
WYO-WRITER Vol. 45 No. 3

1 message

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WYO-WRITER JULY 2019 VOL. 45 NO. 3



WYO-WRITER

July 2019 Vol. 45 No. 3

Official Newsletter of Wyoming Writers, Inc.

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

By Kathy Bjornestad, President



When I was first persuaded to join the Wyoming Writers Board two years ago, I didn't expect to be sitting in the president's chair one day. But sometimes we are called to step up in order to keep a good thing going. As I take up this new role, I'm reminded of a much-missed mentor, Gaydell Collier, charter member of Wyoming Writers and of my home group, the Bearlodge Writers. Gaydell was an excellent writer. She was published and received the Governor's Arts Award, among other commendations, but what I recall best about her was her talent for helping others. Gaydell saw many of us on our way to publication, from small fry like me to big names such as Michael and Kathleen Gear. Now I'm paying it forward, hoping to grow and diversify our membership, and keep us on a stable and successful path.

Wyoming Writers' strength is connecting those who live, scattered like tumbleweeds, across our state's vast open spaces. Through those connections, we take heart, pick ourselves up, keep writing. Not always because we are successful at it, but because that act of creation speaks to our souls.

At 23, I joined my first writing group in Rock Springs, Wyoming. Christine Williams and I, along with two other ladies, made up the scope of our membership. Those writing friends took me to

my first big writing conference, the Rocky Mountain Fiction Writers Conference in Denver, and at Western Wyoming College in Rock Springs, I attended my first ever Wyoming Writers Conference.

I was nervous. Back then, entering rooms filled with strangers made me uncomfortable. Mingling during a book signing or sitting down with people I didn't know in a banquet hall jolted me out of my comfort zone. Those feelings have softened over the years, but they never really went away until I joined the WWI Board.

As those of you who've served on this board know, you are often too busy at conference to feel out of place or uncomfortable. But something else was *more* responsible for my changed feelings. Something to do with serving. Now, when I walk through the doors of a conference center and pick up my packet, I'm scanning the room for old friends. People I only see once a year. Kindred spirits. Lovers of the written word, misunderstood by "regular people" but appreciated in this space. Volunteerism has somehow freed me from shyness, has moved me outside myself. And I guess what I'm trying to say is that service has been its own reward.

This coming year, I'll do the best I can to further the mission of Wyoming Writers. I'll sacrifice some writing time to do it. I'll make a few mistakes. But everything the board and I do will be in service to all of you reading this newsletter. We want to help you stay connected, to encourage you and push you back to your feet when you feel like giving up. We want to unite our writing tribe, those rare animals that pick up pen and paper *voluntarily*, even when the rest of the world calls us crazy. So, happy writing! Don't give up. Stay tuned. And, to get the most out of this organization, think about how you can serve.

THANKS FOR A GREAT 2019 WRITERS' CONFERENCE

By Judy Green Matheny, Past President

It was such a joy for me to preside over and participate in the 2019 Wyoming Writer's Conference at Laramie! It was a big conference for WWI, and at times appeared to stretch the capacity of University of Wyoming's Gateway Center. We had 138 conference attendees that included 118 signing up for the full Friday-to-Sunday program; 12 Saturday-Only Passes; and 8 student registrants. We awarded six scholarships this year, and each winner attended.



While the venue scored high, and the food did well in the evaluations, it was the faculty, the educational sessions, the agent / editor pitches, and our signature Open Mic, Paddle Panel and Critique offerings that knocked the conference out of the park! Our 2019 combined Board of Directors worked so hard to meet this organization's overall mission - to educate us, increase our skills, expand our imaginations as to what is possible in writing and publishing, introduce us to writing and publishing masters, and establish and maintain our supportive network of fellow writers.

It was this unique network of Wyoming Writers that intrigued first-time attendee, Alyss Smith. After serving as our Administrative Assistant for almost a year, and devoting lots of time to publicizing the conference, Alyss felt confident she understood the power and contribution of the organization. But it was our writing community that stunned her.

“The WWI community was just so amazing. So many knew each other from prior conferences, but I felt that I knew them, too. I came away with friends that I know I’ll talk to every day!” she said.

