



# ABILENE WRITERS GUILD

## KEEPING MEMBERS IN TOUCH

ABILENE WRITERS GUILD.ORG  
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### Some Tips for the New Year

The New Year has arrived accompanied by feelings of hope and the promise of endless possibilities. We hope that soon it will be possible for members of AWG to once again assemble on the fourth Thursday of each month, but the city has yet to announce plans to re-open Rose Park Center. The regular AWG meetings remain suspended until further notice.

Meeting with fellow writers and attending informative presentations can inspire and stimulate writing, but for now we must each find our own motivation. The beginning of a new year is the traditional time to examine our lives and resolve to reorder and improve them. Whether you are actively involved in a project, have several in progress, or are experiencing an idle period, you might consider the following tips to enhance your productivity.

**Set specific goals** for yourself. If this is the year you would like to begin (or finish) that book, but the thought of such a huge undertaking is daunting, set smaller goals. Give yourself a minimum number of words to write daily and keep a record of the actual total each day in a writing journal.

**Set a deadline** for completing a project or a portion of it. Commit to a regular time to write and honor it as you do other appointments. Be as faithful to your writing commitment as you would be to a job.

**Stay physically active.** If you experience writer's block, step away. Go for a jog or a walk. Engage in

some physical activity to get your blood (and with it your creative juices) flowing. When you feel better, you write better.

**Switch writing directions.** If you find yourself bogged down or stalled out in your current project, change directions. Take a break from the novel or story in progress and write a poem or a letter or comments on social media. If you force your brain to think of something else for a while, you can return to your main project with a fresh approach.

**Take five.** Allow yourself short breaks to refresh and revive. Have a cup of coffee or call a friend, but be sure to return to the task at hand.

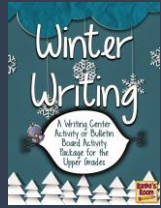
**Reward yourself.** Promise yourself a treat or little reward for reaching milestones toward your goal.

**Remember the journey is the destination.** Focus on writing rather than the story or novel or poem. Be in the present and give attention to your thoughts and words. Remember why you started writing in the first place and write for the joy of writing.

Until we are able to meet again, resolve to take advantage of the Members Only Contest and mark your calendar for the workshop scheduled for March 20.

Happy New Year and write on!

Mary Berry  
AWG President



**Brag**

**Sag**

**Marguerite Gray:** BRAG: Feb. 9, is the release of *Wait for Me. I'm so excited!!!* It is the finale of the Revolutionary Faith Series.

**Suanna Davis:** BRAGS: I have come up with a way to fix a story that was stuck. I am editing again.

**Darla McLeod:** BRAGS: Homeschooling my grandsons 12 and 9. Reading, Reading, and Reading. They have read at least 30 books so far. Writing, Writing, and Writing! Trying a new self-designed technique- Learning to write about interesting subjects while learning phonics, vocabulary, spelling, punctuation, rules of the English language, and writing rules. Succeeding!

**Chuck Webber:** BRAGS: I need a coach, I guess.

**David Dodge:** BRAG: I got a new three wire pacemaker. SAG: Had to stay in the hospital a little longer than anticipated.

**Cindy Mims:** BRAG: Who knew that chasing a puppy in the snow could inspire a story? I've always loved snow! Let it snow, let it snow, let it snow!

**Jo Cox:** BRAG: and SAG - still tweaking *Creation's Parables*.

**Mary Berry:** BRAG: My article examining 200 years of history of Black dolls is the cover story for the Jan/Feb issue of *Doll Castle News*, and one of my dolls is featured on the cover.

**What AWG  
Reads**



**Marguerite Gray:** I'm reading *The Thief of Blackfriar's Lane* by Michele Griep and *Faith's Mountain Home* by Misty Beller.

**Suanna Davis:** I am reading Eva St. John's series *The Quantum Curators*

**Chuck Webber:** Just finished Ken Follett's *Century Trilogy*, 3000 pages. Starting *The Undiscovered Self* by Carl Jung.

**Gail McMillan:** Reading *McTague*, by Wayne Hughes a story about custom harvester crews that cut wheat from the southern Texas Panhandle , up through the Great Plains states almost to Canada. My Mother cooked for the crew that cut for the outfit my Dad was Foreman for. So many memories!

**Carolyn Dycus:** Reading *The Sabbath* by Abraham Joshua Herschel. A classic piece for understanding the Jewish religious observance of Shabbat. As a Christian, I found new and challenging ways to sanctify our first day of the week. This little book is a poetic jewel. I am also reading *transforming-The Bible & the Lives of Transgender Christians* by Austen Hartley

**Jo Cox:** Finished reading - *A World From Dust: How the Periodic Table Shaped Life* by Ben McFarland. Excellent! He made chemistry and biology simple enough and interesting enough for an old art major. Now reading - *Spiritual Intelligence* by Kris Vallotton. So far, it is good information.

## 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	



## 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



## NOTICE

*Article X, Section A of the Abilene Writers Guild Bylaws allows any member in good standing to recommend changes by submitting them to the Executive Board by February 1<sup>st</sup> of each year. The Bylaws can be found on the AWG web page.*

*If you have any recommended changes, please send them to a Board member by February 1.*



## WINNERS

**January Members only Contest**

**1<sup>st</sup> Place – Cindy Mims  
“Chase the Puppy”**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Place – Chuck Webber  
“Comics”**

## OUR THANKS

*Dear Friends at Abilene Writers Guild,*

*Thank you all so very much for the wonderful journal and pen for each of our Audrey Grace House children! I am sure that they will be filled up in no time!*

*We appreciate you all thinking of our kiddos during this holiday season. We are so grateful!*

*We hope you had a very Merry Christmas. Best wishes to you all for a very Happy New Year!*

*Sincerely,  
Cara Stone*



## Special Thanks

*A big thank you to each of you who gave to the special Christmas project to make the Holiday Season one of greater joy for the children at Audrey Grace House. Thank you, Gail, for your sacrificial gift of time and effort to make it happen.*

## 2021 a Year of Writing Opportunities

**Members Only Contest  
February Words  
Love-Friends-Memories  
Deadline: February 12**

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**For Women Only  
Reflections of the year 2020  
<https://www.kaliedoscope.com>  
Deadline April 30, 2021**

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**Owl Canyon Press is pleased to announce that our next Hackathon is now accepting short story entries. For additional information, visit our website at:**

**<https://www.owlcanyonpress.com/hackathon5>**

**Deadline: March 15, 2021**

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**Humor Me  
A Funny Writers' Fellowship  
[writerscolony.org/fellowship](http://writerscolony.org/fellowship)**

**Deadline: February 22, 2021**

# 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](mailto: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.