

SouthWest Sage

October 2013 www.southwestwriters.com

Tiina Nunnally Receives Knighthood by Gayle Lauradunn

Albuquerque resident and SWW member Tiina Nunnally is a translator of Norwegian, Swedish, and Danish literature who also writes her own novels and YA books. I met Tiina about six years ago when my book group decided to read *Kristin Lavransdatter* and discovered in the front matter of the novel that the translator lives in Albuquerque. When we were ready to discuss the book, we invited Tiina to lunch to talk about the novel, the author, and the process of translating.

GL: What an exciting experience to be appointed Knight of the Royal Norwegian Order of Merit by the king of Norway. The honor is for your contribution to Norwegian literature in English.

TN: Yes, I've translated a lot of Norwegian books over the years, and the award is for my efforts on behalf of Norwegian literature in the U.S.—primarily for my translations of numerous works by Sigrid Undset.

GL: In addition to *Kristin Lavransdatter* (the epic trilogy by Sigrid Undset, 1928 Nobel Prize winner), what other Norwegian authors have you translated?

TN: I've translated books by Linn Ullmann, Gunnar Kopperud, Knut Hamsun, Mette Newth (together with my husband Steven T. Murray, who also translates from the Nordic languages), and Karin Fossum (under my translator pseudonym Felicity David). My most recent Norwegian translation is a mystery titled *The Land of Dreams* by Vidar Sundstøl. It's the first volume of his Minnesota Trilogy, set on the North Shore of Lake Superior. The book is due out in early October

from the University of Minnesota Press, and the advance reviews have been great.

GL: Tell us about the award ceremony.

TN: The official award ceremony took place at the Norwegian Embassy in Washington D.C. in March, followed by a luncheon hosted by the Ambassador and his wife, and attended by some of my family members and colleagues. It was a wonderful day!

GL: So, is it now appropriate to address you as Dame Tiina, or do the Norwegians have a different term?

TN: In Norwegian the title of "Knight" ("Ridder") is the same for both men and women. My sister jokingly calls me "Sir."

GL: Explain about the beautiful order you received and why you are not to wear it.

TN: The order, which for women is a silver cross on a navy blue ribbon, is meant to be worn only at official ceremonies and royal functions. But I also received a small lapel pin which can be worn at other times.

GL: You had a 15-minute private audience with the king at the royal palace when you were in Norway in April. What was the experience like?

TN: I was very nervous! But it was a great honor to be allowed to thank the king in person for this award, which recognizes my literary work. He was very kind and gracious, and we had a pleasant conversation about all sorts of topics.

(Continued on page 12)

**Congratulations to the
2013 Storyteller Winner**

LAURA KELLER

Laura Keller won the \$1500 grand prize Storyteller Award in the SWW annual writing competition, as well as first place in the Juvenile/Young Adult Novel category for her entry *Making Sense of Us*.

THANK YOU to all who gave a matching-fund donation! SWW has surpassed our \$1500 goal in overcoming the cash shortfall due to the "Flood of 2013."

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

SWW Annual Meeting

Saturday, October 5 • 10:00 am - noon



This summer has been a frenetic mess. I've had to deal with three conferences, rehab on a storm-damaged house, and a couple of trips abroad for the day job. And yes, I'm still whining about the flood at the SWW office. All these things have done terrible things to my productivity. Well, if I'm honest, shiny objects are enough to derail my productivity, but I'd rather focus on the writers who pound away at their keyboards while the National Guard airlifts them from fire, flood or volcano.

"Come on, guys! The lava isn't flowing that fast. Let me finish this last paragraph and hit save!"

The reason I seek out these folk is that I have an editor breathing down my neck requesting I expand a short story into a novelette. I need their inspiration. I've been too busy with the above to get around to the work. Now that I have two minutes to rub together, I am furiously trying to make fire, but my kindling is wet. I haven't had time to think, to worry story solutions for the expansion. I jump in hoping something will catch.

Nope. Solution A is like dividing by zero. Really bad things happen. I furiously bang out Solution B. That only violates the character arc and destroys the plot. So it's better but not quite it. I panic. I've got to get this done while I have time. I have to get this done, right now! I start in on Solution C and hit the wall.

