

 Chattanooga  
**Writers' Guild**

## News & Updates

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Greetings, fellow writers! Recently, I asked a friend to take a look at a poem I had written. I don't write poetry very often (I average two a year), but I was pretty proud of this one. So proud I thought I might try to submit it somewhere, and I haven't submitted anything anywhere in about two years.

I trust this friend's opinion because she is a *very* talented writer. I trust this friend's opinion because she writes a lot of poetry herself, poetry that digs its way to my heart, turns in a circle three times and settles in for a long nap. She also introduces me to a lot of poetry that mostly jibes with the poem I wanted to share with her. I thought to myself, *If anyone could love this poem the way I love it, it's her.*

But she didn't.

Like, at all.

Where I (naïvely) thought there'd be lots of underlines followed by "<3 this!", there were giant, three-story tall Xs and comments that ran into the margins and dribbled down the page. In short, she thought the message was unclear, the story boring, and she wanted me to change the whole thing.

Well, shucks. It stung to read all that. As I read her suggestions and comments, I kept thinking, *She's wrong, she's wrong. How could she be so wrong?* But thankfully, this is not my first rodeo. I know how to ride the Bull of Criticism. I got to the bottom of the page and made myself think, *She's not wrong. You just didn't express yourself clearly.* And when I forced myself to think that way, I was no longer hurt. I became determined to rewrite the poem in a better way, so that everyone who reads it will know *exactly* my intentions, and they will feel *exactly* the way I felt when I wrote it. Because my poem is worth sharing, and when I do, I want it to connect with all who hear it. Thank you, to all the critical friends out there, for being the editors we may not want, but definitely need.

Share your experiences with criticisms and revisions with me at [NoogaNewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:NoogaNewsletter@gmail.com).

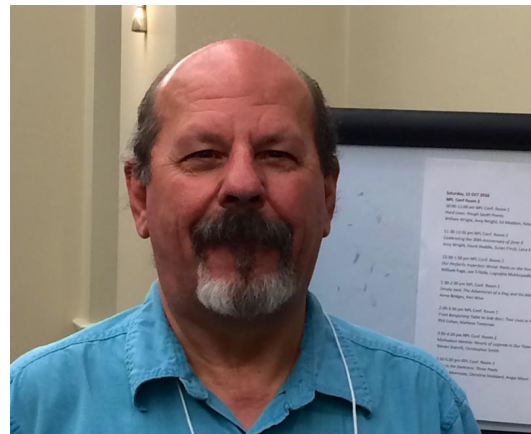
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### Our February Program will feature John C. Mannone

**John C. Mannone**, president of the Chattanooga Writers' Guild, has a long history of providing effective writing prompts to writing groups. He has work in *Blue Fifth Review*, *Poetry South*, *Peacock Journal*, *Baltimore Review*, and others. He won the Jean Ritchie Fellowship (2017) in Appalachian literature and served as a celebrity judge for the National Federation of State Poetry Societies (2018). His poetry collection, *Flux Lines* is forthcoming (Celtic Cat, 2019). He edits poetry for *Abyss & Apex* and others.

<http://jcmannone.wordpress.com>

John will lead a workshop filled with writing prompts that will engender all the major genres, so make sure to bring pen and



paper!

The meeting will be held on February 12 at  
**THE DOWNTOWN LIBRARY**  
(our old location), 1001 Broad Street,  
from 6PM - 8PM, in the Auditorium on the 1st  
floor.



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## THANK YOU to everyone who joined us for our Winter Writers Workshop!

The Workshop is FOR and BY you, Chattanooga's writing community, and it was wonderful to spend the day learning from each other, making new friends, and honing our craft. And a special thanks to our wonderful presenters, [Charles Dodd White](#), [Dana Shavin](#), and Bill Brown.

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### Member Spotlight featuring Rachel Crumble

**When did you first consider yourself to be a writer?**

Writing is the only thing that I have really ever wanted to do. I have been writing since I was 10 or 11. Yet perversely, I don't know if I still consider myself a writer, though I have been writing most of my life. I will own the word "poet" though; I think in paradigm, my native language. It describes how I live in this world.

**Tell us about your muse or source of motivation. I**

have always been motivated to write to make sense of things, to create order out of chaos. In that way, I think living with my beautiful, artistic, schizophrenic mother was my motivation, initially, to try to fathom her illness.

**What are your thoughts on Valentine's Day?** My husband is a jazz drummer who usually has a gig on Valentine's Day, but my tradition since we started dating was that I make him a heart-shaped cake. We go out to dinner later. I have written a few love poems for him over the years. Valentine's Day is a great occasion to write a love poem. There is so much aggression in the world, that by contrast Love seems like a worthy thing to celebrate.

