

# WRITE AWAY

Rockford Writers' Guild | Since 1947

## RWG Zoom Meeting AUGUST 16

Join our Zoom Meeting: Sunday, OCTOBER 18 from 1-3 p.m. Central Time. RWG member and prolific author Paula Morhardt will be our featured artist. See more on page 3.



Image by Pixabay

## Writing Opportunities

### “Courage” Poetry Contest (Members Only)

Submit up to three new, previously unpublished poems (50 lines or less). Theme is *Courage*. The deadline is October 15, 2026. Winning entries published in *The Rockford Review*, Winter-Spring edition, 2027. Winners announced in the December 2026 newsletter.

### “Persistence” Prose Contest (Members Only)

Submit up to three previously unpublished prose pieces, each 1,300 words or less. Theme is *Persistence*. The deadline is October 15, 2026. Winning entries published in *The Rockford Review*, Winter-Spring edition, 2027. Winners announced in the December 2026 newsletter.

### 2027 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Submit up to three new, previously unpublished poems (50 lines or less) or three new prose pieces (1,300 words or less) or a combination of up to three poems and prose pieces to be considered for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: October 15, 2026. Notification by December 15, 2026.

Submit online at [www.rockfordwritersguild.org](http://www.rockfordwritersguild.org) or send to: [sally@rockfordwritersguild.org](mailto:sally@rockfordwritersguild.org).

No post office mail submissions: please, we won't open them

## Happy Halloween — and Happy Thanksgiving to Our Canadian Members!

### ROCKFORD WRITERS' GUILD YOUTH POETRY CONTEST

Deadline: **November 15**

Money prizes available! Please encourage youth writers to enter our youth poetry contest (up through age 18).

Prizes: **\$700 in total plus publication in our Winter-Spring Rockford Review.**

Submit online at: [rockfordwritersguild.org](http://rockfordwritersguild.org) or send to: [sally@rockfordwritersguild.org](mailto:sally@rockfordwritersguild.org).

### SEPTEMBER MEMBERS: DUES REMINDER (due by SEPTEMBER 30)

Rhonda Parsons  
Annalyce Schwitters

### OCTOBER MEMBERS: DUES REMINDER (due by OCTOBER 31)

Jeanne Vargas

### NOVEMBER MEMBERS: DUES REMINDER (due by NOVEMBER 30)

Dan Klefstad  
Library, Madison, WI  
Sam Perone  
Jane Richards  
Kendra Schiffman  
Christine Swanberg  
Kathleen Weber

## 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.

The Kansas City Musical Club, is an organization that is over 100 years old. The purpose is to raise money for music scholarships and this is done by presenting seven concerts throughout the year. This year, 2026, the National Federation of Music Clubs has honored the Kansas City Musical Club with a plaque for poetry readings at the beginning of music recitals. Member **Marie Asner's** work to honor the poetry of poets such as Edgar Lee Masters, with her written work, has earned the National Award. In May, 2026, The Missouri Federation of Musical Clubs honored Marie Asner for writing poems for the yearly state convention, to begin the Convention and for the Convention Program.

One of **Mike Bayles'** poems was published in *The Weekly Avocet* online magazine on September 19. On September 20, he took part in The Butterfly Effect readings in Burlington, Iowa. He did a book signing on September 26 at the Brewed Book, and sold books at the Art Walk that night. Both events were in Davenport. He read a poem for the Rattlecast Invited Open Mic on September 27.

**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** will be a Featured Poet in Highland Park, IL, at Highland Park Poetry's Reading, Saturday, Oct. 10, from 4 to 6 p.m., to be held at Secret World Books. She will also sign her books. There will be an open mic for poets afterward, so anyone who is in the Chicago metro area is invited to come and read a few of their poems. Further, Charlotte was recently honored to be interviewed on "Poetry Today," a T.V. program hosted by Highland Park Poetry. You can watch the 30-minute broadcast by VBV Entertainment Company, replayed on YouTube: <https://youtube.com/watch?v=S7avVWZTppk>.

**Peggy Heitmann** has been named as a finalist in the Ron Rash Poetry Contest 2026 for her poem, "Planting Fear." Her poem, "Sunflower Awakening," has garnered an acceptance in Main Street Rag Magazine. And, Peggy is pleased to announce she has a poetry book titled "Some Call It a Journey" that will be released Fall 2026 by Kelsay books.

Kelsay Books will be publishing **Dr. Blanche Kabengele's** collaborative full-length poetry book, "We Came & Gullah," which Blanche has been working on with fellow Cincinnati poet Eileen Trauth, in 2027. Also, *Neon and Smoke* is publishing Blanche's poem "Letting Go." *The Prairie Review* has published three of her poems.

**Mary Lamphere** had two poems selected to be published in the Fall 2026 edition of the "anthology of poetry815," including one which will be a reprint of her very first RWG submission, titled "Lemmings," published in *The Rockford Review* Summer-Fall 2007. The second title is one Mary started for the RWG "Procrastination" theme and ironically did not finish in time. Ironically? Perhaps predictably, lol. She has also released a new novel, *The First Ghost*, Samantha Gordon is haunted by the ghost of the man she accidentally killed.

