

Hawaii Writers Guild  
-MINUTES of the ANNUAL MEETING-  
JANUARY 20, 2024

Minutes of the Hawaii Writers Guild (HWG) Board of Directors meeting, held *via Zoom*. All times noted refer to Hawaii-Aleutian Standard Time.

Officers and Directors present *via Zoom*:

Diane Revell —*President and North Kohala-area Regional Director*  
Bruce Stern — *Vice President*  
Catherine Tripp —*Treasurer*  
Donna Beumler —*Secretary*  
Joy Fisher —*Public Relations Director*  
Frank Reilly —*Kauai Regional Director*

Other Members present *via Zoom*:

Nancy Baenziger  
Dale Baker  
Susan Cyeswski  
Duncan Dempster —*Webmaster*  
Cheryl Ann Farrell  
Steven Foster  
Gwyn Gorg —*joined at 3:07 pm*  
Dawn Hurwitz  
Angela Leslee  
Don Mules  
Moirra Nicholson  
Kimberly Russell  
Ed Sancious  
Youfeng Shen  
Dan Sockle  
Nancy Strickland-Juneau  
Martín Velez  
Diann Wilson  
Margaret Zacharias

**REGULAR SESSION (open to general membership)—**

**1. PRESIDENT DIANE REVELL CALLED THE REGULAR SESSION OF THE ANNUAL MEETING TO ORDER at 2:12 pm AND GAVE THE “STATE OF THE GUILD” ADDRESS:**

Diane welcomed all members. She shared her view that reading will necessarily enhance one’s writing skills, and provided visuals *via* Zoom’s “share screen” function. Diane spoke about the original “mission statement” upon which the Guild was founded, and emphasized that the Guild, as a §501(c)(3) organization, exists to support writers, and to heighten community appreciation for literature as well as the written and spoken arts. Diane then reported on the different activities which HWG was able to accomplish in 2023 — despite continuing to be somewhat hampered in its efforts by pandemic precautions.

Initially, Diane noted the financial contribution which the Guild made to the MLK, Jr. Peace Poem Project, and expressed the hope that HWG may continue to offer its support in the future (financial and otherwise) to this very important youth writing program. She then remarked on the Guild’s presence this past November at the Kauai Writers Conference, which was well attended by HWG members, and at which she and Joy staffed an informational table. She observed that quite a few recent applicants for membership in HWG became familiar with the Guild at the Kauai Writers Conference.

Diane then discussed the changes in leadership within the Guild during 2023. She mentioned that Bob Lupo, a long-standing member who made many valuable contributions to the Guild, found it necessary to resign due to personal issues. Member Catherine Tripp, who has a background in banking, stepped up and took over Bob’s role as treasurer. Similarly, Margaret Zacharias agreed to take over as managing editor of the Guild’s on-line literary journal, *Latitudes*. Diane also noted that Gwyn Gorg has indicated an interest in assuming the long-vacant “events director” role, and that her nomination will be on the agenda for the January 25th Special Planning meeting. Diane mentioned that the first event scheduled for 2024 is an informational table at the Cherry Blossom Festival in Waimea on February 3rd.

Diane also offered her appreciation to Frank Reilly, who initiated an open-forum on-line writers support group based on Kauai, and who accordingly agreed to become the Kauai Regional Director, a newly-created position. Finally, Diane touched on the plans by Guild members Michael Foley and Carol Prescott to hold a youth poetry contest in the North Kohala area, and then follow-up with a youth creative writing workshop if warranted by the response to the poetry contest.

2. **ELECTION RESULTS:** Diane took on the responsibility to distribute *via* Google e-mailed ballots for the election of officers, and to tabulate the results. She reported that there were a total of 33 votes for each of the positions, with none of the candidates (all incumbents) running opposed. The unanimous results were: President - *Diane Revell*; Vice-president - *Bruce Stern*; Treasurer - *Catherine Tripp*; Secretary - *Donna Beumler*. Diane emphasized that some Board members may not wish to continue in their respective roles into 2025, and that members are always invited to share their interests and expertise by taking on leadership positions within HWG.

3. **MEMBERSHIP REPORT:** Bruce welcomed members to the Annual Meeting, and noted that since the Guild has begun meeting *via* Zoom, there have been more opportunities to participate for those who live in areas distant to the Big Island. He reported that the Guild currently numbers 75 active members. Bruce remarked that, although there was some attrition in 2023, the Guild gained more members than it lost. Additionally, the number of new members in 2023 exceeded that of 2022.

