

The Next Chapter

November 2023
Volume 19 Issue 11

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Members to Share Stories of Thanks November 13

On **Monday, November 13, 6:30 p.m.**, during ETWG's regular meeting, members and guests will **read short stories** they have written about

Thanksgiving/thankfulness.

(Genecov Room, Tyler Area Chamber of Commerce Building, 315 N. Broadway, Tyler. Parking and entrance on Line Street.)



A strict limit of 1500 words, please!

Come share a story of thanks with other ETWG writers! You will walk away feeling satisfied and full of gratitude.

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*Before the meeting, ETWG Members and guests will meet at 5:00 p.m. at Don Juan's on the Square for food and fellowship.<>*

## Join us for: Nutz and Boltz (ETWG'S Open Discussion Meeting)

On **Monday, November 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.

We always have interesting and informing discussions on a variety of writing subjects.

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



## PRESIDENT'S CORNER

November brings cooler weather, warmer colors, shorter days, and longer nights. It is also the month for giving thanks, at least in the United States of America. As we pull our coats and sweaters and boots out of storage or the back of the closet, our thoughts turn toward the holiday.

No, not the Christmas/Hanukkah/Kwanzaa/Festivus/etc. holidays, but Thanksgiving Day. Some families like to take turns telling what they are thankful for before enjoying Thanksgiving dinner. With all that in mind, I thought I would list some things I am thankful for (for which I am thankful, Mrs. Phillips—my high school English teacher).

Besides the obvious—God's mercy and provision, family, friends, church, good health, food, and shelter—I am thankful for the following:

- Freedom...
  - To write, vote, play, travel, speak, work, own a copy of the Bible, etc.
- The East Texas Writers Guild...
  - Fellow writers, camaraderie, help, encouragement, knowledge, support, etc.



Have I left anything or anyone out? Probably. No matter. I want you to know, fellow ETWG member, that I am grateful to you for supporting this organization and for persevering as a writer. Without the written word, we have nothing—no Word from God, no history, no legacy. Let's not forget this Thanksgiving Day to be grateful for everything we have and enjoy in this great nation of ours. It is indeed a privilege to live here.

Happy Thanksgiving, everyone! Don't forget to write! ; p

XOXO

*April Coker*

2023 ETWG President

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

# 2024 OFFICER ELECTIONS HELD SOON!

Positions for Elected Officers will be voted on by the membership **through email ballot.**

Elected Officers are:

- President
- Vice President
- Secretary
- Treasurer

## **Be sure to cast your vote!**

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In addition to elected officers, the Board consists of the following organizational and committee chair positions:

Organizational Positions:

- Newsletter Editor
- Historian
- Webmaster

Committee Chairs:

- Event
- Membership Chair
- Hospitality
- Public Relations

Please contact April Coker ([aencoker@gmail.com](mailto:aencoker@gmail.com)) if you are interested in volunteering.



# Poetry Society Meeting

*Submitted by Carol Thompson*

The Rusk County Poetry Society (RCPS) will meet Thursday, November 16 at 2 p.m. in the all-purpose building at the South Main Church of Christ, 402 S. Main Street in Henderson. The meeting will include a poetry lesson and prompt, poetry reading and refreshments.

The RCPS, founded in 1971, is a chapter of the Poetry Society of Texas (PST) and is affiliated with the National Federation of State Poetry Societies (NFSPS.) Anyone interested in learning more about writing poetry or listening to poetry is welcome to attend.



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## Quote of the Month:

“A non-writing writer is a monster courting insanity.”

*~Franz Kafka*



## Author Announcement

Dana Wayne's latest book, *Texas Winds*, will be released in November.



Jake Holloway discovered his wife's infidelity as she lay in a coma, carrying a child that may not be his.

Four years later, his heart remains closed to all emotion.

Lexie Morgan's dream of happily-ever-after ended the day she stood alone at the altar. The need to put distance between her and the pain places her in the path of feral hogs and Jake Holloway's life. Neither is prepared for the intense attraction.

When Lexie meets his four-year-old daughter, Katie, the timid child with downcast eyes steals her heart.

Forced to rely on Jake's assistance, it's impossible to ignore the escalating pull.

But the past never dies, and resurrected hurts threaten their fragile bond.

Two hearts in pain, a child reaching for love. Will shifting Texas winds hold them together or reduce their love to dust?

# Author Announcement

Are you tired of staring at a blank page, overwhelmed by the task of turning your ideas into a compelling nonfiction book?

