would, or who does? However, it inserted itself into my life in a shocking way and forced me to put some things (like selling my house and going on a mission trip) on hold. I did, however, try to remain productive by continuing to pack small boxes and donating things to my church's big garage sale. It helped pass the time.

Fortunately, I was surrounded by women who had walked this road before. They encouraged me, called me, brought me food, drove with me back and forth to appointments and surgeries in Dallas, and generally added many bright spots to my life just when I needed them. I cannot thank them enough. Even as a writer I don't think I have enough words to express my gratitude. I suppose I could try, but some of you might get bored.

Suffice it to say, I actually got around to listing my house the second week of December; thankfully, it sold quickly and closed on Dec. 28. So I DID sell my house in 2018, after all was said and done! I am grateful for reasons too numerous to list. I find myself very comfortable in my smaller house. It's cozy and my daughter-in-love, Abbye, said it is very homey. That's exactly what I want. My other daughter-in-love, Jessica, helped me get the small house ready AND indulged me when I was trying to decide exactly where to put my piano and how to position it. Son Patrick helped put up some mirrors, bless him. Son Tate went with me to surgery last May and helped me get things out of the big house/yard and stuff them (literally) into my overflowing storage building! Son David and

his sweetheart took an antique rocker for the porch of their new home. There was no room for it in my inn.

I will report on our Annual Contest in our next newsletter in case you were wondering. Entries are in the judging process. A few are finished. Our second Children's Writing Contest is currently open for children ages 9-10 and 11-12. The judges are anxious for the entries, so I hope you are looking forward to our March meeting where all winners will be announced for the Annual Contest; then at the April meeting we will announce the winners of the children's contest! Such fun!

Keep smiling, folks; enjoy this new year. It will likely be as fast and furious as the last one! I'm praying for no big (bad) surprises.

Be sure to enter our members-only contests... and follow the rules.

Blessings and write on!

Sharon Ellison

AWG President

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	(2020)
Executive VP: David Dodge	(2019)
Program VP: Kay Talley	(2020)
Secretary: Carolyn Dycus	(2020)
Treasurer: Gail McMillan	(2019)
Board member: Suanna Davis	(2019)
Board member: Linda Gordon	(2019)
Board member: Coy Roper	(2020)
Board member: Mary Ann Smith	(2020)
Alt. Board member: Mary Berry	(2020)

Newsletter editor: Jo Cox

Monthly Contest Coordinator: Linda Gordon

BRAGS AND SAGS

Stewart Caffey picked up his latest little book, *Hearing from God*, from the printer last week.

Penny Klostermann has a new manuscript with her agent. "Fingers crossed!"

Mary Berry's article about a little known Hollywood child star and the doll she inspired was published in the latest issue of *Doll Castle News* magazine. She has two doll displays in Abilene, one at the south branch of the library (in the mall) is entitled "Story Time Friends" and features popular children's books and dolls based on characters; the other is baby dolls at Rose Center titled "Kicking Off the New Year."

Jo Cox's manuscript, *Creation's Parables*, is being read by four people. She is working on the next two in the series, *Creator's Parables*, and *Messiah's Parables*.

WHAT AWG READS

Carla Kerr: *Becoming* by Michelle Obama. It is well written and a fast read. *Anna Age 8: The Data-Driven Prevention of Childhood Trauma and Maltreatment* by Katherine Ortega Courtney PhD and Dominic Capello. "This is a short book, but one I highly recommend to everyone. Reading it will help you to better know yourself and give you some insight into people around you."

Penny Klostermann: A pile of picture books.

Carolyn Dycus: *Educated* by Tara Westover. "I highly recommend this memoir." *Searching for God Knows What* by Donald Miller.

Mary Berry: *The First Conspiracy* by Brad Meltzer, a non-fiction account about a secret plot to kill George Washington. "It is fascinating for a history buff." "And when I have finished that one, I have a new copy of *War and Peace*. It's been about 50 years since I've read it!"

Jo Cox: lots of web pages as research on God, angels, end times, and Messiah to write her books.

JANUARY PROGRAM

PASSION TO PROMOTE

LuCresia Fields is a veteran, wife, mother of three children, author, PhD Health Psychology student at North Central University, and owner of One More WREP.

LuCresia was born in Pensacola, FL, but spend most of her years between Louisiana and Texas. After spending four years in the military from 2010-2014, she decided it was time to support her family from home as she also worked toward her own goals and passions. She published her first book of her Grace Revealed series, *Find Her: Releasing Insecurity & Embracing Identity*, in September 2018 and established One More WREP in the same month.

One More WREP focuses on encouraging women to find their identity and wholeness spiritually, mentally, emotionally, and physically. She also has a One More WREP podcast which is available on Spotify, iHeart Radio, Apple Podcasts, Google Play Podcasts, Podbean, and Amazon Music. She also hosts monthly One More WREP classes that incorporate a 45-minute bible study followed by a 45-minute workout.

