Straw Dog Writers Guild is a vibrant, non-profit organization that serves the writing communities in Western Massachusetts. SDWG began in 2010 with the goal of becoming a hub of information and support for writers as well as for those who value the written word. Since that time, SDWG has grown in the diversity of our offerings, members and program participants.

In January, Christopher J. Sparks resigned as president of SDWG due to the requirements of his employment at UMass. Jacqueline Sheehan volunteered for the remainder of his term, and extended that service through December 2023.

Some of the highlights of 2022 include:

SDWG joined the Northampton Chamber of Commerce with the goal of becoming more active with the arts and business community. In November, together with Forbes Library, we co-hosted a Chamber event called “Arrive at Five.” During this monthly get-together, Chamber members gather casually to learn more about fellow artists and businesses.

In March, Rick Paar initiated a new program, “A Writer's Night,” at the Longmeadow Adult Center. This new reading series features one regional writer each month. 2022 Readers included Michael Favala Goldman, Jacqueline Sheehan, Jovonna Van Pelt, Michael White, Ellen Meeropol, Chris O’Carroll, Stephanie Shafran, Gail Thomas, and Ed Orzechowski.

After two years of Zoom events due to Covid restrictions, Writers Night Out (WNO) celebrated being back in person again at Michelson Galleries for a gala event. The evening included the usual Open Mic, followed by Featured Reader, Magdalena Gómez. As of July, WNO had a new home at Big Bear Used Books & Café in Easthampton. 2022 Featured Readers included Richard Horton, Adin Thayer, Lynne Bertrand, Karen Skolfield & Rio Santos (Poet Laureate and Youth Poet Laureate of Northampton), Rebecca Olander, Magdalena Gómez, Kevin O’Hara, Chris O’Carroll, Regine Jackson, Janet Alfs, Ellen Meeropol, and Michael Favala Goldman. Ten writers read at the Open Mic portion each month for a total of 120 readers.
The Emerging Writer Fellowship Program Committee named Regine Jackson of Springfield as the recipient of the 2022 Emerging Writer Fellowship. Regine’s Fellowship goes from May 2022 to May 2023. It includes a stipend, a website, opportunities for mentoring, teaching, and program development, as well as participation in writing groups and the Edith Wharton-Straw Dog Writers Guild Writers-in-Residence Program.

This year we held our first Advisors on the Deck Reception in September. The Steering Committee shared SDWG accomplishments and sought their ideas about fundraising.

With the demise of WriteAngles, Inc., SDWG has taken over the WriteAngles Writers Conference, to be held April 6, 2024 at the Northampton Center for the Arts. Initial plans include a scholarship in Daisy Matthias’s honor, virtual agents’ meetings, and a nationally-known keynote speaker who will be awarded the Abel Meeropol Social Justice Writing Award. Seed money has been donated by WriteAngles, Inc. The Committee includes over 20 volunteers, representing a wide range of local literary organizations.

A spring fundraiser, in celebration of Straw Dog Writers Guild’s Writers Night Out 10th anniversary, brought in $12,568.18 from 66 donors. Also in 2022 we applied for two Mass Cultural Council grants; we received notice in February 2023 that we were awarded one. This unrestricted funding covers July 2022-June 30, 2023.

Programming
Over 1400 community members attended one or more of our events during 2022.

Craft workshops totaling 144 participants included:

- Creative Approaches to Structuring Your Essay, Nancy McCabe
- Writing Disabilities: Addressing Ableism, Assumptions, and Social Role Valorization, Panel of Anna Bellassai, J.A. McIntosh, Jule Selbo
- Character Whispering: Strategies for Further Insights, Justine Dymond
- Poetry Writing: Strategies for Finding Voice Through Life, Ron Welburn
- Writing Funny Workshop, by Terianne Falcone
- A Crash Course on Using Dialogue, by Morgan Talty
- Anyone Can Write About Food, by Carol Connare

Anyone Can Write About Food
A Straw Dog Writers Guild Workshop with Carol Connare

We’ll learn about the genre, explore story types, identify common elements, try our hand at writing and sharing food vignettes, and workshop food story pitches for publication. You’ll take home resources and exercises, and more than an inkling as to why attending to food writing can elevate all writing.

