



LEAGUE OF VERMONT WRITERS, INC.

League Lines

The League of Vermont Writers Newsletter

*Register now
for FREE*

Feb. 20, 2021

9:00 AM to 1:15 PM

On Zoom

Join us for the Virtual Winter Program & Annual Meeting 2021!



Image: Virtual Meeting by Chris Montgomery on [Unsplash.com](https://unsplash.com)

As a service to our members, this year, our virtual Winter Program and Annual Business Meeting are completely FREE of charge.

Please visit <https://leagueofvermontwriters.org> to register as soon as possible.

Please also participate in the business meeting at lunchtime since we need a sufficient number of members for elections and voting. There will be giveaways between sessions, and you must be present to win.

AGENDA

9:00 AM – 9:15 AM

9:15 AM – 9:30 AM

9:30 AM – 10:30 AM

10:30 AM – 10:45 AM

10:45 AM – 12:00 PM

12:00 PM – 1:00 PM

1:00 PM – 1:15 PM

1:15 PM – 1:30 PM

Pre-Program: log-in and check your tech

Opening Remarks

A.Y. Berthiaume—*Don't Try This at Home: Surprises and Other Sh*t I Didn't Think of When I Self-Published*

Lunch Break/Giveaway #1

Annual Business Meeting

Sharon Darrow—*What I Wish I'd Known When I Started Writing and Publishing*

Closing Remarks/Giveaway #2

Post-Program: Informal members Q&A with President Shawn

(speaker info on pages 3-4)

Letter from the President

Dear League members, fellow writers, and friends:

I don't think I need to say it, but I will, to give it closure: 2020 was an exceptionally rough year.

It was a year of hunkering down and holding the line.

It was a year of reacting to the shifting conditions of the pandemic and adjusting plans accordingly.

It was a year of balancing work, family, and volunteering—all under one roof.

I'm cautiously optimistic that 2021 will be much better.

But not everything in 2020 was dreary and dire. It gave us the opportunity to explore new ways of connecting and building our Vermont writing community. It made us take a closer look at and reassess everything we do. From this perspective, we will move forward with key emphasis on virtual programming, membership benefits, and what will sustain us and help us grow the organization in the future.

I am thankful for the nine board members that served with me in my first year of presidency. Thank you, Amy, Ron, Lisa, Bobbi Jo, Pat, Hank, Jean, Caryn, and Pete. You have been such a wonderful support system during these complex times. Some will be moving on from the board; others will remain to tackle the new projects on the 2021 road ahead. And hopefully, fingers crossed, we will all be able to get together soon—in person.

As for 2021 goals, we will be looking closely at engaging with, retaining, and increasing membership. We seek to expand our programming and the benefits we offer, while reinvesting and reimagining in-person meetings when the time is right. We will also continue to look at all facets of the organization to make sure we can establish and maintain our momentum in the new year.

The future will be positive and bright, because we're going to make it that way.

Shawn T. Anderson
President, League of Vermont Writers

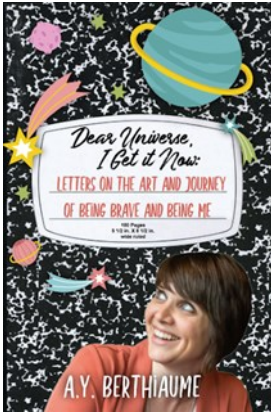


WINTER PROGRAM

Presentations

SPEAKERS

A.Y. Berthiaume—*Don't Try This at Home: Surprises and Other Sh*t I Didn't Think of When I Self-Published*



In 2020, against the backdrop of a global pandemic, an economic downturn, and political tensions, Berthiaume kept a promise to herself and a client. She published her first work of memoir (*Dear Universe, I Get It Now*) and her client's part-memoir, part-business book while leading two teams of people to do it. (Yes, she's both an overachiever and a masochist.)

In this keep-it-real, frank but humorous recounting, Berthiaume will share the surprises and other sh*t she didn't think of along the journey to publication, promotion, and selling. You'll want to be present for this truth-bearing presentation on the details you need to consider before you try this (self-publishing) at home.

About A. Y. Berthiaume



A.Y. Berthiaume (also known as Alyssa in some circles and Ally in others) is a professional writer and the author of *Dear Universe, I Get It Now: Letters on the Art and Journey of Being Brave and Being Me*. She's a prior LVW president and board member, a native Vermonter, practicing feminist, a small-business owner, and a mom who's pretty sure she's "just winging it."