Take a leap from amateur to pro with this indispensable guide. Brimming with practical exercises, essential checklists, and an abundance of wisdom acquired through years of experience, *The Book Writing Process* will equip you with the precise tools you need to craft a nonfiction book that engages your readers from start to finish.

No more stumbling through the writing wilderness alone. Inside these pages, you'll discover the

- secrets to establishing a rock-solid foundation for your book.
- key players in your journey (editors, beta readers, and more).
- vital components required for a flawlessly structured piece of work.

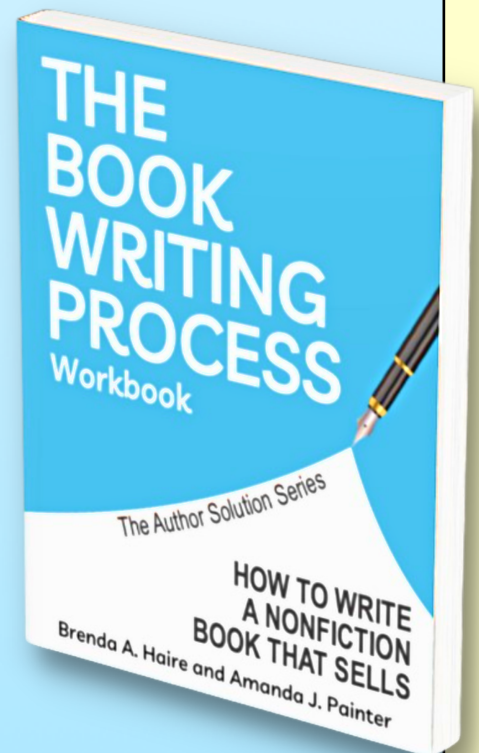
*The Book Writing Process* is your compass to navigate the overwhelming world of nonfiction writing, ensuring that your words not only captivate but also sell. Say goodbye to common pitfalls and hello to a book that leaves an indelible mark on your reader. This meticulously crafted guide guarantees that your writing journey will be streamlined, saving you precious time and effort while empowering you to produce a book of unmatched quality.

Now is the time to embark on your author journey, and let your words reshape the world with your words.

Brenda A. Haire, the creator and coach of the Author Business Network, and her business partner, Amanda J. Painter, help authors write, publish, market, and build businesses around their books. Additionally, they work with small business owners, guiding them through everything from HR practices to publishing books to position themselves in the marketplace. They lead by example, in the trenches, publishing right alongside you.

This workbook is book 2 in *The Author Solution Series* and it releases on November 14. Join us on Facebook for an online launch party at 12 pm Central.

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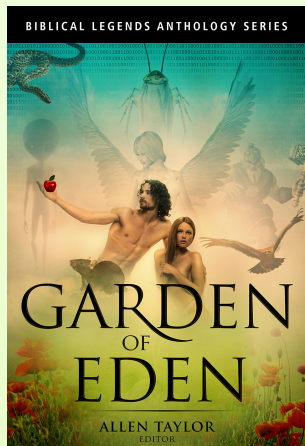




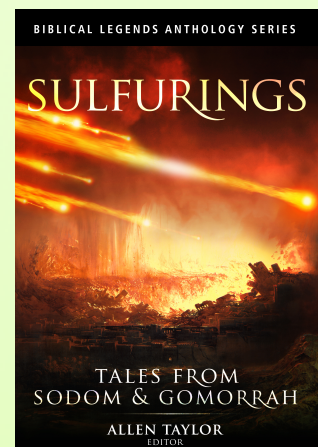
# Author Announcement

## Looking for Reviews

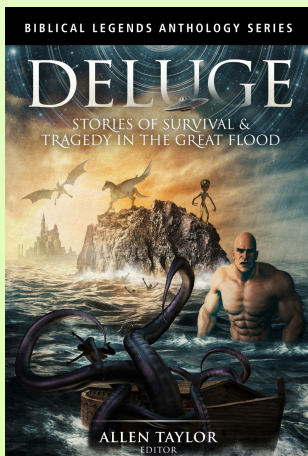
Author Allen Taylor has recently relaunched his multi-author speculative fiction anthology series called Biblical Legends Anthology Series (BLAS), which consists of three titles.



*Garden of Eden* features fifteen authors exploring the lives of the inhabitants of history's most famous garden telling the stories of creatures not mentioned in the Bible.



