

WRITE AWAY

Rockford Writers' Guild | Since 1947

RWG Zoom Meeting MARCH 15

Join our Zoom Meeting: Sunday, MARCH 15 from 1-3 p.m. Central Time. Author and RWG Vice President Dr. Blanche Saffron Kabengele will be our featured artist. See more on page 3.



Image by Pixabay

2026

MARCH 2026 MEMBERS: DUES REMINDER (Due by MARCH 31)

Mike Bayles
 Judith Kittredge
 Marie Krohn
 Araceli Olvera
 James Whitehead

IT'S TIME TO SUBMIT YOUR STORIES AND POEMS

See the deadlines in the next column: April 15 is when everything should be sent to me, sally@rockfordwritersguild.org. I look forward to reading what you send! Remember, every RWG member is guaranteed publication in our Summer-Fall edition of The Rockford Review.

You should receive your Winter-Spring Rockford Review soon. A big thank you to Zaf Azam, Hana Fadness, and Tom Walsh for all the help with mailing!

Writing Opportunities

“Optimism” Poetry Contest (Members Only)

Submit up to three new, previously unpublished poems (50 lines or less). Theme is *Optimism*. The deadline is April 15, 2026. Winning entries published in *The Rockford Review*, Summer-Fall edition, 2026. Winners announced in the June 2026 newsletter.

“Procrastination” Prose Contest (Members Only)

Submit up to three previously unpublished prose pieces, each 1,300 words or less. Theme is *Procrastination*. The deadline is April 15, 2026. Winning entries published in *The Rockford Review*, Summer-Fall edition, 2026. Winners announced in the June 2026 newsletter.

2026 Winter-Spring 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Submit up to three new, previously unpublished poems (50 lines or less) or three new prose pieces (1,300 words or less) or a combination of up to three poems and prose pieces to be considered for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, 2026. Notification by June 15, 2026.

Submission Guidelines:

Poetry: 3 poems per submission, each poem 50 lines or less (including blank line spaces), no more than 65 letters/spaces per line)

Prose: 3 prose pieces, each 1,300 words or less

Bio: send a short bio of 50 words or less

Word document (.docx), Times New Roman, 12-point font

Simultaneous submissions: yes, if you inform us.

Submit online at www.rockfordwritersguild.org or send to: sally@rockfordwritersguild.org.

GOOD NEWS about GUILD WRITERS

To have your literary good news published here and on our Facebook page every month, email 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, and at Read Between the Lynes bookstore on the Woodstock, IL, Square.

Marie Asner and husband, Harold Asner, known as The Poetry Couple, will participate in an Open Mic Poetry Reading on February 27 in Overland Park, Kansas. On March 2, they will do a poetry reading at Asbury Hall, Overland Park, as part of a recital to raise money for music scholarships. Marie Asner's poetry will be highlighted at the 2026 Convention of the Missouri Federation of Music Clubs in May, 2026 in St. Louis, Missouri. The theme of the Conference is "Music Can Change The World."

One of **Mike Bayles'** poems was posted on newversenews.com on February 13.

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 seeks tanka, previously published or unpublished, for her blog, www.charlottedigregorio.wordpress.com. You may email her at c-books@hotmail.com with JUST ONE tanka, including publication credit, if previously-published. Please submit by March 31. There are many examples of tanka – a Japanese-style poem of five lines with a maximum of 31 syllables – on the blog, that will introduce you to it. Tanka has no title, and punctuation and capitalization are used sparingly, if at all. (Charlotte's blog includes The Daily Haiku with poets from 61 countries.)

Peggy Heitmann's poem, "On Adopting a New Bird Mythology After My Mastectomies," appears in *Quartet Journal*, Winter Issue 2026, Volume 6, Issue 1.