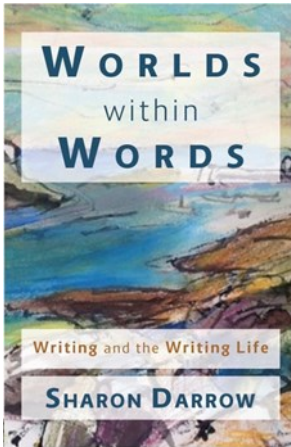
Berthiaume holds an MFA in creative writing and believes in emotionally compelling, honest, and powerful stories that are told in an authentic voice, come straight from the heart, and celebrate bravery, grit, and hope. If you can catch her *not doing all the things*, she's probably drinking maple lattes in a coffee shop, getting lost in a bookstore, or binge watching something on Netflix in her sweatpants while she eats ridiculous amounts of movie-theater-style popcorn.

WINTER PROGRAM

Presentations

SPEAKERS (continued)

Sharon Darrow—*What I Wish I'd Known When I Started Writing and Publishing*



Sharon says: “I’ll talk about some of the things I wish I’d known about the writing life when I began to write seriously, publish my work, and teach writing. I’ll add a few things I’m glad I didn’t know, things I’m sorry or glad to see change, and some ideas about PR and social media in the age of coronavirus. Also, I’ll add some ideas about flexibility, hope, and frustration in these times.”

Discussion: What do you wish you’d known or not known in your writing life? What do you see for the future? Are you flexible? Hopeful? Frustrated? What can we do to help and encourage each other during this strange time in history we are living through?

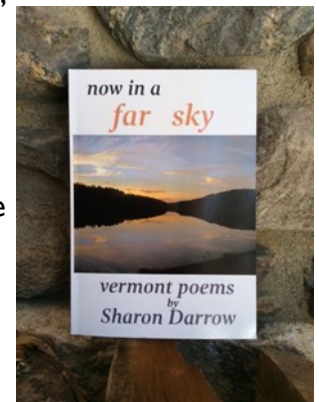
About Sharon Darrow



Sharon Darrow writes for all ages. She is an award-winning author of books for children and young adults, and her poems, short stories, interviews, and personal essays for adults have appeared in several literary journals and anthologies. Her most recent works are *Worlds within Words: Writing and the Writing Life*, and *Now in a Far Sky: Vermont Poems*.

The Darrow Lecture Series, named in Sharon’s honor, is held annually in Montpelier, with lectures delivered by distinguished authors who are graduates of Vermont College of Fine Arts’ MFA in Writing for Children and Young Adults program, of which she was a faculty member for over 20 years. She holds the MFA in Writing from Vermont College and also

taught at Columbia College Chicago. She lives in Sutton with her husband and cat, Thisbe Thistledown.



WINTER PROGRAM

Annual Business Meeting 2021

Agenda for 2021 Annual Business Meeting (10:45 AM – 12:00 PM)

Call to Order

Vote on Approval of 2020 Annual Meeting Minutes

Treasurer's Report

President's Report

Committee Reports and Updates

Membership/programming/marketing updates

FREE book group meetings

FREE open mics

Book Festival 2022 with Burlington Writers Workshop

New high school writing contest with Northern Vermont University (NVU)

Revamping critiques

Call for newsletter staff

Nominating Committee Report

Presentation of new board member nominations

Floor nominations

Election of board members

Presentation of slate for officer nominations

Election of officers

President's Address

Adjournment

Slated for the LVW Board of Directors

A heartfelt thank-you goes to the members of the Nominating Committee, Kathleen McKinley Harris, Paula Diaco, and Jerry Johnson, for reaching out to the following individuals slated for the Board of Directors.

Candidates to fill At-Large positions with three-year terms:

Amy Braun (second term At-Large to hold executive position)

Sean Holcombe (At-Large to hold executive position)

Lori Rivers (At-Large to hold executive position)

Margery Sharp (At-Large)

Candidates nominated to hold officer positions:

Shawn Anderson — President

Amy Braun — Vice President

Sean Holcombe — Secretary

Lori Rivers — Treasurer

RECENTLY PUBLISHED

League Members' Credits and Accomplishments



Amy Braun

Amy's short story, "The Plastic," was published in [APPLE IN THE DARK](#)'s online literary magazine in September 2020.

