

“Books are the treasured wealth of the world and the fit inheritance of generations and nations.”
— Henry David Thoreau, Walden

LA PLUME

Official Newsletter of the Writers’ Guild of Acadiana

March 2023

Time to renew your membership?

Board Members:

President John Comeaux, Vice President Christopher Fontenot, Treasurer Beth Davis, Publicist Ellen Threatts, Secretary Ed Gauthier, Webmaster Rhonda Lejeune, Historian Pamela Harrington, Newsletter John Comeaux, and all past WGA Presidents in good standing.



Next Meeting: March

March 28, 2023. The South Regional Branch of the Lafayette Library, Auditorium. Address is 6101 Johnston St, Lafayette. Start time is **6:00 p.m.** We usually go to 7:15, but we must end by 7:30. *For March and some months after, there will be road construction at this intersection, so plan ahead to figure out the detour depending on where you are coming from.*

We will have a Door Prize from the books that were donated by authors.

March Prompt

“Unfortunately, the truth is never entirely true.”

Category: Fiction

This is a fun competition for members. The prompt **MUST APPEAR** somewhere within the work, and entries must be no longer than 500 words. When the prompt category is poetry, both traditional and free verse poems are acceptable. All entries must be typed and double-spaced. The story or poem must have the word count, title, author’s name, and date of the competition written at the top of the first page, and a paper copy of the winner and runner-up is to be handed in to the president after the judging. Contest participants are not allowed to enter the contest with works that are typed on iPhones or any other electronic devices.

Looking Ahead: **April Guest Speaker: (TBD)**

WEB Page and Facebook

Our web page is here: <https://www.writersguildacadiana.org/>

Like us on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/writersguildacadiana.org/>

The Writers' Guild is always willing to share the success stories of its members. Be sure to let us know about your writing. We will put your blurb on our website, on our Facebook page, and on this newsletter. Let's highlight and showcase our writers! Send us a synopsis or your own paragraph about the work you are working on or have published, and how to get it. Send to John at jpcoman9@gmail.com.

◆ Member Announcements

New Feature! La Plume will allow our authors to submit a teaser or extended passage from their upcoming or existing work, one page or less. Send your submission to JPComan9@gmail.com

Keep Me Safe

Author: Bellamy Gayle

Published: 2022

The shiny black flash drive slipped smoothly into the USB port. Cecile's index finger double-clicked the computer mouse, and she shivered with unexpected emotion.

People who looked familiar appeared on the screen, snaking in a sinuous procession through the headstones and mausoleums grounded beside a graceful, ivy-covered old church—it was her funeral, their funeral, hers and Barley's. Somber people blotted hot, damp necks and fanned their faces as they trudged behind two coffins.

Cecile nibbled at the skin next to her thumbnail as she watched, imagining wisps of miasmatic steam rising above the whitewashed tombs of the New Orleans cemetery. The heat and damp of that September day seemed to come right through the transparent computer screen.

The presence of so many mourners weighed her down. She suspected more than a few were there only for the gossip. Not typically a cynic, Cecile didn't feel her usual sanguine self—though it wasn't grief making her struggle, it was the guilt of vast relief.

She was hidden now, and safe, far from New Orleans. Cecile didn't want to watch her funeral, but she had a job to do.

◆ Contest Announcements

Writer's Digest Annual Writing Competition

Writer's Digest's oldest and most popular competition, the Annual Writing Competition, is now accepting entries. Winners of the 92nd Annual competition will be announced in the Nov/Dec 2023 issue of Writer's Digest.

Deadline: May 5, 2023

Writer's Digest has been shining a spotlight on up-and-coming writers in all genres through its Annual Writing Competition for over 90 years. Enter our 92nd Annual Writing Competition for your chance to win and have your work be seen by editors and agents! Almost 500 winners will be chosen.

Full details here: [Writer's Digest Competition](#)

Self-Published Book Awards

Deadline: 4/3/23. Writer's Digest's Self-Published Book Awards is currently accepting submissions. This is the only Writer's Digest competition exclusively for self-published books.

DEADLINE: April 3, 2023.

Whether you're a professional writer, a part-time freelancer or a self-starting student, here's your chance to enter the premier self-published competition exclusively for self-published books. Writer's Digest hosts the 31st annual self-published competition—the Annual Self-Published Book Awards. This self-published competition spotlights today's self-published works and honors self-published authors.

Full Details Here: [WD Self-published Book awards](#)

◆ Writing Inspiration

A Writer's Guide to Breaking the Rules

by Sarah Penner from Writer Unboxed

All writing advice, I ultimately decided, should be taken with a grain of salt. Writing is art, and *art* doesn't mix with *rules*. Take what works for you as the creator, and leave the rest behind. Below are six conventional writing "rules" I'd encourage writers to think twice about.

Rule #3 worth breaking: Write for the market

When considering a breakout book premise, a writer needs to break away, quite literally, from the pack. This is accomplished not by writing for the market, but by writing something totally different and untapped. This can be related to a book's themes, setting, or era, among others.

One of my favorite examples is *Red, White & Royal Blue* by Casey McQuiston. How brave of McQuiston to pen an LGBT rom-com about the First Son of the United States and a British prince who's third in line for the throne. Such a premise hadn't been done before.

[ed. note: Future newsletters will continue this theme. Reprinted with permission.]