Bruce also reported that there are currently 42 members who have taken advantage of the opportunity to be included in the Google-groups “Opt-in List,” which he maintains. Bruce noted that this list contains the names, e-mail addresses, and preferred writing genres of those who’ve “opted-in,” but no other information —such as mailing addresses or phone numbers. He mentioned that this list is intended to be a vehicle by which members may connect for purposes of mentoring, networking, and exchange of information; however, it is not to be used for commercial or marketing purposes. Any member who wishes to be included in the “Opt-in List,” may contact Bruce at [brucestern.hawaii@gmail.com](mailto:brucestern.hawaii@gmail.com).

4. **CALL FOR MEMBERS’ SUGGESTIONS:** Bruce emphasized that the Board welcomes ideas and suggestions from members at any time during the year, but especially at the beginning of each year, when a “special planning meeting” is typically held. He directed members to contact any Board member, whose e-mail addresses can be found on the website, with thoughts they may have on implementing new Guild activities or improving on current ones. He mentioned that the Board is at all times interested in hearing from members on their thoughts as to how HWG might best assist writers in the community, and also that the Guild is especially open to hearing thoughts on how HWG might involve itself in literary efforts with respect to the community and local schools.

Bruce advised that, later in this program, there has been time set aside to discuss more fully members’ suggestions, and invited all present to utilize the Zoom “Chat” function to share their ideas. He indicated that suggestions for future activities and how best to implement them will be discussed at length during the upcoming Special Planning meeting on January 25, 2024 beginning at 6:00 pm *via* Zoom.

5. **TREASURER’S REPORT:** Catherine reported that the Guild’s treasury amounts to approximately \$10,000. She emphasized that the funds represent a perhaps extraordinary accumulation of monies due to the fact that the pandemic of recent years has necessarily eliminated or curtailed in-person events on which Guild’s funds have been spent in the past. She is encouraged that the situation may be changing in 2024, and face-to-face events may again be scheduled. She invited members to share their thoughts and ideas on to how best to spend these funds in accordance with the Guild’s mission.

Catherine also mentioned that she is in the process of revising the dues payments process for members, so that new members will be invoiced each year in the month that they joined HWG. Current members will continue to have a dues deadline in January. Because of the transition, the invoicing timeline was somewhat abbreviated in 2023; this year however she plans to distribute the invoices well in advance of the due date.

6. **SECRETARY’S UPDATE:** Donna reported that over the past year, she has on behalf of the Guild prepared the agenda for each monthly meeting, and also typed up the Minutes for each meeting. She noted that the Minutes, once approved and finalized, are posted to the website and are available for viewing under “Guild Business.” Additionally, Donna files the Guild’s updated report each year with the State of Hawaii, as the Guild is incorporated as a non-profit organization under state and federal law. Finally, she continues to work on training opportunities to develop grant writing expertise on behalf of the Guild.



#### **OPPORTUNITY DRAWING #1:**

- 1.) “Hawaii Tradewinds” by Steven Foster: *winner Youfeng Shen*
- 2.) “Lucky to Live Hawaii” by Angela Leslee: *winner Steven Foster*
- 3.) “Goodbye Big City, Hello Big Island” by Diann Wilson: *winner Susie Cysewski*

#### **PRESENTATIONS:**

1. MEMBERS WHO PUBLISHED IN 2023: Joy presented a slideshow which she’d prepared celebrating Guild members who published in 2023. A total of 20 members had their work published in the fourth volume of the Guild’s on-line literary journal, *Latitudes*. Additionally, 15 members published books last year, while 11 members saw their articles, stories, poetry, or other short pieces published. Joy’s presentation also highlighted the four members whose work won awards in 2023. A complete list of those members who published in 2023 is appended.

## 2. ON-LINE WRITERS GROUPS:

\*Open-forum Readings & Responses: Cheryl Ann, who agreed this year to fill the vacant position of facilitator, was pleased to report that the Saturday “Readings & Responses” on-line writers group is going well. There have been five meetings so far, usually held on the third Saturday of the month, and the group typically consists of 6 to 7 people. A variety of genres are represented, and she finds that both the opportunity to read out loud and to solicit feedback to be helpful.