In her spare time, she is either playing with her children, at the gym, or taking good old-fashioned naps that seem to be rare since three little people soak up her day! Love, transparency, resiliency, and tenacity are the principles that her life is built upon, and she intends to continue living out her passions with these at the forefront of her heart, mind, and spirit.

Any change to the AWG by-laws must be submitted before February 1.

Volunteers for new officers needed by April.

CPS DONATION

AWG received a confirmation and thanks for our donation to CPS. We gave sixty children's books, thirty-five journals, ten coloring journals. There were also twenty seven packs of pencils, coloring pencils, and crayons. **Thank You AWG!**

Members Only Monthly Contest - 2019

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 due by the 12th of the contest month.

Enter by Email Only: Send document as attachments 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 coversheets 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 or line count for poetry (*do not include title in 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	New Year's Eve, Winter	Poetry – 50 lines or less Fiction – 1,000 words or less
FEBRUARY	Games, Candy, Friendship	Poetry – 50 lines or less Non-Fiction – 1,000 words or less
MARCH	Mandatory prompt words: Gift, Revelation, Break, Jewel, Blue	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	Independence, Beaches, Weddings	Poetry – 50 lines or less Fiction – 1,000 words or less
AUGUST	Mandatory prompt words: Rain, Letter, Skip, Clear, Disguise	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.

ABILENE WRITERS GUILD'S STUDENT WRITING CONTEST 2019 For ages 9-10 and 11-12

RULES and ENTRY FORM

You do NOT have to be a member of Abilene Writers Guild to enter or win the contest, nor do you have to attend the April 2018 meeting. However, if you enter our contest, we encourage you to come to the meeting to help support and cheer your fellow students in their writing efforts.

Enter between January 1, 2019, and February 15, 2019. Entries received before or after these dates will not be judged.

CATEGORIES, MAXIMUM LENGTHS

1. **Poetry**, rhymed or unrhymed.....maximum 50 lines
2. **Short story**.....maximum 600 words

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS – Do not count titles in the line or word count.

1. **Poems:** may be rhymed **OR** unrhymed in any style. **Limit: Two poems per student.**
2. **Short Story:** If you like to make up fun stories, now is your chance! Give us a beginning, interesting characters, a middle, and a good ending with a maximum of 600 words (which equals about two and one-half typed pages or four and one-half hand-written pages). **Limit: Two short stories per student.**

COVER SHEET: Each entry must have a separate cover sheet with the following:

Your name and age
Category (poetry or short story)
Your school's name
Your teacher's name (If home-schooled, put parent & school name)

Then, go to the center of the page and put the title of your poem or story.

SHORT STORY: Entries may be typed on computer or handwritten. **Center the title of your story at the top of the first page, leave a space after the title,** and begin your story. For second, third, fourth pages, put the story title and page number at the top— **DO NOT PUT YOUR NAME ON ANY OF THESE PAGES!** If your entry is handwritten, please make sure judges can read your writing!

POETRY: Poems may be typed or handwritten. If you hand-write your poem, please make sure judges can read your writing. **Center the title** of your poem at the top of the page, leave a blank line, and write your poem. **Do NOT put your name on this page!**

PROCEDURES: Staple a cover sheet to each entry. Send us a SASE (self-addressed, stamped return envelop) if you don't plan to attend the awards meeting but want your entry back. SASE must include **adequate postage.**

NOTE TO PARENTS & TEACHERS: The entries will be judged on content, presentation, and creativity, — not necessarily on spelling and punctuation. We want this to be a fun project for the children. The judges, professionals in their fields, are asked to critique each poem or story, and they may make suggestions about spelling and punctuation. It is our aim to help the children succeed! **Decisions of the judges are final.** Awards will be announced at the April 2019 meeting of Abilene Writers Guild, held at Rose Park Senior Center at 7 pm the fourth Thursday in April.

Awards: First place, Second, Third, and Honorable Mention

Please visit our website, AbileneWritersGuild.org, for more details about Abilene Writers Guild. Entries may be picked up after our April meeting, or we will use the self-addressed, stamped envelope (SASE) to return the entries as long as there is sufficient postage to do so.

Winners will also be listed on our website: AbileneWritersGuild.org by May 15, 2019.

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ABILENE WRITERS GUILD 2018 STUDENT WRITING CONTEST ENTRY FORM

MAIL TO: Abilene Writers Guild
c/o M. Berry
PO Box 1681
Abilene, Texas 79604

Email QUESTIONS To:
maberry@hughes.net

* =Required Information

* Your Name: _____ * Age: _____

* School and Teacher's Name or Parent's Name:

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

(Parents/Teachers: We only ask for address, phone and/or email address in case we need to contact you for some reason. If you prefer not to include this information, feel free to omit it.)



of Poetry Entries _____

of Short Stories _____

We invite you to join AWG individually for \$25 a year, or two members of a family may join for \$35; however, you do not have to be a member to enter or win in this contest!

Fourth Thursday Together

January 24 – 7:00 p.m.

**Passion to Promote
LuCresia Fields**

ABILENE WRITERS GUILD

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