



BIG COUNTRY WRITERS

NEWSLETTER OF THE ABILENE WRITERS GUILD—FEBRUARY 2019

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Freezing February!

As I sit here writing today, we are in the midst of a cold snap, and there was even some sleet late yesterday afternoon and into the early evening. Are y'all as ready for Spring as I am? In this cold weather, I tend to want to stay in my cozy house with a blanket over my legs and feet (if my dog isn't already there) and either read a book or watch TV, doing precious little else.

If you missed our January meeting, you missed a rapid-fire, fun program by our guest speaker, LuCresia Fields. If only I had as much energy as she has! She was inspiring, interesting and fun! Now I am looking forward to hearing Joey Roberts share his thoughts about communicating with today's technology. Some of us "more mature" folks are trying to keep up with all the changes in communication, so come be inspired and encouraged by someone who is in the know!

As usual, here is my yearly reminder that if there is bad weather or ice on the streets, we will NOT meet because we want everyone to be safe and stay home. However, if the weather is nice, you have no excuse for not being there (other than work, or if you are out of town or ill), so mark your calendar now. We need YOU to help keep AWG successful. We love visitors and seeing familiar faces, so invite a friend or three.

St. Valentine's Day has passed and everyone no doubt had too much chocolate (is that possible?) or other candy. I hope you got flowers or a card from someone special or got together with good friends at the very least.

Please remember to check out the rules to our Members-Only Contest in the Newsletter and get your entries in on time each month. The rules say you can send in entries early for months ahead, but you must be sure to label them as such. Start writing now and perhaps you can even tweak one or more of your

entries and submit them to our annual contest in the fall. It's never too early to get started.

Some of you gardeners are no doubt looking forward to planting flowers. On chilly, overcast, dreary days it may be hard to think about blooming flowers and plants, but Spring IS coming. Here are some thoughts for you.

"Keep your faith in beautiful things; in the sun when it is hidden, in the Spring when it is gone."—Roy R. Gibson

"The flowers of late winter and early spring occupy places in our hearts well out of proportion to their size."—Gertrude S. Wister

"If we had no winter, the spring would not be so pleasant."—Anne Bradstreet

"Winter, a lingering season, is a time to gather golden moments, embark upon a sentimental journey, and enjoy every idle hour." —John Boswell

Last one about sums it up! See you soon.

Sharon Ellison

AWG President

Our Life Members:

Stewart Caffey, Nancy Masters, Laura Thaxton, 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

Brandon Davis is way behind on his reading. On the table sits a book he started years ago and a magazine from spring 2017.

Iris Williams is overjoyed that her son is home from Iraq. She sang at the senior citizens center gospel hour the "Prayer to the Holy Spirit" to music she wrote and an original song. She finished the "Bible in One Year 2018" and started 2019 on time.

Carla Kerr has been involved in another Murder Mystery production and a trip to Mata Ortiz, Chihuahua, Mexico so not much time left for reading.

David Dodge has finished the two books he has been working on. "It's been a challenge, but fun."

Mary Ann Smith entered the February Valentine's Day writer's contest! "This is more luck than brag since I thought it needed to be sent in by the 2nd until I read the contest rules a second time."

Marguerite Gray has exciting news! Her third book *Bring Me Near* has a release date of February 26! She adores her publisher Celebrate Lit Publishing. This is Book Three in her historical fiction series Revolutionary Faith, 1772-1777, Charles Town, S.C.

Lou Mougins's comics history book is underway. He placed another *CREEPS* script and is nearing completion on the third *FOXFORCE*. However, when he went to work on his book, *Frankenstein 2*, he found corrupt file. Lesson: backup files in multiple places and share with friends. Instead of a massive reconstruction job, it will only be a two-page rewrite!

Jo Cox has her next book, *Creator's Parables*, out with readers.

Volunteers for new AWG officers needed by April.

OBITUARY

AWG has lost a life member,
Clyde N. Morgan, Sr. MD
We send his family our condolences.

WHAT AWG READS

Brandon Davis: volume two of *Master Keaton* by Naoki Urasawa, Japanese manga.

Carla Kerr: *Rock Needs River*, a memoir written by Vanessa McGrady, about a very open child adoption and the attending events, good and bad, that happened to the family as life wore on.

Lou Mougins: a book in the *Mike Hammer* series by Mickey Spillane and Max Collins. *One Man Against the World: The Tragedy of Richard Nixon* by Tim Weiner. *Adventures in the Dream Trade* by Neil Gaiman.

Barbara Loyd: *Roses*. "This is a glorious saga compared to *Gone With the Wind*."

FEBRUARY PROGRAM

WHEN A MESSAGE IN A BOTTLE NO LONGER WORKS: COMMUNICATING WITH TODAY'S TECHNOLOGY

With over 15 years of creating media message, strategic branding and clear communications experience, Joey Roberts strives to help people focus on creative excellence. From public relations and advertising to graphic design and website, Joey has spent his professional career helping people and companies communicate their mission and strategies.

Joey serves as the director of communications and administration at Herald of Truth where he oversees the public relations, publications, website, video productions, administration and more. Prior to his current position, Joey served six and a half years as the communications minister at University Church of Christ in Abilene.

After graduating with a bachelor's degree in public relations/advertising and a minor in Bible, Joey spent three years as the sports information director at Southwest Baptist University in Bolivar, Mo. before working as the director of athletics communications for eight years at Tarleton State University in Stephenville. He also holds a master's degree in digital media.

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.

Fourth Thursday Together

February 28 – 7:00 p.m.

Joey Roberts

When a Message in a Bottle No Longer Works:
Communicating with Today's Technology

ABILENE WRITERS GUILD

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