



**Temporary logo*

The Legend

Emerald Coast Writers, Inc.

Member Newsletter

www.wff.org

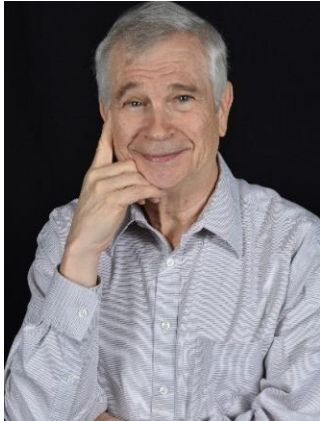
December 2022 Edition

December Open Mic Cancelled

ECW will not be hosting an Open Mic in December since this is such a busy time of the year. We will resume meetings in January, and we hope to see you all via Zoom at the next Open Mic on January 17!



Message from the President



This December, the ECW Board wishes each of our members a Happy Holiday season. We are taking a break this month from our monthly meeting and open mic. We will start things up again in January, so check back on the website and in the January edition of *The Legend* for details.

In February, we will hold our annual membership meeting where new Board members will be elected and the “state of ECW” will be presented. Plans are still being finalized. Do we continue with a virtual meeting or go back to in-person? We would love to hear your thoughts.

Details are in this month’s issue, but we are still accepting nominations for members to join the ECW Board. We have two open Director positions and an open Secretary position. If you are interested, please contact Mandy Fernandez (writtenbymandy@gmail.com) or Diane Skelton (dianeskelton@att.net).

November was a busy month for us. We participated in the 2022 Great Gulfcoast Arts Festival with a booth for our published

authors to sell their books. While crowds and sales were down a bit from the 2021 event, we got great group exposure to our local community.

On the heels of that event, we hosted a virtual writers conference that was a great success. All our speakers were well received and presented great information useful to just about every ECW member. If you bought a ticket but were unable to attend all the workshops you wanted to, you still have time to see the video replays through the week of December 12th.

Presenting a conference for our membership was the fulfillment of a goal that’s been in the ECW Board’s sights for quite some time. Through a lot of discussion, surveys, and planning going back many months, we finally pulled it off. And we made it affordable. For the price of a single workshop, we gave you eight. While we hope to make it an annual affair, I can’t promise that it will always be the bargain purchase it was this year. But I will promise that future events will be worth attending.

For those who attended the conference, the Board would appreciate any feedback you have so we can be sure to improve our event for the next time. Send comments to me at tome129@hotmail.com or to our Gmail account westfloridaliteraryfederation@gmail.com.

In the coming months, you will be seeing changes on our website. The Board has decided to move to a new hosting platform that will be easier going forward. If you have web development skills or have ideas about new features, we can use your help!

–Tom Roberts

The 12 Gifts of Writers

A Holiday Gift Giving Guide for Writers

Are you still trying to find the perfect gift for the writers in your life or even for yourself? We've got you covered with several gift ideas that will involve words and celebrating writing talent! Check out these 12 gifts of writers' ideas:

1. **Support a local writer and gift the book of a fellow Emerald Coast Writer.** Need to know who has published books in our group? Visit our member directory for the published writers and links to their books at <https://wflf.org/MemberDirectory>. Our members cover a wide genre of writing, from historical fiction and women's fiction to poetry and literary travels, and much more! After you read one of our member's books, consider writing a review on it to help the author, too!
2. **Give a membership to ECW** to a writing friend who has let a membership expire or to a new friend who could use some writing support and encouragement. View our membership options at <https://wflf.org/Membership>.
3. **Coffee and/or tea variety pack** – There are many places to find new selections during the holiday season. Some of my favorite, more affordable places are Wal-Mart, Ross (Dress for Less), Marshalls, and T.J. Maxx. You can also visit a local favorite coffee or tea place with your favorite writer. May I suggest Drowsy Poet and The English Creamery as my two favorite options.
4. **Bookmark and book light** – You can find cute, bright options at local bookstores or browse endless options online. I like the kind that clips onto the book, so I don't misplace it.
5. **Editing software subscription** – Need help polishing or organizing your writing? Research options that will make your life easier such as Grammarly, Scribblr, Scrivener or Final Draft.
6. **Join one of our smaller writers' groups** – Check out page 9 in this *Legend* for options such as Word Weavers and the Wednesday Portfolio group. Maybe what you need most next year is a dedicated ongoing group of encouraging writer friends.
7. **A master class workshop or online writing course** – If the ECW ongoing groups do not meet your schedule, then look for an online course or class that you can take anytime, anywhere. From James Patterson to Shonda Rhimes, the online options are endless.
8. **A writers conference admission ticket** – Look for a writers' conference that you've been wanting to attend and finally book admission. Send interest in Emerald Coast Writers hosting another conference or consider a state-wide opportunity such as FWA

