

# WRITE AWAY

Rockford Writers' Guild | Since 1947

## RWG Zoom Meeting March 20

Join our Zoom Meeting: Sunday, March 20, from 1-3 p.m. Rockford time (CST). Our featured artist will be RWG member and author of "Baffled," Gary Lawrence. Gary is a retired creative writing professor. See more information in the next column and on page 3.



### MESSAGE FROM OUR MEMBERSHIP GUY, TOM WALSH

This TED video talks about writers finding their own voices, about digging deeper. Nicoletta Demetriou lets us in on her writing exercises designed to let our inner voices come through. — Tom Walsh

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aTg-PJQ9Dy7Q>

### ROCKFORD REVIEW YOUTH POETRY AWARD — \$600 IN PRIZE MONEY

Our anonymous donor has sent \$100 and a generous family friend of mine has sent \$500 for our Rockford Review Youth Poetry Award winners in the 13-18 and Under 13 age categories. Sharpen up your writing skills, kids, and enter our contest, deadline May 15. Parents and grandparents, please encourage your kids and/or grandkids to enter the contest. In addition to prize money, winning poems will be published in our 2022 Summer-Fall edition of *The Rockford Review*.

The contest is open to all kids and the theme is "Tomorrow." Limit poems to 50 lines or less. The \$600 prize money will be distributed to all the winners. Submit entries via our website submission form or email them to: [sally@rockfordwritersguild.org](mailto:sally@rockfordwritersguild.org).

## March 16 Zoom Poetry Workshop

Please let me know if you plan to attend the free poetry workshop (7 p.m.) led by Rockford Poet Laureate, Christine Swanberg. "Crafting Comparisons" [sally@rockfordwritersguild.org](mailto:sally@rockfordwritersguild.org)

### WRITING PROMPT FOR MAR. MEETING

Hana Ferguson suggested a writing prompt for the next meeting, March 20 — "Perception." Attendees of the Zoom meeting will be able to share their poems (50 lines or less) and flash fiction (1,000 words or less) related to the above prompt. For more about the meeting, see page 3.

### OFFER FROM GARY LAWRENCE, SPEAKER, MARCH 20 MEETING

Gary Lawrence, retired creative writing and English composition professor, has offered to give complimentary digital (pdf file) copies of his short story collection, "Baffled," to attendees at our March 20 Zoom meeting. People can let me know after the meeting and I'll send a copy of his book to each of you.

### DEADLINES:

#### "Raspberries" Poetry Contest (Members Only)

Submit up to three new, previously unpublished poems (50 lines or less). Theme is *Raspberries*. The deadline is March 15, 2022. Winning entries published in *The Rockford Review*, Summer-Fall edition, 2022. Winners announced in the May 2022 newsletter.

#### "Expectations" Prose Contest (Members Only)

Submit up to three previously unpublished prose pieces, each 1,300 words or less. Theme is *Expectations*. The deadline is April 15, 2022. Winning entries published in *The Rockford Review*, Summer-Fall edition, 2022. Winners announced in the June 2022 newsletter.

#### 2022 Summer-Fall Edition (Members Only)

Submit up to three new, previously unpublished poems (50 lines or less) or three new prose pieces (1,300 words or less) or a combination of up to three poems and prose pieces to be considered for publication in *The Rockford Review*. No theme. Simultaneous submissions are fine, as long as you notify us. Please include your bio, 50 words or less. Deadline: April 15, 2022. Notification by June 15, 2022.

### GOOD NEWS about GUILD WRITERS

To have your literary good news published here and on our Facebook page every month, email [sally@rockfordwritersguild.org](mailto:sally@rockfordwritersguild.org).

