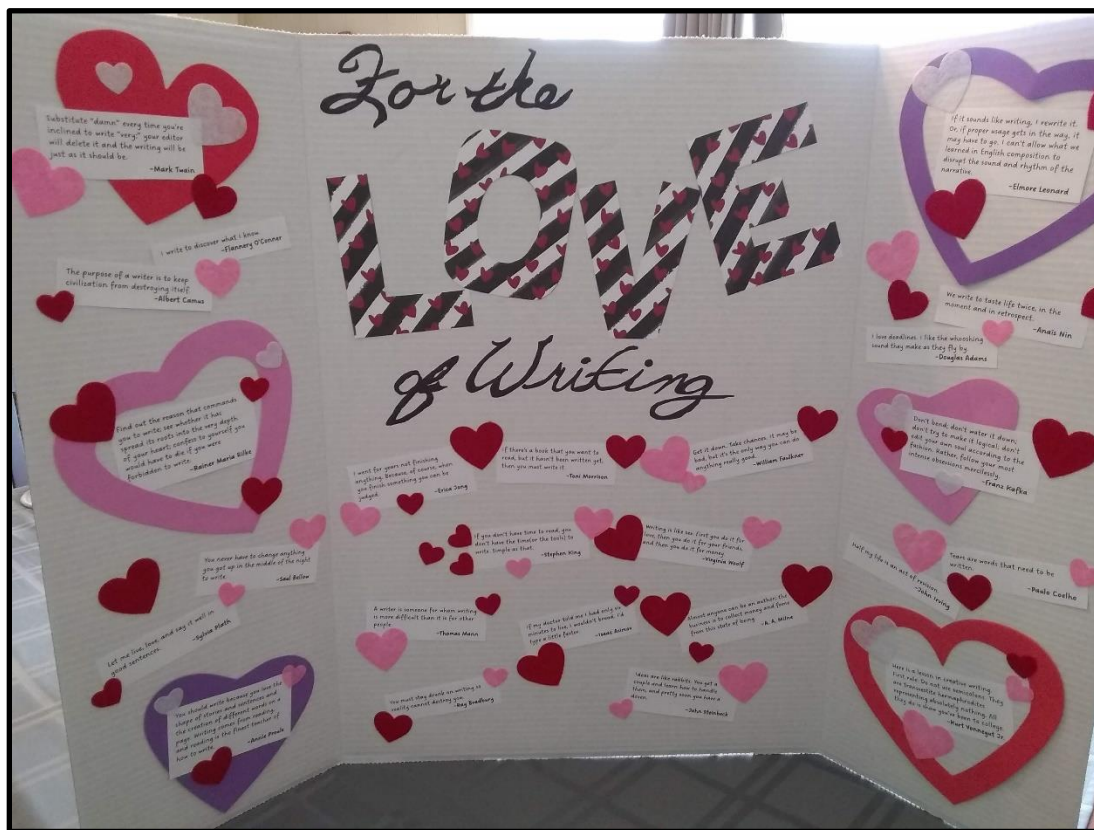


## Winston-Salem Writers 2024 Annual Report



*Building community and helping writers improve their craft.*

## Interim President's Report – Judie Holcomb-Pack



Due to a family health situation, Kat Bodrie had to step down as president in February. I agreed to fill her remaining term as president through June 2024 when elections will be held at the annual meeting. Kat performed the duties of president above and beyond and her organizational skills were apparent as she guided the organization until her resignation. We owe her much thanks and appreciation for her leadership, as well as her continuing support with On Your Feet in-person open mic, which she helped to start this year.

The strong board we have and the committed committee coordinators make the job of president much easier. I've seen more members coming out to events, attending workshops, and supporting Winston-Salem Writers. I believe this is one of the best writer's groups in North Carolina.

## Treasurer's Report – David Winship



The WSW started the fiscal year (7/1/23) with \$7,451.45 in the checking account, our operating account.