Alyss was also motivated to take a fresh approach to her writing. “I hadn’t written much until the conference, but I came back and started writing again.” Alyss’ genre is predominantly non-fiction, coupled with a personal passion for blogging. She has agreed to share some of her techniques and knowledge of blogging in a future newsletter.

WWI’s new 2019-2020 President Kathy Bjornestad, and Vice President Jessica Jackson have already hit the ground running on plans for Lander and our next Writers’ Conference (June 5-7, 2020). Comments submitted on the Laramie evaluations are being reviewed and incorporated to make next year’s conference even better. Thank you all for attending and for making this organization a dynamic, engaging and supportive community.

MEET THE NEW WWI BOARD MEMBERS



Melissa Cook, Secretary

Melissa L. Cook has a Masters Degree in School Administration from the University of Anchorage (2007) and a second Masters Degree in Education with an emphasis on technology from the University of Alaska Southeast (2002). She obtained two bachelors degrees from Black Hills State University in Secondary Education with an emphasis in middle school (1994) and Composite Social Science

(1993).

In 1995, Melissa and her husband, Elgin Cook, moved their three young sons to the tip of the Alaska Peninsula to live in a remote village located along the Bering Sea shores after growing up in Detroit, MI and Tucson, AZ. Nelson Lagoon was considered by many to be one of the most remote locations in the state at the time. Two years of thrilling bush flights, spectacular volcanic activity in the neighborhood and long, lonely winters lead the couple to move their family to a more populated area of Alaska though still qualifying as bush by most people’s standards - Prince of Wales Island. They lived on the island in the Tongass National Forest for 18 years.

Melissa left teaching after 15 years, moving to medical disability due to multiple sclerosis (MS) in 2011. She began the blog, www.MSsymptoms.me, documenting the latest MS research and her experiences living with multiple sclerosis. Elgin continued to teach in Thorne Bay, Alaska until the summer of 2016. They are now both retired from education and live in Burlington, Wyoming.

Two of their three sons and four grandchildren continue to reside in rural locations on Prince of Wales Island, Alaska.

Cathy Ringler, Publicity Chairman

Cathy Ringler is a storyteller, cowgirl and retired teacher. She lives at the foot of the beautiful Beartooth Mountains and rides in them as often as her busy schedule will allow. Winner of the 2016 YA Wyoming Writers Award, two-time winner of the Gib Mather's Journalistic Writing Award and receipt of the 2019 Western Horizon Award, Cathy enjoys working with youth. She is a "Circuit Reader" for the Park County Library at local preschools, volunteers at a horse camp for teens and tells stories of adventures on horseback at the Annual Big Horn Arts Festival.



Cathy is eager to serve on the Wyoming Writer's Board because she is grateful for the advice, guidance and support of the Wyoming Writers. Without them, her first book *Miya's Dream*, may never have been published. She is currently hard at work on the sequel.

WINNERS OF THE WW, INC. 2019 WRITING CONTEST

This year's contest was very competitive! The conference in Laramie June 7-9 attracted 138 participants. Congratulations to the following contest winners!

Adult Fiction

1st Carolyn Dickinson "Fire's Coming"

2nd Reatha Thomas Oakley "Dancing with Donnie Miller at the West Augustine Elementary All-School Christmas Program"

3rd Dulce Bell-Bulley "Raising Rose"

Honorable Mention

Reatha Thomas Oakley "The Night of the Peacock" and "Funnin' Thursman"

Tom Spence "The Poet Laureate of Bilderbeck Creek"

Fiction for Children and YA

1st Marilyn Davidson "Lily and the Orphan Fawn"

2nd Kimberly S. Brown "The Bow Queen"

3rd Reatha Thomas Oakley "From the Top Secret, Personal, Private Property Notebooks That belong to Annie Louise Porter, Detective #3"

Honorable Mention

J.A. Strike "Apple Red Caboose"

Kathy Bjornstead "Fade"

Reatha Thomas Oakley "From the Top Secret, Personal, Private Property Notebooks That belong to Annie Louise Porter, Detective #1"

Free Verse Poetry

1st Lyndi Waters "To My Friend Who Wants Me to Say Something", "Snipe Hunt", "Bedtime in the White Limousine"

