



The Legend

Emerald Coast Writers, Inc.

Member Newsletter

emeraldcoastwritersinc.org

January 2024 Edition

Join Us for Our Annual Membership Meeting on January 16

Emerald Coast Writers' Annual Membership Meeting will be held on January 16th. The meeting will open at 6:00 pm with our first guest speaker of 2024, Anne MacDonald. Read more about Anne in this issue of *The Legend*.

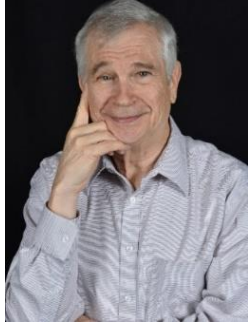
The business portion of our annual meeting will start at 6:30 pm with the January Open Mic beginning immediately after the membership meeting.

Our annual membership meeting is an important one where we review the past year's events and receive information about the state of our organization. It is also the time we hold elections for open positions on the ECW Board of Directors. At the meeting the slate of candidates will be announced, and nominations taken from the floor. This is followed by a vote of members present at the meeting per our Bylaws.

Our meeting will take place in the Boardroom on the second floor of the Clark Family Cultural Center, 400 S. Jefferson St., Pensacola. Doors will be open starting at 5:30 pm.

Please make plans to attend and enjoy seeing your fellow writers.

Message from the President



Happy New Year to all Emerald Coast Writers members.

Emerald Coast Writers' Annual Meeting will take place on **January 16, 2024**. Our evening will start at **6:00 pm** with a presentation by our guest speaker, **Anne MacDonald**. More information about Anne is found later in this newsletter. The business portion will follow at 6:30 pm with an open mic concluding our meeting. The location is the Boardroom, second floor of the Clark Family Cultural Center, corner of Jefferson and Main, Pensacola.

A big part of our annual meeting is the election of new officers and directors for the ECW Board. While we have a slate of candidates (see more info [HERE](#)), any member is free to nominate additional candidates at the meeting. Be sure that the person you nominate has agreed to serve in the position you nominate them for.

Our March 2024 Books By the Bay Festival continues to roll along. We have secured a \$10,000 grant from the Florida Humanities. Speakers have been engaged, and over 20 booths have been sold with more applications coming in

every week. Full details of our event are available [HERE](#) and on our Facebook page.

Great thanks are due to **Tonya Dalhaus**, the events committee (**Diane Skelton, Gina Cooke, Pat Black-Gould, Jen Aicher Powell, Candace Segar, Anne MacDonald, Chris Larson, Katherine Nelson-Born, Tom Roberts**), and the ECW Board for making this event a reality.

This is my last President's Message as I am not seeking another term as ECW president. I have been on the ECW Board for five years now, and, while it has been both fulfilling and challenging, I am turning back to my writing, which has been on hold for too long. It was a big step for me to take on a leadership role in an organization. I've always been a behind the scenes kind of guy. It's been a fun, frustrating, and character-building endeavor, and I'm proud of how ECW has grown in the past few years (we added 40 new members in 2023!).

Though many good things have happened to our group in those five years, and we've achieved many goals, I am always left with the feeling that we can do more. Though the work can seem daunting at times and a certain level of dedication is required, there are no prerequisites for volunteers who want to jump in just as I did in 2019. Why don't you give it a try?

See everyone on January 16th.

–Tom Roberts

Announcements

Nominees for Emerald Coast Writers Board of Directors 2024-26

The ECW Nominating Committee, consisting of Diane Skelton, chairman, Katherine Nelson-Born, and Jeannie Zokan, present the following slate of nominees to the membership for open officer and board positions for Emerald Coast Writers 2024-26.

President: Tonya Dalhaus

Treasurer: Mary Gutierrez

Director: Terri Barlotta

Director: Gina Cooke

Director: Heather Mitchell

Learn more about each nominee:

Tonya Dalhaus, Nominee for President

Tonya Dalhaus is an experienced leader, manager, speaker, facilitator, and coach. A former stand-up comedian, Tonya's work in Boston as Program Manager for a homeless shelter, serving over 150 families, has made her well acquainted with managing conflict and communication with a little humor. She now taps into those experiences when teaching public speaking, facilitation, and training to graduate students at the University of Denver.