We offered seven workshops during this year, two workshops in the fall, four workshops in January (free to members), and one in April. Presenters were paid \$200 per presentation, with one workshop in January with no fee. Attendee fees were \$239.12.

In outreach, the rack cards were reprinted to distribute at Bookmarks and other events.

Two primary programs are Flying South and 10-minute Play Festival.

- **Flying South:** The revenue from entry fees is about \$3,200 (Entry fee was \$25, minus handling fee per transaction). Flying South has received sponsorships of \$450. Expenses are incomplete as of June.
- **10-minute Play Festival:** With 47 entries and three performances, the 10-Minute Play Festival was hosted by 40+ Stage Company at the new Intergenerational Center for Arts and Wellness for the first time. The Arts Council handled on-line ticket sales. It proved to be the biggest ever, in attendance and profitability of over \$1,200.

On 5/31/24, the account balance was \$10,144.20 The amount in the savings reserve account is \$7,607.53.

## Communications - Anna Patterson



All press releases were sent to our regular contacts list of approximately 35 media outlets. Pertinent individuals and additional relevant contact lists were included depending on the topic of the release.

From The Page press releases (formerly 4 on 4<sup>th</sup>) were also posted to the City of the Arts, NC Writers' Network, and, beginning in March, the WSToday calendars.

We have received broad media coverage including in The Chronicle, which has published stories about Flying South and Ten-Minute Play Festival, Yes Weekly, WSToday, which listed the 10-Minute Play Festival in their e-news, and other outlets.

David Ratcliffe was interviewed on WTOB radio. I spoke briefly about the Three in a Row Plus One and the 2024 10-Minute Play Contest on WSJS radio.

## Newsletter – Howard Pearre



The WSW newsletter was published electronically on or before the first day of each month during the year. New articles and corrections to standing articles were requested to be submitted by the 22nd of each month except for several months that included holidays. After review and proofing, the draft was sent to WSW webmaster Julie Kolischak who prepares the newsletter and sends it to members and other subscribers.

Eblasts were sent to members mid-month as reminders about events that would occur before the next newsletter. Eblast articles were requested to be submitted by the 10th of each month. Word copy was submitted to Julie who created the eblasts and published them after proofing by the newsletter editor and WSW president.

Dates of upcoming events submitted in advance to Julie for the WSW webpage. Occasionally, WSW events were submitted to the Charlotte Lit newsletter and Charlotte Lit events were included in the "Opportunities To Explore" section of the WSW newsletter. Information and member news can be submitted by email to [newsletter@wswriters.org](mailto:newsletter@wswriters.org).

## Programs – Janice Jennings



During 2024, we have continued to offer Zoom-based programming which included our popular Three in a Row January sessions. This included: *Joining a Critique Group* with Kat Bodrie, *Finding a Story Worth Telling* with Joseph Mills, *Action Out Loud: Dialogue and Character* with Jacob Paul, and *Submitting Your Work to Journals, Agents and Publishers* with Julia Ridley Smith.

In April, we hosted Sarah Ann Winn, who offered a generative Mary Oliver focused poetry workshop.

Later in the year we will hold two October workshops: Nicole Breit will offer a workshop called *Your Story Is in The Shape: How To Write A Powerful Personal Essay*. This will be followed by an instructive workshop on submitting work to publishers, hosted by Leslie Pietrzyk, along with a session on crafting a compelling pitch, taught by Dr. Rowena Kirby-Straker, of WFU's Department of Communication/Speaking Center.

## Membership – Veronica Kavass



Member Statistics as of May 2022	Member Count
Renewed Members	<b>76</b>
New Members	<b>44</b>
Total members	<b>120</b>

## Events – Rebecca Holder



Winston-Salem Writers wrapped up 2023 with its annual holiday celebration. The *Holly Folly* was held December 2 at the Sherwood West Clubhouse. Each attendee received a reindeer antlers headband to wear, which set the stage for an entertaining evening. Food, drinks, music, a team holiday trivia contest, prizes, and a photo booth were enjoyed by members and guests.