Wednesday December 7 6:30-8:00pm at Forbes Library in Northampton
Straw Dog Writers Guild www.strawdogwriters.org
SDWG is strengthened by community partnerships. We continue to work with area libraries, nonprofits, and businesses to host our events and programs.

- **A Writer's Night**, met monthly at the Longmeadow Adult Center. 20-25 people participate in this monthly event.
- **Arrive at Five**, Northampton Chamber of Commerce holds monthly events. In November, SDWG co-sponsored with Forbes Library. 125 people were in attendance.
- **Poetry Critique Meet-up**, co-sponsored by the Northampton Center for the Arts and hosted by Michael Goldman, continued virtually. 24 Poetry Critique Meet-ups had a total of 177 participants.
- **Poetry Ritual**, a celebration of poets from the Poetry Critique Meet-ups, was co-sponsored with the Northampton Center for the Arts. There were 20 readers; 75 in the audience. The program was taped and the video watched on YouTube over 100 times.
- **Poetry Share**, a seasonal program co-sponsored with Belding Memorial Library in Ashfield and facilitated by poet and our Administrative Director Arianna Aleksandra Collins, through her business Offerings for Community Building. This program met 4 times with a total of 40 participants.
- **Prose Meet-up**, hosted by Celia Jeffries, co-sponsored with the Northampton Center for the Arts, met 7 times with a total of 35 participants.
- **The Valley Society Black Writers of the Pioneer Valley Read**, took place at the Leverett Library with Regine Jackson, Dashaun Washington, Christopher Sparks. 27 people attended.
- **Voices for Resistance**, co-sponsored by Forbes Library, featured Thérèse Chehade, Neema Avashia, Dahlma Llanos Figueroa, Daisy Hernández, and Steve Edwards, hosted by Andrea Hairson. 44 people were in attendance.
- **The 8th Annual Author Showcase**, co-sponsored by Forbes Library, featured John Sheirer, Nina Dabek, Chris O’Carroll, Julie Wittes Schlack, Suzanne S. Rancourt, Lanette Sweeney, Michael Favala Goldman, Maureen Callahan Smith, Sally Bellerose, Joan Livingston, Mark Luebbers, and Tom Weiner. 105 people attended this Zoom event.
- **Writers-in-Residence**, in collaboration with Edith Wharton’s The Mount in Lenox, SDWG co-created a residency program for emerging writers, funded in part by an anonymous SDWG donor. Nine writers were selected and announced in January 2022.

- **Writers Night Out**, offered on the first Tuesday of each month, took place at Big Bear Used Books and Café in Easthampton. 20-25 people participate in this monthly event.
Finances

Income
Our operating account income for 2022 was $23,599 (compared to $26,657 in 2021). Contributions, especially from our special fundraising event celebrating the ten-year anniversary of Writers Night Out ($13,757), and membership fees ($9245) count for most of our income.

Our designated funds income was $28,025. This includes monies given to us by the former WriteAngles conference (to seed a new version of the conference and to start a Daisy Mathias Scholarship Fund), donations for the Emerging Writer Fellowship, the Meeropol Social Justice Fund, and the Edith Wharton-Straw Dog Writers Guild Writers-in-Residence Program, and a grant to Valley Society to cover a public reading in Leverett.

The combined total income of operating and designated funds was $51,624 (compared to $25,121 in 2021).

Expenses
Our total operating expenses for 2022 were $17,751 (compared to $18,970 in 2021). The bulk of expenses are from administrative contractor fees ($12,206), followed by “Other Expenses” ($3,088) — which include such things as insurance, Chamber of Commerce membership, PayPal fees, web hosting, and Zoom subscription — and fees paid to featured readers and presenters ($1700).

Our designated funds were $14,725, for the Emerging Writer Fellowship, Writers in Residence at The Mount, Valley Society payment for the Leverett reading event, and a Writing Group Initiative Fund. The combined total of operating and designated funds expenses was $32,476 (compared with $17,434 when we had no expenses from our designated funds).

