



# The Next Chapter

March 2023  
Volume 19 Issue 3

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## Carolyn L. Dean to speak March 13

**Carolyn L. Dean** will present "**Productivity and Promoting**" at ETWG's regular meeting **Monday, March 13, 6:30 p.m.**, Genecov Room, Tyler Area Chamber of Commerce Building, 315 N. Broadway, Tyler. (Parking and entrance on Line Street)



Productivity is important because readers can finish a book long before a writer can. So, instead of picking up your next book, they move on to another writer's. In order to keep the fans you have, putting out books as quickly as you can is recommended. (Of course, quick doesn't mean poor quality.)

Promoting your books attracts more readers, some of which will become true fans, looking for your next book. So, promoting and productivity go hand in hand.

Carolyn likes to create worlds and people that inspire, challenge, and entertain readers. She's been a published author for a few years now, under different names and genres. She grew up in Oregon, and has just moved to East Texas. Married with kids, she's a full-time author who loves to travel, and it's not surprising that some of the settings in her books are places she's been able to visit.

Come learn how productivity and promoting can work together for you.

*Before the meeting, ETWG members will meet at 5:00 at Don Juan's on the Square to share a meal and talk with fellow authors.<>*

## Nutz and Boltz (ETWG'S Open Discussion Meeting)

On **Monday, March 20, 6:30 p.m.**, click the **Zoom** link on ETWG's website.

On the 3rd Monday of every month, ETWG hosts Nutz and Boltz. It's an open forum for those attending to discuss any matter about writing, problem solving and hangups with their work, or bring to the group any successful writing tool you have found useful.

Hosted through Zoom, you can join from anywhere in the world! <>



## Upcoming Events

*(submitted by April Coker)*

**March 11:** A&A Spring Craft Market, A&A Academy, Mineola, March 11. Facebook A&A Academy, [aaacademy903@gmail.com](mailto:aaacademy903@gmail.com), 903-539-1270

**March 22:** Cherokee Craft & Trade Fair, Jacksonville. [kimfelt94@icloud.com](mailto:kimfelt94@icloud.com), 903-268-1598.

**March 26:** Local Vendor Spring Craft Fair, Drug Emporium of Longview. 903-297-0966

**April 1:** Berry Farm Spring Festival, Tyler. [tylerberryfarm@gmail.com](mailto:tylerberryfarm@gmail.com), 903-526-4440.

**April 15:** Vintage Vibes Spring Flea Market, Lufkin. [Heritageantiquesmall@gmail.com](mailto:Heritageantiquesmall@gmail.com), 936-632-0110

**April 20-23:** Terrell Jubilee, Terrell [www.terrelljubilee.com](http://www.terrelljubilee.com)

**April 22:** ETX Market 2023, downtown Longview.

**April 22:** 2023 Cedar Creek Lake Festival, Cedar Creek Brewery, Seven Points, 903-432-2337

**May 6:** Terrell Taco Festival, Terrell. [terrelltexas.com](http://terrelltexas.com), 972-524-5703

**May 12-13:** Spring Piney Woods Wine Festival, Lindale. [visitlindaletx@gmail.com](mailto:visitlindaletx@gmail.com), 903-881-5103

**Every 3rd Saturday:** PopUp Art Show, Cafe U in Mineola. [Cafeumineola@gmail.com](mailto:Cafeumineola@gmail.com). <>

## PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Can you believe it's already March? That old cliché about time passing more quickly each year seems to be truer every year. March brings spring, spring break, spring fever, and tax season. Why did I have to throw that in? I know, right?

I hope you've been able to stay on track with your new year's goals, and if not, then spring is a good time to start again. For those of you with books to sell, spring also brings lots of local small town festivals, giving authors opportunities to present their works and make a little money to boot. Check the Facebook group East Texas Vendors and the lists in this newsletter and on our website for ideas and information.

Planning for this year's annual conference is underway. The date and venue have been set and speakers are being lined up. It will be Saturday, July 15 at TJC West Campus in Tyler. Stay tuned for more information as we get closer to the date.

March is also the month of St. Patrick's Day. Every year people go nuts with the wearing of the green, the green beer, the parties, and the false claims of Irish ancestry. It's a fun day and a great excuse to celebrate. Even so, I hope you find time during this busy month to do some writing.

