



ABILENE WRITERS GUILD

JUNE 2021 NEWSLETTER

KEEPING MEMBERS IN TOUCH

ABILENE WRITERS GUILD.ORG

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SMILES

It turns out that one little thing that I have been missing for the past year is not such a little thing at all. As the ubiquitous pandemic masks begin to disappear, and faces of friends, acquaintances, and strangers are again in full view, I realize just how much I have missed seeing their smiles. No other signal can convey a welcome greeting or shared experience quite so well. I have always had a ready smile. I'm not sure why, but I whimsically like to attribute it to some quirk inherited from my mother whose family name is "Smiley."

The simple expression is beautifully complex. A smile occurs when some bit of emotional data is routed to the brain and in response the zygomaticus major muscle, which resides in the cheek, tugs the lips upward, and the orbicularis oculi, which surrounds the eye socket, squeezes the outside corners into the shape of a crow's foot. The entire event is short – typically lasting up to four seconds - and is believed to be present from birth.

Research indicates that smiling can make you look younger and thinner. It can elevate your mood; British researchers found that one smile can generate the same level of brain stimulation as up to 2000 bars of chocolate. Smiling makes others perceive you to be courteous, likable, and competent. Studies have shown that smiles can forecast fulfillment in marriage, and a smile may even

be a predictor of one's lifespan. A study done with pictures of pre-1950's major league player baseball cards revealed that non-smilers lived an average of 72.9 years, and those pictured with a smile lived to an average of 80 years. Furthermore, it doesn't take science to tell us what we all know - smiling is contagious.

What I have been describing is the genuine expression of positive emotion and indicator of true enjoyment. Psychologists have labeled it the "Duchenne smile" after a French researcher. Muscles other than the two automatic "smile muscles" can simulate a smile that may be either brought about by or intended to hide such feelings as embarrassment, deceit, grief, or horror. It may accompany acts of lying or flirtation. Such "fake" smiles can be distinguished from the real thing because they rarely reach to include the eyes.

I am looking forward to seeing genuine smiles on the faces of AWG members as we meet for the first time in over a year on June 24. The presence of our members and sharing our creative endeavors through reading from our original work will certainly spark smiles of pleasure and enjoyment from all. (And Gail will almost certainly smile when you hand her your dues!)

Until then - keep smiling and write on.

Mary Berry

AWG President



Marguerite Gray: BRAG: Editing my next book, *Labor of Love* (release in Feb. 2022) and I'm a panelist at a writer's workshop in June.

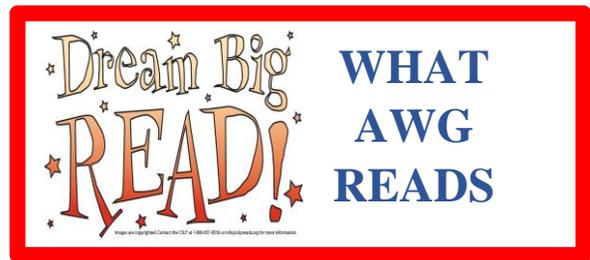
Hallie Wright: BRAG: I've been focusing on some smaller writing projects to get my creativity flowing again for my book.

David Dodge: BRAG: I'm writing again and enjoying it very much, and my treatments seem success. SAG: Build-up of dirt has caused water to come into the house and will require a lot of work.!

Coy Roper: BRAG: My novel *Zeke*, about a police chief in Northeastern Oklahoma in the 1960s, is now available as an ebook from Smashwords or Kindle.

Mary Berry: SAG: For the first time in almost ten years, I missed a deadline for an article. My editor was forgiving and will substitute an unpublished article I had previously submitted. BRAG: I have finally organized a collection of 3000+ handkerchiefs that I inherited from my grandmother about fifty years ago.

Carla Kerr: Unfortunately, I now have terminal cancer and will start chemotherapy within the next two weeks, but, I'm sure you know that chemo does not cure. It just kills cancer cells as they pop up and this can make one ill as well. I will follow the regimen until it gets too much to bear. I really enjoyed my experience with the club and wish all of you great success in your writing.



Marguerite Gray: Reading: *Under the Lilacs* by Louisa May Alcott and *The Ghosts of Culloden Moor Vol 1* by LL Muir.

Linda Gordon: Reading: *The Magic Strings of Frankie Presto* by Mitch Albom, a "magical novel about the power of talent to change our lives," narrated by the voice of Music.

Gail McMillan: Reading *Adobe Walls Bride*, the true story of Billy and Olive Dixon by John L. McCarty. Billy Dixon came to the Texas Panhandle to buffalo hunt. He was the hero of the battle of Adobe Walls, one of the most barbaric Indian battles in the Texas Plains history.

Carolyn Dycus: Reading: Lisa Gardner's *Before She Disappeared*. I uncovered an ancient little book gifted to my father in 1921. *Helen's Babies* by John Habberton, part of The Pleasant Hour Series. Excellent use of children's' dialogue made me laugh out loud! Published by Barse & Hopkins, NYC.

Mary Berry: Reading: I finished two volumes by Barbara Kingsolver - *The Bean Trees* and it's sequel *Pigs in Heaven* - and I am ready to read more from this talented storyteller.



Our Officers

President: Mary Berry (2022)
Executive VP: David Dodge (2021)
Program VP: Sharon Ellison (2022)
Secretary: Carolyn Dycus (2021)
Treasurer: Gail McMillan (2021)
Board Member: Linda Gordon (2021)
Board Member: Darla McCleod (2021)
Board Member: Mary Ann Smith (2022)
Board Member: Kay Talley (2022)
Alt. Board Member: Chuck Weber (2022)
Monthly Contest Coordinator: Linda Gordon

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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



July Contest

SUBJECT—HOME/ TRAVEL

Poetry 50 lines or less

Fiction — 1000 words or less

Deadline — July 12

MEETINGS RESUME

We are looking forward to seeing you all again on Thursday night. Come ready to read one of your WRITINGS.

Officer Elections

Officers and Board Members serve two-year terms. A nominating committee (Linda Gordon, Chair; Jo Cox, and Carolyn Dycus) offers the following slate of candidates for the offices and executive board positions that will expire in June 2021:

Executive Vice President:

Darla McCleod

Secretary:

Linda Gordon

Treasurer:

Gail McMillan

Board Member: Nominations are in order

Alternate Board Member:

Carolyn Dycus

Elections will be held at our Thursday night meeting.



DUES ARE DUE

\$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

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.