

**SAVE THE DATE**  
**January 25, 2025**  
**LVW Annual Meeting**  
**Virtual - on Zoom**  
**Business Meeting and**  
**Guest Speaker**  
**Nadia Colburn**

**ISSN 2992-9954**  
**2024-No. 5, December**

**SAVE THE DATE ..... 1**  
 JANUARY 25, 2025 IS FAST APPROACHING. THIS IS THE DATE OF THE ANNUAL MEETING ..... 2  
**LVW BOOK GROUP ..... 3**  
 2024 BOOK GROUP UPDATE ..... 3  
**ARTICLES OF INTEREST ..... 3**  
 SHAWNA LEMAY FROM [HTTPS://TRANSACTIONSWITHBEAUTY.COM/HOME/BLESSED](https://TRANSACTIONSWITHBEAUTY.COM/HOME/BLESSED) ..... 3  
 A NEW FACEBOOK GROUP FOR HELPING WRITERS ..... 3  
 AN AUTHOR’S BEST FRIEND, BY LOUELLA BRYANT ..... 4  
 A FUN WAY TO IMPROVE YOUR VOCABULARY ..... 5  
 ENCOURAGING YOUNG WRITERS..... 5  
 FROM A WEBSITE CALLED SIXTY AND ME:7 SIMPLE STEPS TO BECOMING A WRITER AFTER 60 ..... 5  
**KUDOS KORNER – WHERE LEAGUE AUTHORS CAN “KROW” A LITTLE! ..... 6**  
 KUDOS TO LOUELLA BRYANT..... 6  
 KUDOS TO SUSAN WINTERS SMITH..... 6  
 KUDOS TO PHILIP JORDAN..... 6  
 KUDOS TO C. L. HOWLAND ..... 6  
**A LOOK BACK AT 2024..... 7**  
**GENERAL INFORMATION..... 8**

**Save the Date**

**LVW IS FACING A CRISIS!**

It is imperative that members step up and run for office. Without new leadership, the OLDEST WRITING GROUP IN THE STATE OF VERMONT may cease to exist. Founded in 1929, we have only four years till our 100th Anniversary! At this time, we are looking for a whole new slate of individuals willing to run for office, and/ or to be on the board of directors.

For a description of these positions, please [CLICK THIS LINK](#) or go to the home page of our website, <https://leagueofvermontwriters.org/> and scroll down to "LVW Leadership."

Don't be worried if you're not sure if you can handle the job. The current board will be on hand to guide anyone new to this type of position, so fear not! You won't be alone if you get on the board.

Positions that will be open are: President, Secretary, Treasurer, and several board members at large.

If you have more questions about what it would be like to fill one of these positions, or, if you would like to run or nominate someone, please reply to this email and I will try to help you, and share your interest with our board. We can't wait too long as the Nominating committee will need to formally contact anyone wishing to run or nominate to add them to the slate of nominees.

The programs of LVW do not 'create' themselves. We need strong leadership and people willing to commit to a couple of hours per month to keep our organization going strong. We are striving to get up to speed in the digital media world too, so if this is one of your interests, please let us know.

**January 25, 2025 is fast approaching. This is the date of the Annual meeting.** We hope all members will try to attend this meeting. We will have a combined business meeting and guest speaker.

**This year our speaker is Nadia Colburn.** Nadia is an American poet, teacher, literary critic, and writing coach based in Cambridge, MA. She has published poetry and prose in a wide range of national publications and her poetry book *The High Shelf* was published in 2019. She was a founding editor of *Anchor Magazine*. Nadia Colburn is a recipient of Pen/New England Discovery Award and Jacob K. Javits Fellowship.

**Following Nadia's presentation, we will hold elections for our Board and Officers.**

The League is hoping that 2025 will see increased participation in its events, both in planning and participation.

For this to happen, we need people to step up and take a turn at helping run this amazing, nearly 100-year-old organization! If you would like to “throw your hat in the ring” and run for an office, please contact the current secretary Gail Wind at [gailinvermont@outlook.com](mailto:gailinvermont@outlook.com). Please put – LVW Elections in the subject line.

