



February 2024

Upcoming Events – February 2024

Date	Time	Event	Location
Thursday, 2/1	6:30 – 8:30 pm	Wine & Words Susan Dwyer, Mary L. Westcott	Riverbend Rec Center
Wednesday, 2/14	9:00 – 11:00 am	WLOV Monthly Meeting CONTESTS – ARE YOU UP FOR THE COMPETITION? The why and how of entering writing competitions.	Laurel Manor Rec Center
Tuesday, 2/13	11 am – 2:00 pm	All Booked Up Author Signing Chris Coward, Brenda Hiatt, Annie Meehan.	All Booked Up, Colony Plaza
Saturday, 2/10	2:00 – 3:00 pm	B&N Author Showcase John Farren, Paula Howard, Scott Ives, Dan Kincaid, Christine Schimpf, Lisa Vincent-Morrison.	Barnes & Noble, Sumter Landing

“Contrary to popular impression, writers, unlike pole vaulters, do not know when they have done their best...”

John Updike

Reprinted from:

A Writer’s Commonplace Book, Rosemary Friedman



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE - FEBRUARY 2024

“LOVE LETTERS AND LITERARY EXPRESSIONS: THE ART OF WRITING ON VALENTINE’S DAY.”

Dear Fellow Writers,

I think we can all agree that December and January are the coldest months of the year. We can also admit that February is not far behind. Valentine’s Day in mid-February helps us see the month differently – warmer **because** it is a day celebrating love and affection. Beyond chocolates and flowers, we are encouraged to express our emotions to those who mean something to us.

Remember, the love letter never grows old, and its popularity achieves a peak in February. Even though recent technological advances have caused many changes in the way we communicate, these advancements have transformed the way people articulate themselves in the modern age. We have progressed from handwritten letters to emails, to texts, and to various methods of social media. But I wonder how these changes have affected our ability to communicate emotions to those we love. Is the depth of emotion still there? Are we simply taking a shortcut? Are we still conveying what we feel?

As writers, we are the lucky ones, the crafter of words. We feel more deeply the importance of honest expression and the value of a thoughtfully composed message. Our words, especially in a handwritten note, can endure. The art of writing remains a powerful and timeless means of expressing feelings.

As we celebrate this Valentine’s Day, let’s keep in mind the impact that a few well-chosen words can have in conveying the deepest sentiments of our hearts. February gives us the opportunity to tell that special someone what they mean to us. Such a missive can solidify and strengthen the bond between individuals.

For myself, I have been with my husband for more than thirty-five years. Putting into words the way I feel is difficult for me, even as a writer. The importance of it all makes me feel inadequate. But maybe I will send him a text.

Write On!

Jeanne

SHARING A LITTLE SUNSHINE

Know of a member recuperating from surgery, down with the flu, suffering from the loss of loved one – or facing some other traumatic event? Please contact us at wlovwriters@gmail.com and share the member's name and situation. We'll forward the information to Our Sunshine Committee chair, Kathy deMaCarty, who will send them a card with a caring message to show WLOV's support.



WLOV Member Benefit

BE FEATURED IN VILLAGE NEIGHBORS MAGAZINE

Contact Mark H. Newhouse at mark@newhouse.net if you would like to be a guest columnist or be featured in a future **Writing Bug** column promoting WLOV authors and their books via mail to more than 30,000 homes.

FACEBOOK ALBUMS

Check out these links for WLOV member newspaper coverage and event pictures.

NOVEMBER FACEBOOK ALBUM

<https://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.748380127329647&type=3>

DECEMBER FACEBOOK ALBUM

<https://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.764299225737737&type=3>

JANUARY FACEBOOK ALBUM

<https://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.781768313990828&type=3>

BOOKEXPO 2024 ALBUM

<https://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.797928312374828&type=3>

BOOKEXPO 2024 – FINAL RESULTS

Rita Boehm, BookExpo2024 Chair

BookExpo2024 is a wrap! The weather was beautiful, and although the crowds were slightly smaller than last year, the feedback from authors and attendees was positive. As we build a more permanent Expo committee structure, the event will continue to improve.

Survey results: About 75% of the exhibitor surveys were submitted. Of that grouping: 83% ranked the event in the 9/10 Excellent range; 15% gave it a 7/8 Good ranking.