Net income
We ended the year with a gain of $5878 in our operating account and $13,300 in our designated funds, for a combined gain of $19,148.

Account Balances
As of December 31st, our operating account balance was $24,334. Our designated funds balance was $42,550.
Steering Committee

Board of Directors:
Alexis Johnson, Rick Paar, Mary Ann Scogna ignilio, Macci Schmidt, Stephanie Shafran

Officers
President: Jacqueline Sheehan
Clerk: Macci Schmidt
Treasurer (ex officio): Becky Jones

Committee Members:
Lynn Bechtel, Ellen Meeropol, Ed Orzechowski

Our Board of Directors and our Steering Committee provide guidance and continuity. We are a volunteer-run 501(c)3 organization. Steering Committee members act as liaisons to the plethora of sub-committees, attending to the specifics of social justice, programming, publicity, development, and finance. The Steering Committee meets monthly to provide oversight and continuity.

We have two retreats per year, one in July and the other in January. Both of these retreats are open to members who serve on sub-committees. These working meetings help the Steering Committee with yearly program planning and focus.

In addition, our annual meeting took place in November which was open to all SDWG members.

Advisory Board
Carol Connare, Patricia Lee Lewis, Richard Michelson, Bill Newman, Lesléa Newman, Jane Yolen

Staff
We have 4 paid contractors:

- Arianna Alexandra Collins, Administrative Director, updates our webpage www.strawdogwriters.com, creates graphics for social media platforms, hosts our Zoom meetings with our Steering Committee, and performs countless other tasks.
- Robin Glenn creates our e-newsletter with nearly 1800 subscribers.
- Beth Filson takes photos at our events and helps with Writers Night Out. https://www.youtube.com/@strawdogwritersguild6300
- Sam McClellan hosts our website https://www.strawdogwriters.org and provides tech support.
Members’ 2022 Publications

51 SDWG members published a book, poem, article, or essay, with a total of 148 items published. This includes a series of 10 SDWG Author Interviews by Mark Luebbers which appear on the SDWG blog. These interviews highlight SDWG members, their work, and their writing process. https://strawdogwriters.org/blog