"Second Hope," **Mike Bayles'** next book, is expected to be released around May this year. It contains three sections. The first, *Second Hope*, is a sequel to "Breakfast at the Good Hope Home," in which the main character visits his Alzheimer's father in the nursing home. The second section, *Nets Must Be Cast and Tossed Aside*, is a collection of short stories. The third section, *All Eyes on the River*, is a collection of poetry. The theme of the book is rediscovery after loss. *The Avocet* will publish one of his poems in its spring issue. On April 2, he will participate in the Bishop Hill Book Fair. On April 30, he will host an open mic poetry reading at the Geneseo Public Library.

**Charlotte Digregorio** of Winnetka, IL, was interviewed in an hour-long podcast about the art of poetry and getting it published. (The Boyd Chronicles, Georgia.) On the podcast, she also read from her inspirational book, "Ripples of Air: Poems of Healing," featuring poetry of fourteen forms. In other news, she received an Honorable Mention in the 2022 Poetry Challenge, sponsored by Highland Park Poetry (IL), and another Honorable Mention in the Illinois State Poetry Society's Annual Contest. Further, her free verse poem, "Afterlife," is appearing in an exhibit at the Addison Center for the Arts (Addison, IL), beside a painting by Artist Susan Cargill who was inspired by the poem to create art. (This exhibit is a collaboration between the Illinois State Poetry Society and Illinois artists.) Also, Charlotte gave a two-hour workshop about haiku and senryu at the Annual Conference of the Arizona State Poetry Society (via Zoom). It culminated in a haiku reading by participants from throughout the U.S. Lastly, Charlotte had a poem accepted for the 2022 anthology to be published by Haiku Canada.

**Eunice Fisher's** apartment building in St.Petersburg prints a monthly newsletter for residents ("*The Messenger*"), which also includes creative writing by some of the residents, and the next two issues will include (one in each issue) Eunice's essays that were in the Summer-Fall 2021 edition of *The Rockford Review*,

Listen to and read about **Susan Brazas Goldberg's** experiences reading aloud to her children. WNIJ "Perspective: Reading out loud" — <https://www.northernpublicradio.org/wnij-news/2022-02-25/perspective-stories-out-loud>.

Author **Dan Klefstad** writes a delicious blog about supporting Indie Bookstores: <https://danklefstad.medium.com/the-true-value-of-indie-bookstores-lets-do-the-numbers-a619fa5f1b27>. And, another delicious satire "Dear Publisher: Notes From a Disgruntled Rejectee" — <https://www.chicagowrites.org/blog/entry/dear-publisher>.

**Gary Lawrence**, a Rockford native and long-time RWG member, will be our featured artist at our March 20 Zoom meeting. Gary earned a BA in English from Rockford College and an MFA in Writing from VCFA. He has published a short story collection set in Rockford, and recently retired from teaching college English and Creative Writing.

**Wilda Morris** has a poem in the February issue of *Moss Piglet*. *Brass Bell* and *kontinuum*, a journal of contemporary haiku, each accepted one of her haiku and *Failed Haiku* accepted three of her senryu. Rengay she wrote with Wisconsin poet Jo Balistreri have been accepted by *Fireflies' Light* and *Failed Haiku*. Wilda will be participating in a poetry reading with the rest of the P2 Collective at Cliff Dwellers in Chicago on April 26 (Covid permitting). She has had a poem accepted for the Spring issue of *The Avocet*. Her piece, "Spooked," appears on *Five Minute Lit* at <https://www.fiveminutelit.com/five-minutes/spooked>.

### NEW MEMBERS

**New Members for 2022:** Please welcome **Judy Cummings** of Loves Park, IL; **Bethamie Montieth** of Jefferson, WI; **Michael Peterson** of Genoa, IL.

**New Members for 2021:** Please welcome **Zafarul Azam** of Rockford, IL; **Steven Bates** of Ada, OH; **John Desjarlais** of Hendersonville, NC; **Gerri Hood** of Rockford, IL; **Elizabeth Jahn** of Lee Center, IL; **Blanche Kabengele** of Cincinnati, OH; **Aavyn Lee** of Plainville, GA; **Kimberly McKee** of South Beloit, IL; **Ali Maloney** of Rockford, IL; **Rashid Osmani** of Kildeer, IL; **Pete Plescia** of Galesburg, IL; and **Matthew Vitek** of Roscoe, IL.