*Sulfurings: Tales from Sodom and Gomorrah* imagines non-biblical inhabitants of these famous ancient cities and how they reacted to the fire and brimstone storm raining down on them from above.



*Deluge: Stories of Survival and Tragedy in the Great Flood* features stories and poems about characters who might have existed but didn't get a mention in the biblical record.

All three books are discounted on Amazon for a limited time. The Kindle books are all 99 cents and the print books are \$9.99 for *Garden of Eden* and \$10.99 for *Sulfurings* and *Deluge*. The author is seeking honest reviews on Amazon and Goodreads.

Find the books at the following links:

- *Garden of Eden* - [amazon.com/dp/1535509414](https://www.amazon.com/dp/1535509414)
- *Sulfurings* - [amazon.com/dp/1540836096](https://www.amazon.com/dp/1540836096)
- *Deluge* - [amazon.com/dp/1519634889](https://www.amazon.com/dp/1519634889)

# Meet the Members: Marvin S. Mayer



## **What made you decide to sit down and write your first story?**

When I retired, my wife handed me an application to apply for writing children's books. The application was from The Institute For Children's Writers. Several weeks into the course, while mailing in a course lesson assignment, the idea of a squirrel "teaching" children the value of obeying their parents came to me. I wrote *Sammy Squirrel and the Sunflower Seeds*.

## **What genre do you write in now?**

I prefer to write for young children, particularly picture books, although *Sammy Squirrel* and *Case of the Stolen Stash* were written in prose, intended to children who were already able to read.

## **What made you decide to become a member of ETWG?**

At the time, I was attending meetings at the Tyler Public Library. The group was not very well organized and I didn't feel I was getting the help and support I needed. I heard about ETWG, attended a meeting in a small book store, and was immediately impressed by the caliber of writer/members, as well as, the structured organization of the group.

## **What has been/is the most positive response/experience of you becoming a writer?**

For me, interacting with youngsters and seeing them enjoy my books has been most rewarding. I read to children at schools, daycare centers, and, in connection with my book about *The Queen's Tea*, even at the Broadway Square shopping mall! One of my favorite book signing events has been in front of the gift shop at the Tyler Rose Garden Museum ON the day of the Queen's Tea.

## **For you, what has been/is the most challenging part of being a writer?**

Coming up with new ideas for books. I like my books to carry a message to young readers, a message containing [my] values. In today's world, the values that were taught to me by my parents seem to have been removed, replaced by violence and focusing on "me" rather than others.

(MAYER, Cont'd on Page 20)

# It's NaNo Month!

*Lydia Holley*

If your writing buddy suddenly starts ignoring you, don't panic. They're probably participating in NaNoWriMo—National Novel Writing Month. November is when writers all over the world buckle down to write 50,000 words in one month.

Not sure you can write 50,000 words in just 30 days? Don't worry. You can use NaNoWriMo to start or increase your daily writing goal. You can choose to write a number of short stories or poems instead of a novel. You can finish your novel instead of starting one. You can even set time goals instead of using word counts. The main focus of NaNoWriMo is to *write*.

I have never participated in NaNoWriMo, but once used it as a guideline to write 50,000 words in one month. Unfortunately, I found polishing the book took longer than if I had taken my time. But I'm glad I did it and figured out my own process. That said, many, many writers swear by it, and some get ready for it all year long. Then they take the 50,000 words they write in November and polish, polish, polish in the months afterward. I definitely think if you've never tried it, you should. It might be just the right process for you. Even if you find later on you personally need to slow things down, you've got 50,000 more words written than you did before. And you may find starting with a first draft fits perfectly with your process.



(NANO, Cont'd on Page 18)



# Don't Do What I Did

April Coker

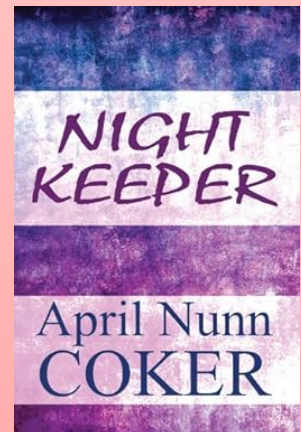
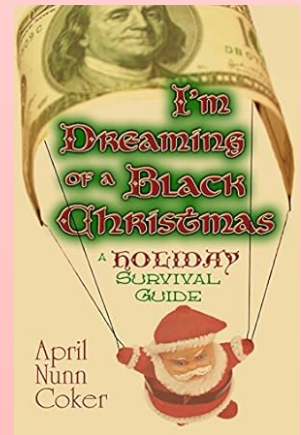
Right after Christmas in 2005, I sat down at my computer and drafted a short book called *I'm Dreaming of a Black Christmas: A Holiday Survival Guide*. Though only 80-some-odd pages, I was proud of it and even included some of my own pencil drawings for illustrations. It was a humor book describing tongue-in-cheek how to save money during the holiday season, although some of the tips are worth practicing.