“May the road rise up to meet you.

May the wind be always at your back.

May the sun shine warm upon your face,

And rains fall soft upon your fields.

And until we meet again,

May God hold you in the palm of His hand.”

(Traditional Irish blessing and ancient Celtic prayer)

Take care, y'all. . .

XOXO

*April Coker*

2023 ETWG President

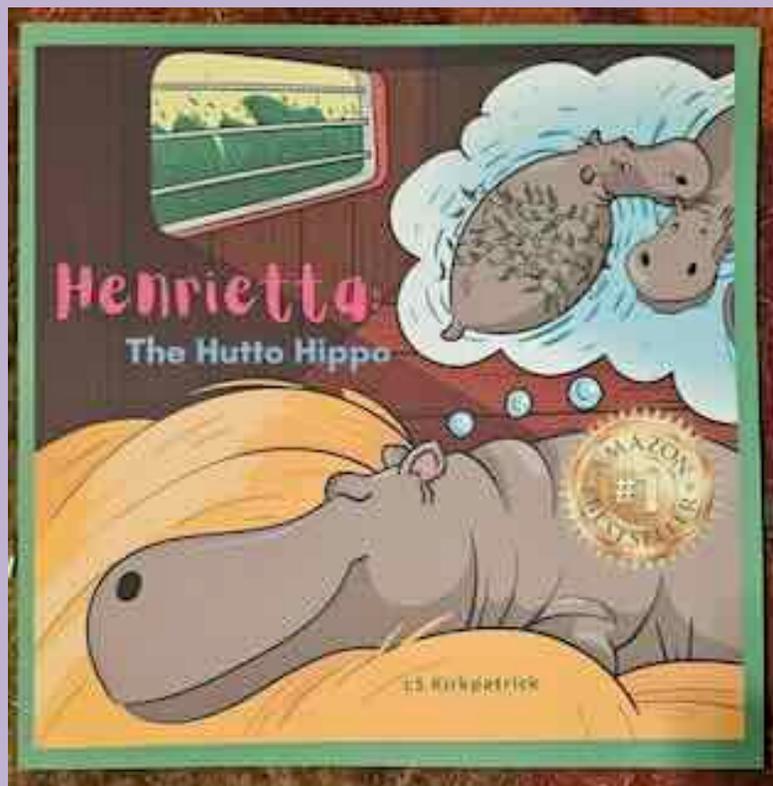
[www.aprilnuncoker.com](http://www.aprilnuncoker.com)



## *Author Announcement*

New member and local author, LS Kirkpatrick, published her second children's book, *Henrietta: The Hutto Hippo*. She was inspired by all of the concrete hippos she saw in Hutto.

She wrote the first draft on her cell phone while sitting at a booth for lunch with her husband in the Hippo Cafe. The book is available on her website, [www.LSKirkpatrick.com](http://www.LSKirkpatrick.com), where you can learn more about her.



## Three Books to Read on Reading (Which will Improve Your Writing)

Lydia Holley

Almost every famous writer's advice for writing better includes reading. But have you ever thought to read a book about reading? Here are three books you may want to add to your reading list which are focused on reading, but will help you write a better book.

### 1. *A Swim in a Pond in the Rain* by George Saunders

This book is a take on Saunders' lectures given to those taking classes for a MFA. He uses a casual, humorous tone, even though you can feel his passion for the subject in his words. He takes several short stories and breaks them down page by page. After reading a page of the story, he stops you to ask questions, then answers them. You then read another page and get more advice. (Some you read entirely before he breaks in.)

This book includes several Russian short stories, so it's unlikely you've read them before. At first, I was disappointed these wouldn't be better-known stories, but that's not the point. The point is that every story has certain qualities which make it good. And even though these stories use older writing techniques, that doesn't matter. The point is not to learn technical advice on how to write sentences (POV, passive voice, etc.). The point is to learn how to write a *story*. Or, more specifically, how to make *your* story even better.

The type of advice given is specific to the story being read, but is also general enough to resonate with any and every story told. For instance, in the very first story, he reminds you "Story is about change." He not only explains the change in the character, but how the words used leads you to feel a certain way about the thing being described, how the setting enhances the story, etc. He gives you three questions to stop and ask about every story you will ever read. He even gives you exercises, such as cutting out the waste in a story. It shows how you can improve your own writing by diagnosing others.