#FenKu, a feminist haiku journal, nominated **Wilda Morris's** haibun, "Junior," for a Touchstone Award. Her other recent publications include *Storyteller Poetry Review*, *Hedgerow*, *Wales Haiku Review*, *Chrysanthemum*, *Enchanted Garden*, and *Moss Piglet*, as well as *Distilled Lives*, Vol. 8, the forthcoming anthology from the Illinois State Poetry Society. Wilda still serves on the boards of both the ISPS and Poets & Patrons of Chicago. Two of Wilda's haiku pieces were accepted by *Haiku Canada Review*.

## NEW MEMBERS 2026

**New Members for 2026:** Please welcome **Paula Coulahan** of Rockford, IL; **Kyla Cunningham** of Rockford, IL; **Jim Hammack** of DeKalb, IL; **Anna Jollymore** of Rockford, IL; **Gary Lawrence** of Rockford, IL; **Gabrielle Person** of Rockford, IL; **Ethan Quirk** of Rockton, IL; **Nancy Runner** of Jamestown, NC; **Dawn Sopron** of Crystal Lake, IL; **Jeanne Spraeetz** of Savanna, IL; **Adelaide (Addy) Whitehouse** of Waukesha, WI; **Winnebago Public Library** of Winnebago, IL; and **Fred Zuroske** of Loves Park, IL.

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

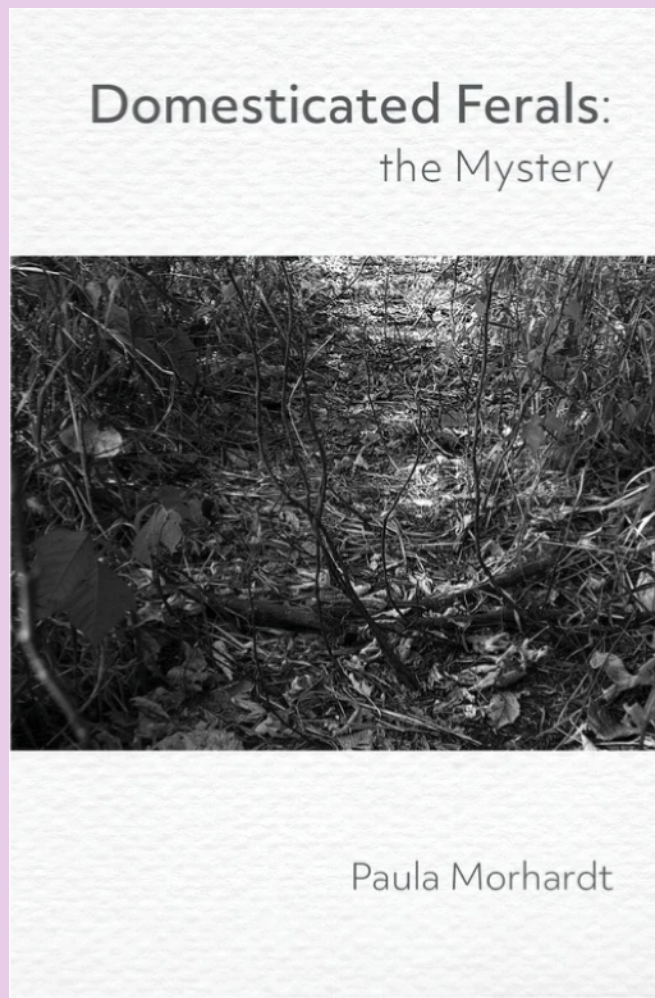
## ZOOM MEETING LINK

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

## RWG Zoom Meeting: October 18

**Paula Morhardt** was born on April 1, and has never recovered from that auspicious beginning. Losing her husband suddenly, and her mother the next morning, propelled what had been a quiet writing life into something she could actually do. With the grief that took over for a while, she wrote and self-published "Widow's Walk: How My World Ended and What Happened After," a journal of her journey through the beginning of widowhood. Three years later she wrote and self-published "Widow's Tears of Sorrow," also through Amazon. A publishing company in MN, Fox Pointe Publishing LLC, thought she had promise, and became her publisher. Her eighth children's book, "Flutterbys Come to Gray Valley" will be published in the Fall of 2026.

Paula moved to Richland Center, WI, in 2023, and is learning to lean on only herself for the first time in her long life. She loves her little house, her tiny yard, and all the birds, squirrels, rabbits, deer, possums, raccoons, and other wonderful wildlife that call Richland Center home as well. Many books later, she is still writing and publishing with Fox Pointe. Her 17th book, "Domesticated Ferals: the Mystery" is her first mystery story. Her 8th children's book, "Flutterbys Come to Gray Valley" will be published in the Fall of 2026. It is the fourth book in the Gray Valley series. The fifth, and last, book in the series will be published in 2027. Will there be more? Paula just smiles thoughtfully.





### 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).