

GLVWG



Welcome to the monthly
Greater Lehigh Valley Writers Group Newsletter

Mostly June 2022/into July 2022

The intent of this newsletter is to give information and tips to our authors.



For the month of June, there is a general membership meeting and workshops on Saturday, June 25, starting at 10:00 am. The meeting will be hybrid, that is to say over Zoom and at the Palmer Library. The workshop will be live and zoomed. Check our website for the morning Zoom link or see below.

No afternoon workshop in June. Afternoon workshop time will be used for Anthology Critiques.

11:00 - 12:00 Morning Program:

Photographers and writers - perfect together!

Joan Zachary will be presenting with Angel Ackerman, from Parisian Phoenix Publishing. They will be talking about how Parisian Phoenix has joined literature and the visual arts (especially photography), and how photography can be the "secret sauce" that will bring excitement to your writing process, from inspiring future works to marketing the finished product.

Joan Zachary joined GLVWG a year after it was founded. She began her creative life as a writer, but in recent years, she has found more satisfaction by telling stories visually. Illustrating the written work of others is her current passion, along with photographing farms, cats, and total strangers.

Angel Ackerman, former journalist, founded Parisian Phoenix Publishing in September 2021 to promote unique voices and diverse perspectives. In addition to newspapers, Angel has been published in Ten Word Stories by Dime Show Review, Rum Punch Press, StepAway Magazine, two volumes of The SAGE Encyclopedia, and did book reviews for Hippocampus Magazine and Journal of Global South Studies. She loves to travel, has an academic interest in post-colonial francophone Africa, and writes the Fashion and Fiends horror/chick lit series. Learn more at ParisianPhoenix.com.

Gayle Hendricks is a professor of graphic design with decades of experience in commercial print production. She is the art director at Parisian Phoenix where she puts her obsession with typography and clean design to good use creating books.

To join morning Zoom Meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85135715090?pwd=czVWWm01YVFXUW5GRC9aRmNiOFVXdz09>

Meeting ID: 851 3571 5090

Passcode: 157741



GLVWG 2023 ANTHOLOGY – JUNE UPDATE

Theme: Writing Across America

Have you signed up for the GLVWG 2023 Anthology yet? If not, visit GLVWG 2023 Anthology [webpage](#), to learn more. You will find a description of our four-phase process – Creation, Engagement, Refinement and Publication. See a summary below. The Anthology webpage also provides several writing aids to help you complete your deliverables, including 1) quotes that might inspire to write an entry for anyone of the three categories covered – Short Fiction, Essays, and Poetry; 2) guidelines that our team will use in evaluating submissions; and 3) tips on how to write a bio.

We are still in the Creation Phase, so even if you haven't started writing an entry, you still have time over the summer. Submissions are open from 1 through 30 September 2022. If you have a draft started, consider getting some expert advise on how to improve your entry by attending one of our Summer Anthology Workshops (SAWs). The next one is set for Saturday, 25 June, as the afternoon event after our regular meeting and morning presentation. There more will be scheduled similarly in July and August. Attending one of these workshops qualifies for the required critique to waive the \$10 Anthology submission fee.

Some dates to remember...Submission closing will be strictly observed, ending at exactly midnight on 30 September 2022. The Anthology will be published in time for our Write Stuff conference in March 2023.

If you already know that you are interested, and haven't done it yet, please click the **Sign-Up** link below. This action is not a commitment, but for planning purposes, we would like to know how many authors are interested. So far, we have 24 authors representing 43 possible works to be published.

If you need more inspiration, consider reading our past anthologies. See the end of this article after the Anthologies on Sale button to order past copies. Thank you!

Any questions? Feel free to contact the Anthology Chair @ glvwg.anthology@gmail.com.

Summary of GLVWG Anthology Process and Timeline



[Sign-Up](#)

Announcing Past GLVWG Anthologies on Sale

If you are not sure whether you want to contribute to the GLVWG 2023 Anthology, take a look at our past publications. Just go to the [Events section](#) of the GLVWG website, scroll down to the Anthologies on Sale section, and click on any of the links to the Amazon pages for our past anthologies, including:

[2021 – Writes of Passage](#)

[2019 – Rewriting the Past](#)

[2017 – The Write Connections](#)

[2016 – Write Here, Write Now](#)

[Anthologies on Sale](#)



Notices of Contests.

GLVWG does not endorse any of these following events—they are supplied to our members solely for informational purposes.