2nd Myra L. Peak "Can't Hold It In My Hand", "Remorse", "Worn"

3rd Betsy Bernfield "Conversation of the bald eagle and the great grey owl and the owl's response; Breathless Awe", "A Gift of Leaves"

Honorable Mention

Sarah E. Reichert "Phenominity", "Memories of a Dirt Road", "Keep LA"

Tom Spence "disclaimer", "mute", "calibrating the countdown"

Lyndi Waters "The Gentle Face Slap of Early Morning Light", "The Dental Hygienist Scrapes My Teeth With a Description of Her Cuban Vacation", "She Wouldn't Touch a Dead Prairie Dog"

Traditional Poetry

1st Marie Marchand "Acts of Sweeping and Wishing", "How the Past Clings to Us (or How We Cling to It)", "How Words Set Us Free"

2nd Craig Youngblood "Reverie", "Teton Requim" and "Peaks, Valleys and In Between"

3rd Luana G. Powell "Missed Chances", "A Lullaby for Luke"

Honorable Mention

Constance Brewer "Crash and Scatter", "Muster the Sheep to the Shearing Shed", "Drought"

Nonfiction

1st Nick Sweet "Varrone"

2nd Luana G. Powell "Crazy Woman Canyon"

3rd Jessica Jackson "Splitting Cords"

Honorable Mention

John Raul Gutierrez "Working Hands"

Barbara Wild "The Tale of a Sleuthing Sloth"

2019 MAJOR AWARD WINNERS

Emmie Mygatt Award
(est. 1974)
For outstanding service to WW, Inc.

Echo Klapproth

Milestone Award
(est. 1997)
For ongoing achievement in members' writing careers.
Multiple awards yearly.

Nicholas Trandahl

Arizola Magnenat Award
(est. 1983)
For encouragement/support to writers.
One award yearly.

Wyoming Public Radio

Western Horizon Award
(est. 1997)
For a member's first publication.
Multiple awards yearly.

Diane Nighswonger

Cathy Ringler

A WORD FROM JOHN

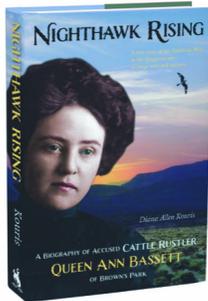
"Greetings Fellow Writers,

The Wyoming Writers Conference will be held at Lander Wyoming in June of 2020. Keep in mind that WW Inc offers scholarships to attend the conference and awards to recognize the successes of our worthy writers. You should consider nominating a fellow writer or yourself for the Emmie Mygatt Award for Outstanding Service and Support, The Western Horizon Award for your first published novel or collection of short stories, The Milestone Award for your major accomplishment/achievement or major event of influence in your writing career, and The Arizola Magnenat Award, given to a business, a community individual or an entity who support the arts. Watch for the application due date at the start of next year."



Don't goof around...Get 'er done!

MEMBER NEWS



Diana Allen Kouris, longtime Wyoming Writers member, has a new book out! Her book, *Nighthawk Rising: A Biography of Accused Cattle Rustler Queen Ann Bassett of Brown's Park* is a historical account of the beautiful and controversial woman who lived a life of adventure and controversy in the area where Colorado, Wyoming, and Utah converge.

This is Kouris's third book on the Brown's Park region. She has written another history and a memoir. *Nighthawk Rising* is available from High Plains Press at www.highplainspress.com in a limited edition hardcover and a paperback.

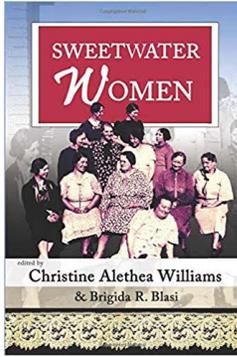
Art Elser has had two poems, "Moth of His Imagination" and "The Scent of Burning Trees" accepted for publication in the summer issue of *Gyroscope Review*. He also has had one poem, "We Called It Crossing the Fence" accepted for publication in *So It Goes, the Kurt Vonnegut Literary Journal*.