Ron Lavalette

The past 12 months were good for LVW Member Ron Lavalette (Barton, VT), who managed to have 33 pieces published.

These included 23 poems in 15 different journals, reviews, or anthologies, and 10 prose pieces (mostly flash, either fiction or creative non-fiction) in seven publications.

Most publications were online only (24), some were print only (5), and a few were both (4). Most of these works can be found at Ron's website, [Eggs Over Tokyo](#).



Michael Cahlin

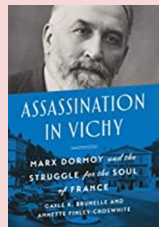
In the past 12 months, two of Michael's short shorts have been published:

"Honey's Turn" appeared in [Black Cat's Mystery Megapack](#) (April 2020).

"Killer Advice" appeared in [DOWN & OUT MAGAZINE](#), Vol 2, Issue 2 (December 2020).

Gayle K. Brunell

Gayle and co-author Annette Finley Crosswhite published [Assassination in Vichy: Marx Dormoy and the Struggle for the Soul of France](#) (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, October 2020).



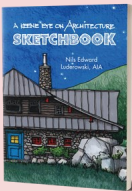
Janet Hayward Burnham

In July 2020, Janet published a cozy mystery novel with Xlibris, titled [Evil Has a Key](#).

RECENTLY PUBLISHED

League Members' Credits and Accomplishments (continued)

Carolyn Bates



In May 2020, Carolyn published Nils Edward Luderowski's sketchbook, [*A Keene Eye on Architecture*](#). A pioneer of the "New Adirondack Style," Nils Luderowski, AIA, specializes in residential architecture and design. His work can be seen dotting the many lakes, rivers, and mountains throughout the central Adirondacks.

The book was printed by L. Brown and is available at Phoenix Books in Burlington, at The ArtHound Gallery in Essex, on [Carolyn's website](#), and on Amazon.

J.W. Yeager



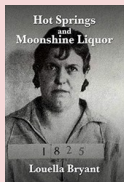
Jean published a new play titled, [*Dante in Jiffy Lube—The Oxycodone Crisis*](#), at New Play Exchange. Set in the year 2000, it dramatizes the true story of how a drug company introduced Oxycodone, combined it with the newly patented drug Contin, and massively promoted it to the medical world, starting a decade of "pain relief" that turned into an addiction nightmare. An estimated 70,000+ people die each year from prescription opioid

overdose.

Jean also led the Zoom salons, "[Ageless Authors](#)" (Phoenix Bookstore, Rutland, Jun. 11 and Aug. 20, 2020), and "[Virtual Halloween](#)" (Phoenix Bookstore, Rutland, Oct. 29, 2020).

NPX National New Play Network
New Play Exchange®

Louella Bryant



Louella's memoir, [*Hot Springs and Moonshine Liquor—A History of Illegal Whiskey in the Shenandoah Valley*](#), was released in December 2020 with Black Rose Writing.

Peter Hogenkamp

Peter published two novels in the last year: [*The Intern*](#) (published by TouchPoint Press, April 2020), and [*The Vatican Conspiracy*](#) (published by Bookouture/HachetteUK, October 2020).



RECENTLY PUBLISHED

League Members' Credits and Accomplishments (continued)

Sas Carey



The movie [*Transition*](#), a documentary about the difficult life choices a female Mongolian physician has to make, was produced by Sas Carey and Nomadicare Films and was released in 2020. The movie received awards from Doctors Without Borders and the Dumbo Film Festival. It was also selected for the San Luis Obispo International Film Festival.

Laura Power

Last year, Laura's article "[Band of Brothers](#)" appeared in the Sept./Oct. issue of the Cornell Alumni magazine. It's the story of four friends who all contracted COVID after a ski trip in March. One saved the life of another with convalescent plasma donations. Another one of her articles, "Staying at Home With John Steinbeck," appeared in the *Vermont Standard* in April. It's about the delights of reading *Cannery Row* when stuck at home during a pandemic.



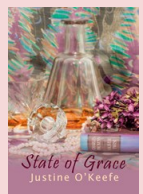
George Longenecker



George Longenecker has published poems and book reviews in *Main Street Rag*, *Rain Taxi*, and *Mountain Troubadour*. His short story "Acquisitions" is included in the anthology, [2021 Best Short Stories from the Saturday Evening Post Great American Fiction Contest](#).