What people liked most:

- Socializing with other authors
- Networking opportunities
- Well organized
- Table location
- Meeting people
- Excellent foot traffic
- The overall opportunity
- Friendly atmosphere
- The training sessions
- Well publicized, great facility

What could be improved – comments made by at least 2 authors:

- Event is one hour too long (2 authors) –
 - o Traffic did slow down after 3. Will consider this recommendation going forward.
- Rooms are too cold (3 authors)
 - o This is not something over which we have control. Exhibitor Info Sheet advised everyone to bring jackets.
- Try to hold it on a non-football day (2 authors)
 - o BookExpo has been on The Villages calendar for the 4th Sunday in January for a number of years. However, we've asked The Villages Rec Dept management about availability of the following Sunday – the off week before the Super Bowl. Rec Centers are heavily used, so we may not have this flexibility. Stay tuned.
- Expo management comment -
 - o Snacks ran out too soon. Need to purchase more snacks for future Expos – and continue to remind exhibitors to bring lunch. It's a long day.

Note: Due to limited seating, there were a number of attendees who were disappointed that they were unable to listen to the speakers. In December, the fire marshal removed 20 chairs from the room layout, significantly reducing access. For future Expos we are considering enlarging the room which would require deleting 11 exhibitor tables.

Friendly reminder: BookExpo2025 registration opens on July 1.

BOOKEXPO 2024 – A THANK YOU NOTE

A significant number of people are needed to successfully hold an event like BookExpo 2024.

At the risk of offending someone who I may inadvertently leave off (and for this I apologize), I'd like to acknowledge the Expo Team without whom the event would not have been possible.

Thank you for your hard work!

Registrar: Manijeh Badiozamani

Assistant Expo Chair: Dan Varalli

Training Sessions: Mark Newhouse, Paula Howard, Chris Cooper

Raffle Baskets: Chris Cooper

Table Numbers and Genre Colors Tabs: Dan Varalli and Eric Honour

Business Outreach Committee: Coordinator – Julie Feingold

Committee: Ann Marie Acacio, Francesca Boroden, Julie Boyd, Steve Camp, Jack Ciotti, John Farren, Thomas Freemer, Rick Greenberg, Anne Heathman, Bill Hutchinson, Scott Ives, Tom LaBaugh, Frank Lancione, Ron Markland, Dave McKeon, Patricia Minots, Kome Onokpise, Barbara Rein, Rebecca Rock, Marsha Shearer, Fran Szarnicki

Program: Penny Thomas

Event Day Committee: Coordinator – Sandy Swanberg

Committee: Colleen Heitman, David Himelrick, Dee Martin, Diana Dean, Diana Hollingsworth, Diane Gentz, Dottie Klein, Dwight Connelly, Hank Feingold, Judy Burnham, Karen Lang, Kathy DeMaCarty, Linda Hallinan, Mark Witmer, Mary Ann Sinopoli, Rich Radcliffe

With appreciation and gratitude,

Rita Boehm – BookExpo2024 Chair

MOMENTS FROM BookExpo 2024



Raffle Basket Winners
 Top Left: Colleen Kelly. Bottom left: Sandra Swanberg with with winner Kelli DeWitt. Right: Kathy Mehlretter