Her past non-profit leadership roles include President of the Boston Junior Chamber, President of the University of Denver-University College Alumni Association, and Vice President of Education for the Jepp-N-Toast, Toastmaster's Club. Additionally, she served on the board of the Longmont Community Justice Partnership with whom she received the Above and Beyond Award. As a volunteer mediator with Jefferson County Mediation, she was awarded the Volunteer of the Year Award, and the 100 Club award for mediating over 100 cases. Currently she serves on the board of the Pensacola Women's Alliance as the Communication Trustee.



Tonya joined Emerald Coast Writers as a critique group member to work on her book: Raising Chickensaurus, a humorous handbook on how to, and how not to raise chickens. She immediately fell in love with the people and the organization for which she has a great passion. Soon after, she joined the event committee and conceived Every Picture Tells a Story—a collaboration with the Wide Angle Photography Club with which she is also a member. She currently steers the helm of the Books By The Bay festival as the Event Manager.

Her passion for creating digital photography, mixed media, and social media content led to the forming of HenHaus Media, geared at helping authors navigate social media. In 2023, her photos of @botlthemodelchicken won first and third place at the Pensacola State Fair. You can find some of her work in this year's Emerald Coast Review. To relax, Tonya enjoys swinging on a hammock with a lap full of chickens. She and her husband Don have a small chicken farm with some very friendly chickens and king quail.

Mary Gutierrez, Nominee for Treasurer

Mary Gutierrez is a Mexican American female, the 2nd generation born in the U.S. Her father's parents migrated to the U.S. in search of better economic opportunities and to escape political unrest. She grew up in a military family, her father was in the U.S. Air Force, so they moved a lot as do all military families. Her mother worked at home, which benefited her greatly.



Although Mary was born in Aurora, Colorado, which is still one of her favorite places, she has been a resident of Northwest Florida for decades. Yet, she still believes that she is from everywhere and nowhere and maintains a gypsy spirit. Mary has always had a special relationship with nature and animals, becoming a vegan at the age of 12 with the full blessings of her parents. Mary's parents always encouraged their children to follow their own path and be their authentic self.

Her love of nature is often reflected in her writings. She started writing at the age of 10 through journaling that eventually led to writing poetry and short stories. She has one self-published book, "Naked in the Rain" and is part of the recently published anthologies, "Word in a Web," "Voices of the Earth: The Future of Our Planet III," "G.I. Days: An Anthology of Military Life" and Emerald Coast Review XXII. Mary has also been published in numerous zines and magazines throughout the years. She is an Environmental Scientist by profession and passion with a B.S. in Earth and Atmospheric Science and a M.P.A with a concentration in Sustainable Community Development. She is currently the Director for Earth Ethics, Inc., a non-profit environmental and social justice organization.

Terri Barlotta, Nominee for Director

Terri Barlotta is a retired RN, living in Mary Esther, with her husband Nick. She enjoys beach walks, reading, and tending her plants. She and Nick love traveling and spending time with family.

Terri loved creative writing during her school years and is eagerly pursuing her passion in retirement. She journals and writes poetry, prose, flash fiction, and short stories.



Since becoming a member of Emerald Coast Writers, she has participated in two writing groups, a “Memories to Memoir” class, turning memories into vibrant stories for future generations, and “Word Weavers,” developing skills in poetry, flash fiction, and micro-writing forms.

Terri earned her first college credit in writing this year, after taking Creative Writing I at Northwest Florida State College with Dr. Jessica Temple. Her work has been published in two Memoir class anthologies, “Collections,” and “Mosaic of Nature,” and a Word Weavers Anthology, “Words in a Web.” This year, her poem, “Molten Gold Sunset,” and memoir, “Nursing School Psychiatric Rotation,” were published in the Emerald Coast Review. Terri is grateful for the growth she has experienced as a writer through opportunities provided by Emerald Coast Writers.

Gina Cooke, Nominee for Director

Gina Cooke worked for a publisher as a Book Production Manager for seven years. She is a visual person interested in art and graphic design and is currently handling the graphic design projects for Books By the Bay. She joined Emerald Coast Writers (then West Florida Literary Federation) in 2014 when she attended Julie DeMarko’s weekly poetry writing group. She has also studied memoir writing and is currently working on her first book, which she hopes to publish next year.