**What writing project are you working on at the moment?** I have a manuscript, *Sister Sorrow* which I keep revising which has been a finalist in 2 publication contests, so I keep sending it out. Meanwhile, I have about 60 or so other poems ready to be edited into a second manuscript, and more on the way, thanks to Bill Brown's Workshop at the



CWG Writers' Conference. I teach in high school, and I keep writing non-fiction vignettes, poems, snippets of character-driven fiction from that context that I need to figure out what it wants to be: a YA novel, personal essays, or memoir?

**What is your favorite book on writing?** *Bird by Bird* by Anne LaMott. It is human and not reductionist or elitist, and is full of humility, humor, and faith.

**Where is your favorite place to go in Chattanooga?** I love outdoor places I can walk, like Forest Hills Cemetery, Reflection Riding, The River Walk, or Walnut Street Bridge.

**Who do you nominate for next time?** Annette Pasternak, whom I just met at the Conference.

## Mad Blab

How to play: Say the following nonsensical sentences aloud and try to guess the name of the famous literary work you're saying. Answers at the bottom.

Curl lawn gnat churr rain

In tooth he why auld

Ache aim muff Thoreau inns

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Word to Know: **Deprecate**, v.  
To express serious disapproval of.

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## Exciting Opportunity!

CWG members have an opportunity to participate in a radio program on WUTC: Richard Winham's Writers in the Round, Wednesday evenings, 7 to 8pm (88.1 FM radio or <http://www.wutc.org>) To be part of this please submit the following to: [writerstogo@gmail.com](mailto:writerstogo@gmail.com): 1- name and contact info 2- a short bio 3- a link to your online author page or published writing 4- an attachment with two samples of what you would read, 300 words or less. If you are accepted you will be contacted to schedule your time. On the broadcast you may promote your book or event. And you will be a representative of CWG's excellent pool of authors.

## CWG Taboo Results

January's Prompt word was *Company*, and the Taboo Words were *friends*, *business*, *unwanted*, and *dance*. The North Georgia Writers Group had two submissions, both published below. If **you** would like to participate in CWG Taboo, ask your critique group leader how!

**From Beth Zurkowski:**

I started a new career. It took me a while to get into the swing of it. I'm going to go to my sister's house and practice. She wasn't expecting any company and she told me the house doesn't have much room. I'm doing magic tricks and balloon animals at her house. I'm going to be a clown magician who does science effects

also. My Dad and Betsy are going to bring me a clown suit I can wear with a rainbow wig.

**From Bruce Gaughran:**

He gazes across the Tennessee River at the city lights—his destination. A place where strangers could care less why he is there. He needs to be around these people, but not for their company.

He can disappear in this urban sprawl of self-centered Millennials who pay more attention to their phones than anything else. Nameless faces unaware of who walks amongst them and what he is capable of.

The neon glow reflecting off the water would normally provide comfort. Not tonight. He raises his head and smells the air. The honeysuckle is strong, but another pungent scent tingles his olfactory nerves. He is not alone. The men pursuing him are nearby.

Anger mixes with frustration forcing a primal challenge from his throat that invades the silent night. There is no reply until a lone, vibrating cicada shatters the stillness. Moments later, a buzzing chorus responds.

Closing his eyes to calm himself, he takes a deep breath and lets it out slowly. He knows what must be done. It is time to hunt.

## Mark your calendars

On Saturday, April 13, at 2:00 CWG member Adair Sanders will be speaking about and signing her books in the Allison Parker Mystery Series at Star Line Books, 1467 Market Street, Chattanooga, Tennessee.

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## Six-Week Workshop in Nashville

### THE PORCH WRITERS' COLLECTIVE – Prose Workshop

Not a poem, not a narrative, not an idea-driven essay, but something other.

Outside and/or inside this post-structuralist definition exists a genre of writing contemporarily vital to our literature.

In this class, we will spend the first three weeks defining, reading, discussing, and writing the lyric essay (writers discussed may include, among others, Lia Purpura, Joni Tevis, T Fleischmann, Karen Green, Brian Lennon, and Brenda Miller), and then we will embark upon a three-week workshop-style look at our own work.

- **Instructor: Gary McDowell**
- **Length of Workshop: 6 weeks**
- **Date: Wednesdays, Feb. 6 – Mar. 13**
  - **Time: 7 – 9 pm**
  - **Cost: from \$207**
  - **Location: Porch HQ**

2811 Dogwood Pl.

Nashville, TN 37204

- **Registration Link:** <http://www.porchtn.org/workshops-prod/the-music-of-language-a-poetry-workshop-9gjrx-bj7e9>  
<http://www.porchtn.org/workshops/>  
<https://www.facebook.com/ThePorchWritersCollective>  
<https://twitter.com/PorchTN>

**Send inquiries to** [Katie@porchtn.org](mailto:Katie@porchtn.org) or [Susannah@porchtn.org](mailto:Susannah@porchtn.org)

Mad Blab answers: Girl on a Train, Into the Wild, A Game of Thrones

STAY CONNECTED