## February 20, 2022 RWG Zoom Meeting Notes



A monumental thank you to Hana Ferguson for leading our Zoom meeting and to acclaimed author and RWG member Dan Klefstad for sharing his writing and marketing expertise with us. We sat, mesmerized, by what he had to say. Dan is the author of the popular novel, "Fiona's Guardians," and deserves kudos for his inspirational presentation to our group.

Unfortunately, we don't have a screenshot from the meeting. Those who attended were: Marie Asner, Mike Bayles, Judy Cummings, Karen Danielson, Rick and Thomas Danielson, John Desjarlais, Charlotte Digregorio, Hana Ferguson, Susan Brazas Goldberg, Cindy Guentherman, Blanche Kabengele, Dan Klefstad, Zoe Norwood, Tom Walsh, and me (Sally Hewitt). If I missed anyone, please let me know.

### Upcoming: March 20, 2022 RWG Zoom Meeting

RWG member and author of "Baffled," Gary Lawrence will be the featured artist at our March 20 meeting. After earning an English degree from Rockford College, Gary worked 30 years as an aerospace technical writer before earning an MFA in Creative Writing from Vermont College of Fine Arts. He taught English composition and creative writing for 10 years at Glendale Community College and Cochise College in AZ (mostly online). In 2013, he published a short story collection titled "Baffled." One of his short stories, "The Best Laid Plans," was published in the Summer Fall 2021 *Rockford Review* and his essay, "On Writing," was included in our 2022 Winter-Spring book. Several of his stories, literary analysis papers, and workshops are available online, including at his writer website (<https://garyswritestuff.wordpress.com>) and at NPR Northern IL ("Rockford Native Mines His Past for First Book," 6/6/2014). Gary has created a PowerPoint presentation for the meeting.

We hope to see you at our March Zoom meeting from 1-3 p.m. Rockford time (CST). The link to join all upcoming Zoom meetings is below. Hana opens the Zoom meeting room at 12:50 p.m. Join us — you'll be glad you did! Anyone can attend our meetings. Writing prompt for our March meeting: *Perception*.

### April 24, 2022 RWG Zoom Meeting

Jack Ryan, longtime editor-in-chief and publisher of *The Enterprise-Journal* in McComb, Mississippi, and university colleague of RWG's Tom Walsh, will be our featured artist at our April 24 meeting.

Zoom meeting link: <https://zoom.us/j/5670839995?pwd=SEhwL2h0U1BTNkN2OEwyaWlkV0ljZz09>

### BOARD POSITION OPEN

Because Becky Wyant had to resign, RWG has an opening on the Board. If anyone is interested in taking on the position of Vice President, please contact me at [sally@rockfordwritersguild.org](mailto:sally@rockfordwritersguild.org). According to our Constitution, “the Vice President shall arrange interactive educational programs for meetings and special events and preside in the absence of the President.” Our last meeting before the pandemic occurred in February 2020. With the onset of the delta variant surge, it’s unlikely we’ll have another meeting in the near future.



Photo credit: [pixabay.com](https://pixabay.com)

### Rockford Writers’ Guild Board of Directors

**Sally Hewitt** President & Editor  
**Cindy Guentherman** Treasurer, Social Media Editor  
**Hana Ferguson** Recording Secretary, Social Media Director  
**Tom Walsh** Membership Director

#### Join the Rockford Writers’ Guild! (Or Renew)

Membership Levels:

Adult \$35 (1-yr) \$65 (2-yr) \$95 (3-yr)

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Library \$25 (1-yr) Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Your membership level: \_\_\_\_\_

Complete form and send (snail mail) check or money order to:

Rockford Writers’ Guild

P.O. Box 858

Rockford, IL 61105

Or, Join/Renew online at [www.rockfordwritersguild.org](http://www.rockfordwritersguild.org).