Justine O'Keefe

Justine's novel, [State of Grace](#), was published in September 2020 by Onion River Press. During the turbulent years of Prohibition, a daughter tries to protect herself and the people she loves from the consequences of her father's dangerous choices.



Michael Caldwell

Michael's guest columns, "We Are All People of Color," "Take Back the Flag," and "Take Back the Republic" were published in the Stowe Reporter and the Morrisville News & Citizen. A piece related to his "Abraham's Blessing" monologue project was printed in the *Catholic Radical*, and he was asked to deliver the monologue during a worship service at the 2nd Congregational Church in Hyde Park.

LEAGUE EVENTS

The {LVW} Virtual Book Club: Join Us to Discuss the Next Book

“If you want to be a writer, you must do two things above all others: read a lot and write a lot.”
— Stephen King

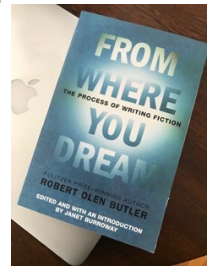
In 2020, we worked hard to shift direction and create engaging virtual programming. One of these new initiatives was to launch a FREE book club. In the past year, we read ***Steering the Craft*** by **Ursula K. Le Guin** (Aug.), ***How to Be an Antiracist*** by **Ibram X. Kendi** (Sept.), and discussed ***We Have Always Lived in the Castle*** by **Shirley Jackson** (Oct.) with special guest discussion leader, local young-adult horror author, and *Seven Days* Associate Editor **Margot Harrison**.



The first meeting of 2021 will be on **Thursday, Feb. 26, 7:00 – 8:30 p.m.**, and it will focus on writing goals and books on writing craft. The selected

title for this session is ***From Where You Dream: The Process of Writing Fiction*** by Pulitzer Prize-winning author **Robert Olen Butler** (it works for nonfiction too). Can't find the book and/or read it in time for the virtual meeting? You can still join us and bring your favorite books on writing to share with the group.

“FROM WHERE YOU DREAM reimagines the process of writing as emotional rather than intellectual. It proposes fiction as an exploration of the human condition with yearning as its compass, and reinterprets the traditional tools of craft using the dynamics of desire. Butler offers invaluable insights into the natural, and tells writers how to achieve the dreamspace necessary for composing honest, inspired fiction.”



The virtual book group will meet every other month, alternating with virtual open-mic readings (see page 10). In our February meeting, we will select new books and brainstorm possible guest-author hosts for future gatherings.

These sessions are FREE for members, and there's currently no registration.

If you'd like to join, email us at lvw@leagueofvermontwriters.org and put “LVW BOOK GROUP” in the subject line; Shawn will add you to the email list.

We hope to see you at the next virtual book group and other meetings in the future!



LEAGUE EVENTS



Image: Robinson Recalde on [Unsplash.com](https://unsplash.com)

VIRTUAL OPEN MIC

Mar. 11, 2021, 6:00 PM

The League of Vermont Writers (LVW) is hosting a virtual Open Mic event on March 11, 2021. It will begin at 6:00 PM and will feature published and unpublished authors alike.

The readings will begin and end with two featured writers, who will share their work for 10 minutes. All other writers will read poetry, fiction, and nonfiction in five-minute slots. Due to the virtual nature of the program, the event will last somewhere between an hour and an hour and a half.

If you are interested in attending this event or reading your work to other writers, please reach out to lvw@leagueofvermontwriters.org to sign up. Amy Braun will be the emcee for this event.

We are planning on a virtual open mic every other month, alternating with virtual book club sessions.

TELL YOUR FRIENDS ABOUT THE LEAGUE!
HAVE THEM VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT:
www.leagueofvermontwriters.org

LVW Board: Shawn Anderson, president; Amy Braun, vice president; Bobbi Jo Capone, immediate past president; Ron Jensen, treasurer; Lisa Halvorsen, secretary; Joan Grant, Pat Esden, Hank Parker, Caryn Connolly, Peter Hogenkamp at large.

Membership: Tommy Walz

League Lines is published four times per year. Questions or information can be emailed to us at lvw@leagueofvermontwriters.org