[Craft First Chapters Contest 2022](#)

The 2022 CRAFT First Chapters Contest, for unpublished first chapters of book-length projects up to 5,000 words, will be awarded in December 2022. The top three entries will be selected by Guest Judge Maisy Card. The winner will receive a \$2,000 award. Runners-up will receive a \$500 award and \$300 award respectively for the second- and third-place finalists. The top three stories will be published in CRAFT, each accompanied by an introduction by the guest judge and an author's note (craft essay) by the three winning writers.

Entry fee: \$20

Deadline: June 30, 2022

[The Francine Ringold Awards for New Writers](#)

These awards for new writers honor the work of writers at the beginning of their careers.

Prizes: \$500 prizes will be awarded in both the fiction and poetry categories, and the winning manuscripts will appear in the spring issue of Nimrod. Winners will have the chance to work with the Nimrod board of editors to refine and edit their manuscripts before publication.

Honorable Mentions will also be published and paid at our standard publication rates. Honorable Mentions will have the chance to work with the Nimrod board of editors to refine and edit their manuscripts before publication.

Entry fee: \$12

Deadline: July 15, 2022

[Page Turner's Short Story Contest](#)

Clumsy Spider Publishing

Page Turner is looking for your short story that teens will read in one sitting because they can't stop! Top prize \$50.

Entry fee: \$0

Deadline: July 30, 2022



This month's **Featured Publishers.**

[Gollancz: Seeking Manuscript Queries](#) (This Month Only.)

Gollancz is an established UK-based publisher of science fiction, fantasy novels, and horror novels that is now an imprint of Hachette. They only publish worked aimed at adults. They have good distribution within the UK and have excellent covers. They have been closed to unsolicited submissions for a long time, and only recently have opened up submissions from June 1st through June 30th 2022.

[Dark Matter Ink: Monstrous Futures](#)

This is a science fiction and horror anthology. They have extensive guidelines, including, "I've been referring to this anthology as 'the next season of Black Mirror that never got aired' and that's exactly what I'm looking for—dark sci-fi with an emphasis on exploring our connection with technology and one another through speculative concepts and backdrops."

Deadline: 30 June 2022

Length: 2,000-4,000 words

Pay: \$0.08/word



The Author's **Resource Well**.

[Walter Myers Grant 2022](#)

The Walter Dean Myers Grants are open for submissions by unpublished but promising diverse writers and Illustrators. They are offering community-specific grants of \$2,000 including two Walter Grants to Muslim creators, and two Walter Grants to Native/Indigenous/First Nations writers or illustrators, and two Walter Grants to trans writers or illustrators. To apply for these grants, you must select that you wish to be considered in your application. Applicants must be diverse, at least 18 years, and unpublished as illustrators and/or authors (this includes both trade publishing and self-publishing) and be U.S. residents or refugees living in the States.

Deadline is June 30, 2022.

[24 Journals Open to Publishing Reprints](#)

This is an article written by Emily Harstone of Authors Publish.



Our **CaféZoom!** sessions continue. The Café is every Wednesday via Zoom. Details will be on the web site on the previous Friday. You must register to read and/or attend. However, they fill up pretty fast, so pay attention to the event listings on our website and signup for the next one.

Here is the link for more information and to register for The Writers Café. There is a waitlist for those who can't register in case someone doesn't show up.

<https://greaterlehighvalleywritersgroup.wildapricot.org>

We are now allowing up to 20 participants to be readers. The Writers Café format has two parallel sessions (breakout rooms) with 10 readers in each. You can still join the meeting, but only the first 20 to register will be able to read their work. There will be a waitlist for readers, so have something available to read in case someone doesn't show up.

Total registration will be limited to 25 people, any more would be unmanageable.

We will be using Zoom, and those who have registered will get an invitation via email and be notified again on the day of the Café. The meeting will start at 6:55 pm, with no particular end time. If you have signed up, be prompt!



Here is our **Monthly Column** by **Pattie Giordani**.



Crimes Against Grammar: The Great Oxford Comma Debate

By Pattie Giordani

At a writers retreat I attended earlier this year, two published authors had a short debate about the use of the Oxford comma. The debate was short because neither one was going to change her mind, no matter what the other said. I listened and took notes, thinking it would make a great column.

First, let's define the Oxford comma. Sometimes called the serial comma, the Oxford comma is a comma placed between the last two items in a series of three or more. The "Oxford" designation comes from the Oxford University Press, where for more than 100 years, it has been the standard in the *Oxford Style Manual*.

For example, the Oxford comma is the comma that falls after "chest protector" in this sentence: "The catcher wears a mask, a chest protector, and shin guards."

Back to the writers retreat debate. One author is dead set against the Oxford comma. She said, "It's not necessary—just rewrite the sentence for clarity."

The other author countered with, "It can make your writing clearer, so why not use it?!"