It was my first book, and like any new author, I wanted to get it published. I searched online for publishers and found one that did not charge a fee to publish a book, so I contacted them. I was pleasantly surprised in the next few weeks to hear that they accepted my manuscript, and would I please sign the contract and give them some ideas for a cover?

I should have examined the contract more carefully and even had an attorney look at it, but I was too excited to think much about it. I happily signed it, communicated my cover ideas, and waited to hold my book in my hands.

The cover was just what I had envisioned. I can't describe the feeling of holding the first copy of your first book in your hands. It was a lifetime dream come true. I ordered copies, hosted book signings, interviewed with a local newspaper and radio station, and waited for royalty checks. They didn't come. Instead, my email inbox filled week after week with opportunities to have my book shown at various events by the publisher for certain fees. I couldn't afford most of them, so I didn't participate. I never saw much, if anything, in royalties.

Fast forward four years. I had an idea for my first novel, *Night Keeper*. I sent a query and some sample chapters to the same publisher, and they accepted it with a deadline to send in the finished manuscript. I worked feverishly to get it done, and sent it in. I had no ideas for the cover, silly me, and allowed them to come up with the worst cover ever, but being a newbie, I accepted it, signed another contract, and received my first copy. I ordered more to sell and share. Again the offers flooded my inbox, inviting me to pay for marketing opportunities ranging from \$49 to around \$500. I actually paid a few times, but never got any feedback on how the event went, how many books were sold, or if the event ever even happened. Unfortunately, I'd been had.



(DON'T, Cont'd on Page 19)

# Plot Points: Do You Know Where Your Story is Going?

*Lydia Holley*

I started writing a story the other day, then stopped. I felt so lost! Where was I going?

I suddenly realized I hadn't put down my plot points! After taking the time to determine the points of my story, I understood why I was so lost—I had nowhere (or perhaps I had too many places) for my character to go. By deciding on the plot points beforehand, I know where my character is going (and what to write about next).

Plot points are major events which turn the story in a different direction or have a meaningful impact. Of course, some stories go by the Hero's Journey structure, the romance structure, or a different plot structure, but I generally use the one below. Does it scare or bother you to make your story fit into any structure at all? Don't worry. The percentages listed are not exact—think of them as guidelines rather than carved in stone.



Of course, you might not work this way—and might not even want to! That's okay. We are each individuals. Whatever works for you is what you should be doing. But if you have been writing manuscripts that later on you have to go back and rework to put your major points in the places they should be, perhaps try plotting your points first. You can always change back.

I am a semi-plotter. Figuring out my plot points beforehand has been the best writing advice I've ever received. I determine the plot points and how they hook together, figure out how many words should be between them, then pants my way through the rest. But knowing each plot point beforehand gives me enough road signs to let me know where I'm going. If you want to try using plot points to make a map of your story before you start writing, read on. These are the major plot points I use and the approximate location of where they should be.

1% - Hook: The first 25% sets up the story. It introduces your reader to the characters, their world, their wants and desires. But your story shouldn't be boring. A hook at the beginning of the story makes the reader curious, but does not yet alter the character's journey.

*(POINTS, Cont'd Next Page)*

*(POINTS, Cont'd from Previous Page)*

12% - Inciting incident (or a key event): Something that engages your protagonist with the villain or throws him into the plot's main focus. (Be aware that some guidelines do not list this plot point, so it doesn't have to be life altering, but it should get the character aware of the main conflict.)

25% - Doorway of no return: (some guides call this the inciting incident). This is where the protagonist makes his first major life changing decision. It must be urgent and move the protagonist in an unforeseeable direction. This point starts them on their journey. An emotional stake is needed for your protagonist to decide to face their challenger so readers will believe he has no choice. This point represents a change, so if your protagonist stays home, consider introducing new people around them. Sometimes the protagonist confronts the villain at this point, or the ticking clock begins. Whether you call this or the point at 12% the inciting incident, this is where your character starts his main journey.

37% - First pinch point: reminder of goal and what will happen if protagonist fails. Let pressure "pinch" your protagonist into making a decision. Again, make it emotional for your protagonist. And don't forget to put your character through a series of challenges along the way—also called rising action.