or even out-of-state.

9. **Reading pillow** – Does your neck hurt after a while from reading? Perhaps you need a better way to prop up your book while you read? Look at online options or visit the Pensacola Palafox Market on Saturdays and look for the vendor that sells custom reading pillows with inspirational messages as well as a pocket to slip in books.
10. **Pens and pencils and notebook paper** – Even if you prefer to type writing drafts, we writers still need paper and pen to jot down new ideas and voices we hear when we're out and about. Look for inspirational, creative journals and pens and pencils for the writers in your life or for yourself.
11. **If you have the time and the creative energy, create your own crossword puzzle or word search worksheet for the word lovers in your life.** You can do these for free using online sources. I've turned these ideas into gifts for my children, including a crossword puzzle that describes and compliments my teenager for a gift. Check out <https://www.puzzle-maker.com/CW> for crosswords and <https://thewordsearch.com/maker/> for making a word search that a writer will love.
12. **The best gift you can give a writer in your life is your time, an ear, and a few encouraging words.** So, on that note, we want to thank EACH AND EVERY ONE of you in Emerald Coast Writers for being a part of our organization! Thank you for giving your time and entrusting us with your words this past year! We appreciate you! We hope you will continue your membership and volunteer your time and ideas in 2023!

Merry Christmas, Happy Holidays, and Happy New Year to all! However you celebrate, we hope you enjoy the season. Write, write, write!

–Mandy Fernandez



News and Announcements

Join Our Emerald Coast Writers Board in 2023!

A new year means a new opportunity to enhance Emerald Coast Writers! Board elections are coming up soon. ECW will have four open positions on our board in 2023 since terms are ending:

- Vice President,
- Secretary and
- Two Board Members

These four positions will be available.

Here's 10 Reasons Why You Should Think of Volunteering and Applying:

1. Give back to this great organization that you enjoy and that has helped you!
2. Learn new skills and gain experience. Current board members will help you, teach you, and support you.
3. Put your ideas into action.
4. Use your voice to help other writers in the community.
5. Volunteerism is always a good, rewarding idea.
6. Add this role to your resume and professional development.
7. Make new friends.
8. Share your knowledge and experience with others.
9. Uplift our organization and the local writers' community.
10. Be the person and the change you want to see.

How to Nominate:

Nominations are now being accepted. Current members of ECW may nominate a member for an open position by submitting the name of the member by email to Mandy Fernandez, at writtenbymandy@gmail.com. Include "ECW Board Nominations" in the subject line of your email, which should be sent by February 1, 2022. Please check with an individual before nominating him or her for one of the open positions. To quote from our bylaws:

- "All officers shall be nominated by membership and elected by ballot at the annual meeting by a majority of members of the Federation present and voting."
- "Only those officers who have signified their consent to serve if elected shall be nominated."
- "The officers of the Federation shall consist of a President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer."
- "Terms of office for officers shall be two (2) years. No officer may serve more than two consecutive terms in office."
- "Directors shall be nominated and elected by the general membership of the Federation."
- "A term of office for a director is two (2) years. Directors may be reelected to subsequent terms but may not serve more than two (2) consecutive terms."
- The three open positions are: Vice President, Secretary, and Directors – Two.
- Copies of the bylaws can be requested by sending an email to westfloridaliteraryfederation@gmail.com.