And why aren't my solutions working? Because I forgot to take into consideration the quiet time all authors need to sit back and listen to their own writing. True, I created this world and populated it with characters I invented. Yes, I torture them with difficulties of my choosing, but if I made them smart enough to be interesting, then I have to let go and allow them to figure out their own escape from the corner I so assiduously painted them into.

In an essay in *Poets and Writers* (May/June 2013), Ruth Ozeki writes, "Many people (non-writers) imagine the novelist to be a lofty, godlike being who wields omniscient and absolute authority over his creations, manipulating characters like puppets and compelling them to enact his every whim, but nothing could be further from the truth. Writers are at the mercy of their creations, as I suspect all gods, ultimately, must be."

For me, this means I need to shut up and listen. This is difficult because I'm impatient by nature, and I don't like the appearance of not doing anything. So I compromise and wander the house cleaning random objects. My husband asks me what I'm doing, and I tell him I'm writing. He rolls his eyes and goes back to his spreadsheets. You know, real work. But I can take the implicit criticism. After several hours, my main characters present to me how they would like things to work out. And of course they're right. Well, I hope so. I just sent the novelette to my first reader. I'm keeping my fingers crossed.

Remember, it's okay to take time to reflect and to have faith in your characters.

Happy Writing!

Kathy

IN THIS ISSUE

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1 Tiina Nunnally Receives Knighthood
BY GAYLE LAURADUNN | 8 Snake Oil?
BY OLIVE BALLA |
| 3 Critique Groups | 9 Choosing a Memoir Disclaimer
BY CATE MACABE |
| 3 Albuquerque Area Writing Groups | 10 Member Successes |
| 4 2014 Nominees for the SWW Board of Directors | 10 Member Books |
| 4 Welcome New SWW Members | 11 Announcements |
| 5 <i>Eats, Shoots & Leaves</i> by Lynne Truss
A BOOK REVIEW BY A.R. AEBY | 13 NM-AZ Book Award Finalists: SWW Members |
| 6 SWW Meetings | 14 Student Scholarship Application |
| 7 October & November Classes | |

SouthWest Sage Advertising Rates Worldwide Internet Circulation

The SWW website receives thousands of page requests every month.

Business card size: \$20 1/4 page, vertical: \$40 1/3 page, horizontal: \$50
15% discount for 3 mos. 20% discount for 6 mos.

Deadline: 1st of each month for the following month.
Payment due with camera-ready ad copy in .jpg format.

Annual Membership in SouthWest Writers

Individual: \$70 (\$65 renewal if paid two months in advance)

Student: 18 and over, \$40; under 18, \$25

Requires proof of student status

Outside U.S.: \$75, Lifetime Membership: \$750

Download the Sage from www.southwestwriters.com

Join us first Saturday, 10 am-Noon and third Tuesday, 7-9 pm

New Life Presbyterian Church, 5540 Eubank NE,
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SouthWest Sage

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Members Seeking Critique Groups

Fantasy/Sci-Fi

Linton Bowers, lbowers27@gmail.com
prefers: online/email group

Mainstream Fiction Only

Stephen Gregg, sgregg5@cableone.net
Albuq./Bernalillo/Rio Rancho
Flexible: day/time

Mainstream Fiction (and Other)

— and Genre
Mike Zimmerman, mikeyzman@gmail.com
Albuq./Rio Rancho
Mon.-Thu. evenings

— and Memoir

Kate Leistikow, Call 867-9586
kathleenleistikow@gmail.com
Albuq./Corrales/Placitas/Rio Rancho
No evenings, flexible time

Memoir

Terry Wright, Terry_w38@yahoo.com
anywhere near Montgomery Blvd
11:00 am, Mon.-Fri

Young Adult Fiction

Damita Butler
deneemariel@yahoo.com
any day, after 4:00 pm

Critique Groups Seeking Members

Children's/MG/YA

See Albuq. Area Writing Groups, below

Fiction/Nonfiction

Wally Gordon, wallygordon@q.com or
Chris Enke, enke@unm.edu
Erna Fergusson Library
Second Wed. each month, 4-6:00 pm
With interest, can change day & time

Genre, Novel Length

Lee, Lee@seki.com
Second Tues. each month, 7:00 pm
Reviewing ready-to-query novels