◆ Ask Google

I asked Google: "Who was the best selling author in 2022?"

Colleen Hoover

Colleen Hoover's 2016 novel "It Ends With Us" is the best-selling book of 2022.

From Forbes: Romance and young-adult author Colleen Hoover wrote six out of the top 10 best-selling books of 2022 through the end of November, according to market research company NPD BookScan, fueled by her dedicated fanbase and the massive influence of readers on TikTok.

◆ Helpful Websites

Here is the in-depth look at what to do after you write your book.

<https://medium.com/the-1000-day-mfa/what-to-do-after-you-finish-the-first-draft-of-your-book-3202637ed57e>

◆ Publishing

◆ Marketing

The 20 Top Ad Designs Readers Want to Click

1. *The Trouble with Dukes* by Grace Burrowes



There's a lot that works well in this ad: the large book cover, enticing blurb, contrasting call-to-action (CTA) button, and promise of a sale all helped this ad get many clicks.

[Ed. note: this is an excerpt from BookBub. Their business is to get you to buy ads from them. But they do offer many helpful ideas, such as this one. Full article [here](#).]

◆ **Word of the month**

Straw man (*noun*)

A doll or scarecrow, particularly one stuffed with straw.

(figuratively) An innocuous person or someone of nominal or lesser importance, as a front man or straw boss.

(figuratively) An insubstantial concept, idea, endeavor or argument, particularly one deliberately set up to be weakly supported, e.g. by misrepresenting an opponent's argument by broadening or narrowing the scope of a premise, so that it can be easily knocked down; especially to impugn the strength of any related or contrasted thing or idea.

◆ **Events**

FREE WORKSHOP on AMAZON Ads

The Writers' Guild of Acadiana is offering a workshop on Amazon Campaign Ads. It will cover how to set up a campaign ad, maintain it, edit it, controlling cost and dealing with the rather complicated algorithm that controls it. This is very handy for those selling their books on Amazon as well as those selling non-book items. It will be held at the South Regional library beginning at 9:15 to 1:30. (we have to vacate the room by 2:00) on April 15, 2023.

To sign up, email Ed Gauthier at eggchess@gmail.com. This class may fill quickly. I suggest you bring a laptop computer (or equivalent), a note-taking pad and pen. Have your library card to access the library's Internet feed.

Note the sign up reservation below. Once your name appears on it, you're insured a place in the class.

THIS CLASS IS FREE. However, you must be a paid member of the Writers' Guild of Acadiana to enter.

QUESTIONS? email Ed G at eggchess@gmail.com

BOOK Sales at Moncus Park

Sales Opportunity! WGA members have the opportunity to join us at Moncus Park Farmers and Artisan Market on the **second AND last Saturday** of the month. We display our books and meet with people to discuss writing and publishing. Usually hundreds of people go by the booth, and our huge WGA banner attracts many to see and meet the authors.

Writer's Guild of Acadiana vending table regulations:

The following applies to Moncus Park WGA vending table, *or any other WGA vending event*.

1. You must be a *paid member* of Writers Guild of Acadiana
2. You'll need to confer with the Secretary of the board (Ed Gauthier) and arrange a date to sell *a month in advance*.

You do that by calling or texting Ed Gauthier (337-945-5718) or emailing him at eggchess@gmail.com to make arrangements.

You are *not scheduled unless* you receive a confirmation from him, via text, email or phone call.

- 3. Keep in mind that WGA only sells on the second and last Saturday of the month at Moncus Park.
- 4: On March 11th, 2023 and thereafter, each scheduled vendor will be asked to pay \$5.00 for each day they sell their books at our vending table. This assists the WGA in defraying our costs (required payments to Moncus Park reserving our sales space).
- 5. Ed Gauthier will periodically send out the reservation list, which will show those that are signed up to sell, and the dates they're scheduled to do so, and which dates are still OPEN for those who wish to sign up. If your name appears on the reservation list, you are definitely scheduled to sell at the WGA vending table. Keep an eye out for it.
- 6: For the Moncus Park farmers Market Saturday morning sale, authors who are scheduled to sell should arrive by 7:05 a.m. and have table displays and books for sale set up by 7:35 a.m. Customers start to arrive by 8:00. Each seller should bring their own table, which should be limited to 4 ft long. (Square card tables are acceptable) Bring a drop cloth to cover the table. Bring a chair for your personal comfort. Please be aware that bringing extra people with you may require them to sit outside the tent area. Scheduled vendors need to have priority to be under the tent to meet and greet customers.

Would you like to join or renew?

Thank you for your interest in the Guild. Submit the form below to register to become a new or renew a membership with Writers' Guild of Acadiana. Annual membership fee is \$25.00. **NEW: Your dues are good for one year of remittance. Thus, if you join in mid-year, you are a paid-member through the following mid-year.** You will receive this monthly newsletter "La Plume", which will keep you informed of events and news of the Guild. When submitting the form, please mail your check or money order to:

**Writers' Guild of Acadiana
P O Box 51532
Lafayette, LA 70505**

Email questions to: info@writersguildacadiana.org
Cash payments can be made at the monthly meeting – do not mail.

This form is also online: writersguildacadiana.org

Name _____

City, State, Zip _____

Phone/Email _____

Date _____

How did you find out about us? _____