Then, our Nominating Committee will get in touch. Below, you will find some pertinent information from our bylaws to help you make this decision.

#### **Section 1-Board of Directors:**

The function of the board of directors shall be to provide direction and governance for the organization. The board shall be composed of no fewer than nine directors. Directors shall be elected for a period of three years. Each director shall hold office until the annual meeting when his/her term expires and his/her successor has been elected. Any vacancy on the board shall be filled by appointment by the president.

#### **Section 2-Elections:**

The board shall appoint a Nominating Committee of three or more persons, each for a two-year term. The Nominating Committee shall submit nominations for officers and directors-at-large to the board by Dec. 1. An approved slate of prospective board members shall be published in the January issue of League Lines and voted on by the membership at the annual meeting.

No member may serve on the board of directors for more than six consecutive years whether as an officer and/or director-at-large.

#### **Section 3-Officers:**

The board of directors shall include a president, vice president, secretary, and treasurer. The immediate past president shall serve on the board for one year immediately following the conclusion of his or her term as president and shall be considered an officer.

Each officer, with the exception of the immediate past president, shall be elected at the annual meeting for a one-year term and shall hold the office until a successor is elected at the next annual meeting unless nominated for another term, in which case, would continue for another one-year term if elected. An officer shall not hold the same position for more than three consecutive one-year terms. In the case of appointment to fill a vacancy for an unexpired term, an officer who has served more than six months of the one-year term is considered to have served a full term in that office.

#### **Section 4-Duties of Officers:**

A. President: The president shall serve as the chief executive officer of the League and shall preside at all meetings and perform other duties to ensure that the board fulfills its responsibilities for the governance of the League.

B. Immediate past president: The immediate past president shall provide advice and leadership to the board regarding past practices and other matters to assist the board in governing the League and shall support the president on an as-needed basis.

C. Vice president: The vice president shall assist the president as needed and, in the absence of the president, perform all duties of the president.

D. Secretary: The secretary shall record the minutes of the annual meeting and sessions of the board of directors.

E. Treasurer: The treasurer shall be responsible for overseeing the management and reporting of the League's finances, including, but not limited to, collection of membership dues; maintenance of all bank accounts and financial records; handling of financial transactions including bank deposits and issuance of checks. The treasurer also shall prepare a written financial report for the annual meeting, and provide the League with financial and accounting data as required.

## LVW Book Group

### 2024 Book Group Update

Shawn managed to keep our book group alive and thriving this past year. He jostled the calendar a bit, but managed to host a full six meetings. These are the books that the group read and discussed. There were some spirited discussions!

- March 7: *BIRD BY BIRD: Some Instructions on Writing and Life* by Anne Lamott
- April 25: *How to Write a Sentence: And How to Read One* by Stanley Fish.
- July 18: *THE CREATIVE HABIT: Learn It and Use It for Life* by Twyla Tharp
- August 29: *THE WRITING LIFE* by Annie Dillard
- October 10: *Meander, Spiral, Explode: Design and Pattern in Narrative* by Jane Alison
- December 12: *27 ESSENTIAL PRINCIPLES OF STORY* by Daniel Joshua Rubin

The next book that will be discussed is *The Creative Act: A Way of Being* by Rick Rubin. The book group is planning to meet to discuss this book on February 20, 2025.

\*\*\*\*If you would like to be part of the virtual – Via Zoom – book group meeting in October, drop Shawn an email and he will put you on the list. [Click Here to email the League](#) or copy [lvw@leagueofvermontwriters.org](mailto:lvw@leagueofvermontwriters.org). Put “2024 BOOK GROUP” in the subject line. You don’t have to read all (or any) of the book of the month to join in, as during the course of a meeting the group discusses writing in general and the chat is lively and entertaining. \*\*\*\*

## Articles of Interest

### Recap of November’s Zoom Presentation by Ann Dávila Cardinal, by Jeniah Johnson

LVW’s virtual fall event featured award winning novelist, Ann Dávila Cardinal with a craft talk entitled the “The Socially Acceptable Stereotype: Writing the New Seniors.”