- Janet E. Aalfs, What the Dead Want Me to Know, Human Error Publishing, Spring 2022
- Lindsay Adkins
  - Third Anniversary (Or, First Anniversary After the Birth of Our Daughter), in Fourth River
  - It is the Clouds, in New Verse News
  - Untitled, in Mom Egg Review
- Jeannine Atkins, Hidden Powers: Lise Meitner's Call to Science was published by Simon and Schuster in January 2022
- Stephen Billias & Bela Breslau, Pilgrim Maya, Odeon Press, August 1, 2022
- Roxanne Bogart, All That Sustains, poetry, 2022
- S.D Brewer
  - The End of His Rope. Part Five of Revin’s Heart, Water Dragon Publishing, San Jose, California. 46pp.
  - Something Else to Do in Modern Magic. Knight Writing Press, Parker, Colorado. 55-59.
- Elaine Burnes, Endurance. Mindancer Press, June 21, 2022
- Grant Carrington
  - “The Beginning of the Rainbow” in Carmina, February 2022
  - The Seventh Wind (Brief Candle Press), March 2022
  - “On Tour With the Sweet Apocalypse Traveling Medicine Show and Gypsy Caravan” in Dreamforge, March 2022
- Chelsea Catherine: "A Kind of Miracle" - Carolina Quarterly, published in Spring of 2022
• Audrey Child, Over Home: a memoir, Off the Common at Collective Copies, Amherst June, 2022
• Christopher Heights Writing Group, Write On! Prose and Poetry
• Arianna Alexandra Collins
  * “Wild Edibles Walk-About in Your Yard”, Northern Woodlands, Spring 2022
• Julie C. Day and Ellen Meeropol (editors), Dreams for a Broken World
• Corinne Demas, The Perfect Tree . came out in October of 2022. It was published by Cameron Kids, a division of Abrams, and it was illustrated by Penelope Dullaghan https://www.corinnedemas.com/books/tree.html
• Cheryl J. Fish
  * OFF THE YOGA MAT, Livingston Press/Univ. of West Alabama, Oct. 2022
  * Short excerpts from OFF THE YOGA MAT appeared in Boog City (Jan, 2022) and KGB Bar Lit (April, 2022)
  * Guest Blog Post Largehearted Boy, Playlist for my debut novel Off the Yoga, Mat http://www.largeheartedboy.com/blog/archive/2022/10/cheryl_j_fish.html
  * poem, “Not (N)Yet” Maintenant 16, A Journal of Contemporary Dada Writing & Art, Nov. 2022
  * Two poems, "Abecedarian: Infrastructure" and "Iceland 14 (Overturn)" published in About Place Journal: Center of Gravity (Dec. 2022)
  * poem, "Spit Three Times," in MotherFolk special portfolio, Mom Egg Review, Dec. 2022
  * two poems, "Vacuumed Pack Poem" and "Lovers in Black,” published in LIVE MAG 19, 2022
• Marianne Gambaro
  * "Hera," Defenestration: A Literary Magazine Dedicated to Humor, December 8, 2022
  * "My Father's Spade" and "Praise Song for the Women Who Cared for My Mother," The Poet Anthology Series, June 28, 2022
  * "Stuffed Monkeys" and "A Walk on the Dam at Sunset," Smoky Blue Literary and Arts Magazine, July 8, 2022
  * "Felinus Hereticus" and "Schrodinger's Kitten," Gone But Not Forgotten Anthology, May 19, 2022
• Michael Favala Goldman
  * THE TROUBLE WITH HAPPINESS, Selected short stories by Tove Ditlevsen, translated from Danish by Michael Favala Goldman (Penguin Classics/FSG)
  * IF YOU WERE HERE YOU WOULD FEEL AT HOME, poetry collection, (cyberwit)
  * SMALL SOVEREIGN, poetry collection, (Homestead Lighthouse Press). (Won first place in the Los Angeles Book Festival)
Editor of: ADELA ZAMUDIO: Selected poetry and Prose, translated from Spanish by Lynette Yetter (Longlisted by PEN Literary Awards)
numerous translations and poems published in a variety of journals.
fifteen page interview in the fall 2022 issue of RATTLE Magazine.

- Magdelena Gómez, Mi'ja: A Memoir Noir, May 2022
- Tzivia Gover
  - How to Sleep Tight Through the Night, kids' book with Lesléa and one on her own summer, 2022
  - Dreaming on the Page, Dec. 2022
- Ellen Evert Hopman, “Once Around the Sun: Stories, Crafts, and Recipes to Celebrate the Sacred Earth Year,” April 2022
- Becky Jones, “Ode to Calcifications,” Words to Live By: Words and Images for Contemplation in a Time of Not Knowing, Cancer Connection
- Heather Kamins, The Moth Girl, Putnam Books for Young Readers/Penguin Teen March 8, 2022
- Patricia Lee Lewis
  - “A Meal At A Table,” for Center for New Americans' fund-raiser; Hampshire Gazette, December 2022
- Joan Livingston
  - Working the Beat (Fifth in the Isabel Long Mystery Series), darkstroke books, Jan. 27, 2022.
  - Following the Lead (Sixth in the Isabel Long Mystery Series), darkstroke books, No. 3, 2022.
  - The Sacred Dog, darkstroke books, Dec. 27, 2022
- Mark Luebbers, Author Interviews (10), SDWG blog https://strawdogwriters.org/blog
- Susan E. McKenna published her short story, "Sudoku Xmas" in Issue 6.2 of Collateral Journal
- Judy McIntosh , Grandpa Leary: A Meredith Massachusetts Novel mystery March, 2022
- Martha McCullough, Wolf Hat Iron Shoes April, 2022
- Ellen Meeropol
  - The Lost Women of Azalea Court, a novel
  - “Querencia: the fictional home place,” Meat for Tea, December 2022
  - “Balancing Act Between History and Fiction,” Medium.com, October 2022
  - “Writing into the gaps left by untold family stories,” Literary Hub, September 2022
  - “What you can’t find in research - and why it matters,” The Writer Magazine, August/September 2022
- Lesléa Newman

• Nerissa Nields
  • "Blueprint" (a short story) published in the Spring issue of J Journal.