Gina feels if a person is creative in one field, they can cross over into other areas, like art and music. She finds writing an outlet for her thoughts and feelings, allowing her to express herself and discover hidden truths. Her real-life experiences and family inspired her to write about her parents’ divorce, moving, and other adventures. Writing has been a great tool for self-realization. The more she writes, she finds her voice and style.

Heather Mitchell, Nominee for Director

Heather Mitchell is an award-winning artist who has exhibited in galleries across the southeast. She specializes in coastal art, especially wading birds, and pet portraits. Heather is a great believer in late blooming, as she began her art career in her 50s and writing in her 60s, both childhood ambitions.



Heather has short stories published in the 2021 and 2023 Emerald Coast Review. She is an active member of Emerald Coast Writers and the National League of American Pen Women. She acted as art judge for ECW’s Youth Writing and Art Contest, and recently assisted in the production of Nobis II, the second anthology of the local Pen Women branch. She participates in critique groups and attends far too many webinars about writing and getting published. Heather is a former adult literacy tutor, and advocates

for the protection of the freedom to read. Heather is a dog-mom to adopted schnauzer-mix Evie, who is great company in the studio and reminds her of the importance of walks, naps, and treats.

ECW's Annual Youth Writing Contest Seeking Submissions



Spread the word! Do you know a talented young writer or artist? Do they have a love of books, an idea for a story/poem involving books, or do they have something to say about book banning? We would love to hear their original perspectives!

Emerald Coast Writers' annual youth writing contest is now seeking submissions from K-12 public/private school and homeschooled students in Escambia and Santa Rosa counties. Students may choose from four categories: poetry, fiction, nonfiction and the visual arts. This year's theme is "**An Open Book.**"

Go to our website at www.emeraldcoastwritersinc.org to learn more and to submit entries! The deadline is March 31st. Winners will be invited to an awards ceremony at Books-A-Million and will receive cash prizes, as well as a free copy of their work published in an anthology.

**Please note that students should NOT list their school email on the submission form, as we will not be able to contact them at that email address.*

Renew Your ECW Membership Today!

1. Mail a check for your renewal (\$35.00 for a 1-year renewal or \$60.00 for a 2-year renewal) to our office (400 S. Jefferson St. Suite 212, Pensacola, FL 32502). Be sure to update your information (email, address, phone) OR
2. Pay online on our website [HERE](#).



Note that membership dues for new members are \$20.00 (first-time members). Couple's membership dues are \$60.00 (1-year) or \$115.00 (2-years).

Why renew your ECW membership?

We are better writers, artists, and community members when we work together, share our

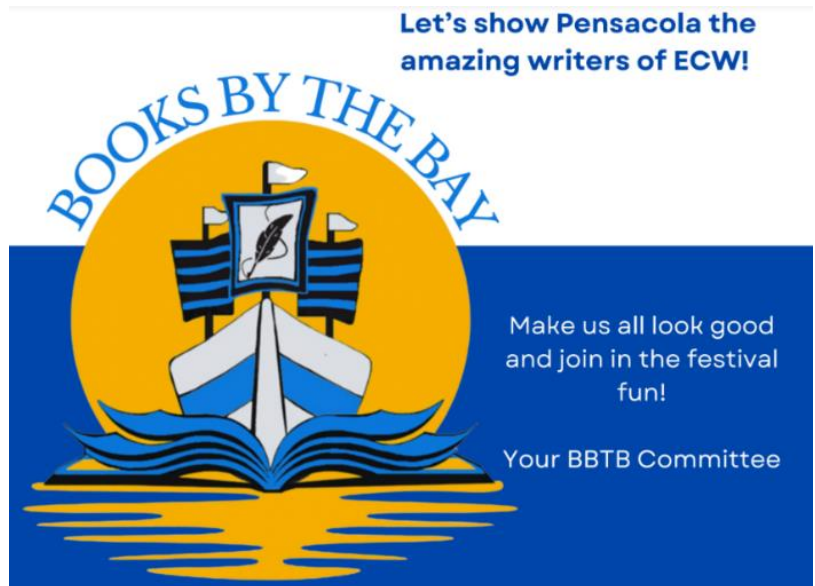
love of art, and let our creative voices be heard! Emerald Coast Writers provides you with a network and resources to help you achieve your writing goals.

Thanks so much for your engagement! We look forward to an exciting 2024.

Three Ways to Take Part in Our Inaugural Books By the Bay!

#1: RENT A SPACE AT THE AUTHOR TENT.

