



And the winners are...

Hi all! Whoever said "It's not whether you win or lose, it's how you play the game" probably wasn't a winner, right? Playing the game well is certainly a worthy goal, but let's be honest — winning is a lot more fun.

At our meeting this Saturday, **August 15th**, Gulf Coast Writers Association is thrilled to be celebrating nine talented folks who played the writing contest game *very* well — and won.

Please join us as GCWA Vice President of Special Projects Claudia Geagan honors our winning writers of the 2026 Writing Contest in the Poetry, Fiction, and Non-Fiction categories. Winners will be reading their entries aloud to the group — always a thrill for both the writers and the audience. We hope you'll join us!

📍 [St. Hilary's Episcopal Church](#)

🕒 10 a.m. – 12 p.m.

As an extra bit of bragging rights, selections from our contest winners have also been published in *Fort Myers Magazine's* summer issue. So if you've never considered entering a writing contest before, take this as your sign: our next GCWA Writing Contest launches October 1, 2026. You could be next year's "and the winner is..." headline!

Beyond the glory (and there is glory), winning adds real, tangible credibility to your writing credentials — the kind that can catch a literary agent's eye. So dust off that manuscript and get ready to enter.

Nosh Notice...

Once again our faithful Refreshments Coordinator, Julie Moore, could use a few folks willing to bring noshes to provide proper energy for all the applauding we will be doing during our program on Saturday. Julie suggests keeping things light and healthy: fruit, nuts, etc - although I'm sure we would not turn down any "healthy" cookies or pastries either! Message [Julie](#) if you can help.

"Your book is amazing," says someone who never read it...

Several of our members — yours truly included — recently received a lovely, glowing email inviting our book to be featured in a certain out-of-state book festival. Flattering? Very. Legitimate? Almost certainly not.

Here's the deal: this is a known scam pattern hitting authors nationwide right now. Scammers send warm, personalized-sounding praise about your specific book (yes, they did their homework), then eventually pivot to a "participation fee" once you've taken the bait. Sometimes they even borrow the name of a real festival to sound credible — which makes it trickier to spot.

Our advice: If you get one of these, don't click, don't reply, and definitely don't pay. If you want to double-check, go straight to the festival's official website and contact them directly — never through the email that reached out to you.

When in doubt, forward it to a fellow GCWA member first (you are welcome to email me directly). We're onto them now. Write on (and stay skeptical)!!

And the winners are (Part II) ...

Last weekend was FAPACon '26 in Orlando Florida, and once again this year, GCWA was well represented in the winner's circle! Join me in congratulating the following members (listed by category and medal awarded):

Adult Fiction – Thriller/Horror:

Silver *Vatican Daughter*—Joni Marie Iraci

Adult Fiction – Historical :

Gold *The Sculptor and the Saint*—Lori Joan Swick

Silver *Made to Last Forever: A Family. A House. A Nation.*—Sharmin Fairbanks McKenny

Autobiography/Memoir:

Silver *Chick Stories: A Memoir of Adventures Lived, Laughter Shared, and Lessons Learned with My Girlfriends*—Patti M. Walsh

Bronze *I Am Their Voice: A Guide for Caregivers and Advocates*—Julie Moore

Cover Design-Adult:

Gold *Soul Collector*—Nancy R. Koucky

Silver *The Harbormaster*—Nancy R. Koucky

Bronze *Fear Knocked, It Was Alzheimer's: The Story of One Man. His Determination. And the Diagnosis that Made Him Vulnerable* -Nancy R. Koucky

Have you written a book? Would you like the chance to see your name on this list next year? Check out the FAPA website for further information here: [FAPA Awards Submissions](#)

That's a wrap...



GCWA

P.O. Box 60444, Fort Myers
United States of America

Thank you for your patience during our recent website management transition. Things seem to be going smoothly, but if you have any questions, problems, or suggestions, please feel free to reach out to me directly at president@gulfcoastwriters.org

See you Saturday!! And don't forget to...

Keep writing!!

Warmly,

Christie Zarria

GCWA President

You received this email because you are a member or you signed up on our website.

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