### 2. *How to Read Literature like a Professor: A Lively and Entertaining Guide to Reading Between the Lines* by Thomas C. Foster

When you were in college, did you ever wonder how your literature professor got so much out of a story than you did? Foster tells you the difference between a trip and a quest. He gives you the four needs human beings struggle with: to maintain their dignity; to have faith and remain faithful; to return home; and struggles with nature, the divine, other humans, and ourselves.

(READING, Cont'd from previous page)

He explains the symbolism of various things. Not only do classics use these symbols, so do newer writers such as Toni Morrison, etc, and gives specific examples. He reminds writers that symbols need to be used organically, not forced. But when used correctly, they can enhance and elevate your writing.

He also gives you lots of food for thought when he speaks about how the Greek and Roman gods make their way into modern literature. (symbolically, of course) Or when the Bible does. Or Shakespeare.

With chapter titles such as: Yes, She's a Christ Figure, Too; He's Blind for a Reason, You Know; and If She Comes Up, It's Baptism, you can see Foster puts a lot of personality into his writing.

By the way, Foster also has a book, *How to Read Novels Like a Professor*. I enjoyed the Literature guide the best.

### **3. *Reading Like a Writer: A Guide for People Who Love Books and for Those Who Want to Write Them*** by Francine Prose

Written by a writer and a reader, it's for both writers and readers. But of course, she believes every writer should be a reader first. She states that close reading (which she describes as "looking at the brilliance of each word choice and how much every sentence is telling you without *telling you*") not only makes you marvel at how the author's choices make for a better story, it can yield solutions to your writing problems. Such as when she noticed, "a moment of violence is directly preceded by a passage of intense lyricism...the poetry, then the horror." She states you should use successful writing as a model for your own work.

Another piece of advice is: "rhythm is nearly as important in prose as it is in poetry. I have heard a number of writers say that they would rather choose the slightly wrong word that made their sentence more musical than the precisely right one that made it more awkward and clunky."

She reminds the writer not to judge the character—just let the character be who he/she is. And that readers do not have to like the character, only that the reader must be interested in the character.

Reading is something that she loves, and believes every writer should love, too. She states, "On a very basic level, I can't figure out why people would want to write unless they like to read. I mean, what would be the point? For the incredibly glamorous fast track lifestyle? I don't think so."

Finally, because she feels reading can be so very educational and inspirational, she gives a list of books to be read (and savored). <>

## Meet the Members: Woody Edmiston



### Why I write.

**“This book was researched and written on my son’s computer. It is a place where he lived out the last weeks of his life.”** *Why Parents should Fear Myspace. WDE*

Those two sentences, complete with passive voice and loaded with good intent, are what launched me into writing. I had no ambitions to be a writer. I’d written things all my life. In June 2006, after becoming immersed in the new social media, breaking his heart, and giving up struggling with abandonment, he took his life. Today we know a great deal about the dangers of the internet. I wrote about them, explained them, prophesied. Everything I warned parents about—bullying, suicide, phishing, AI, catfishing, and predation—is commonplace now and more dangerous than ever.

### Genre

In 2023, I write in both nonfiction about those similar topics and fiction centered on law enforcement and the people in it. There is also a blog and a website.

### Membership

I needed a critique group in 2006 and went to an ETWG meeting at a bookstore in Bullard. The first person I met was K. Sellars. If you have experienced K., you know why I stuck around.

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### **The Positive**

I will admit that what I enjoy out of writing is pure, unvarnished, self-satisfaction accompanied by the ego-delusion that I do it well. Over a dozen uses of the personal pronoun I, above, are proof of that.

### **Challenges**

Writing challenges? Yes, because it is a challenge, I like to work, but physical work is not possible because of age and injury. The Bible tells the elderly to teach the young. My second nonfiction book is another warning.

### **Goals**

“All writing is re-writing.” Stephen King says. A van hit King while he was walking. He began writing again, in pain, in the back corner of a hallway on a desk cobbled together by his wife to accommodate the wheelchair. Writing and especially rewriting is work, hard, solitary work. I do it to keep my brain in gear. I suffer from the affliction Jerry Jenkins says most writers have. We don't really like to write; we like to have written.