The new year began with a new event for WSW. During the board retreat in July, it was recommended that WSW increase its efforts to welcome new members, educate them about the organization, and increase their interest and participation. Our *For the Love of Writing Member Mixer* was held February 24 at the Reynolda Manor Branch Library. Officers, board members, and coordinators shared information about the various activities of WSW.

Today's annual membership meeting is our final event for the business year. However, planning is already underway for the 2024 holiday celebration. We will be surveying the membership sometime in the fall to assess what type of event is desired.

While events in 2023 were well-attended and successful, WSW did face some challenges. As with most things, post-pandemic has created a “new normal” requiring adjustment. Venues, fees for goods and services, and scheduling requirements have changed dramatically. In the coming year, events will be working to adapt our budget, creativity, and membership needs/wants to accommodate these changes.



**2023 Holly Folly Holiday Party**



**2024 Membership Mixer**

## Critique Groups – Shannon Golden



Critique groups offer WSW members a chance to exchange feedback and encouragement on creative work in any genre. This resource is valuable for writers and poets at any stage of their craft. Groups form on a rolling basis and members are assigned to groups by genre.

WSW started the 2023-2024 term with five critique groups in three genres. During the term, we added seven groups, lost three, and will start the next term with nine active critique groups in four genres (poetry, fiction, creative nonfiction, scriptwriting).

We started the term with a wait list of four individuals. During the year, 36 individuals requested placement, and we ended the year with a wait list of three people.

Status of Winston-Salem Writers Critique Groups (CGs) This Term ('23-'24)						
CGs confirmed active	CGs newly formed or adopted	CGs disbanded or dropped	New requests for CG placement this term	Wait-listed names carried over from prior term	People newly placed in CGs this term*	Wait-list
9	7	3	36	4	37	3

*\*includes new requests who were later removed from the list at their request or for not responding to several inquiries.*

## Flying South – Steve Lindahl



The submission period for Flying South ended May 31. We're ahead of last year's number through May 22 by 20 (127 to 107). We are past the breakeven point (including the Friends of Flying South page). Submissions are now in the hands of the judges and winners will be announced in July.

The Flying South book launch is scheduled for Wednesday, Sept. 18, at Bookmarks.

## Ten Minute Plays – David Ratcliffe



The 2024 Ten Minute Play contest and festival of selected plays was a record setting success. We had 47 submissions from playwrights across the state. The judges' six selections were performed over three dates at The Intergenerational Center for Arts and Wellness. The production was in cooperation with 40+ Stage. Attendance was an all-time record of over 180. There was an overall profit of \$1263.16.

## Bookmarks – Matthew McLean



### From The Page Author Showcase

Unfortunately, *From the Page* hasn't attracted much in the way of an audience lately. The last three sessions attracted fewer people (in one case as few as four) than all of the previous year's sessions. It's also continued to run low on authors with recently released material.

As such, Bookmarks has decided to move it from monthly to quarterly. The next event will be in November before Thanksgiving.

### Bookmarks Festival of Books and Authors

We have secured our booth to participate in the 2024 Bookmarks Festival, which will be held on Sept. 28 on Spruce and Holly Streets. We will begin signing up members in August who have published books and would like to promote them at our booth. We schedule two authors per hour from 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. They are responsible for their own sales. We will also be promoting the 2024 edition of *Flying South* and will have copies on hand to sell.

We will be signing up volunteers for two-hour shifts that run from 10 a.m. – 5 p.m. in August. Volunteers welcome visitors who stop by the booth, tell them about WSW and the benefits of membership, sign them up for the newsletter, sell *Flying South*, and assist authors to get set up for their promotional time.

This is a rain-or-shine event and a lot of fun, plus it is an opportunity to get to know your fellow members better.