Raffle Baskets and hard-working volunteers



Cleo Simon and fellow hikers



Shirley Jones



Rita Boehm



Frank and Diane Lancione and friends



Christine Campbell



Brenda Hiatt



Jack Hayes, Steve Burt, Jeanne Rogers



Leigh Court



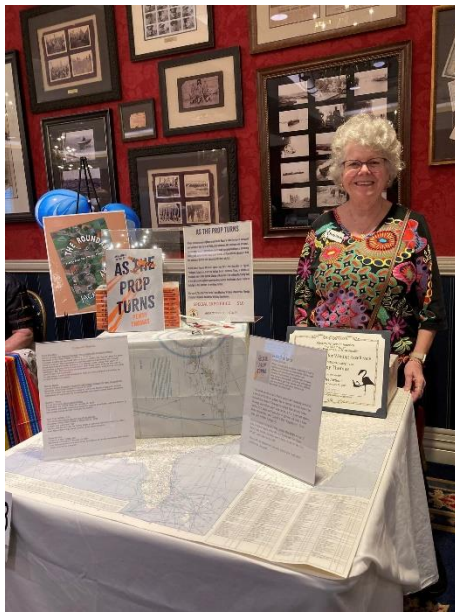
Mary Westcott



Paula Howard



Paula Tucker, Barbara Welsh, Phyllis Walters



Penny Thomas



Phyllis Walters

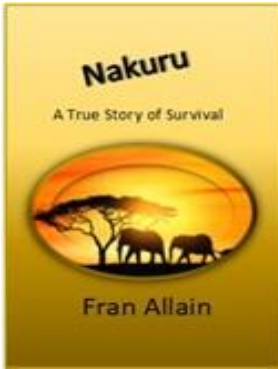
FUTURE BOOK PROMOTIONS

Quill de Ville would like to promote your book.

We'll do it by a lottery system. At every WLOV monthly meeting, Penny Thomas will be there with a box. You will put in that box a card containing your book title, your name, and email address. This can be on a 3" x 5" index card, your social/business card, or your promotional bookmark. Every month, Penny will pull out a few cards (she promises to close her eyes as she dips into the box). Penny will then contact you for a photo of the book cover, the back cover blurb, and purchase info to put in the next *Quill de Ville*.

You have to be at the WLOV monthly meeting to put your card in the box.

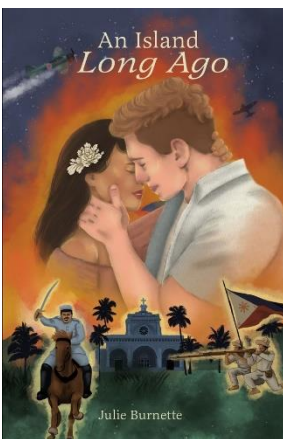
FEBRUARY BOOK PROMOTIONS



Nakuru, A True Story of Survival by Fran Allain

KENYA, EAST AFRICA 2:15 on a Saturday morning. Ten men with rifles, machetes, and pistols. Bolt cutters severing the hasps on the veranda's rod iron gate, releasing the thick padlock, 'Ping'! The hasp hitting the cement floor. I woke up! I believe that in every situation there is a threshold moment that dictates the course of that experience. Most often it is imperceptible. Ours came with a 'ping'. One moment and a simple sound that changed our lives forever. This is our story of survival, the aftermath and the government's involvement. Available on Amazon.

<https://www.amazon.com/Nakuru-Story-Survival-Fran-Allain>



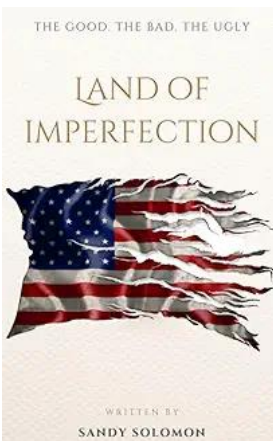
An Island Long Ago by Julie Burnette

The old jeweler smiled as the young man laid the intricately carved ivory comb on the counter. "Ah, this is one of a kind!" he said. Give this comb to your true love, and should you ever be separated, it will lead her back to you."

After a whirlwind romance set against the backdrop of the American occupation in the Philippines, following the Spanish-American war, Rich's bride dies in childbirth. When he is told his daughter is dead by her embittered grandmother, Rich believes her and returns to America brokenhearted.

Follow four generations of women as the mysterious comb is handed from mother to daughter in this gripping saga as it journeys from the late 1800s Philippines to mid-1960s America.

Based on a real family and steeped in the history of the Philippines, follow along as the comb reunites Rich with the family he never knew existed. Available on Kindle Amazon, and B&N (local Authors).



Land of Imperfection By Sandy Solomon

When the place you grew up in, didn't live up to its expectations, how do you deal with it?

Land of Imperfection opens your eyes so you can view the whole picture of our great country: The Good, The Bad, The Ugly, and The Pride.

It picks up on the elements which make all Americans proud but also sounds a clear warning tone about a future that could go in the wrong direction if growing disunity, discord, and intolerance continue unchecked.

Meet WLOV's Webmaster/Marketing Committee Coordinator



Paula Howard

When John F. Kennedy campaigned for President, he drove past my high school. It was a defining moment and ignited my patriotism to join the Peace Corps. Becoming a Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) was the fastest route to acceptance, so, at 19 years of age, I became a nurse. Shortly after, I was sent to Bolivia, South America, to work in Community Development. There, I met another Peace Corps Volunteer from New Jersey and we married upon returning home.