### **Books**

I have two nonfiction books published, one still being promoted online as both an Ebook and a print book. There is also one fiction police procedural book. I'm writing a four-part series that will use the same story, told from a different point of view. Writing is also a learning experience and I research everything, learning along the way. <>



## IS “UM” EVEN A WORD?

*Patricia La Vigne*

The other day I had occasion to visit the Toastmasters of Tyler group at their very early morning session of their regular meeting time. My eyes were opened (literally and figuratively) while watching and listening to the presenters.

When the meeting was called to order, the Toastmaster explained the procedure and the rules for speakers and those who participated in “critiquing” the speakers. They were the members who listened for any grammatical errors, positive and negative mannerisms by the speaker, his or her poise, evaluating the topic chosen by the speaker, and any hesitations or straying from subject matter.

As I watched and listened, I imagined myself in the speaker’s position, doing a kind of self-evaluation based on my past experiences of public speaking. One area I focused on was the use of the expression—“Um.” If my speech were worth 100 points, probably 90 would be marked against me for using “um”.

Merriam-Webster Collegiate Dictionary defines “um” as “prolonged m sound. Used to indicate hesitation.” Yes, “um” is in the dictionary! So I guess we can say “Um” is a word.



So why make an issue of it?

“Um” inserted into a sentence shouts out that the speaker either (1) has drawn a mental blank in the thought process most likely due to some distraction, or (2) has not thoroughly prepared a proper sequence of order, or (3) the brain has played a trick to pull the speaker off topic and now he/she must maneuver the way back to the original topic. While the speaker’s mind works to get back on track, a spontaneous “um” is usually the only sound heard. There are other sounds, like “ah”, “uh”, a clearing of the throat, or a nervous titter or snicker that can cover the “dead air.” But “um” seems to be the most common one. I can truthfully say I have been guilty of each one. I did not hear any “ums” at this particular meeting.

Besides being thoroughly impressed with the professionalism of the meeting and the laughs we shared, I came away with a silent resolution to do what I can to improve my own speech, which I guess, is one of the goals for the members of Toastmasters. That may...um...improve my...um...self-confidence in standing before a...um...group of my peers. <>



## WINNSBORO CENTER FOR THE ARTS

*Embracing the spirit of creativity*

Dear Author Friends,

We've been busy making plans for the 2023 Winnsboro Festival of Books. We hope you are too! Mark your calendars for Saturday, May 6th.

[Author Registration](#) is now available on our webpage under events. We have a couple of things to pin down, but we look forward to announcing our special literary guest character soon. I promise you, he is one cool cat!

Could you help us grow by sharing this info with your writing groups, favorite indy bookstores, and writer friends.?

We look forward to your participation. Please let me know if you have any questions.

Jennifer Hudson Connors  
(local author) and WCA Director of Operations



## WINNSBORO CENTER FOR THE ARTS

200 Market Street, Winnsboro, TX

903-342-0686

[www.winnsborocenterforthearts.com](http://www.winnsborocenterforthearts.com)



### Quote of The Month:

“If you tell the reader that Bull Beezley is a brutal-faced, loose-lipped bully, with snake’s blood in his veins, the reader’s reaction may be, ‘Oh, yeah!’ But if you show the reader Bull Beezley raking the bloodied flanks of his weary, sweat-encrusted pony, and flogging the tottering, red-eyed animal with a quirt, or have him booting in the protruding ribs of a starved mongrel and, boy, the reader believes!”

*~Fred East*

# What's Your Genre?

*Lydia Holley*

When writers meet, often the first question is “What’s your genre?” It’s also usually the first really big decision you will make as a writer. If you’re wondering what genre the story your writing falls into, or are curious what others mean when they talk about their own genres, here is a quick overview of the major ones. Once you figure out your genre, you can then research it for more details, tropes, word count, and other requirements/expectations.

**Action and Adventure** - the hero goes through an often dangerous journey to get what he/she needs. Many times they return home.

Includes:

Military/espionage: soldier or spy;

Epic adventure: long, magnified

## **Children's/Teenager Books:**

Includes:

Board Books- printed on cardboard for toddlers (under 3 years)

Picture Books - heavily illustrated to help tell the story (4-8 years)

Easy Reader - for those learning to read (5-8 years)

Middle Grade - (9-11 years)

YA (Young Adult) - (12-18 years), usually with a teenage protagonist.