2023 Event Committee Members Needed

Emerald Coast Writers has had an amazing year filled with enriching activities for our members, including our highly successful writing conference and our author visits at the Greater Gulfcoast Arts Festival. We hope you have been able to participate and have gained knowledge, friendship, and inspiration through these gatherings.

We want to be able to continue offering events such as this in 2023, but we need your help! **If you have ideas for filling up our 2023 calendar or enjoy planning events, please consider joining our Events Committee.** The more members we have, the more wonderful opportunities we can all share in the next year! Reach out to westfloridaliteraryfederation@gmail.com if you are interested.

PROUD MEMBER



COMMUNITY OF LITERARY MAGAZINES & PRESSES
W W W . C L M P . O R G

Submission Opportunities Through CLMP

Emerald Coast Writers is a proud member of the Community of Literary Magazines & Presses (CLMP), and as such, our members have access to their submission opportunities, including:

- **The South Florida Poetry Journal.** They are looking for poetry, flash, and CNF/essays for their February 2023 issue. **Deadline: December 18.** [Learn more.](#)
- **Islandia.** They are seeking prose, poetry, and visual art from creatives who either live in South Florida or whose work interacts with this region. **Deadline: December 31.** [Learn more.](#)
- **Creative Nonfiction Foundation.** They are looking for new narratives about caring for the heart – medically, technologically, or metaphorically. **Deadline: January 23.** [Learn more.](#)
- **Belmont Story Review.** They seek to publish new and established writers passionate about their craft, fearlessly encountering difficult ideas, seeking to explore the human experience and feature works of short fiction, creative nonfiction, and poetry. **Deadline: January 31.** [Learn more.](#)
- **The Women's Prose Prize,** for a previously unpublished, original work of prose. Novels, short story collections, memoirs, essay collections, and all other forms of prose writing are eligible for consideration. The award is \$1,000 and publication by Red Hen Press. **Deadline: February 28.** [Learn more.](#)
- **ARTWIFE!** They are seeking submissions of visual art and video art for publication. **Deadline: February 28.** [Learn more.](#)
- **The Fabulist.** They are seeking short fiction submissions **between February and April.** [Learn more](#) about their interest in fantastical fiction and view accompanying deadlines.

Creative Submissions from Our Members

The Bicycle Helmet

By Patricia Taylor Edmisten

The Bicycle Helmet
It's Thanksgiving.

My old muscles need to move
after the long car ride,
so I risk riding my son's bike,
managing to swing a leg over
that killer bar.

My son gently places a helmet upon
my head. He fastens the clasp and
checks to see that the fit is good, asking
if I can get a finger under the chin strap.
I feel nurtured, as though a child,
and I love it.



Our Christmas Tree, Our Family

*(a reimagined poem to be read in tune with the song,
"O Christmas Tree")*

By Mandy Fernandez

O Christmas Tree, O Christmas Tree
You illustrate our family
O Christmas Tree, O Christmas Tree
You illustrate our family
Showcase the past and present day
Fun memories with each display
O Christmas Tree, O Christmas Tree
You illustrate our family
Childhood painted feet and hands
Pinecones, princesses, frying pans
O Christmas Tree, O Christmas Tree
You illustrate our family
We laugh at poorly painted crafts
Dismayed we ever wore those hats
O Christmas Tree, O Christmas Tree
You illustrate our family



Our first Christmas together needs a shine
 Yet Disney World ornaments still look fine
 O Christmas Tree, O Christmas Tree
 You illustrate our family
 From candy canes to a banana split
 Coffee mug, Captain Kirk, each one's a fit
 O Christmas Tree, O Christmas Tree
 You illustrate our family
 Grandma's hand painted figurines
 Two of the most beautiful girls I've ever seen
 O Christmas Tree, O Christmas Tree
 You illustrate our family
 Though not the prettiest on the block
 Each fixture truly means a lot
 O Christmas Tree, O Christmas Tree
 You illustrate our family.