50% - Midpoint: protagonist changes from reacting to being proactive. Give your protagonist a new goal or a new resolve. It is a moment of reflection, a mirror moment. Sometimes a dilemma is introduced and your protagonist can clearly see what he's doing wrong and what needs to be done in order to win.

62% - Second pinch point: another reminder of what will happen if protagonist fails. More pressure. Perhaps a new plan is formed or a small battle is waged.

75% - All is lost moment. Also known as the dark night of the soul. The plan has failed. Your protagonist now chooses between what he wants and what he needs. He questions his ability to succeed or if he should even go on. His decision here will lead to the climax.

88% - Climax: Faces the antagonist or their fears. Either a fight to the death, or he makes a profound decision. Sometimes called resolution. The fight ensues, with the climatic moment coming near the 98% mark.

98% - Epilogue or Denouement: ties up loose ends. Puts the protagonist back into a 'regular' world.

I've already said this is not the only way to write (so no hate mail, please). Everyone has a different writing procedure. Or you may need to use a different story structure. But if you do not yet have a procedure you are comfortable with, consider figuring out your plot points beforehand. Then just follow the signs. *(FYI: References follow on Page 21)*<>

# A Florida Thanksgiving Prayer

*Laura Bentz*

Dear Lord:

I pray this year Thanksgiving will be a good one: The turkey will cook through. It wouldn't be too hot outside and strain the A/C. Our electric bill will survive. I can wear a sweater instead of a T-shirt.

And help my pumpkin pie to cooperate in my mom's fickle oven. And I'll be able to cook it without too much trouble. I pray my sister's turkey turns out all right as well. And she doesn't put too many pecans in her green beans. I hate it when she does that!

And she brings her famous cheesecake.

And I remember the cranberry sauce.

Thank you for all you've given us.

Thank you for the beautiful weather.

Thank you for the mobbed roads and packed attractions.

Thank you for family and friends.

And for fifty years of living in the late, great state of Florida.

I am truly blessed more than I deserve. Thank you for the delightful house you've given us. Thank you for the pool. May it not turn green but stay blue for the big day.

May everyone get along and we don't get into any heated discussions. May it be a nice, sunny, but cool day.

May my husband have a blessed day at work. He has to work at "Dizzy World" on Thanksgiving Day. He goes to work in the afternoon, after a quick lunch. Lord, bless them even though they are stingier there than Scrooge...Bless the quarter-an-hour raise they gave him.

I pray that the little Bob makes stretches, especially with Christmas around the corner.

And I intervene for my brother, who will only stop by for a few minutes, after visiting with mom a few days, and then leave to go back to Colorado.

He will probably not eat any of our food because his wife hates anything we make.

Thank you for him even though he is a pain. All of us need someone like him to keep us humble.

And bless our left-overs, Lord. Let them be delicious and stretch to Christmas.

Thank you, Lord, for your grace is sufficient.

Amen!





## Writing from the Male POV

*Dana Wayne*

As a romance author, my preferred writing style is dual POV, meaning the viewpoint of both the male and female main characters.

This style is more natural for me than I anticipated when I began. Maybe because I grew up in the country surrounded by male siblings and cousins, and my first two jobs were in a male-dominated environment, but, for whatever reason, it's relatively easy for me to do.

The switch between the two is critical. If I just spent half the morning working on the female-centric viewpoint, and now I have to convey the male, that requires a bit of re-focus time. I must put myself in his shoes and redirect my brain to his way of thinking. Sometimes, I go back and re-read another scene of his to get in character and sometimes I just picture him and the scene in my mind.

Here are a few tips for writing from the male POV. These are very generic in nature since not all things apply to all people in all situations, but they will provide a starting point.



- **People watch.** I love to people-watch. I traveled for a living for many years before I retired, and spent hours at airports, hotel restaurants, and bars. I always had a notepad of some sort with me and made notes on things that caught my eye. How a guy enters the room, how he studies it. Trust me; with a bit of observation, you can spot a burned-out executive or a guy on the prowl just by his body language. How does he decide which girl he wants to approach? How does he walk? How does he take rejection?
- **Talk to guys.** Sounds simple, right? It's not always easy to do, but it's essential to be able to understand not only what a guy says but how he says it. Use your family and friends as guinea pigs – just don't let them know it. Ask questions and engage in casual conversation. Study how they respond. Every social function you attend is an opportunity to learn, to talk, to observe. Don't pass it up.