New Adult - college age protagonist doing things a new adult experiences

**Christian fiction** - teaches a moral lesson, characters are Christian or come to find faith. It generally has little or no violence, sex, drugs, or bad language.

**Contemporary fiction** - writing set in the present day

**Dystopian** - about the future of mankind (often in a bleak or oppressed society) after the fall of the current government

**Erotica** - revolves around sex

**Fantasy** - Magic or supernatural elements.

Includes:

Epic fantasy: lengthy and grandiose

Grimdark fantasy: grim and dystopian high fantasy;

High fantasy: set in a fictional world.

Low fantasy: magic in the real world.

Magical realism: real world, regular characters, supernatural happenings (for instance, a baby is born as a talking cube) (usually no explanation)

Urban fantasy: set in a city with magical creatures

**Graphic novel** - uses illustrations (think comic-book style)

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**Historical fiction** - stories set in the past (generally, at least 50 years ago, most of the time many years prior)

Includes:  
Western: set in the Old West

**Horror** - written to quicken the pulse of the reader.

Includes:  
Gothic horror: with elements of fear and haunting between humanity and evil forces  
Monster horror: horror with creatures  
Splatter horror: gore and graphic violence

**Literary fiction** - character-driven, introspection, social commentary, pretty prose

**Mystery** - a crime must be solved.

Includes:  
Cozy mystery: amateur sleuth, small town, family friendly (no gore, no sex, etc.)  
Detective: detective with keen observational skills and a superior mind  
Hardboiled: cynical detective, unsentimental attitude toward sex and violence  
Police procedural: police crime drama

**Paranormal** - ghosts, demons, vampires, etc. (not magical elements such as witches). Set in current times in this world.

**Sci-Fi** - has real (or possibly real) science, such as space exploration or time travel. Can include other sciences which impact the future of the human race here on Earth.

Includes:  
Hard sci-fi: real or possibly real fields of science  
Soft sci-fi: uses the sciences of anthropology or sociology  
Space opera: set in space  
Steampunk: historical setting with steam-powered technology

**Romance** - the romance is the main plot, with a “happy ever after” ending. Can be a subgenre such as YA romance, paranormal romance, historical romance, etc.

**Speculative fiction** - both fantasy and sci-fi

**Thriller and suspense** - psychological fear. Usually the hero is trying to save their own life.

**Women's fiction** - written for a female audience, about women's experiences. (May be called chick lit)

I'm certain there's some I didn't list. Determining which genre to write can be one of the hardest decisions for a writer to make. Don't feel tied down, however. Some write more than one genre, some use different pen names.<>

Sources:

<https://blog.reedsy.com/book-genres/>

<https://bookriot.com/guide-to-book-genres/>

<https://self-publishingschool.com/book-genres/>

<https://www.writersdigest.com/writing-for-kids/defining-picture-books-middle-grade-and-young-adult>



## Ten (or Fifty) Rules

*Lydia Holley*

If you ask 10 different authors their favorite rules for writing, you will probably get 10 different answers. Here are a few top-ten rules from various writers:

Elmore Leonard's top ten rules read like a how-to, with very specific advice on word choice. Here's his top-ten rules:

1. Never open a book with weather.
2. Avoid prologues.
3. Never use a verb other than "said" to carry dialogue.
4. Never use an adverb to modify the verb "said."
5. Keep your exclamation points under control
6. Never use the words "suddenly" or "all hell broke loose."
7. Use regional dialect sparingly.
8. Avoid detailed descriptions of characters.
9. Don't go into great detail describing places and things.
10. Try to leave out the part that readers tend to skip.

Henry Miller reminds writers not to get bogged down into too many projects. His top-ten rules are:

1. Work on one thing at a time until finished.
2. Don't be nervous. Work calmly, joyously, recklessly on whatever is in hand.
3. Work according to the program and not to mood. Stop at the appointed time.
4. When you can't create, you can work.
5. Cement a little every day, rather than add new fertilizers.
6. Keep human! See people, go places, drink if you feel like it.
7. Don't be a draught-horse! Work with pleasure only.
8. Discard the program when you feel like it but go back to it the next day. Concentrate. Narrow down. Exclude.
9. Forget the books you want to write. Think only of the book you are writing.
10. Write first and always. Painting, music, friends, cinema, all these come afterwards.



