



The Journal

Changing of the Guard

By Mary Koeberl Rechenberg, President

The Heartland Writers Guild would like to thank **Mary Fricke** for her dedicated service to the guild serving as editor of The Heartland Writers Journal for the past fourteen years. We appreciate her hard work and wish her well in the future.

We are pleased to welcome **Sarah Geringer** as the new editor of The Heartland Writers Journal and designer of our website with a new web hosting service. Sarah lives in rural Jackson, Missouri with her husband and three children. Sarah graduated from Jackson High School and has a degree in English from Covenant College along with a degree in graphic design and illustration from Southeast Missouri State University. She was a graphic designer and event planner for SEMO Home & Garden Show for nine years, and has been an administrative assistant at Saxony Lutheran High School for the past three years. Sarah likes to write poetry, memoir, devotions, and essays. She has been blogging since 2010. Learn more about Sarah's writing at her blog: sarahgeringer.com.

HWG is blessed to have a diverse group of members interested in the writing process. Many of our members have been published in books, magazines, newspapers, and blogs. We enjoy the wealth of information shared at our meetings, not only by the experiences of our members but also through featured speakers, workshops, conferences, and field trips. Our meetings offer a friendly, relaxed atmosphere, where answering your questions are a top priority. It is our goal to see that anyone who writes has the opportunity to be published. We welcome all new members.

I believe Mary Fricke's story about her journey as a writer is a testament to the value of this organization, and I would like to dedicate this issue of The Heartland Writers Guild Journal to her. I know you will find her story as fascinating as I did. **See page 2 for Mary Fricke's story.**

March Program Speaker

Julie Kolb was born and raised in Kentucky and now lives in Southern Illinois. Julie writes children's and YA books, as well as mystery fiction and other eclectic genres. Her first story "Snowball" was written for her granddaughter's birthday and is available on Amazon. Julie is a student at SIU Carbondale majoring in creative writing, and has been accepted at Old Dominion University College of Arts and Letters for the creative writing degree program. She is also a participant in The Muse Writing Center in Norfolk, Virginia.

Inside this issue:

<i>Mary Fricke's Writing Journey</i>	2
<i>Meeting Minutes</i>	3
<i>Snippets</i>	4

Next Meeting Date

Sunday, March 20

2:00 p.m.

First Presbyterian Church

Jackson, Missouri

My Writing Journey

By Mary Fricke

There was a time when I honestly believed I was the only writer in the entire state of Missouri. I began writing before I knew how to read. I used to just think up stories, and I always knew I would write books someday. In school, I made better grades in classes where I could read and then write a report, and I always kept a journal. I was 20 before I actually wrote a story on paper. After a few years, learning through many, many mistakes, struggling to sell something—anything—a kind editor/publisher (to whom I sent sample chapters) told me I had a natural talent for writing, but I needed professional training.

At the time, I could not go to the nearest community college to take classes because I was needed at home 24/7. My first husband was disabled and very ill. We had a four-year-old son, and I was trying to supplement our income by babysitting in our 14' x 56' mobile home—for nine kids, five days a week. I learned about the Writers' Institute and signed on to their three-year correspondence course...and almost didn't complete it. My husband died, I found a job in a department store, and then, I met the love of my life—all within six months! Dennis and I got married, we moved, and my second son was born. I finished the course on time (barely) and kept writing.

By the end of the 1980's, I began to hope I might someday be published. SoHo Press became interested in my life story. I worked directly with my editor for three years developing what became "Dino, Godzilla and the Pigs," published in 1993. I was 42 years old and still had so much to learn about writing.

What a joy it was to discover I was not the only writer in Missouri!

"Dino" was accepted (but not yet published) when I found out about the Heartland Writers Guild from Jory Sherman the summer he held a two-day workshop in Hermann, Missouri. I attended my first Guild conference in 1992. What a joy it was to discover I was not the only writer in Missouri!

I joined the Guild and soon began sending articles to be published in the monthly newsletter. Now and then, I also had articles published in various national magazines. I stuck with writing non-fiction for a number of years. However, I am a storyteller at heart, so I also struggled to publish fiction.

I attended most of the HWG conferences between 1992 and 2008. Each time, I spoke with other struggling writers, hearing experiences of those who actually "made it" getting published. I have made life-long friends through the HWG Guild, and I have learned more about writing than I ever imagined possible. In 2002, I took on the job as newsletter editor. At that time my life was a little empty. My sons were grown and moving on with their lives. I was no longer a room mother or a 4-H leader, and I retired from teaching in 2004. I had less laundry to do, less cooking, and less overall chaos in my life. Because of HWG, I could now call myself an editor. I kept on writing fiction and publishing non-fiction through various internet connections.

