

There is nowhere better to start than the Guild Mission:
The Northwest Independent Editors Guild connects clients with professional editors in the Pacific Northwest. We also foster community among our members and provide resources for their career development.

Our mission hasn't changed much in 20 years thanks to a strong vision and careful planning by our founders.

From Guild history written by Sherri Shultz:

The Northwest Independent Editors Guild began in the summer of 1997, when eleven Seattle-area editorial professionals gathered in a Seattle living room to explore the idea of forming an editors' group that met regularly. Out of the discussion came the realization that such a group could have many benefits: getting to know other editors, gaining a sense of having colleagues, building a job-referral network, and more.

The group agreed to meet bimonthly in Seattle. Early meetings were largely discussions among members, but within a few years the group began to enjoy guest speakers...

Fast forward to now and we still hold member meetings every other month in Seattle, but now we hold five regular meetings per year with a full program and a guest speaker or panel, plus an annual potluck. Our meetings are free for anyone to attend and are open to the public because we recognize that education is such a crucial part of our mission. We began livestreaming our meetings and making the full videos available on YouTube in March 2014 so members and nonmembers outside of the Seattle area could enjoy the presentations.

As the Guild grew, it developed an electronic discussion list to facilitate communication among members, and a website and Facebook page to promote itself to prospective clients, members, and the public. It organized panels and had informational tables at Northwest Bookfest, Wordstock, and various writers' conferences.

Guild members developed and offered courses in editorial careers, proofreading, and copyediting through Discover U, an adult education company in Seattle, and later through the University of Washington Editing Certificate program.

We continue to facilitate discussions through our listserv (which will move to a more user-friendly platform in 2018!), through our social media, and with in-person coffee hours and happy hours. Our outreach efforts continue to attract new clients and members throughout the region. We continue to partner with the UW Editing Certificate, and we can now claim that nearly 1/3 of our members are graduates of the program.

One important item to note is that the Guild was founded by and for freelance editors. Back in 1997, freelancers were much less common. Plenty of traditional in-house editing jobs still existed with book publishers, newspapers, and major corporations. Branding the Guild as “Independent” was crucial at that time—to distinguish that this was a group of freelancers or “independent workers,” who built their own support network.

Everyone in this room will have a different idea of what being an “independent editor” means to them—to some it means you’re independent-thinking, to others it means you set your own rules. To many, it signifies that you are an independent worker, or a freelancer. The word “independent” is an important part of our identity, even if its traditional meaning doesn’t fully encompass who we are in 2017. Today it is more common for someone to be a freelance editor than to have a full-time in-house editing job, and the Guild has needed to adapt to face that reality.

You have undoubtedly heard the term “gig economy,” and how this work model is changing the face of regular business. Thanks to technology, certain jobs that used to be office-based can now be done from just about anywhere in the world with a reliable internet connection. It’s not unusual for people with full-time jobs to take on extra “independent contractor” work on the side, or for freelancers to juggle several different jobs all at once. Just about everyone has a side-hustle nowadays.

As more and more people have shifted the way they work, the Guild has had to shift its focus as well. We used to be exclusively for freelancers, but in the past five or so years, we’ve had more and more in-house editors reach out to try to find a community. It’s not uncommon to find someone who is the one and only editor on the payroll at a job that probably had several staff editors a decade ago.

In-house or freelance, you are still an editor, you are still one of us, and you are welcome in the Guild.

Unfortunately, not everyone understands that the Guild is for *all* editors. We have a reputation for being only for freelance fiction book editors (when in reality last year’s member survey showed that about 72% of us self-identified as freelancers, and 66% reported being *nonfiction* book editors, 44% work on web editing, and 41% work on business or corporate communications—we’re really all over the place). We are working on changing this outdated image of our organization, one which causes so many in-house editors to say, “But I have a job—I’m not an ‘independent worker.’ I can’t join, right?” Wrong. The Guild is here for all types of editors of the written word and will continue to be here to support you. (Although I will emphasize “editors of the written word,” video editing is a completely different ballgame.)

As we continue to look forward and grow, we will keep adapting to the needs of the greater editing community in the Pacific Northwest and beyond. This will mean

updated branding and outreach materials coming soon; a more consistent voice and strategy on social media; a revival of our Speakers Bureau program; additional learning opportunities for members and nonmembers; more outreach at regional writing- and literary-related events; more opportunities to connect for our members in Portland, Spokane, Bellingham, and elsewhere; and most important: we strive to provide you with more options to connect with your fellow editors.

What started out as a friendly group centered around “living room camaraderie” is now one of the largest, most respected regional editing groups in the country. Thanks to the efforts of the dozens and dozens of people who gave their time and expertise, we are here today ready to celebrate!