Past-President **Judy Matheny** will participate in the Local Author Showcase on August 17, 2019, hosted by the Douglas County Libraries at the Phillip S. Miller Library, Castle Rock, CO. Judy will be showcasing her middle-grade novel and screenplay, *The Princess in My Head* (Aignos Publishing 2018). On Thursday, August 15th, a book signing and reception for Judy and *The Princess in My Head* will be held at the Mama Tried Boutique, 220 Wilcox Street, Castle Rock, CO from 4pm-7pm. Middle-grade actors will read from the screenplay.

Myra L. Peak's poem "Worn" received second place in the Free Verse category at the Wyoming Writers Inc. conference. Two of her poems, "Clean-Up" and "Done," were published in the Boars Tusk, Western Wyoming Community College's literary journal in May. She led a workshop (assisted by her daughter, Emily), "Write with More Flavor," at the Wyoming Writers, Inc. conference in June and at Western Wyoming Community College's Literary Festival in April. She is editing a series titled "Member Inspiration" for the WyoPoets' newsletter. WyoPoets' members have contributed their comments and summaries of their inspirational tools. These compilations have appeared in the Winter, Spring, and Summer 2019 editions, and more are to come.

Abbie Johnson Taylor's poem, "The Alligator", has been published in the summer print edition of *The Avocet*. Other work appears in various weekly online issues of this magazine. Her new

novel, *The Red Dress*, is due out in mid-July from DLD Books. You'll find more information on her blog at <https://abbiescorner.wordpress.com>.



In conjunction with Wyoming's Office of Tourism's "Year of Wyoming Women," celebrating the sesquicentennial of women's right to vote, co-editors **Christine Alethea Williams** and **Brigida R. Blasi** have released a book of photos and biographical information on historic and modern women of Sweetwater County. The book is currently available at the Sweetwater County Historical Museum bookstore and on Amazon.

Carol Deering has had three poems accepted recently: "A Stillness Rose" in *Parks & Points & Poetry* (April) online at <https://www.parksandpoints.com/poetry-2019/a-stillness-rose>; "Mare in the Moon" in the *SummerMoonPoetry* anthology by The Linnet's Wings (summer); and "A Huge Toad Sits" in *Gyroscope Review* (summer). Also, she has just completed successful reading-presentations (book and slides) in Ohio and Massachusetts.

WyoWriter member from Afton, **sid woods**, is also the Board Chair for a new women's retreat opportunity: see at www.FeatheredInk.org. Applications open until end of July for fall 2019 week-long retreats at a coastal Maine cottage. Travel costs may be covered under Professional Development grant requests from the WY Arts Council. Since this is new, your chances are EXCELLENT at being accepted. Fiction, Creative Non-Fiction, Poetry and Oral Storytelling are all included. Fall colors in MAINE—hasn't that been on your bucket list?

In June I swam at the Senior National Games
with octogenarians of many strange names,
and although I swam fast
I finished dead last
and came home with a dearth of acclaims.

—C. F. Kelly

Dean Peterson's novel *The Burqa Cave* releases this August. You can find it on [Amazon](#).

Pat Jones will be holding a book signing of her latest book, *Sagebrush Alley*, at Wind City Books in Casper on August 16, 4-6 p.m. and attending the Wyoming Authors and Publishers Event at Goshen County Library in Torrington on August 27, starting at 1 p.m.

Maria Lisa Eastman was just featured on the Cowboy Poetry website! [Here's the link!](#)

Cal Stevens just published a new book available on Amazon and Kindle entitled "[Dog](#)" - a year with a dog and his boy in the California desert. It is about the adventures of a dog with his boy from the dog's perspective.

Compiled by Abbie Johnson Taylor

Wyoming Writers, Inc. does not endorse any publications mentioned here. Please read all guidelines carefully before submitting. If possible, it's a good idea to read at least one issue of a magazine to get more of an idea of the type of work they publish. Some publications have online editions and back issues available for purchase.

WyoPoets calls for submissions for their juried 2019/20 chapbook. Though it is a "members only" project, poets can join (\$20 bucks) and submit simultaneously. It doesn't get any easier than that! And no submission fees for members. Find the submission guidelines at <http://www.wyopoets.org/2019-2020-members-only-chapbook.html>.