### **Open Mic On Your Feet – Barbara Greenbaum, Shannon Golden, Kat Bodrie**

Second Thursday In-Person | The Bookhouse | Reynolda Village | 6:45 – 8:30 p.m.



*On Your Feet* is WSW's new in-person open mic night, launched on February 8, 2024. It is open to the public and held monthly on the second Thursday night of each month at *The Bookhouse* (120-A Reynolda Village Way) from 7 – 8:30 p.m. Readers are encouraged to arrive by 6:45 p.m. to sign up to read.

Five events have been held at the time of this report. They ranged in attendance from 10-35 people, including 5-15 different readers who each shared one or two works depending on time. Exact attendance is reported monthly to the Board and can be found in the minutes.

The event is collaborative with three coordinators who support each other, especially when one or more is not able to attend. The Bookhouse proves to be an excellent venue, which offers a café counter (readers and guests buy tea, coffee, beer, wine, and snacks) and a comfortable space at no charge. WSW is permitted to store one of our speaker systems on the premises, which is a large rolling duffel bag that includes a microphone. In exchange for their hospitality, we encourage The Bookhouse staff to use our speaker system for their events, if needed.

In the upcoming year, we plan to market to other writing groups in the area, encourage virtual groups to join us in person (such as the WSW Open Mic on Zoom), refresh the WSW newsletter copy for the event, and create postcards we can distribute to stores in town for those interested in attending/participating. We may also consider holding a Slam periodically to mix things up a bit. (A Slam is a competitive spoken word event with a live audience and panel of judges.)

### **Open Mic Online – Ed Robson**

First Tuesdays via Zoom | 6:45 – 8:45 p.m.



Open Mic continues to have a loyal following of six to eight writers plus drop-ins most months. There is usually more prose than poetry lately, lots of fiction, and currently enjoying some extended narratives. Pleasant, supportive group. Zoom allows some attendees who live away from Winston-Salem or in the winter, those who do not like to drive at night.



### Graphic Design & Printing – David Johnson



The role of graphic design in Winston-Salem Writers is to create designs that promote what we offer. We have printed rack cards, booklets, flyers, and more for several years. Our latest designs add to that work.

In May 2024, we printed 250 copies of our latest rack card design. Goin' Postal completed the print order for a cost of \$89.23. I created the designs at no charge to WSW using a website called Canva.

In September 2023, the Flying South Book Launch was promoted using a flyer design created in Canva. In early 2024, more flyers were designed for our “On Your Feet” Open Mic, 10-Minute Play Festival, and Flying South Writing Contest.

### Generative Writing Workshop – Barbara Greenbaum

Second Wednesdays In-Person | Forsyth County Central Library | 6:30 – 8 p.m.



This ongoing workshop is an opportunity for writers to gather, read examples of great fiction or poetry, talk about those pieces as writers, and create their own pieces. The aim of this workshop is to allow writers the time to talk and write.

Writings and prompts are provided. If you want to start something new—great. If you have a piece you are working on and find yourself stuck on something, this may be a way to get unstuck, or further your exploration.

This is not a critique session, but we do have an opportunity to talk about the process. All levels of experience are welcome. Please bring your preferred method of writing.

### Writers Around Town – Judie Holcomb-Pack



After having to cancel Writers Night Out during COVID, we pivoted to Writers Around Town, held on the first Sunday of each month. At first we went to different bars or coffee shops but ran into the issues of finding convenient free parking and limited Sunday hours. We have now settled on meeting every month at Campus Gas on Polo Road. It has everything we were looking for: convenient free parking, good food and beverages (adult and otherwise), an area for us to meet, and great service.

We have a core group of writers that come every month, as well as others who join us as often as possible. The group ranges in number from six to 15 or more. The point of Writers Around Town is to get to know our fellow writers in a casual social setting. Conversations flow and topics are varied, from serious to outrageous, which is probably what keeps the core group coming back. All members are welcome, as well as guests as a way to introduce them to Winston-Salem Writers.

## Notes

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**June 29, 2024**