Meet fans, and sign and sell books in a large 20 x40 shared tent housing multiple authors. Each author gets 4 ft. of an 8-ft. table to sell one or two titles. Hours will be determined on a first-come, first-served basis. Each author is guaranteed at least a 2-hour time slot. Additional hours may be purchased if space is available. **SPACE IS LIMITED!**



#2: RENT A 10x10 EXHIBITOR SPACE.

If you have multiple books or other literary merchandise to sell, a flare for décor, and love a little more elbow room, then upgrade to your own space. You are also welcome to share the expense of your space with one other author. (Exhibitors will need to provide their own tent, table, and chairs).

For more info and to reserve your spot, fill out an exhibitor application at: <https://www.emeraldcoastwritersinc.org/exhibitor-applications>. For the author tent, be sure to fill in the number of hours you prefer.

#3: VOLUNTEER!

Books By the Bay needs many hands to make the day a success. We need people who can help do everything from checking in speakers, monitoring rooms, giving exhibitors relief, set up and clean up, handing out programs, and more. Please email booksbythebayfest@gmail.com if you think you can help.

Let's show Pensacola the amazing writers of the Gulf Coast and beyond!

Upcoming Events

Live 8-Week Poetry Workshop This Month

Former Northwest Florida Poet Laureate Katherine Nelson-Born is facilitating an in-person poetry workshop at the ECW office, starting **Wednesday, January 10, at 6:00 p.m.**

The workshop is free to current ECW members, but space is limited to the first 8 members to sign up. Slots are going fast but 2-3 remain open! Email KNB at bc.editor@gmail.com.



ECW's Open Mic Speakers This Spring

Emerald Coast Writers is excited to present an upcoming season of talented Open Mic Speakers. These local and national authors, poets, and publishers will offer a variety of topics for you to enjoy from January through May. While the meetings will be held in person, some speakers will be joining us in person and some via Zoom.

JANUARY 16, 6:00 PM – IN PERSON

We start off the new year with author and publisher **Anne MacDonald**. Anne is the Acquisitions Director of Indigo River Publishing. She is the host of the Pensacola Mom's Collective Podcast, Raising Pensacola, voted Best of the Coast in 2023. She is the author of two novels. The first, *A Lost Woman*, won an honorable mention at the New York Book Festival in 2021.



FEBRUARY 20, 6:30 PM – ZOOM

February's Open Mic presenter is **Louise Pachella**, an author, speaker, funeral director, embalmer, and death educator. Louise will provide fundamental knowledge about the use of proper terminology and guide authors on how to avoid myths and misinformation when covering death in their writing.

MARCH 19, 6:30 PM – ZOOM

Toby Dorr will join us in March. Toby dared the unthinkable by breaking a convicted murderer out of prison. Since completing her time in Federal Prison, she has achieved two master's degrees and rebuilt a broken life. Featured in the Wall Street Journal, Anderson Cooper, Inside Edition, and Dateline. A screenplay of her story is in the works, and the

Lifetime movie based on her story, Jailbreak Lovers, was released in July of 2022.

APRIL 16, 6:30 PM – IN PERSON

Outgoing Poet Laureate **Katherine Nelson-Born** and incoming Poet Laureate **Asia Samson** will celebrate April's Poetry Month. Katherine's award-winning creative writing has appeared in numerous journals as well as in her own poetry collections. Katherine will discuss how her theme of HOPE (the Healing Of Poetry is for Everyone) was addressed during her tenure and is still worthy in practice for all poets or creatives. Asia is an award-winning spoken word artist who has worked with organizations like Disney and the US military. Asia has broken college booking records for the most booked poetry act, garnering him a number of awards.

MAY 21, 6:30 PM – ZOOM

The month of May features **Hannah Kozak**, an award-winning photographer and a former Hollywood stuntwoman who tells stories through her pictures. She creates psychological and autobiographical photographs. Her work has been exhibited widely from Berlin, to Málaga and Barcelona, Spain. Her book, He Threw The Last Punch Too Hard, tells the story of her mother, whose physical abuse by her boyfriend left her with permanent brain damage. Hannah has followed her mother's harrowing journey. A story that inspires women to leave an abusive relationship before it's too late.