Mainstream Fiction

Online Critique Group
Christie Keele, ckeele10@hotmail.com

Sci-Fi

Send name and writing experience to:
Cosmic_Connections_SF_Critique_Group@yahoo.com

Screenwriting

See Albuq. Area Writing Groups, below

Albuquerque Area Writing Groups

The **Albuquerque Croak & Dagger** chapter of Sisters in Crime meets 4th Tuesday of the month, 7 pm, police briefing room at James Joseph Dwyer Memorial Substation. www.croak-and-dagger.com/

Bear Canyon Writing Group: Don Morgan and Dennis Kastendiek moderate, all genres welcome. Mondays 2-4:00 pm at North Domingo Baca Multigenerational Center, Room 1, 2nd floor. Contact Dennis for more information: dwjkas@yahoo.com

Children's/MG/YA Writers, 3rd Saturday critique group, share and receive feedback. Meets monthly at Erna Fergusson Library, San Mateo & Comanche, 10:30-12:30. To share, bring 5 copies of 5 pages, double-spaced.

Duke City Screenwriters, every other Thursday, 6-8 pm at UPublic Station on 3rd St: critique, education, and fun. Contact Marc Calderwood at skatingkokopelli@hotmail.com.

SCBWI: Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators, 2nd Tuesday each month, 7-8:30 pm, Alamosa Books, 505-797-7101. Short workshops/discussions. Pre-schmooze dinner at Flying Star on Wyoming & Paseo, 5:30-6:45 pm. For more information: schmooze@scbwi-nm.org

Writers2Writers, 2nd Monday each month, 6:30-7:30 pm, Hastings Café, northeast corner of Coors & Montano. Monthly speakers. All genres are welcome. Contact FAAiken@aol.com for information about upcoming speakers.

2014 OFFICER NOMINEES FOR SWW BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President: Lee Higbie

Lee Higbie worked as a supercomputer engineer for four decades and has now transitioned to writer. He has written several genre novels of pre-publication quality (two SF novels, two mysteries, and a thriller). The latest of these has been e-published on Scribl.com.



Vice-President: Robin Kalinich

Artist, writer, and chemist, Robin Kalinich works for the man, but her true passions lie in the creative realm. She leads Ink & Alchemy, focusing on inspiring, encouraging, and transforming creative people via networking and social media. Robin has published scientific papers, short stories, and poetry. She is an aspiring novelist.



Secretary: Andy Mayo

Andy Mayo completed his career in the financial services industry as a financial advisor and regional sales director for Smith Barney. A diverse writer, he began as a newspaper reporter, and has three plays that received staged readings. His two novels in progress are about money laundering and high frequency trading.



Treasurer: Dino Leyba

Dino de Leyba has a design degree from Otis Parsons School of Design. His manuscript *Sketching a Life* became text for fashion students at Brooks College in Long Beach. He works in the finance department at a membership association and owns BeautyMark Foundation specializing in design and marketing of couture jewelry and women's accessories.



ELECTION SWW 2014 OFFICERS

The election of board officers will be held at the annual meeting on October 5, the first Saturday meeting of the month. Nominations of candidates were received from the general membership through May 31, 2013. Nominations can also be made from the floor at the October 5 meeting. You must have the consent of the candidate whom you are nominating and they must meet the qualifications as stated in the SWW bylaws.

To be eligible for either of the offices of president or vice-president, a person shall have served as a member of the SouthWest Writers Board of Directors for one year. The secretary and treasurer shall have been a member of SouthWest Writers in good standing for no less than one year immediately preceding the date of nomination, unless waived by the Board, and have the necessary qualifications for the job.

