

**Minutes**  
Appalachian Authors Guild  
A Chapter of the Virginia Writers Club  
Writer's Workshop  
Tuesday, August 14, 2018

**Time and Place:**

The writers workshop meeting of the Appalachian Authors Guild met on Tuesday, August 14, 2018 at the Small Business Incubator in Abingdon, Virginia. The meeting took place from 1 – 3 p.m.

**Attendance:**

President Vicki Fletcher, Vice President J.C. Schweingrouber, Treasurer Jack Rose, Board members Linda Hoagland, Sylvia Nickels, and Addie Davis attended. Linda Dobkins was absent. In addition, Ellen Myatt, Dan Swanson, Greg Lilly, Joey Collard, and Connie Wholford attended.

**Call to Order:**

President Vicki Fletcher called the meeting to order.

**Business:**

**✓ Golden Nib Winners Announced:** At the end of the Board Meeting and the opening of this General Membership Meeting, President Vicki Fletcher announced the chapter's winners of the Golden Nib entries, now submitted to the Virginia Writers Club Golden Nib Contest. Winners need to make sure they pay the VWC dues online today. Visit [www.virginiawritersclub.org](http://www.virginiawritersclub.org) for details.

<b>Non-Fiction</b>		
1st	Dan Swanson	"Cousins"
2nd	Lynn Young	"Rambling Visit at Grandma's Home"
3rd	Linda Hoagland Linda Dobkins	"What Was That?" "The Drug Raid"
<b>Fiction</b>		
1st	Ellen Myatt	"September Bread"
2nd	Linda Hoagland	"The Hold Handwritten Book"
3rd	Ed Clark Linda Dobkins	"Coldest Winter" "Crouching Frog, Hidden Fox"
<b>Poetry</b>		
1st	Linda Hoagland	"The Last Time"
2nd	Linda Dobkins	"Curse of the Mirror"
3rd	Lynn Young	"Haiku World"

**✓ Presentation:** AAG board member J.C. Schweingrouber presented "Kick Starting Your Book! Creating Your Story!" He suggested reading his blog on the AAG website on a Three-Step Writing Process. As part of the creative process, he suggests to:

1. "Consume" other works in the genre in which you plan to write. Pick a genre and know why. He said he first consumed a lot of horror stories and found Stephen King's book on writing to be the most helpful. Other members said they have consumed Sci-Fi and/or Memoirs. "The hardest part is writing the story," he said. "It tests your passion." However, J.C. reminded AAG members and guests that "the best way to write is *your way*." He advised writers not to get hung up on techniques or processes at first – quoting Hemingway to write "until your fingers bleed." Board member Linda Hoagland (working on 29<sup>th</sup> book) said she writes fiction mainly -50%, but also has written plays, poems, and short stories to keep things interesting and mixed.
2. The "Aha" moment is an important one, J.C. explained. He said he experienced such a moment in 2000 when he knew he wanted to write a horror novel but didn't have a story in mind.
3. Character building is another part of the process. He shared how characters come alive like a scene in a movie. He shared how he did it ineffectively with his book Grave Legends when he didn't build a more developed character profile of likes, dislikes, and other descriptors. "When you have a character in mind, this may be all you need to get the story going. Use it as a writing prompt," he said. With that, he had members participate in a brief character biography writing exercise.
4. J.C. noted that characters will experience a range of emotions. Thus, he asked members to take a moment to write a paragraph in which their character was annoyed, then one paragraph where their character was angry, and a final one in which their character is enraged.

**✓ Free Books:** Books were donated by Linda Dobkins for AAG members to take and use. The assortment included MFA in Creative Writing, Perseverance, Dialogue, novel writing, and much more. This was so well received that the other members asked if we could do that at every writer's workshop and continue to exchange books and return them for others to read the next time. This was agreed by all who attended. If you have books you would be willing to share, please bring those to the next workshop on October 9<sup>th</sup>. If you haven't attended one of these workshops, you are missing out!!! This is a wonderful way for authors to discuss writing from many topics and points of view. Come on out to the next one.

**✓ Adjournment:** President Vicki Fletcher adjourned the meeting.