Creative Writing Workshop at UWF's Fort Walton Beach Campus

Together with writers Vicki Kovach and Wendy Rudman, Claire Massey will be facilitating the class, ***Creative Writing: Imagine the Possibilities***, to be offered on the Fort Walton Beach campus of the University of West Florida. The class is sponsored by the nonprofit Center for Lifelong Learning, a member of the Road Scholar Institute Network, which provides lifelong learning opportunities for adults.

The class is designed to appeal to both novice and seasoned writers in a variety of genres. Meetings will be once weekly during the winter semester, which runs from January 16 until March 8. Registration fee is only \$20.00. The class will be especially convenient for writers who live or work in Santa Rosa or Okaloosa counties. Visit cfl-fwb.org for more information.



Submission Opportunities

POETRY – STONE POETRY QUARTERLY – \$3 FEE – Deadline Jan.31

Stone Poetry Quarterly is an online poetry journal that publishes poems ranging from the visceral to the cerebral across a full scope of human experience and awareness. They prefer to publish poems that present a diversity of contemporary perspectives and are well-crafted, artistic explorations of language, subject, and image; publish online four times a year. Reading now for February issue.

<https://stonepoetryjournal.com/submission-guidelines/>



Community of
Literary Magazines
and Presses



UNPUBLISHED NOVEL – THE BIG MOOSE PRIZE – \$1000 – \$30 FEE – Deadline Jan. 31

Each year Black Lawrence Press awards The Big Moose Prize for an unpublished novel. The prize is open to new, emerging, and established writers. The winner of this contest will receive book publication, a \$1,000 cash award, and ten copies of the book. Prizes will be awarded on publication. The Big Moose Prize is open to traditional novels as well as novels-in-stories, novels-in-poems, and other hybrid forms that contain within them the spirit of a novel. <https://blacklawrencepress.com/submissions-and-contests/the-big-moose-prize/>

POETRY, NONFICTION, ART, PHOTOGRAPHY, EKPHRASTIC – \$3 fee – Deadline Feb. 1

Bicoastal Review is a print and online magazine committed to fostering creative and cross-genre conversations among poets and writers whose works and theories are helping to shape the contemporary literary scene. They are accepting poetry (free verse or formal), nonfiction, essays, reviews, photography, and occasional fiction from. They publish writing that provides a lens into varied schools of thought and showcases epiphany and mastery of language. In addition to original works (particularly on themes of East Coast/West Coast cities, peoples, cultures, and ecologies), they welcome ekphrastic writing that imitates, borrows from, challenges, or is otherwise in conversation with work we have previously published. <https://www.bicoastalreview.org/submit>

POETRY BY WOMEN OVER AGE 50 – No Fee – Deadline Feb. 1

Quartet is an online poetry magazine featuring work by women aged 50 and older. They are looking for poems that surprise and illuminate, that are genuine, that have momentum and play with language. They don't have a specific word count or theme, but caution against unusual formatting as it is sometimes difficult to reproduce in an online journal.

<http://www.quartetjournal.com/submissions>

HUMAN OBSCURA – CONTEMPORARY POETRY, ART, SHORT FICTION – \$5 FEE – Deadline Feb. 29

This online poetry and art magazine is looking for work that is nuanced, raw, and imagistic with strong elements of the natural world or hints to the human-nature relationship. They like a strong sense of place and strong imagery. They prefer short work, simple formatting, and uncomplicated language plus artwork of the natural world.

<https://www.humanaobscura.com/submit>

Publishing and Member News

Tales of the Strange, a print anthology that seeks to explore "the beautifully weird, the slightly off and the unusual," will include **Claire Massey's** story, "AI Husband." The book was released in December and is now available on Amazon.

Karen McAferty Morris' recent publishing news includes poems "The Mast" (which will appear in the spring issue of Rust & Moth Journal), "Snowline" (in the Winter Solstice issue of Canary Literary Journal), and "Autumn Sonnet" and "Into the West" (in The Orchards Poetry Journal). Read "Snowline" at <https://canarylitmag.org/contents.php#1334>, and at <https://orchardspoetry.com/> you can download the entire Winter 2023 issue – there's a wealth of beautiful writing in this journal from England – Karen's are on p. 16 and 123).

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.

January 2024

Legend – 11

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 [HERE](#).

or

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

Emerald Coast Writers | Pensacola Cultural Center | 400 South Jefferson Street Suite 212 | Pensacola, FL 32502

*January 2024
Legend – 12*