*(MALE, Cont'd Next Page)*

*(MALE, Cont'd from Previous Page)*

- **Research.** Research involves different things. When does your story take place? How old is your character? What is the setting for the story? Each of those things will impact how you write your male POV. A twenty-something guy is not going to think, act, or speak the same way a 30-something one would. By the same token, guys today are very different from guys in the mid-1800s. So, do your research.
- **Introspection.** I read a stat somewhere that said men speak like 7000 words a day and women 20000 or more. I don't know that I buy that, but I do know men tend to be less vocal. BUT, just because your guy is silent doesn't mean he isn't thinking. Introspection is a great way to convey things to the reader. Don't be too wordy, though. Remember, he's a guy.
- **Men are visual.** As a general rule, if a guy sees it, it's more likely to stay with him, so your male POV will have more 'seeing.' Thoughts and feelings are easily stimulated by what he sees.
- **Just the facts.** Most men are big-picture guys, they are not detail-oriented. Now, if your guy is a cop or Spec Ops guy on assignment, that's different. But, as a general rule, men don't care about the label or style of the woman's dress. He cares that the sleek, black dress fit her like second skin and showed a mile of shapely legs.
- **Men are logical.** You really need a hug and some kind words because you've had a crappy day, but when you start talking, he wants to tell you how to keep that from happening again. He's Mr. Fixit. Something's wrong, you fix it. And they don't understand tears. Very few men I know can handle anything involving tears. If you're lucky, you get a pat on the shoulder and a "it's gonna be alright" speech. They're guys. They need to fix it. Hugs don't fix things in their world.
- **Men touch, women feel.** Guys don't always think about sex. It crosses their mind, of course, but doesn't (normally) fill every waking hour. Again, as a general rule, men connect through physical touch, whereas women connect on an emotional level.
- **The second look.** A guy will always notice a girl walking by, regardless of her general sex appeal. That first look is impulse – she walks by, he notices. It's the second look, that double-take, that signifies interest. Now, that interest can be good or bad and everything in between, but it's still the second look that signifies interest, and you need to convey that in your story.
- **Make the voice fit the man.** The voice must fit. What he says and how he says it. A no-nonsense, ex-military cop is going to speak and think differently than a book-smart lawyer—both in the words he uses and how he uses them. The time period also affects how he speaks. If the words don't mesh, if they aren't believable for your character, your story will fall flat, and your reader will be gone.

Writing the male POV isn't easy, but doing it well can strengthen your writing and enhance your story. <



# Vendor Opportunities

*Compiled by April Coker*

Pack up your books and crafts! East Texas is full of vending opportunities these next few weeks. Happy selling!

## November

11/11: Troup Farmers and Craft Market, Troup, 9 am – 1 pm. Contact A.J.'s Place at 903-842-0207.

11/11: Vendors of Plenty – The Shops on Mill Street, Gladewater. 10 am – 5 pm. Contact Christi Crump via Facebook.

11/11: Gladewater Vendor Event, 10 am – 4 pm. Text Irene at 903-235-5779.

11/11: Hidden Gems Trades Day, Mt. Pleasant. Contact Jessica Hanna at 903-563-6941.

11/11: The Syrup Festival, Henderson, 9 am – 5 pm. Email Kathy at [maysharriseventvenue@gmail.com](mailto:maysharriseventvenue@gmail.com).

11/11-12: 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Military Appreciation Celebration, Gladewater. Contact Melissa Campbell via Facebook.

11/12: Dia De Los Muertos, Bergfeld Park, Tyler. Contact Mar Hernandez via Facebook.

11/14: Christmas & Crafts at the Creek, Marshall, 11 am – 7 pm. Message Wendy Reagan Newman via Facebook.

11/14: Friendsgiving Vendor Market, Mt. Pleasant, 5:30 – 8:30 pm. Text FRIENDSGIVING to 903-251-3245 for information.

11/18: The Great Turkey Shoot 2023, Mineola, 9 am – 2 pm. Call 888-372-7633.

11/18: Christmas in November Craft & Trade Show, Gilmer, 10 am – 5 pm. Call 903-921-8335.

11/25: Christmas Parade on Main Street, Kemp. Register via Eventbrite.

11/25: Country Christmas at El Cerrito Lodge, New Diana, 10 am – 5 pm. <https://vendors.elcerritolodge.com>.