I eventually found a publisher for my fiction series. In 2014 my first fiction romantic suspense, "Pigeon in a Snare," was published through AKW e-books. "Roses for the Sparrow" was also published in 2014. At the end of 2014 the publisher-owner of AKW retired, so I became independent. I published "Plight of the Wren" in 2015. On Jan.1, 2016, I published #4 in the Birds in Peril Series, "Robin Unaware." All four books are available as e-books through Amazon.

It is because of HWG that I obtained the status of a professional writer.

I am currently working on a story which was my final assignment for the Writers' Institute. I cannot tell you how many times I have rewritten this story. Several friends have read it and insist I publish it. "Sweet Pea," spanning the late 1960's through 1990, is a nostalgic story I affectionately refer to as my *Gone with the Wind* of the 20th century. The primary character encounters quite a bit of chaos and turmoil throughout her simple farm life. In a few months, I may publish it—or put it on a back burner (again).

I will also write at least one more installment to *Birds in Peril* #5 "Challenge the Eagle." That title may change, and #5 may or may not be the last in the series.

I want say thank you to all the Guild members who have enlightened my life over the years. It is because of HWG that I obtained the status of a professional writer. I would not be publishing as I am today without the encouragement and friendship I have obtained through the Heartland Writers Guild.

January 2016 Meeting Minutes

We had a great turnout at the meeting. Lots of chairs filled up and lots of writing ideas circled the table. Members also gave updates on their current writing and editing projects.

We want give a special thank you to Mary Fricke, our newsletter editor for the past 14 years. Mary, we appreciate your service to HWG and we wish you well in your continued writing projects!

Old Business: Sarah Geringer, our brand new newsletter editor, and Carol Fisher will work with Julie Wolpers, our webmaster, to update our website. Sarah will also update our HWG Member Guide for 2016.

Our All Write Now! Writer's Conference will be held at SEMO University Center on July 16, 2016, from 8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. Check the All Write Now! website for updated information about the conference. Upcoming information will include contest details and a lineup of presenters.

The conference committee members are seeking input from members regarding the conference offerings. Send suggestions to Donna Essner at donna.essner@amphoraepublishing.com.

Carol Fisher will present the February program on "Writing Like the Masters."

Submitted by Sharon Hohler, HWG Secretary

**Register for the
conference and find
more info at:**
**[allwritenowmo.wix.com](http://allwritenowmo.wix.com/allwritenow)
/allwritenow**

February 2016 Meeting Minutes

Sixteen members were present at the meeting. Each person introduced themselves and shared current writing projects.

Program: Carol Fisher presented the program in which she discussed cumulative sentences and how they can add variety and interest to writing. These are sentences that use clauses and phrases to add detail and depth to the main idea presented in a sentence. She provided examples of this sentence structure from the writing of several well-known authors. Group members were then challenged to write sentences applying this technique. Each then shared the sentences they had written.

Business: Sarah Geringer has agreed to edit the newsletter, compile the member guide, and work toward a redesign of the HWG website. The website will be moved to a less costly web hosting service.

Conference: Donna Essner, chair of the 2016 All Write Now! Conference, gave an update on conference plans. All speaker slots are now filled and all contests have sponsors. The website is now active and registrations are now being taken. Fees will be \$75 for early registration and \$85 for regular registration. A continental breakfast and buffet lunch will be provided.

A \$200 grant has been received from the Missouri Writer's Guild for the conference. Donna urged members to sell advertising to help defray costs of the conference.

The meeting was adjourned by President Mary Rechenberg.

Snippets

By Sarah Geringer, Editor

Hello everyone! I am so honored to serve our group by creating this newsletter.

Each month I will offer up a sampling of the best writing advice I've found online for your enjoyment and inspiration. Here are a few from the past few weeks:

3 Keys to Schedule your Dream Job

A guest post by one of my favorite online mentors, Michael Hyatt, this is practical help for managing all priorities, not only writing.

<http://goinswriter.com/dream-job/>

How I Used Medium to Get My First 20,000 Subscribers in 6 Months

Eye-opening for anyone looking to increase blog traffic.

<http://goinswriter.com/medium>

7 Things to Remember When You're Feeling Stuck

Writer's block? Directionless? Uninspired? These ideas will help you move forward.

<http://allisonfallon.com/stuck/>

Have you found an interesting snippet of online writing advice? Email me and I'll include it in the April newsletter!

The Heartland Writers Guild Journal

Submit newsletter info
by the 15th of the month to:
Sarah Geringer, Editor
dsgeringer@gmail.com

heartlandwriters.org



Member submissions to *The Journal* are encouraged.

No fee will be paid, but a byline will be given if info is provided.

All submissions are subject to editing and will be printed on a space-available basis.

A word count of up to 200 words is requested.

Welcome topics include guild news, awards and achievements, and family occurrences. Photos must be in .jpg format and 1 MB or less.

Some forms of advertising, such as new publication information for member books and member book signings, are also accepted.

Articles printed with member by-line are considered "credits" by other publishers for that writers' portfolio.