October 31st is the deadline for a poetry prize competition sponsored by *The Pangolin Review*. Work can only be submitted by email. The entry fee is \$5.00 for the first poem and \$3.00 for each subsequent poem. For rules and to enter, visit <https://thepangolinreview.wixsite.com/mypoetrysite/prpp-rules>.

A website called *Changes in Life* offers a submission opportunity for women who have experienced bullying. The deadline is September 1st. To submit, visit <http://www.changesinlife.com/>.

August 31st is the deadline for an anthology called *Show Us Your Papers*. They want poems about wills, passports, and other hard copy documentation. The submission fee is \$3.00. For more information, visit <http://www.showusyourpapers.info/>.

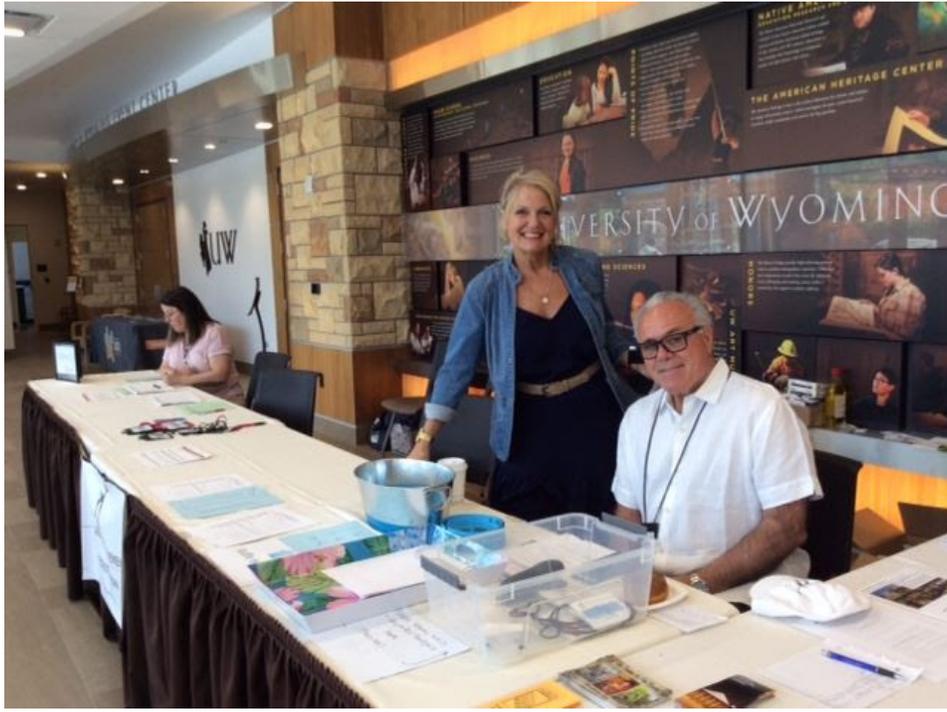
Tinderbox Editions seeks essay and poetry collections during its summer reading period. Work must be submitted online. The fee is \$22.00 per manuscript. The deadline is August 31st. To submit, visit <https://tinderboxeditions.submittable.com/submit>.

Ad Lumen Press seeks unpublished novels and memoirs. There's no reading fee. To submit, visit <https://adlumenpress.submittable.com/submit>.

2019 CONFERENCE PHOTOS



Breaking Through. Photo by Marie Marchand



Judy Matheny and a conference volunteer.



Jessica Jackson and Keynote Speaker Brad Watson.



Page Lambert in a session on Saturday.



Signing books!



Judy Matheny and Kathy Bjornestad. Photo by Marie Marchand





Tasha Alexander and Andrew Grant. Photo by Marie Marchand.



Marie Marchand and Jovan Mays.



Photo by Marie Marchand.



Susan Mark and Eugene Gagliano. Photo by Marie Marchand.



Don and Reatha Oakley. Photo by Marie Marchand.

Stay tuned...
the new WWI website is almost here!

Wyoming Writers, Inc. Membership Form

New Member Renewal Student Member

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Website: _____

Student \$10 Regular \$35 Sustaining \$75 Patron \$250

Mail completed form and check to:

Wyoming Writers, Inc.
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Riverton, WY 82501

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