2017 Stats:

Leadership:

2017 Board:

Jill Walters, President

Pm Weizenbaum, VP of Board Development

Kristin Carlsen, VP of Member Services

Christina Johnson, Secretary

Elaine Duncan, Treasurer

Members at Large

Kelley Frodel, Roberta Klarreich, Donita Leeson, Kerrie

Schurr, Jessyca Yoppolo, Polly Zetterberg

Advisory Committee:

- Anne Moreau
- Kate Rogers
- Sherri Schultz
- Bill Thorness

We said goodbye to Rebecca Brinbury as the Guild’s administrator in May. She served in the position for about a year and a half. Longtime board member Jen Gogan stepped in as the new administrator and is doing a fantastic job so far.

Member Meetings:

Since our last potluck, we have had the following member meeting topics:

- Fact-Checking: Don’t Assume Anything
- Roundtable Editing Discussions
- Let’s Talk LinkedIn
- Corporate Editing 101
- Engaging with Other Editors and Fostering Our Community panel

Still to come:

- Fact-Checking Workshop Nov. 4
- Nonfiction Publishing Panel Nov. 13

Member Meeting Volunteers for 2017:

Chris Matthias, Michael Schuler, Betsy Berger, Lisa Gordanier, Ginger Everhart, Jennifer Munro, Kelsey Klockenteger

Regional Meetings:

Regular regional meetups in Portland, Spokane, Far-North (Mt. Vernon), South Sound, and various Seattle-area neighborhoods.

Other:

- 346 Active members (as of Oct. 6, 2017)
- Held our first successful half-day workshop since 2011 (separate from the conference) in November 2016. Story Tailors: The Craft of Copyediting Fiction with Mia Lipman brought 35 participants to learn the nuances of editing fiction. The workshop was so successful, we are holding another workshop this November on fact-checking.
- In late 2016, we conducted our first full membership survey since 2008. The survey got an astounding 57% response rate, and we are using the data to inform our choices on the board and conference committee. We will conduct the survey again in 2018 so we can establish baseline member data for the future.
- Revived our social media presence to promote the conference. We don't have a huge following, but it is still significant enough that we have become a trusted online presence for editors from all over the world. We're currently at about 1,055 Facebook followers, and we just broke 700 followers on Twitter during the conference. This summer, we began a regular weekly feature called #StetPet, where we feature a photo of a canine or feline editorial assistant. These are consistently some of our best performing posts.

Outreach:

Expanded our outreach efforts in the past year, and returned to conferences where we had been absent for several years:

Had Guild table at:

- Ooligan Press Write to Publish Conference in Portland
- Willamette Writers Conference in Portland
- Wordstock in Portland

Sent Guild materials to:

- Independent Book Publishers Association Publishing University in Portland

Mentoring Program:

Huge thanks to Kyra Freestar for reviving the Guild's mentoring program in the last year. We match mentors and mentees in 10-week mentoring sessions. The winter session matched six mentors and mentees, and **the spring session brought together 12 pairs**. The fall session with nine mentors and nine mentees just began their 10-week session last month.

Red Pencil 6: Tracking Changes in Editing Conference

- The Guild's sixth biennial editing conference was two weekends ago on Sept. 23 at Bastyr University.
- We are now the largest regular editing conference on the West Coast
- 235 registrations for 2017 (new record!)
- Most attendees from WA and OR, but large groups from CA and British Columbia, two people from MN, and others from Texas, Virginia, Wisconsin, North Carolina, and Illinois.

Major conference sponsors included: PerfectIt, Copyediting.com, Denny Mountain Media

Vendors: University of Chicago Press, Willamette Writers, PerfectIt, Steampunk Unicorn Studios + Jen Vaughn, Killa's Photography, Copyediting.com, Third Place Books

Conference Committee:

Committee Chairs

Richard Isaac, Logistics^[L]_[SEP]

Christina Johnson, Volunteers^[L]_[SEP]

Mary Lindberg, Volunteers^[L]_[SEP]

Kathleen Sidwell, Treasurer^[L]_[SEP]

Jill Walters, Sponsorship^[L]_[SEP]

Pm Weizenbaum, Programming & After-Party

Marketing and Communications

Jen Grogan^[L]_[SEP], Kelsey Klockenteger, Andrea Leigh Ptak, Jill Walters

Programming Support

Kristin Carlsen

This potluck & Anniversary celebration

Thanks to board members for organizing. Special thanks to Polly and Elaine for the bulk of the programming today.

Thank you to all the longtime members who came out to help us celebrate!