\*Non-fiction invitation-only group: Joy reported that the non-fiction focus group will have been meeting for a year this March. There are currently five members who participate on a routine basis, and she finds the rapport as well as the quality of the writing to be excellent.

\*Fiction-focus invitation-only group: Frank reported that the fiction-focus on-line writers group continues to meet, representing a broad range of fiction such as horror, YA, and literary fiction. He finds that the diversity of genres tends to broaden horizons, and is especially welcome.

3. YOUTUBE PRODUCTIONS: Diann reported that she has been the host of the Guild’s YouTube program *Write On!* since 2020, when pandemic protocols eliminated or strictly curtailed in-person workshops and other activities. The goal of the program is to provide writers with tips and inspiration in an interview setting. This past year the program saw 8 new subscribers, 329 views, 6 likes, 4 comments, and 25 shares. The most-watched episode was episode number 20, Diann’s interview with Carol McMillan regarding Carol’s publishing journey. All of the *Write On!* episodes are available on YouTube.

Additionally, Diann mentioned that she is searching for someone to serve as co-host and share in the hosting/interviewing duties. She is also looking for people who want to be interviewed on a topic of relevance to the writing community. Further, the Guild’s other YouTube production *Inside the Writers Studio* is on hiatus and is need of a facilitator/host. Diann mentioned that anyone who is interested in these opportunities should reach out to Donna or Diane.



### **OPPORTUNITY DRAWING #2:**

- 1.) “The Last Football Player” by John Blossom: *winner Angela Leslee*
- 2.) “Echoes of Extinction” by Don Mules writing as D. Ward Cornell: *winner: Joy Fisher*
- 3.) “Shadowy Tales” by Lucy Jones: *winner Nancy Baenziger*

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

a.) EVENTS COMMITTEE: Bruce advised that, although the position of events director has been vacant for some time, Gwyn Gorg has indicated that she is available to fill that important role for the Guild. Accordingly, the nomination of Gwyn Gorg as Events Director is scheduled to take place during the upcoming Special Planning Meeting on January 25th.

b.) PUBLIC RELATIONS: Joy reported that, in addition to sending out press releases highlighting actives of the Guild and its members, she is the editor of the Guild's on-line member newsletter, *Member News*. The idea for the newsletter arose out of the pandemic's restrictions on in-person gatherings, and serves as a way for members to keep in touch with the "writing lives" of each other. Each issue, which comes out twice per year (Spring and Fall) features stories on new members, recently published authors, a "transitions" column, a "genre" column, and feature stories of timely interest to members.

Joy is hoping to find someone to serve as co-editor of *Member News*. She is also in search of a member with social media experience to manage the Guild's two Facebook pages—one which is limited to members only, and the other which is open to the public.

c.) WEBSITE UPDATES: Duncan reported that, as webmaster, he is the initial point of contact for people who wish to become Guild members. Once the membership form is accessed via HWG's website and is completed, he distributes the application with attachments to the Board members for their consideration. When an applicant is accepted into the Guild, Duncan then works with the new member to develop input for "Our Authors" page as well as for the member's personal page.

Duncan is in search of someone with interest in website management to assist him, or even ultimately take over as webmaster. He noted that the website currently utilizes the Weebly platform, and that—ideally—the web assistant would have familiarity with that platform. He also continually solicits input concerning the content and layout of the website, and is open to all suggestions.

Finally, Duncan advises that he has just completed the posting of the Guild's on-line newsletter *Member News* to the website, and that he will soon be working with Margaret to format and post the fifth edition of the Guild's literary journal *Latitudes*.

d.) LATITUDES: Margaret, as this year's managing editor, reported that as of this date 14 members have submitted their work for consideration, resulting in 39 submissions in total. She has compiled a 12-member editorial team, and they would like to see more submissions in the next few weeks before the submission window closes on January 31, 2024. She did add that the current submissions include interesting new voices from those who've not previously submitted

their work for consideration. Margaret noted that quite a few of the submissions are pieces of work which have been previously published, and she would like the Board to review its policy in this regard in the future. Similarly, she believes that the rules regarding “word count” can vary unnecessarily amongst genres, and would like to see this addressed over the coming year.

e.) REGIONAL DIRECTOR REPORTS:

—**Volcano-area:** On behalf of Bryan Furer, Diane reported that the Volcano-area writers group continues to work on publishing their third anthology. They have a very active in-person group which meets to read their work once per week, and will have as many as eighteen people participate in the readings and provide feedback.