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Joyce Carol Oates gives advice straight from the heart. Her 10 rules are:

1. Write your heart out.
2. The first sentence can be written only after the last sentence has been written. **FIRST DRAFTS ARE HELL. FINAL DRAFTS, PARADISE.**
3. You are writing for your contemporaries not for Posterity. If you are lucky, your contemporaries will become Posterity.
4. Keep in mind Oscar Wilde: A little sincerity is a dangerous thing, and a great deal of it is absolutely fatal.
5. When in doubt how to end a chapter, bring in a man with a gun. (This is Raymond Chandler's advice, not mine. I would not try this.)
6. Unless you are experimenting with form gnarled, snarled, & obscure be alert for possibilities of paragraphing.
7. Be your own editor/critic. Sympathetic but merciless!
8. Don't try to anticipate an ideal reader or any reader. He/she might exist but is reading someone else.
9. Read, observe, listen intensely! as if your life depended upon it.
10. Write your heart out.

Screenwriter Billy Wilder's 10 rules read like a play themselves:

1. The audience is fickle.
2. Grab 'em by the throat and never let 'em go.
3. Develop a clean line of action for your leading character.
4. Know where you're going.
5. The more subtle and elegant you are in hiding your plot points, the better you are as a writer.
6. If you have a problem with the third act, the real problem is in the first act.



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Billy Wilder's advice, cont'd.

7. A tip from Lubitsch: Let the audience add up two plus two. They'll love you forever.
8. In doing voice-overs, be careful not to describe what the audience already sees. Add to what they're seeing.
9. The event that occurs at the second act curtain triggers the end of the movie
10. The third act must build, build, build in tempo and action until the last event, and then—that's it. Don't hang around.

Finally, here are 10 rules from MasterClass. I'm not certain which writer gave this advice, or if it's a compilation from various authors:

1. Read voraciously.
2. Make checklists of details you want included in your story.
3. Develop good habits by setting aside a consistent time to write.
4. Use your limited time wisely by planning ahead.
5. Build a relationship with an editor.
6. Don't stress your first draft.
7. Seek out surprises in your second draft.
8. Start with characters.
9. Write for art's sake, save the commercial analysis for later. (regarding genre)
10. Rules are meant to be broken.

Which of these rules do you use? Which do you break?



Sources:

- <https://www.writingclasses.com/toolbox/tips-masters/elmore-leonard-10-rules-for-good-writing>
- <https://www.writingclasses.com/toolbox/tips-masters/henry-miller-10-writing-tips>
- <https://www.writingclasses.com/toolbox/tips-masters/joyce-carol-oates-10-writing-tips?page=3&per-page=8>
- <https://www.writingclasses.com/toolbox/tips-masters/billy-wilder-10-screenwriting-tips>

## TNC Newsletter and ETWG Information

### TNC Submission Guidelines and Deadlines

All submitted data must be received by the 30<sup>th</sup> of the month prior to the month in which art/ad/etc. will appear.

Length—up to 500 words (ask if more)

Format—single space, no indent

Fonts—12 pt. Times New Roman

Photos—jpeg with caption instructions

#### Send to:

LydiaHolley@aol.com

### 2022 ETWG Officers & Leadership Positions

<b>Founder:</b>	<b>“K” Sellers</b>
<b>President:</b>	<b>April Coker</b>
<b>Vice President:</b>	<b>Woody Edmiston</b>
<b>Secretary:</b>	<b>Patricia La Vigne</b>
<b>Treasurer:</b>	<b>Janice Conlee</b>
<b>Historian:</b>	<b>Laura Bentz</b>
<b>TNC Editor:</b>	<b>Lydia Holley</b>
<b>Membership:</b>	<b>Ilenya Marrin</b>
<b>Publicity:</b>	<b>Lynn Pinkerton</b>
<b>Website:</b>	<b>Nikki Brown</b> <b>Lisa Holcomb</b> <b>Laura Bentz</b>
<b>Technical:</b>	<b>Mike Wigington</b>
<b>Conference Chair:</b>	<b>April Coker</b>
<b>Parliamentarian:</b>	<b>Lisa Holcomb</b>



#### East Texas Writers' Guild

P.O. Box 10074  
Tyler, TX 75711

#### Website:

<https://etwritersguild.org>

#### Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/etwritersguild/>

#### Email:

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