The hour flew by as we listened to Ann convey an important topic with irreverent humor and insightful examples. We shared our least favorite “old people” tropes such as: the lady knitting in a rocking chair with a cat on her lap, or the man cursing out the neighborhood kids from his porch.

Ann pointed out that a character of “a certain age” needs to be rendered with even greater nuance than their younger counterparts due to the richness and complexity of their long history.

As a writing prompt, we were asked to sketch an older character with a superpower. Some great story seeds were shared, and we all agreed it was an empowering and uplifting exercise.

### Shawna Lemay from <https://transactionswithbeauty.com/home/blessed>

Shawna was writing blessings and she wrote, “If you were to write a blessing for creative types, for writers, for artists what would it look like? What if you were to write a blessing for your own work? Let’s begin.

May you come to your morning work with dreams still floating around you.

May the coffee you drink be strong and bracing.

When you are granted the time and space to work,

may you banish all doubt and swiftly find the flow and let it carry you.

May the work surprise and delight you and challenge you and change you.

The work is not easy but you feel equal to it and you have the energy to pursue it into the dark depths and back out into the light.

May the interruptions be minimal and the sparks of creativity abundant.

And, now, your turn. How will you bless your working time, and extend this blessing to others?”

### A New Facebook Group for Helping Writers

Tracie Ashman (from Northeast Kingdom Editing) Wrote;

“I would like to promote my [ABCs of Book Publishing](#) Facebook Group in one of the newsletters.

The Facebook Group is for Authors, Writers, Beta Readers, Proofreaders, Editors, Illustrators, Formatters, Agents, Publishers, Marketers, and Writing Coaches.

The idea would be to build a community of professionals to help answer author/writer questions and to help each other gain clients. [This FB group is open to the public.]

### **An Author's Best Friend, by Louella Bryant**

To website or not to website—that is the question. According to a recent BookBub article, 85-90% of authors selected for featured deals have a website for their books. If you've written a book you're trying to publish or market, a website is essential. But why? BookBub gives you some solid reasons.

- A website is a place to collect email addresses to build a mailing list you own.
- A well-designed site can establish credibility and professionalism showing you're serious about your craft.
- As opposed to social media platforms that can change or disappear altogether, a website is a public profile you own and is not subject to platform changes or limitations.
- A well-optimized website can help you appear in search engines, increasing your visibility.
- A website can be a central hub where readers will find all your published works.
- By linking to various online retailers, your website can guide readers to buy your books.

When New England Press published my first book in 1996, a young adult historical novel, Google didn't exist. The web browser of choice was Netscape Navigator and connecting to the Internet from home meant a slow, dial-up modem operating through your landline.

In 1996 only 20 million Americans had access to the Internet. If you cranked up your computer using a startup floppy disc and a second floppy for storing data and waited half a minute for the program to load, you could check your email. Then what? There was no YouTube, no Twitter, Facebook, Wikipedia, and certainly no Instagram because pictures took too long to load.

You might be able to read the *New York Times* and other news outlets that competed for an online presence, but what was an author to do if I wanted people to know about my books? I had to have a web page. And who was making web pages in 1996?

Luckily for me, I was teaching English in a rural Vermont high school that had a technology program, and several students were fluent in html language. I hired a freshman eager for a few extra bucks to teach me how to design a website. Full disclosure—I'm a slow learner in the tech realm.

"You'll have to slow down," I told him.

The 14-year-old gave an exasperated sigh. "You have to speed up."

I managed to learn some symbol commands for font size, boldface, italics, centering, and even a clipart image or two and was able to set up a rudimentary author site.

A few years and a several books later, through Go Daddy I designed a functional but not very sexy site. Updating and monitoring the site was complicated and took time away from writing and after publishing eight books, I looked elsewhere for help.