## December

12/2: Christmas on Main, Grand Saline, 11 am – 7 pm. Contact [mainstretevents@yahoo.com](mailto:mainstretevents@yahoo.com).

12/2: Yuletide Market, Athens, 12-5 pm. Contact Robert Bob Morton, East Texas Vendors Facebook.

12/2: Local Vendors Market, Gilmer, 9 am – 5 pm. Call Enchanted Physique Salon & Boutique for information. 936-208-6880.

12/2: A Celtic Christmas, Mineola Select Theater, 2-9:30 pm. Message Lorissa Holley Meade via Facebook.

12/2: Harleton Hometown Christmas, Harleton, 10 am – 4 pm. Email “info” to [harletonevents@gmail.com](mailto:harletonevents@gmail.com).

12/2: Tis the Season Geekmas Celebration, Kilgore, 10 am – 5 pm. Email Melissa at [geekend.melissa@gmail.com](mailto:geekend.melissa@gmail.com).

12/2-3: Winter Bazaar, Palestine, 10 am – 5 pm. Contact Tyler Hebert-Brown via Facebook or look up event on East Texas Vendor Events on Facebook for link to application.

12/9: Winter Fest with Santa, Bergfeld Park, Tyler, 1 - ? pm. Register at [www.collegeelite.org/events](http://www.collegeelite.org/events).

12/9: Jingle Bell Rock at the Ranch, Henderson, 10 am – 6 pm. Contact Macie at 903-646-5220.

12/2-3: The Big Christmas Expo, Longview, 10 am – 6 pm. Message Addison Anderson via Facebook Messenger. (East Texas Vendors)

12/15: Country Christmas at Lottie Bug Farms, Hawkins, 7-10 pm. Email [lottiebugfarms@gmail.com](mailto:lottiebugfarms@gmail.com) for registration link.

12/16: Marshall's Main Street Christmas Market. Marshall, 10 am – 5 pm. Call Raven at 903-934-0151 or email [blackbirdbathllc@gmail.com](mailto:blackbirdbathllc@gmail.com)



*(NANO, Cont'd from Page 10)*

Why join? The official NaNoWriMo site has forums where you can communicate with other writers for added encouragement or help. Some meet in person. Or you can set up your own private group. How fun would that be?!

The main focus of NaNoWriMo is to stop procrastinating. It's hard to start a book. It's difficult to begin typing on a blank page. Sometimes the emotional journey of your character is challenging to slog through. NaNoWriMo may be the catalyst you need to get through it—or to get started.

Discouraged because November has already started? Don't be. Just start now. Perhaps you'll only get 40,000 words instead of 50,000. That's 40,000 more words than you have now! And you may become a NaNoWriMo enthusiast!

Need more sprints throughout the year? NaNoWriMo offers Camp Nano in the months of April and July. Whether you write 5,000 words or 50,000 in November, get writing! It's NaNo month!

<https://nanowrimo.org>

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(DON'T, Cont'd from Page 11)

I finally admitted it when the publisher sold out and made off with the copyrights to both books after offering to sell me the copyrights for \$500 each, but I was in no financial position to buy them. To tell the truth, I really didn't see the need, since I planned to write more books anyway. But it meant I was unable to buy copies of my own books to sell, so basically my books were gone.



That all happened before Amazon. When I later found my books being sold on Amazon, I learned something else. Any sales of my books on Amazon benefit someone else, not me. They are still there, and I don't know who gets the royalties if they sell. I don't know if there is any legal action I can take to get the books removed from Amazon, but I'm sure I don't want to pay whatever it would cost.

There is a happy ending, however. It was my good fortune and a blessing to discover the East Texas Writers Guild. Following the advice of dear Caleb Pirtle, I rewrote some of the scenes in my novel, gave the characters different names, and gave the book a different title and genre. Caleb helped me self-publish it, and it became the first in *The Keeper* trilogy. Without his help, I would have lost my book forever.

I hope you will learn from my mistakes. Research your publisher carefully. I don't know what PublishAmerica was—a vanity publisher, a hybrid publisher, or just a bad publishing company. I do know that they were out to make money from their authors instead of marketing and selling the books themselves. The road to becoming a published author is hard enough without a publisher taking advantage. <>

(MAYER, *Cont'd from Page 9*)

**In a couple of sentences, give us your short bio or list your accomplishments or goals.**

Born in Louisville, KY, I migrated to New Orleans after receiving my BA from the University of Louisville. There I met my true love, Iris, and we began a wonderful life together spanning 58 years. I like to think of myself as a kid, masquerading as a Senior Citizen. I was fortunate enough to serve the community as a volunteer at various venues and in 2012, was honored as Tyler's "Volunteer of the Year." Over the years, I have published five children's books and one book for adults. <>

#### **Other Opportunities:**

The Rockport Fulton Book Festival will be a free, fun, family-friendly event on the coastal bend (April 27th & 28th, 2024), boasting authors from all over Texas. If you are interested in selling your books there, more information, along with author applications, are available at the following website: [www.rfbookfestival.com](http://www.rfbookfestival.com).

