



# The Creative Writer

[www.whitecountyc creativewriters.org](http://www.whitecountyc creativewriters.org)

## January kicks off new ideas, new goals for the club

Treasurer's report read by Rhonda Roberts and accepted as read. The November 2020 balance was \$1,348.68. Deposits were made from the Christmas Contest. There are two outstanding winner's checks. Ending balance was \$1,124.68.

**Old Business:** Del Garrett mentioned the 2021 AWC Conference contests are posted online. Members will not participate in the WCCW Writers Award *High Falutin' Western Adventure* contest. Judges TBA.

**New Business:** President Gary Rodgers presented plaques awarding Dot Hatfield and Del Garrett Lifetime Memberships in recognition of their dedication and service to WCCW. They no longer will pay membership dues. Julie Zellner was announced as a new member.

In the November 2020 meeting, members were asked to write a 500-ish word blog for the website and send them to Steve May. Latisha, Donna, Kim, Rhonda, and Dot read theirs. Other members were encouraged to send an article to Steve.

Kim Vernon-Rodgers led a discussion about upcoming activity ideas. Rhonda mentioned WCCW does better at contests and getting published when members participate in new writing activities.

Members agreed to have a suggested speaker teach on how to write romance for various genres. Other ideas included: POV; how to find a story, elements of a story, plot formulation and development; read a book and share a review. Next month's activity is to write a 500-word short story using two or more words from the WCCW *High Falutin' Western Adventure* AWC contest.

--Anthony Wood

### The Creative Writer

is a monthly newsletter for the White County Creative Writers of Searcy, Ark.

If you have news stories or photos to share, send them to [del.garrett.s0ke@gmail.com](mailto:del.garrett.s0ke@gmail.com).  
Deadline for reader submission is seven days prior to each month's meeting. WCCW reserves the right to edit all submissions.

#### President

Gary Rodgers

#### Vice President

Kim Vernon-Rodgers

#### Secretary

Anthony Wood

#### Treasurer - Conference Chair

Rhonda Roberts

#### Contest Monitor

Dot Hatfield

#### Press Agent

Del Garrett

#### Webmaster

Steve May



Photo by Steve May

### Lifetime Membership selectees

Dot Hatfield and Del Garrett, both are past presidents of the WCCW, were awarded Lifetime Membership in the club for their continued dedication and service and for their long history of achievements as writers and editors. Both of them are in the Arkansas Writers' Hall of Fame. Dot is the author of seven books; Del has written nine.

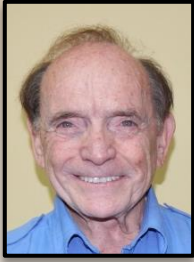
### Next meeting

Feb. 15, 2021, 6:30 p.m.

Meet inside the Shelter Insurance office on Beebe-Capps. Wear your mask and bring a chair.



# Two WCCW members win awards



**Mike Bass**

Mike Bass won awards for the best monologue and best joke in national comedy writing competition sponsored by the Gene Perret Round Table organization.

*Once again, WCCW members show their award winning skills in writing competitions. WCCW emphasizes excellence in all genre and its members are constantly turning out top of the line material. Congratulations Milke and Donna!*



**Donna Nelson**

Donna Nelson took two wins at a recent Poets Roundtable of Arkansas contest, scoring First Place in the November 2020 event for “Autumn’s Embrace” and First Place in the January 2021 contest for “Snowflakes”.

# How to test a story idea

*Ansen Dibell* was the pen name used by Nancy Ann Dibble (Sept. 8, 1942 – March 7, 2006), whose five-novel science-fiction series *The Rule of One*, earned her MA, MFA and PhD from University of Iowa.

She wrote in Writers’ Digest textbook on “Plot” that you can test whether or not your story idea is worth the time and effort in bringing it to fruition.

“Once you have been writing awhile, people will start forcing their ideas on you,” she warned.

Those are the wanna-be writers who never get around to actually writing anything and just know if YOU write their story, both of you will get rich.

But some ideas are worth exploring, even if they seem a bit bizarre. Dibell mentions Truman Capote, who took a “senseless multiple murder case” and turned it into a non-fiction best seller, *In Cold Blood*; and relates that Mary Shelley’s immortal best seller, *I Frankenstein* was reportedly based on an alarmingly vivid dream.

“Story ideas,” she stated, “are everywhere. Your problem is every writer’s problem, figuring out which...is a potential story.”

She outlined four basic questions which help determine if the story is right for you to tell.

**1. Is it your story to tell?** Do you believe in the story and, perhaps most importantly, are you capable of writing it; in other words, are you “writing about what you know?”

**2. Is it too personal for readers to become involved with?** She describes this as “Is it a story that is too personal, something that is important to you, but would justifiably bore a stranger sitting next to you on a cross-country bus?”

**3. Is it going somewhere?** Does this great story idea of yours have “a specific opening, one or more specific elements, and a solid ending?”

**4. What’s at stake?** Is there something vital about the story, not just to you but others, as well. (Reread rule #2).

# SPOTLIGHT

## Mike Bass



Mike Bass is a retired neurologist who grew up in Benton, Ark., but retired to Conway after a professional life in California. The Army took him to San Francisco where he stayed for pre-med studies. He returned to Arkansas for medical school, and then went back to the San Francisco Bay Area for further medical training and for practice as a neurologist.

Mike came from a large family that was heavy into song and dance and funny patter. They all enjoyed words, and didn't groan at puns. No matter what stage of life Mike was in, he always played with words and phrases, and sometimes tunes. He has always written songs, parodies, poems, skits, stories, essays, lectures, speeches, and verbal performance pieces.

In San Francisco, he drifted into comedy writing and ended up a professional, although he kept his day job. He wrote on a regular basis for Pat Paulsen and Bob Hope, and on a more casual basis for other comics. His jokes were in newspapers, radio, TV, records, celebrity roasts, political rallies, and other live shows, which included his own stand-up comedy.

Mike retired to Conway in 2015, and joined the Conway Writers' Group. In this new life, he began to enter writing contests.

He has won prizes with rhyming poetry, free verse, short stories, and jokes. His latest win with jokes was announced in mid-January, 2021. The Gene Perret Round Table organization presented two prizes for best monologue and two prizes for best joke, which the judges picked from the monologues. The topic had to be the way the pandemic affected one's comedy. Mike won awards for the best monologue and best joke.

Mike had two children by his first wife. His second wife died in 2014. He enjoys singing karaoke regularly in Conway.

Mike says, "The best way to get to hear me sing a song, or to read a poem or a comedy routine is to not hide when you see me coming."

