

 Chattanooga
Writers' Guild

News & Updates

Greetings, fellow writers! One of the best, and sometimes the worst, things about being a writer is having a very active imagination. How often do you meet someone for the first time, or overhear a piece of a conversation, and immediately withdraw from the world around you to concoct a story or poem in your mind? This happened to me at the gym today.

I sat down at a weight machine and after making adjustments, I looked up and realized I was seated across from an open door which led to a studio. Inside, a woman and a man sat on chairs facing each other. With my headphones blaring full-blast, I felt cozily comfortable watching them from behind my imaginary shield of workout music. As the woman lifted one foot and rotated it, the man copying her movement, I thought that I was watching a very low turnout for a Silver Sneakers class. But then I quickly realized that I was actually witnessing a different program my gym offers - MINDful Movement, a class for people with dementia and their caregivers.

I continued my exercises as the man and woman continued theirs: First they lifted and rotated their right legs, then they clapped their hands and thighs. Then they lifted and rotated their left legs, then clapped their hands and thighs. When they began to raise their right hands, I realized they were dancing the *Hokey Pokey*. And immediately I had visions of this man, many years ago, performing these same movements at his daughter's birthday party, surrounded by a dozen giddy pre-schoolers. Then maybe again, a couple decades later, at her wedding, in front of smiling, laughing guests. And maybe again, not so long ago, with his grandchildren, their mother standing to one side while taking a video. And now maybe the woman sitting in front of him was his daughter, a grandmother herself now, and today *she* was the one leading *him* in this old dance.

The *Hokey Pokey* ended, the two arose, put away their chairs, and left the room. A few minutes later, I looked out the window to the parking lot and saw the man leaving the gym with a different woman by his side. I suppose I had let my imagination run away with me, when I conjured a familial relationship between the man and the woman in the studio and assigned significance to the *Hokey Pokey*.

Tell me about *your* experiences with active imaginations, caregiving, or the *Hokey Pokey* at NoogaNewsletter@gmail.com.

Our next Monthly Program will be held **March 12** and will feature singer-songwriter **Michelle Young**.

This presentation will cover songwriting styles (including putting music to words/poems, and putting words to music), co-writing, and basic songwriting elements. Discover and nurture the music writer in YOU!

Michelle Young is a professional singer/songwriter/musician. Her first solo album, *Song of the Siren*, was included in *The Billboard Guide To Progressive Music (1997)*. She has co-written and supplied original music for an independent film company in France, and has worked with other songwriters throughout Europe and the United States. She has also written and arranged hymns that were published in *Songs and Hymns for Him*.



Michelle has been published in the poetry anthology *Blanket Stories* by Richard Jochum and Ruth Zamoyta, as well as *Festival Writer*, Issue 2:6 July 2014: Sestinas special issue, and *Amore Love Poems* edited by Johnny M. Tucker Jr. She has participated in readings from *Blanket Stories* at Columbia University and the Princeton Public Library.

A visual artist as well, her watercolor painting *Ghost Town On The River* was chosen for the cover of the March 2015 issue of *Pine Mountain Sand & Gravel*, the literary journal of the Southern Appalachian Writers Cooperative. Her artwork has also been featured on the cover of KB Ballentine's poetry book, *The Perfume of Leaving*, and *The Chattanooga Writers' Guild Anthologies for 2015, 2016, and 2017*.

Michelle lives in Chattanooga, Tennessee with her husband Corey Green. Learn more at www.MichelleYoung.com

CWG board member **Susan Spurgeon** will have a book launch for her new book, *Chattanooga Hugs*, on Wednesday, March 6, from 5:30 to 7:30 at the Mountain City Club. Drop in, buy a book, and have some eats, Hugs cards, and mini Moon Pies.



*****Mark your calendars!*****

Our SPRING WRITING CONTEST will be open for submissions on April 1! More details to come, but in the meantime, *start writing!*

CWG Taboo results for February

Thank you, North Georgia Writers Group, for your submissions! The Prompt word was *Broken*, and the Taboo words were *toy*, *marriage*, *bone*, and *window*. My favorite is below, but you can read all the submissions [here](#). If you would like to participate in CWG Taboo, ask your critique group leader how!

From **Barbara V. Paper**:

I teach third grade and know from my own observations that boys are a breed all their own. Sonny sits directly behind Cory in the first row near the door. It was quiet reading time. Then a voice pierces the silence.

“Give that back to me!”

“Finders, keepers,” shouts a voice sounding like Sonny.

Sonny and Cory are in a faceoff. Sonny has Cory’s red pencil. He is holding it high above his head, out of Cory’s reach. Before I can say anything, Cory punches Sonny in the nose, drawing blood.

“Miss Brantley, Sonny took my pencil after I dropped it.”

Then I hear SNAP—now there two red pencils on the floor.

“Miss Brantley, it’s broken. Did you see what he did?” says an indignant Cory.

“Gentlemen,” I announce, “There should be books in your hands, not pencils. I’ll see you both after school for your quiet reading time and I mean exceptionally quiet.”
Wide-eyed, the two boys shrink back to their desks.

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.

**Thick awl love thee why auld
Rob bends sunk rues owe
Cull if furs giraffe fulls**

Word to Know: **Bombast**, n.

Speech too pompous for an occasion. Pretentious words.

There is no need for *bombast* among friends.

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: 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.



Member Spotlight featuring Andrea Parham

What hobbies do you enjoy? Skiing, gardening, travel, decorating/home projects. I should explain that I lived in

New England for over 30 years and am an expert skier, something I don't get to do near enough these days.

What writing project are you working on? Currently, I am working on a short story (non-fiction) about being a special needs parent and the gifts that ensued. That will be published later this year in book one in a series: VOICES: Women Braving It All To Live Their Purpose.



Tell us about your muse or source of

motivation. Absolutely without a doubt my inspiration is my daughter, Sophia Joy, who was born with multiple special needs and is my greatest life teacher, both in life and in her untimely death.

What is your biggest time waster? Surfing the internet.

What is your favorite thing to eat or drink on a rainy March day? Herbal tea or red wine, depending on my mood. Actually that applies any day!

Where is your favorite place to go in Chattanooga? Anywhere there is interesting conversation.

Mad Blab answers: The Call of the Wild, Robinson Crusoe, Gulliver's Travels

STAY CONNECTED