To the rescue came AuthorBytes, a website design company in Cambridge MA committed solely to authors. When I signed on, AuthorBytes project manager Laura Spinelli set up a Zoom and showed me examples of effective websites designed for other authors whether with a single book or multiple titles. Laura asked me about my books, my favorite colors, and what other elements I wanted on the site. She made sure every detail contributed to expressing my brand. Her suggestions were creative and beyond anything I'd thought of on my own. The company takes care of every aspect of the process from design to hosting. See what they have accomplished by checking my website at <https://louellabryant.com>.

What sets AuthorBytes apart from other web designers is their availability. Laura is an email away and I speak regularly with co-owner Steve Bennett. When I have a new book, Steve works with me to design a new hero graphic, and the update is almost immediate. Friendly and enthusiastic, he knows the business of publishing books and helps authors get their work out to potential readers. As for cost, in my opinion, AuthorBytes fees are reasonable for the services they offer. Their website is AuthorBytes.com.

When should you create your website or spring for a more professional site? According to Bookbub, the sooner you present your author website, the better. It's never too early to start building your mailing list,

introducing yourself to readers, and exhibiting your credibility as an author. A website is a vehicle of self-expression that tells your readers who you are and why they should invest in your product. Go forth and introduce your amazing self to the cyber world!

### **A Fun Way to Improve Your Vocabulary** By Gail Wind

I'm always on the hunt to find a better way to say something. Lately, I've been honing my skills with a daily dose of "do you know what this word means" in the form of an email in my inbox. I signed up with the website <https://www.dictionaryscoop.com/word/wheedle>. It doesn't cost anything. It starts with a simple multiple-choice question. (Does nadir mean top or bottom?) Then, when you answer that, you get two sentences using the word and you choose which has used it correctly. Then you get a sort of 'wordle' puzzle to type in a synonym. It is simple, quick and helps you "lock in" the meaning of the word. I use it as a brain break.

### **Encouraging Young Writers**

Young Writers Project is a creative, online community of teen writers and visual artists that started in Burlington in 2006. Each week, VTDigger publishes the writing and art of young Vermonters who post their work on [youngwritersproject.org](http://youngwritersproject.org), a free, interactive website for youth, ages 13-19. To find out more, please go to [youngwritersproject.org](http://youngwritersproject.org) or contact Executive Director Susan Reid at [sreid@youngwritersproject.org](mailto:sreid@youngwritersproject.org); (802) 324-9538.

If you know of an aspiring young artist or writer in your circle, suggest they enter their work here. And then perhaps buy them a year's membership to LVW for a gift!

### **From a Website Called Sixty and Me: 7 Simple Steps to Becoming a Writer After 60**

*By Stephanie Raffelock May 27, 2016 Lifestyle*

Second Chapters. Third Acts. Call it what you will, your sixties are a time to recreate, reclaim and often reinvent yourself. You may be retired or partially so. You did a good job with the kids and they are carving out their own lives now. Maybe you've left a marriage and find yourself single again.

Whatever the circumstances, the true confession that I hear so many times is, "I have always wanted to write." And now is your time to do so.

#### **Becoming a Writer After Sixty is Easier Than You Think**

At sixty-something you have far more experience and cred under your belt than you did when you were in your twenties. You've had time and cause to think about life, reflect upon its meaning and chances are, have hard-won wisdom to share.

Maybe you want to tell your life story or maybe you want to tell stories about the life around you.

I am a fiction writer. I study, experiment with and work the long-form format. And, though I do not yet have a published novel, I do have bragging rights for signing with a New York City literary agent this past year who hopefully will give me a good chance of selling my first novel.

But, there is more than one way to be a writer – and more than one way to tell a story.

If you want to write, it's likely because you already know how. You were "that" kid in English who excelled at description and nuance when it came to short stories or essay. Or you made it through the heartbreak of unrequited love in your teens by penning poetry.

Whatever kind of writer you are, your sixties provide you with a somewhat quieter lifestyle – and that makes the perfect environment for being a writer.

