



December 2016

Amherst Writers & Artists Newsletter

December in Our Hands



Dear AWA Friends,

The next best thing to writing together is eating together. During these holiday weeks, we share food and conversation across tables and offer each other the gift of homemade affection and friendship. Your openness and ability to share your stories and poems is as nourishing as hearty bread. May each of you and all of us find cheer and comfort as the earth tilts away from the sun and finds its way back. The shortest days are the best for warmth in our hands and good listening in our hearts.

We launched the new [AWA website](#) in October. We are very proud that we can now launch the Affiliate Forum within the website. For everyone who has paid dues, please log in and visit the Forum via the Affiliate Dashboard. Ask questions, offer insights, share experiences. This is your place to gather, converse, and support each other as workshop leaders and as writers. Talk amongst yourselves! You'll also find on the website [the first installment of writers](#) from *Write Around the World*. We are proud to showcase these Irish writers who linked arms with us in this [adventurous fundraiser](#). Cheers and happy reading!

The 2017 Training Schedule is in place. We ask you to share this information with those writers in your groups who would like to be trained, or with others who can bring the AWA Method to those who are seldom heard.

Last month we launched a new feature in the newsletter: Among the Stars. This month we feature Margaret O'Brien, Mary Kim Kaylor and Vicki Pinkerton. These AWA Affiliates are galactic warriors, bringing writing experiences to people developing their craft in Ireland, in a high-security hospital in Lake Oswego, Oregon, and with the Vuntut Gwitch'en in Old Crow, Yukon Territory.

We have yet to announce the winner of the 2016 Pat Schneider Poetry Contest. Thank you to all who sent us poems. We apologize for the delay and assure you that the contest is going forward and thank you for your patience. We expect to announce the winner in late winter.

As we turn to a new year, we take comfort in what we have accomplished, sometimes despite difficult hurdles. We are grateful to all who helped AWA to survive. We also look forward to the experiences that await us. We are grateful to all who step into 2017 with us, believing that listening deeply is a profound gift.

With gratitude and respect,
Maureen Buchanan Jones
Executive Director

Training News: Please Join Us in 2017!

AWA Workshop Leadership Trainings in 2017:

February 22 – 26 in Atlanta, Georgia at [Calvin Retreat Center](#)

April 10 – 14 in Malibu, California at [Serra Retreat Center](#)

June 28 – July 2 in Boston, Massachusetts at [Walker Center](#)

September 4 – 8 in Chicago, Illinois at [Cenacle Sisters Retreat Center](#)

To join us, please begin the application process [online](#) or print the [2016 Application](#) and send it with a \$300 deposit to: Amherst Writers & Artists, PO Box 1076, Amherst, MA 01004

Reach out with any questions to amherstwriters@gmail.com. We look forward to hearing from you!

Among the Stars

[The Story House Ireland](#) was founded in 2014 by AWA Affiliate [Margaret O'Brien](#) with [Nollaig Brennan](#).

Unique in Ireland, it provides residential writing courses open to anyone who wishes to write.

To read more about Story House's foundations and find links which provide background on its work, please [visit our blog](#).



Mary Kim Kaylor, AWA

Affiliate, leads an AWA workshop at Oregon State Hospital, a high-security psychiatric hospital with the vision to provide hope, promote safety and support recovery for all.

To read more about Mary Kim's experience writing with patients and staff, please [visit our blog](#).

AWA Affiliate Vicki Pinkerton

facilitates writing groups near her home in Southern Ontario as well as north of the Arctic Circle in the small, fly-in community of Old Crow, Yukon Territory.

To read more of Vicki's story and find out more about her work with the Vuntut Gwitch'en, please [visit our blog](#).



Affiliate Classifieds

Original Voices: Homeless and Formerly Homeless Women's Writings 2nd printing features a new cover and discussion guide. Pat Schneider says, "Original Voices dares to value voices that have been excluded from our definitions of literary art." Give the gift of [Original Voices](#). (Amazon). All proceeds benefit Mary's Place, Seattle.

StudioWriting (Waltham MA), now enrolling for Winter 2016. Fun, supportive, multigenre AWA workshop for adults; suitable for all levels of writers. Prompt based, generate fresh ideas & learn about craft. Wednesday nights. Elisabeth Carter, EdM, MFA, is AWA Affiliated since 2004. Wednesdays; For info please visit: www.studiowriting.org To apply: studiowriting@gmail.com.

AWA facilitator **Jaclyn Desforges** is proud to announce her new online course, [Detoxify Your Writing Life: 4 Weeks to Inspiration, Focus and an Overflowing Creative Well](#). With worksheets, exercises and coaching emails, this course is designed to help nourish your creative life. [Learn more and register here](#), or contact jaclyn@nestandstory.com.

The book, [Memoir Your Way](#), by **Joanne Lozar Glenn** and [five other authors](#), was published by Skyhorse Publishing in September 2016. The book shows that memoir as an art form can be *inclusive* rather than *exclusive*. The following blog post describes the concept behind the book: <http://www.workinprogressinprogress.com/2016/11/memoir-your-way-making-memoir-more.html>

Join **Summer Hardinge** on a week-long adventure in the Languedoc region of southern France for 6 women writers **June 11-June 18**. Workshop includes daily writing practice, transportation to and from airport and to local sites, excursions, regional specialties, most meals, and shared accommodations in a French stone house. Cost: \$1600. *Only 3 spaces left*. Contact Summer beyondmargins@gmail.com . or go to beyondmargins.weebly.com for full details.