• Edward Orzechowski
  • The House on Keyes Street, Forbes Library Virtual Exhibit, March 2022
  • Tales of Our Times, Bronze Goose Books, May 2022
  • Estate Sale, Bronze Goose Books, May 2022
  • Pandemic Ponderings, Bronze Goose Books, May 2022
  • A Visit from Jimmy, Meat for Tea, December 2022

• Rick Paar, God Bless America and Breakfast Burritos to Go

• PD Pin, Poetry Monday, Publisher: International Psychoanalysis, July 4, 2022 https://internationalpsychoanalysis.net/poetry-monday-july-4-2022/

• Elizabeth Richter, Dirigent poetry June, 2022

• Sarah Ritter, Dad, Won’t you Walk with Me? Nov 2022

• V. Jane Schneeloch
  • “Mornings Become Elektra,” Words to Live By, Cancer Connection, 2022
  • “Neighbors” and “Air Raid Drill,” Word Peace, 2022

• Stephanie Shafran
  • “The Nightmare,” Forbes Library, Hosmer Gallery, Virtual Exhibit “Home”
  • “Blaze of Yellow”, Silkworm 15: Vision
  • “The Confession,” (short takes: Turning Points), Persimmon Tree, Fall Issue
  • “Wheels,” Persimmon Tree, Winter Issue
  • “Legacy,” Earth’s Daughters
  • “Make Believe Love,” Writing in a Woman’s Voice (newsletter)

• Anna Smith
  • Croissant Essay Daily
  • Flying Through Space The Fourth River
  • Rats and Traps PANK
  • The Witch of Hadley: Mary Webster, the Weird, and the Wired Massachusetts Review http://www.essaydaily.org/2022/02/the-midwessay-anna-baker-smith-croissant.html
    • https://www.thefourthriver.com/o12-content/2022/4/28/flying-through-space

• Kelsey Socha, An Archive of Brightness, Aug 2022

• Joshua Michael Stewart, Love Something, poetry, Sept, 22

• Gail Thomas
  • Trail of Roots, chapbook, Seven Kitchens Press, winner of the A.V. Christie award
  • Leaving Paradise, book, Human Error Publishing
  • "Pulse of My Heart", poem, Quartet Journal
  • "Wisteria", poem, Ms Magazine
  • "Giving up the Keys", poem, South Florida Poetry Journal
  • 3 poems (Duplex for Photinus Pyralis, Golden Shovel, Ode to Agave), Summerset Review
  • "Between Seasons", poem, Rough Cut Press
• Sharon Tracey, Land Marks poetry fall, 2022
• Ron Welburn
  * “Moon Shadows.” Pensive: A Global Journal of Spirituality and the Arts, for issue 4, for April 2022.
  * Poetry and Place. Association of Writers & Writing Programs 2022 Conference, Philadelphia, with other Native poets Anne Coray, Ruth Nolan, Eric Shaffer, and panel coordinator Lucille Lang Day. AWP22 Session T120, Thursday, 24 March 2022. Virtual (Ron was one of two by submitted video).
• Jan Whitaker, 2022 articles available on blog https://restaurant-ingthroughhistory.com/
• Andrea Veras Botija: A Lost and Found Treasure, July, 2022
• Madelaine Zadik
  * Hope – The Write Launch, January 2022: https://thewritelaunch.com/2022/01/hope/
  * Avoidance – Consequence, January 2022: https://www.consequenceforum.org/nonfiction/avoidance, this essay was listed in Memoir Monday on January 31, 2022: https://memoirmonday.substack.com/p/ten-great-new-personal-essays, and in November it was nominated for a Pushcart Prize by Consequence Forum.
  * Dear Hate – Wordpeace, Issue 7.1, winter/spring 2022: https://wordpeace.co/current-issue-7-1-winter-spring-2022/non-fiction-7-1/madelaine-zadik/