—**North Kohala-area:** Diane, as facilitator for the North Kohala-area writers group reported that there are nine members of the group, with typically about five people attending the twice-monthly meetings *via* Zoom. The group has recently moved to a more formal process, whereby those who wish to read their work are asked to forward their writing by e-mail the day before the meeting, so that participants may have a chance to read the work and be better prepared to offer feedback. She is also hopeful that the group may soon be able to re-establish public readings—which had been held, pre-pandemic— at the Kohala Library in Kapa’au. Diane noted further that two members (Carol Prescott and Michael Foley) are developing a student poetry contest and hope to gauge interest among high school students in a youth creative writing workshop.

—**Tutu’s House:** Bruce reported that the group known as “Tutu’s House” is one of the earliest writers groups to organize on the Island. Since the pandemic, the group meets only via Zoom, rather than as previously at Tutu’s House in Waimea. As co-leader of the group (along with Dave Fouts) Bruce has noted that the participants are motivated and thoughtful, and that many different genres are represented. He continues to be pleased with the success of this writers support group.

—**Kauai Readings and Responses:** Frank reported that he is very happy with the turn-out for the Zoom-based Thursday night “after dark” Readings & Responses. He has observed that the group consists of talented writers providing feedback in a nurturing environment. The Kauai-based group also holds in-person gatherings. He invited anyone interested to contact him at HWGKauai@gmail.com.

 **OPPORTUNITY DRAWING #3:**

- 1.) “Protagonist” by Nancy Baenziger: *winner Diann Wilson*
- 2.) “Meraki” by Karen Hester: *winner Cheryl Ann Farrell*

3.) “Chapel on the Moor” by Duncan Dempster: *winner Ed Sancious*

**OTHER BUSINESS:**

Members’ Suggestions:

- 1.) Writing skills workshop - developing characters
- 2.) Print version of *Latitudes*
- 3.) Guest speakers (schools, community organizations)
- 4.) Self-publishing workshop
- 5.) The use of rhetoric in non-fiction

Diane and Bruce reiterated that there will be a thorough discussion of members’ suggestions for Guild activities in 2024 at the Special Planning Meeting scheduled for January 25, 2024 beginning at 6:00 pm *via* Zoom.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

The next **Board of Directors meeting/Special Planning meeting** is scheduled for Thursday, January 25, 2024 at 6:00 pm. The February Board meeting is scheduled to take place on Thursday, February 22, 2024 from 6:30 to 8:00 pm.

All meetings for the foreseeable future will be **held via Zoom ONLY and will be hosted by Duncan**.

**Requests for items to be added to the agenda for the next regular Board meeting should be sent via email to President Diane Revell ([diane.b.revell@gmail.com](mailto:diane.b.revell@gmail.com)) and Secretary Donna Beumler ([dmbaumler@gmail.com](mailto:dmbaumler@gmail.com)) at least 10 days prior to the next meeting (no later than February 12, 2024). The final agenda will be emailed to the full membership five days prior to the meeting.**

**The meeting adjourned at 3:42 pm.**

Respectfully submitted this 9th day of February, 2024.

By: \_\_Donna Beumler\_\_

Donna Beumler  
Secretary, Hawaii Writers Guild



MEMBERS WHO PUBLISHED IN 2023  
[\*Award Winner]

Jan Asch  
Nancy Baenziger  
Jordan Barnes [\*]  
Donna Beumler  
John Blossom [\*]  
Duncan Dempster  
Zack Ehrman  
Cheryl Ann Farrell  
Joy Fisher  
Steve Foster  
Dave Fouts  
Michael Foley  
Virginia Fortner  
Gwyn Gorg  
Dan Hurwitz  
Darlene Javar  
Lucy Jones  
Angela Leslee [\*]  
Sharon Ludan  
Bob Lupo  
Donna Maltz  
Carol McMillan [\*]  
Don Mules  
Wendy Noritake  
Carla Orellana  
Linda Petrucelli  
Pianta  
Carol Prescott  
Frank Reilly  
Diane Revell  
Tessa Rice  
Heather Rivera  
Youfeng Shen  
Diann Wilson  
Wendy Wilson  
Margaret Zacharias