So, where do you start if you haven't done much in the way of writing since high school? Here are 7 ways to reinvent yourself as a writer:

#### **Read *Writing Down the Bones* by Natalie Goldberg**

This twenty-year-old writing classic has provided inspiration to thousands of aspiring writers. By following Goldberg's free-writing exercises and prompts, you'll start to discover not only your voice, but what's important to you.

What is it that you want to write about? What lights you up? Makes your heart sing? These are always great starting points for creating a writing project that matters to you.

For the complete article, please go to <https://sixtyandme.com/7-simple-steps-to-becoming-a-writer-after-60/#:~:text=Becoming%20a%20Writer%20After%20Sixty,hard-won%20wisdom%20to%20share>

### Kudos to Louella Bryant



Louella wrote, “HERE’S SOME GOOD NEWS!

My new novel *Willie, Rum Running Queen* is now available for preorder but ONLY from Black Rose Writing.

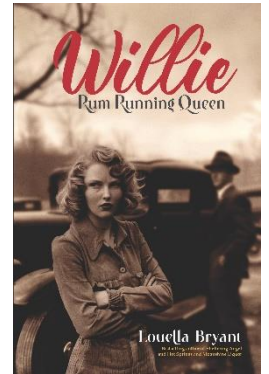
If you purchase prior to publication date, February 6, 2025, use promo code PREORDER2024 to receive a 15% discount.

*Willie* follows the true story of Willie Carter Sharpe, the most notorious bootleg whiskey driver of the Prohibition era. Willie’s success as a moonshine runner brings her riches and fame, but her profession is also her downfall. Read about her

heart-wrenching rise and decline in the novel by ordering TODAY for early release discount.”

<https://www.blackrosewriting.com/historicaladventure/p/willierumrunningqueen?rq=Willie>

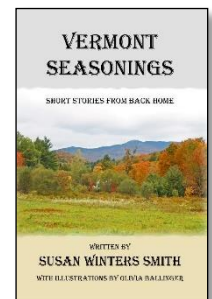
Kudos, Louella!



### Kudos to Susan Winters Smith



Her book *Vermont Seasonings*, 44 short stories about growing up in VT available on Amazon or from the author via Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100057406842190> Sue’s website is currently under reconstruction, but hopefully will be back up soon. <http://www.wintersmithbooks.com> Kudos, Susan!



### Kudos to Philip Jordan

Back in June, Philip wrote, “Despite recent (partial) loss of vision in one eye, I finally sent off *Bootlegger, Bullets and Brothers in the Kingdom* (my second novel) to Onion River Press yesterday ... It’s a coming-of-age tale, set in the depths of the Great Depression in Caledonia County.

Congratulations are in order now:

For immediate release: *Bootleggers, Bullets & Brothers in the Kingdom Moonshine*, mystery and murder in Prohibition- era Vermont. An historical Vermont novel by Philip R. Jordan 400 pages, 6”x9” format, ISBN 978-1-957184-72-2 Release date: October 18, 2024 \$21.95 Retail Publisher: Onion River Press, Burlington VT

[www.onionriverpress.com](http://www.onionriverpress.com)

In this, his second crime novel, author Philip R. Jordan—the retired editor & publisher of Vermont Magazine—turns back the pages of time to 1932 and turns the spotlight on St. Johnsbury and Lyndonville, two Northeast Kingdom towns that figured in the bootlegging exploits of the rumrunners smuggling beer and alcohol into the United States from Canada, during the long years of Prohibition. Kudos, Philip

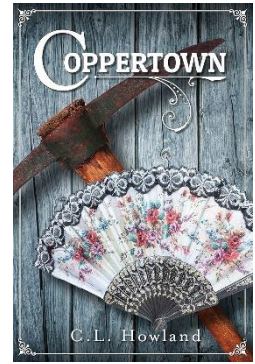
### Kudos to C. L. Howland



C.L. Howland has lived most of her life in rural Vermont, but was an outlander for about 8 years, working in Boston. She is author of *My Mother Grows Wallflowers*, *Legacy of a Wallflower*, *To Thee I Sing*, and *the Good Life*. Her latest book is *Coppertown*. In 1898 Boston society, Josephine Shipton’s bicycle riding is scandalous, but her arrest is intolerable. Exiled to rural Vermont, instead of the planned ostracism, the heiress finds opportunity and new experiences. Free of societal constraints and her overbearing stepmother, Josephine discovers not only a fascination with the medical profession, but a passion to help others. This passion turns to something deeper when she tends a seriously injured miner.