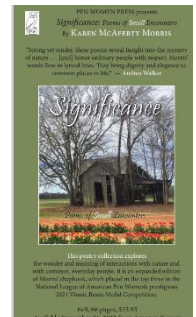
Publishing and Member News

Claire Massey's poems – “Beach Photo, Distance Learning,” and “Night Moves, Reprised” – will be featured in the January 2023 edition of [Writing in A Woman's Voice](#). Two of Claire's poems – “Earth Day, 2020” and “Crashing the Mockingbird's Concert” – will be included in a digital anthology of poetry and visual arts published by [Listeners Unite](#) in 2023.

Karen Morris's poem “Figs” appears in the Fall 2022 issue of *The Louisville Review*, a national literary magazine. In the poem, which was inspired by a friend's photo of a bowl of her recently harvested figs, is an allusion to William Carlos Williams' poem “This Is Just to Say.”

Karen Morris is also very pleased to announce that her new poetry book, *Significance: Poems of Small Encounters*, published by Pen Women

Press, is available from [Amazon](#) or Barnes and Noble. This collection is an expanded version of the chapbook that was awarded Third Place Overall in the NLAPW's prestigious 2021 Vinnie Ream Medal Competition. Karen is very grateful to the ECW members who have purchased it or provided reviews.



Pat Black-Gould will be appearing on the WSRE PBS TV show, Conversation with Jeff Weeks, in January, speaking about her book *The Crystal Beads, Lalka's Journey*. The show will air on January 6 (10:30 a.m.); January 7 (3:30 p.m.); and January 8 (11:30 a.m.).



Ongoing Workshops

MONDAY'S WORD WEAVERS (POETRY, PROSE, MICRO-WRITING FORMS) –

The goal of this workshop is to assist you to further develop writing skills, learn to critique, and grow in confidence as you polish your authentic voice and achieve the next level of your personal writing goals. Join us virtually on the first Monday of the month from 6 to 8 p.m. For more information, please contact Debra Stogner at debrastogner@gmail.com.

WEDNESDAY PORTFOLIO and EXCHANGE SOCIETY –

A lively critique group meets every Wednesday, from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m., on Zoom. The group is looking for writers of any genre — memoir, poetry, fiction, nonfiction — who want to work on completing a project in 12 months. Since the group formed, several members have published books. Participants exchange writing tips, websites, and general trivia. For more information, please reach out to Diane Skelton at dianeskelton@att.net.

Please contact Diane regarding meetings during this time.

Emerald Coast Writers Board of Directors

President: Tom Roberts
Vice President: Mandy Fernandez
Secretary: Charline Barger
Treasurer: Scott Finelli
Director: Lori O’Gara
Director/Poet Laureate: Katherine Nelson-Born
Legend Editor: Katie Rankin

- Check out our website at: www.wflf.org.
- “Like” us on Facebook, (under) West Florida Literary Federation, at: <https://www.facebook.com/West-Florida-Literary-Federation-WFLF-255101747857712>.
- “Follow” us on Twitter @WSTFLLITFED

ECW is a proud member of the
Community of Literary
Magazines & Presses.

PROUD MEMBER



COMMUNITY OF LITERARY MAGAZINES & PRESSES
W W W . C L M P . O R G

Join ECW or Renew Your Membership

Memberships are good for one calendar year beginning January 1 and ending December 31. Individual membership is \$35/year, two-year \$60. Couple one-year \$60, two-year \$115. New members joining after July 15 pay \$20 or may pay \$45 which also pays for the following year. Subsequent years are due annually by January 1. Student membership is \$15.

I would like to sponsor: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Check one please: New _____ Renewal _____

Date: _____

Circle the items you **do not** want published in the Emerald Coast Writers members only directory:

Address

Phone

Email

If no item is circled, we will include all your information in the next published directory.

How to join or renew your membership:

Pay your membership dues online with a credit card at www.wflf.org and then email this form to westfloridaliteraryfederation@gmail.com

or

Mail your check and this form to:
Emerald Coast Writers
400 South Jefferson Street, Suite 212
Pensacola, FL 32502