



## Swanton Writers Group Newsletter December 2024

The Swanton Writers Group meets on the third Thursday of the month at 6 PM at the Swanton Library. All writers or anyone interested in writing are welcome. The November meeting will take place on **Thursday, December 19, 6 -7 PM** at the Swanton Library. For more information or to sign up for the newsletter, contact Becky Rupp at [rebeccarupp@gmail.com](mailto:rebeccarupp@gmail.com).

### IN THE NEWS

Author Events at Bear Pond Books in Stowe: see the schedule at <https://stowebooks.com/author-events>. On Saturday, December 7, 1-3 PM, Vermont dairy farmer George Woodard will be talking about his new children's book, *The Christmas Calf*.

Author Brendan Shay Basham will give a talk on the Writing Craft at the Vermont Studio Center in Johnson, VT, on Friday, December 6, 10 AM. This is free and open to the public, but seating is limited so registration is suggested. See <https://vermontstudiocenter.org/calendar/visitingwriter-crafttalk-brendanshaybasham>.

This year's Vermont Reads book is the YA novel *Gather* by Kenneth Cadow. For information about book and author and links to Vermont Reads events, see <https://www.vermonthumanities.org/programs/book-a-program/vermont-reads/vermont-reads-2024/>.

Got a short story? The Story Foundation Prize (\$1500) is given annually for a story of up to 10,000 words. There's an entry fee of \$25; deadline is December 15. See the website at <https://www.storymagazine.org/>.

The Center for Book Arts is sponsoring a Poetry Chapbook Contest with a prize of \$500. Submit a manuscript of up to 21 pages (or 450 lines) by December 20. For more information, see <https://centerforbookarts.org/annual-chapbook-competition>.

From Boulevard, the Short Fiction Contest for Emerging Writers offers a prize of \$1500 for a short story by a writer who has not published a nationally distributed book. Submit a story of up to 8000 words with an \$18 entry fee by December 31. See <https://www.boulevardmagazine.org/>.

Are you over 40? From the Poetry Society of America, the Robert H. Winner Memorial Award is a prize of \$2500 for poets over 40 who have published no more than one poetry collection. Entry fee is \$15; deadline is December 31. See <https://poetrysociety.org/>.

The Winter Anthology Writing Contest offers an annual prize of \$1000 for a group of poems, a short story, a novel excerpt, or an essay. Entry fee is \$11; deadline is January 10, 2025. See <https://winteranthology.com/>.

## BOOKS OF THE MONTH

Looking for a Christmas present for a writer?

*Walter: The Story of a Rat* by Barbara Wersba is a charmer – the story of a lonely writer, Miss Pomeroy, and Walter, a lonely and very literate rat (he’s named for Sir Walter Scott), who form an unlikely friendship. And it’s a Christmas story.

By John Julius Norwich, with hysterical illustrations by Quentin Blake, *The Twelve Days of Christmas [Correspondence]*, a very short epistolary novel, begins with a thank-you note from Emily to her dearest Edward for the partridge in the pear tree – though the relationship falls apart by the time Edward follows up with the lords a-leaping, pipers piping, and the entire percussion section of the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic.

Cartoonist Bruce Eric Kaplan’s *Every Person on the Planet* (subtitled “An Only Somewhat Anxiety-filled Tale for the Holidays”) is the story of Edmund and Rosemary who decide to throw a holiday party – and, after despairing over the guest list, end up inviting every person on the planet.

Natalie Kinsey-Warnock’s *A Christmas Like Helen’s*, illustrated with woodblock prints by Mary Azarian, is a lovely picture-book story of Christmas long ago. “To have a Christmas like Helen’s,” the book begins, “you’ll need to be born on a Vermont hill farm, before cars, or telephones, or electricity, and be the youngest of seven children.”

Very happy holidays to all – keep writing!

Becky