Braxton Beaumont was a handsome child of the streets—who grew to a man savvy enough to use that attractiveness to his advantage...amassing a fortune along the way. But when he strides into the Coppertown, posing as a miner, neither his wealth nor strength can save him when the mine collapses.

Josephine and Braxton hail from different worlds. But neither social rank nor circumstances can stop the swell of sensations as old as time. Even if they surrender to this ill-fated love, will there ever be a place in society for the millionaire and the miner? Her website is <https://www.clhowland.com/> Kudos, C.L.



## A Look Back at 2024

Despite more strange weather for a second year in a row, and some interesting communication obstacles we persevered! This is a look back at the events of 2024.

Date	Event	Description
1/27/2024	Annual Meeting	Business Meeting and Guest Speaker – Chris Citro
3/7/2024	Book Group	<i>BIRD BY BIRD: Some Instructions on Writing and Life</i> by Anne Lamott
4/25/2024	Book Group	<i>How to Write a Sentence: And How to Read One</i> by Stanley Fish
4/27/2024	Spring Event	Dawn Reno Langley and Jennifer Wilkov – Zoom
7/18/2024	Book Group	<i>THE CREATIVE HABIT: Learn It and Use It for Life</i> by Twyla Tharp
7/27/2024	Writers Meet Agents	Premier In-Person Event of the year at Delta Hotel, South Burlington. Five Agents, plus Jennifer Wilkov
8/29/2024	Book Group	<i>THE WRITING LIFE</i> by Annie Dillard.
10/10/2024	Book Group	<i>Meander, Spiral, Explode: Design and Pattern in Narrative</i> by Jane Alison
11/2/2024	Fall Event	Event via Zoom: Ann Dávila Cardinal
12/11/2024	Book Group	<i>27 ESSENTIAL PRINCIPLES OF STORY</i> by Daniel Joshua Rubin

## General Information

### LVW Board:

- President, Caryn Connolly
- Vice President, Jon Meyer
- Secretary, Gail E. Wind
- Treasurer, Melinda Meyer
- Immediate Past President, Amy Braun

### Board Members at Large:

- Cindy Hill – two years left
- Pat Goudy O'Brien- three years
- Jeniah Johnson- two years left
- Caryn Connolly
- 

### Spread the word:

Do you have a personal website or Facebook page?

→Tell your friends about the league!

It's easy. Just copy and paste this:

Check out the League of Vermont Writers at

<https://leagueofvermontwriters.org/>

And, here's the link to our [Newsletters](#)

**Kudos Korner:** Please send information about your recent publication successes, public readings or any writing awards you might receive to [gailinvermont@outlook.com](mailto:gailinvermont@outlook.com) with a subject line Kudos Korner.

**League Lines questions, corrections or contributions:** Please submit these to the editor Gail Wind at: [gailinvermont@outlook.com](mailto:gailinvermont@outlook.com); subject line re: League Lines 2024.

**General questions:** contact the League at [lvw@leagueofvermontwriters.org](mailto:lvw@leagueofvermontwriters.org)

**Membership questions:** please contact Tommy Walz at [twalz@aol.com](mailto:twalz@aol.com)

Snail mail: League of Vermont Writers, PO Box 3251, Burlington, VT 05408

The League of Vermont Writers, Inc. is a fully approved 501(c) (3) non-profit corporation.  
All donations are tax deductible.

## REMEMBER TO MARK YOUR CALENDAR

**January 25, 2025** ANNUAL LVW MEETING

VIA ZOOM:

Election of officers and  
Guest Nadia Colburn.

Zeffy link coming in an email very soon.