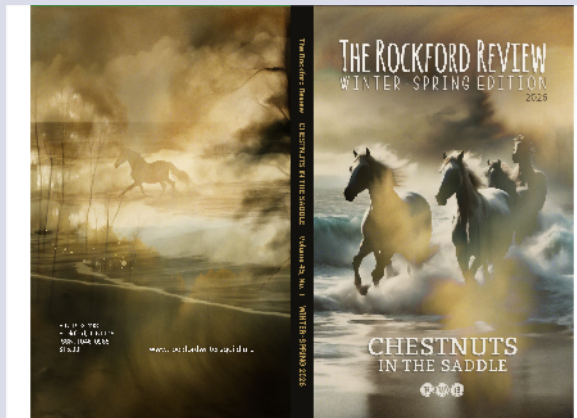


# WRITE AWAY

Rockford Writers' Guild | Since 1947

## RWG Zoom Meeting January 25

Join our Zoom Meeting: Sunday, JANUARY 25 from 1-3 p.m. Central Time. RWG member Jennifer Lagier will talk about her new book. See more on page 3.



## GIVE A GIFT OF AN RWG MEMBERSHIP!

DO YOU HAVE A WRITER FRIEND WHO WOULD LOVE TO GET PUBLISHED AND/OR BE PART OF A GROUP OF TALENTED WRITERS? WE HAVE THE SOLUTION — WHY NOT GIVE THEM A GIFT OF AN RWG MEMBERSHIP? IT'S EASY: JUST GO TO [ROCKFORDWRITERSGUILD.ORG](http://ROCKFORDWRITERSGUILD.ORG) AND CLICK ON "GIVE A GIFT."

**2026**

**JANUARY 2026 MEMBERS: DUES REMINDER (Due by JANUARY 31)**

Barbara Brown  
Lynda Rush Myers  
Paul Smith

## Happy New Year!

**Order your extra Rockford Review books by Jan. 12**

## 12 and Under Poetry Winners

First place: **BLYTHE CERUTTI** FOR "UNTITLED"  
Second place: **ARELY GUTIERREZ MENDOZA** FOR "FALL"  
Third place: **CONNER DOUGLAS** FOR "THE DEATH OF MY PET CATERPILLAR"  
Honorable mention: **JISA PATEL** FOR "THE WISHING WELL"  
Honorable mention ii: **KA'MIAH GARCIA** FOR "LIFE"

## Age 13 to 18 Poetry Winners

First place: **Imran Mardini** for "Regal Journey"  
Second place: **Effadea Rowe** for "Stay at Home Mom"  
Third place: **Samantha Schirro** for "Social Injustice"  
Honorable mention: **Kate Cain** for "Ode to Our Armed Forces"  
Honorable mention ii: **Ava Dabek** for "Bruising"

## 12 and Under Prose Winner

First place: **Anna Pilcher** for "Eleanor's Adventures"

## Age 13-18 Prose Winner

First place: **Khen Julia** for "Oh God, I Was Only Fifteen"

## 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).

**Carol Alfus'** first chapbook, "I Would Swim in Such a Sky" was recently released by Kelsay Books. It is available on Amazon, Kelsay Books' website [kelsaybooks.com](http://kelsaybooks.com), and at Read Between the Lynes bookstore on the Woodstock, IL, Square.

One of **Mike Bayles'** poems appears in the November/December issue of Northern Stars Magazine.

**Olivia Diamond's** my new novel "Andalusia" has been published on Amazon and it is now available at <https://a.co/d/hovIEUV>.

**Charlotte Digregorio** is honored to chair a panel at the American Literature Association Conference to be held in Chicago this spring. The panel, organized by the Haiku Society of America, is titled "American Haiku: Gender, Language, and Race."

**Peggy Heitmann's** poem, "I Have a Question: Are You Related to Joseph Christopher Bates" was published online by *Epistemic Literary* on September 8, 2025. In the following link, Peggy is reading her poem. <https://epistemiclit.com/current-issue/issue-six/i-have-a-question/>. Her poem, "Granddaddy Cauley Rolled Country Gentlemen Cigarettes" was accepted in *Kakalak 2026*, a print literary magazine.

**Dr. Blanche Saffron Kabengele's** poem "Poetry Is" was Shortlisted for The Prose Poem's short prose poem contest. Her poem will be published in an upcoming journal.

**Jennifer Lagier's** new book, "When We Don't See It," has been published by Kelsay Books. Copies may be purchased from Kelsay Books, [When We Don't See It – Kelsay Books](http://kelsaybooks.com) or through Amazon. She'll be our featured artist for our January 25 Zoom meeting.

**Jude McCanse's** poem, "Ancient Ground," won first place in the Peatland Poetry Challenge sponsored by the DNR's Volo Bog in Illinois.

**Wilda Morris's** most recent publications are in *Storyteller Poetry Review*, *Pulse*, *Shadow Pond Journal*, *Modern Haiku*, *Hedgerow*, *Under the Basho*, and *Tidings*. Her poem "Unnamed or Named Women in the Hebrew Scriptures Are Amazing" appears in a new book, *Ancient Israel's Women of Faith: A Survey of Heroines of the Old Testament* by Claude F. Marriotini.

## NEW MEMBERS 2025

**New Members for 2025:** Please welcome **Catherine Murphy** of Winnebago, IL; **Margaret Wagner** of Arlington, VA.

And, thanks to those of you who have renewed and continue to support RWG!

## NEW ZOOM MEETING LINK — THE OLD ONE DOESN'T WORK

RWG Zoom link: <https://us05web.zoom.us/j/5534438062?pwd=1UGf4Ecnqy3dGZelb9TR9ci-faOGx8V.1>

### RWG Zoom Meeting: January 25

RWG member and prolific author, **Jennifer Lagier**, will be our featured artist for our January Zoom meeting. Jennifer will talk about her new book, “When We Don't See It,” which has been published by Kelsay Books. She'll talk about her inspirations, her writing process, and how to go about selling a book. (Jan. 19 is MLK holiday.)



### Next Zoom Meeting: February 22

**Christina Marrocco**, Ph.D., is a lush and candid writer and poet who delves into dark humor and human complexity, taking readers on a journey to remember. Her work often centers on complex family issues and characters who encounter realistic and multidimensional struggles in a working class environment.



### WHY DON'T YOU JOIN US?

Think about gifting a friend a membership to RWG — with the promise they'll be published in our Summer-Fall Rockford Review.

### Rockford Writers' Guild Board of Directors

**Sally Hewitt** President & Editor  
**Dr. Blanche Kabengele** Vice President  
**Hana Fadness** Secretary/Treasurer, Social Media Director  
**Zafarul Azam** Membership Director  
**Tom Walsh** Mail Director

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

Membership Levels:

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

Family or Couple: \$50 (1-yr) \$90 (2-yr) \$130 (3-yr)

Youth/Student \$15 (1-yr)

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 493

Rockford, IL 61105

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