And my opinion? Well, my history with the Oxford comma is diverse.

For years, as a staff editor at two organizations, I had no preference. I followed my publication's guidelines. At *The Express-Times*, a local newspaper, we adhered to the *Associated Press Stylebook*, which says:

“Use commas to separate elements in a series, but do not put a comma before the conjunction in most simple series: *The flag is red, white and blue.*”

“Include a final comma in a simple series if omitting it could make the meaning unclear: *The governor convened his most trusted advisers, economist Olivia Schneider and polling expert Carlton Torres.* (If Schneider and Torres are his most trusted advisers, don't use the final comma.) *The governor convened his most trusted advisers, economist Olivia Schneider, and polling expert Carlton Torres.* (If the governor is convening unidentified advisers plus Schneider and Torres, the final comma is needed.)”

“Put a comma before the concluding conjunction in a series if an integral element of the series requires a conjunction: *I had orange juice, toast, and ham and eggs for breakfast.*”

“Use a comma also before the concluding conjunction in a complex series of phrases: *The main points to consider are whether the athletes are skillful enough to compete, whether they have the stamina to endure the training, and whether they have the proper mental attitude.*”

At my second editorial position at the National Association of Colleges and Employers, we used AP Style, but we also used the Oxford comma.

Now, as a freelance book editor, I use *The Chicago Manual of Style*, which says:

“Items in a series are normally separated by commas, when a conjunction joins the last two elements in a series of three or more, a comma—known as the serial or series comma, or the Oxford comma—should appear before the conjunction. Chicago strongly recommends this widely practiced usage, since it prevents ambiguity. *John was singing, Jean was playing guitar, and Alan was running errands and furnishing food.*”

Many well-known people have strong opinions on the use of the Oxford comma. A Twitter account, [CelebrityOxfordComma](#), asked some famous people where they stand on the issue.

Actor Lupita Nyong'o said, “that comma left Oxford a long time ago. I found it in Kenya, and I won't go without it!”

Some people used an example to illustrate their views, such as author Neil Gaiman, who claimed, “I stand with my parents, Charles Darwin, and God.”

Scientist Neil deGrasse Tyson said, “What's my stand on the Oxford comma, you ask? I would never read, write, or even think of a list without it.”

And TV host Tom Bergeron opined, “I'm an Oxford Comma-nist!”

Author Meg Cabot said, “Obviously I'm pro-comma. But now you have the Oxford Comma song stuck in my head.”

That's a song by the group Vampire Weekend, in which they liken the Oxford Comma as a small thing that shouldn't be discussed ad nauseum, as writers tend to do. In other words, "don't sweat the small stuff." But for writers, the small stuff can be pretty big and worth the sweat!

A company who wished they had worried about the small stuff—the Oxford comma—learned an expensive grammar lesson. A group of Maine dairy delivery drivers received \$5 million in a settlement for unpaid overtime, according to court records. It was all due to the lack of an Oxford comma in a Maine labor law.

The drivers' employer had claimed they were exempt from overtime pay, according to Maine's labor laws. Part of the law exempts certain tasks from overtime. The law originally stated: "The canning, processing, preserving, freezing, drying, marketing, storing, packing for shipment or distribution of: agricultural produce; meat and fish products; and perishable foods."

As written, without an Oxford comma after "shipment," the line could be referring to packing and shipping as a single act, or as two separate tasks.

The drivers said it reads as a single act, and since they didn't actually do any packing, they shouldn't have been exempt from overtime pay.

"Specifically, if that [list of exemptions] used a serial comma to mark off the last of the activities that it lists, then the exemption would clearly encompass the activity that the drivers perform," the circuit judge wrote.

To prevent future Oxford comma drama, the Marine Legislature has edited this exemption, replacing the punctuation with semicolons.

Fortunately, we writers don't need to learn such an expensive lesson about the use of the Oxford comma.

As for me, if I'm writing articles for a magazine or newspaper, I don't use the Oxford comma, since those publications adhere to AP Style. But if I'm writing for my own publications—columns, blog, website, social media—I use the Oxford comma.

If a writer is dead set against--or for—the Oxford comma and you don't have to adhere to a publication's or publisher's preference: You be you. But as I advise about a lot of things in writing, whatever you use, be consistent.

Writers: Do you have a grammar, usage, or style question? Send it to me at pattiegiordani@gmail.com.

***Pattie Giordani** is a writer and editor. She was a staff editor for a national nonprofit association and for a daily newspaper. Her freelance articles have appeared in various newspapers and magazines, and she taught noncredit writing courses at Northampton Community College. She frequently presents at writers group meetings and conferences.*



We hope to be helpful!

Charles B. Kiernan