In 1970, our children were ages 1, 2, and 3, when we moved to Puerto Rico for my husband's job. They grew up in a Spanish-English bi-lingual culture while I went to work part-time as an Arthur Murray dance teacher. Then I became a disc jockey on the only English language station in the Caribbean and began playing top 40 songs while inventing "Contest Time" for call-ins to win movie tickets. Not long after, I became a Cable TV newscaster and cut my teeth interviewing people like Red Buttons, Rodney Dangerfield, The Fifth Dimension, and dozens of celebrities who came to perform in Puerto Rico. My sister and I also opened a bakery called The Cake Box where we created cakes in many decorated shapes.

Six years later, our little family returned to the States to live in Ohio where I became a reporter/editor for the community-wide Journal Newspapers. Between 1975 and 1996, I also worked in public relations at the Cuyahoga County Mental Health Board followed by University Hospitals of Cleveland. Moving into corporate marketing, I worked at the Victor S. Voinovich Company and Executive Caterers at Landerhaven while finishing my college education with a degree in Business Management. I graduated the same month as two of our children graduated from high school. One of my most satisfying accomplishments was fundraising and executive producing a parade float for the Pasadena Rose Bowl Parade in 1996 celebrating the City of Cleveland's 200th birthday.

As the years rolled on, I became an insurance agent to help in both my sister's Allstate business and later, my son's agency, before returning to college. In 2005, I graduated as a Registered Nurse at the age of 61! For the next 13 years, I worked as a bedside staff nurse in medical-surgical and orthopedic hospitals.

By 2008, we were ready to leave the cold northern weather and moved to North Carolina where I worked at Duke University Hospitals before coming to Florida and nursing at Florida Hospital for five years before moving to The Villages.

Along the way, I became an author of several books and established my own business, A Howard Activity, LLC to edit and publish books under the imprint **AHA Publishers**.

Getting involved in the Writers League of The Villages began another great adventure.

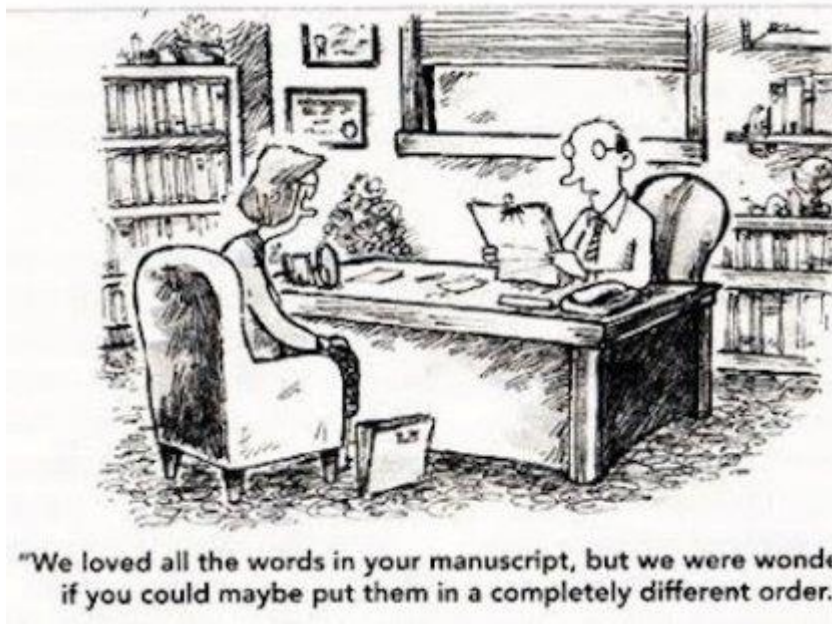
Along the way, my hobbies included competition ballroom dancing, motorcycle riding, martial arts, and skydiving (once!)

With all that I have experienced, I believe we are here to help each other learn and grow. What is important is to light the way for each other.



"No WAIT, I'm not quite ready to submit it yet!
Just need to go over it one more time..."

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“It is by sitting down to write every morning that one becomes a writer. Those who do not do this remain amateur.”

Gerald Brenan
Reprinted from:
A Writer's Commonplace Book, Rosemary Friedman