Paul Smith has a poem published on a website called Tap Into Poetry. The poem is called "Hardboiled Egg." <https://tapintopoetry.wordpress.com/2026/02/01/tap-into-poetry-18/#hardboiled-egg-by-paul-smith> Paul had three poems published at a blog called Poetry Super Highway: February 23–March 1, 2026: Poetry from K.R. Morrison and Paul Smith - Poetry Super Highway

Wilda Morris' latest publications were in the issue of *Moss Piglet* focused on Chicago; #femku (haiku and a single-author rengay), and Storyteller Poetry Review's upcoming issue on aging.

NEW MEMBERS 2026

New Members for 2026: Please welcome **Ethan Quirk** of Rockton, IL; **Paula Coulahan** of Rockford, IL; **Jeanne Spraetz** of Savanna, IL; and **Adelaide (Addy) Whitehouse** of Waukesha, WI.

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

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

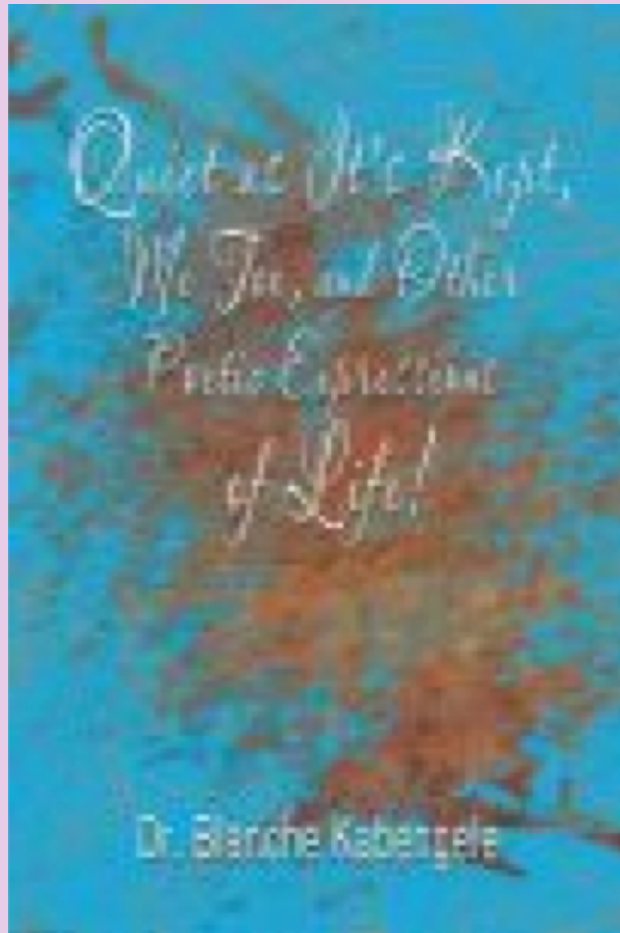
RWG Zoom link: <https://us05web.zoom.us/j/5534438062?pwd=1UGf4Ecnqy3dGZelb9TR9ci-faOGx8V.1>

RWG Zoom Meeting: March 15

Blanche Kabengele is the author of “Conjugal Relationships of Africans and African Americans,” The Edwin Mellen Press 2016, and “Quiet as It’s Kept, Me too, and Other Poetic Expressions of Life,” Xlibris publishers 2018! Blanche holds a doctorate from UC’s College of Education, and has poems published in the *East Fork Journal*, *For A Better World*, *Ohio Writers Association Anthology*, *Poetically Yours*, *Poetry Against Racism & Hate USA*, *The Prose Poem*, *Rockford Writers Guild*, *Verse-Virtual*, *Willawa*, *W-Poesis*, *The Woolf and the WAYE*. Blanche and husband Peter, both retired, enjoy traveling, and taking care of the flowers, hummingbirds, woodpeckers, and owls they welcomed in their garden.

Blanche describes poetry as “*A bathtub filled with bubbling philosophical hooch ...*”

Find Blanche at blkabengele@gmail.com

**Next RWG Zoom Meeting: April 19**

Help us welcome **Adam al-Sirgany**, Rockford’s Poet Laureate for 2026-2027. Adam will share his poetry and writing success with us.



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
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 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.