The League of Romance Writers will hold a Fall Conference on November 10 & 11, 2023, at the Westchase Hilton in the west Houston area. Complete information about the conference can be found at the following website: <https://www.leagueromwriters.com>. Although the League of Romance Writers focuses on romance, they encourage any writer in any genre to come learn the art of writing through their organization and speakers.

BookSpring is a non-profit organization dedicated to building early literacy in children and families through healthcare, education, and the community. They distribute books free of charge to underserved families throughout Texas. They are in great need of open access digital books that families can read together using a digital device for free, and are accepting submissions for their writing and artwork for BookSpring Originals, a new program aimed at developing original, captivating, and culturally authentic content for children ages 0 to 12 years and their families. Selected submissions will be released as custom designed e-books in our digital libraries and book app, under a Creative Commons license, at no cost to families to view or download. All genres of fiction are welcome. Selected authors and illustrators will be given a small honorarium and are required to sign a release form for their materials. Submissions are welcome in English, Spanish, and other languages to cater to a diverse audience. For more information, visit the following website at: <https://bookspring.org/en/family-reading/submissions/>

## Are You Moody?

*Lydia Holley*

Writers Helping Writers has a great post by guest contributor C.S. Lakin about creating mood in your writing. It's a reminder that mood is not always about rainy nights or sunny days.

In the example by Lakin, Bill walked to an old cottage.

You could go with that simple sentence.

But, Lakin spices it up, inserting words which convey a specific mood:

“Bill slogged along the leaf-choked path, the spindly arms of the bare maples quivering in the cold autumn wind—a feeble attempt to turn him back. But he pressed on until he spotted, nestled in a copse of willows, the derelict cottage slumped like a lost orphan, the lidless windows dark and vacant. Hardly a welcoming sight after many tiresome hours of travel.”

Do your characters walk somewhere? Sit? Stand and wait? Go somewhere new? Consider adding in a sentence or two of the mood you wish to convey.

Want to read more? Here's the post:

<https://writershelpingwriters.net/2023/10/how-to-creat-mood-effectively-in-your-fiction/>

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Plotting References:

<https://learnhowtowriteanovel.com/blog/2022/08/02/plot-points-writing-to-percentages/>

<https://www.masterclass.com/articles/how-to-write-the-first-plot-point-of-your-story>

<https://www.masterclass.com/articles/how-to-use-plot-points-to-write-a-compelling-story>

<https://www.helpingwritersbecomeauthors.com/calculate-books-length-writing/>

[https://thewritepractice.com/points-of-a-story/?utm\\_source=ActiveCampaign&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_content=6+Plot+Points+in+Every+Story+%28Plus%2C+an+Audiobook+Giveaway%29&utm\\_campaign=Total%3A+Points+of+a+story](https://thewritepractice.com/points-of-a-story/?utm_source=ActiveCampaign&utm_medium=email&utm_content=6+Plot+Points+in+Every+Story+%28Plus%2C+an+Audiobook+Giveaway%29&utm_campaign=Total%3A+Points+of+a+story)

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## 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](mailto:LydiaHolley@aol.com)



### 2023 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>Sharon James</b>      |
| <b>Conference Chair:</b> | <b>April Coker</b>       |
| <b>Historian:</b>        | <b>Laura Bentz</b>       |
| <b>Membership:</b>       | <b>Ilenya Marrin</b>     |
| <b>Parliamentarian:</b>  | <b>Lisa Holcomb</b>      |
| <b>Publicity:</b>        | <b>Lynn Pinkerton</b>    |
| <b>Technical:</b>        | <b>Mike Wigington</b>    |
| <b>TNC Editor:</b>       | <b>Lydia Holley</b>      |
| <b>Website:</b>          | <b>Nikki Brown</b>       |
|                          | <b>Laura Bentz</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:

[etwritersguild@gmail.com](mailto:etwritersguild@gmail.com)