

WRITE AWAY

Rockford Writers' Guild | Since 1947

RWG Zoom Meeting JUNE 28

Join our Zoom Meeting: Sunday, JUNE 28 from 1-3 p.m. Central Time. (Father's Day is June 21.) Author and RWG member Carol Alfus will be our featured artist. See more on page 3.



Images by Pixabay

“Optimism” Poetry Contest Winners

John Davis for “Open Window, Collioure”
Blanche Kabengele for “*not today*”
Mary Lamphere for “The Journey”
Wilda Morris for “Growing”
Paul Smith for “Make Sure I’m Dead”

Congratulations to the winners of both contests — our judge said she had a difficult time choosing among such exceptional poems and stories.

“Procrastination” Prose Contest Winners

Mike Bayles for “Many Somedays”
Susan Goldberg for “The Picture Box”
Frances Jaeger for “The 1 PM Train”
Pam Pettigrew-Shields for “In the Library ...”

Kids’ Poetry Contest

The Rockford Review Youth Poetry Contest: \$700 prize money plus publication. Deadline: November 15. Send entries to sally@rockfordwritersguild.org.

RWG BOARD ELECTION

A big thank you to all who voted for the RWG Board slate! The following officers will continue their terms on July 1. A big thank you to all Board of Directors, who tirelessly volunteer their time!

2025-26 RWG Board of Directors

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



JUNE MEMBERS: DUES REMINDER (Due by JUNE 30)

No June members

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."

An author interview of **Mike Bayles** for The Midwest Writing Center's Write More Light was aired online in May. It can be found on Youtube. On May 23, one of his poems was posted on The Weekly Avocet. The Avocet accepted another of his poems for the Summer print issue of The Avocet. On May 26, he did a painting for a Paint Night class.

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

Laurie Didesch recently had her poem "If Only" accepted for publication in the 22nd issue of *WayWords Literary Journal*.

Charlotte Digregorio chaired a poetry panel in May at the Annual Conference of the American Literature Association, held in Chicago. The panel was sponsored by the Haiku Society of America with the theme of "American Haiku: Gender, Language and Race." Charlotte said the panel accomplished its objective to bring increased prominence to modern haiku among academics. In other news, she reports that her ninth book, "Wondrous Instruction and Advice from Global Poets: How to Write and Publish Moving Poems and Books and Publicize Like a Pro," is into its fifth printing. It was released in April 2025.

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

The Prose Poem published **Dr. Blanche Saffron Kabengele's** poem "Poetry Is" and *The Prairie Review* published all four poems she submitted: "At the Cusp of Envy," "For All I Know," "El Diablo and the Tempest," and "more of what."

Wilda Morris had five poems published in an anthology, *Haiku for Soulmates*. *Frogpond* accepted a renga she wrote with John Thompson. Other publications include haiku in *Asahi Haikuist*, *Autumn Moon*, *The Solitary Daily*, *Hedgerow*, and *Cornflower*. She also had poems accepted by *Moss Piglet*, *AUSI Journal*, and *Storyteller Poetry Review*.

In April, **Paula Morhardt's** first mystery will be published. "Domesticated Ferals: The Mystery" will haunt everyone who reads it! Sometime in the fall of 2026, the fourth in the Gray Valley series, "Flutterbys Come to Gray Valley," will be published. We are in the illustration phase right now.

NEW MEMBERS 2026

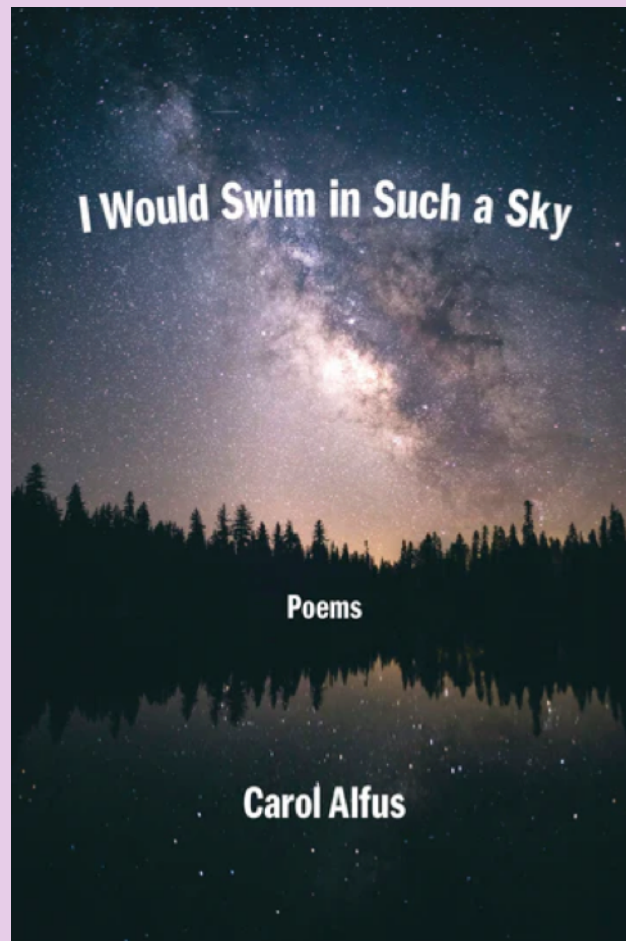
New Members for 2026: Please welcome **Paula Coulahan** of Rockford, IL; **Kyla Cunningham** of Rockford, IL; **Gary Lawrence** of Rockford, IL; **Ethan Quirk** of Rockton, IL; **Dawn Sopron** of Crystal Lake, IL; **Jeanne Spraez** of Savanna, IL; **Adelaide (Addy) Whitehouse** of Waukesha, WI; **Winnebago Public Library** of Winnebago, IL; and **Fred Zuroske** of Loves Park, IL.

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: June 28

Carol Alfus' poetry is inspired by current events, personal memories, and the natural world. Her poems have been aired on WNIJ's *Poetically Yours* segment, published online and in regional, national and international journals. Alfus' poetry has received recognition from the Illinois State Poetry Society, Poets and Patrons, and Highland Park Poetry, and has been nominated for the Pushcart Prize. Her first chapbook of poetry, "I Would Swim in Such a Sky," was published in 2025 by Kelsay Books.)

**Next RWG Zoom Meeting: July 19**

Our July featured artist will be Rhianna Bunch (R.E. Bunch). Originally from Chicago, Illinois—a city notable for its culinary specialties, intriguing mysteries, and atmospheric frights—R.E. Bunch creates literary works that captivate readers with their distinctive qualities.



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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Complete form and send (snail mail) check or money order to:
 Rockford Writers' Guild
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