Welcome New SouthWest Writers Members

Roger Bunch

Sandra B Hoover

Karen Coates

Laura Keller

Michael Cox

Kimberly Kiegel

*Shelley
de Abreu*

Carolyn Madero

Day Donavon

Rebecca Miller

Kevin Dyer

Sharon Sivinski

*Heather
Gemmen Wilson*

Ben Wuamett

Tracy Zullo



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Writers on Facebook



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Try our Google Calendar link to see what's coming up for each month. Use the link on the SWW website or click here: www.google.com/calendar/embed?src=swwcalendar%40gmail.com&ctz=America/Denver

EATS, SHOOTS & LEAVES: THE ZERO TOLERANCE APPROACH TO PUNCTUATION BY LYNNE TRUSS

A Book Review by A.R. Aeby

I would never admit this to just anyone, but since I know I am safe in the understanding arms of our family of writers, here it goes. I suffer from rampant, impartial comma usage. It is a sickness I have always kind of known I suffered from, but it took a wake-up call for me to really acknowledge the extent of my disease. My wake-up call arrived when my darling mother-in-law, and finish editor, sweetly but firmly said she would rather I not put any commas in at all. My mother-in-law also mentioned something about commas having actual placement rules instead of just sticking them in wherever I want a pause (I find her just too precious for words. Placement rules. Can you imagine?).

This embarrassing and rather funny admonishment led me to take an online grammar refresher course. And while I found it very helpful, especially in regard to colons and semicolons, it made me realize I was just at the beginning of my punctuation recovery. So in a desire to continue my rehabilitation, I have decided to see what pearls of wisdom *Eats, Shoots & Leaves* by Lynne Truss had to share.

The book starts off with a lovely foreword from Frank McCourt, author of *Angela's Ashes*. But his fun and lively foreword caused me to suspect the real body of the book would not be as entertaining. I felt like I was being lured into a trap by Mr. McCourt's playfulness (the image of Admiral Ackbar from *Star Wars* quite clearly warning me of imminent danger). With my defenses up I prepared for 200 pages of mind-numbing—though admittedly important—tedium. I mean, really people, this book is about punctuation. But I was wrong to doubt (I guess this time Admiral Ackbar sounded the alarm needlessly), and I am a big enough person to admit it.

Ms. Truss's colorful personality sparkles with the brilliance of a diamond through her impassioned writing, giving life to punctuation. Well-written and interesting with lovely bits of history woven in, Truss takes us back to the basics without being boring. She peppers her writing with historical anecdotes, British humor, and unique twists that made me giggle in a rather undignified way. (If you do not care for British humor, this book may be a bit more challenging to you.) She even dips into the fascinating topic of punctuation theory—which I found a lot more fun than trying to sort out the rules—and it did enlighten me to the power of some of our lesser-used punctuation tools.

On the down side the chapters felt a bit long—which I noticed because I kept checking how many pages I had left until I could take a break. The long chapters definitely contributed to my fatigue factor. I wish they were broken into smaller chunks while keeping the same content to allow for more rest time for my poor, overtaxed brain. Also, on occasion I did get a little confused when we moved into the dark and treacherous waters of opinion. Like I said, proper punctuation does not come naturally to me, so I can barely handle the basics, let alone a variety of subjective views.



A.R. Aeby received a Bachelor of Arts in history almost solely from the love of stories, even nonfiction ones. She is the author of the book review blog *Whymy Likes Books*, where her goal is simply to share her passion for books. But she is a book author with the eternal hope of becoming a published book author. She lives in the deserts of New Mexico with her two young daughters and her husband of ten years. Visit her blog at <http://whymylikesbooks.blogspot.com>.

Even with my complaints, I have to say the good I gained from this book far outweighs my issues. While reading *Eats, Shoots & Leaves* I came to think of Lynne Truss as my punctuation fairy godmother. I imagined her whispering punctuation corrections in my ear, usually accompanied by some very vivid word pictures. Her passion, closely linked to fanatic militarism, made me wonder if she was an escaped character from Jasper Fforde's *Thursday Next Series*. She seemed like the sort of person Jasper Fforde would delight in creating. In any case I would relish a chance to have drinks with her, so I could hear her eloquent rants against the indifference of society toward punctuation, which, of course, is directly related to bringing about the apocalypse.

Ms. Truss's cunning witticism seems to have come about through natural talent and good training. She graduated with a BA Honors (first class) in English Language and Literature from University College London. Ms. Truss has spent time in the trenches as a literary editor, writer, and journalist. She also played host to a popular radio broadcast in Britain called *Cutting a Dash* and wrote a sports column for four years. Her book credits include *Talk to the Hand: The Utter Bloody Rudeness of the World Today*, or *Six Good Reasons to Stay Home and Bolt the Door*; *Get Her Off the Pitch! How sport took over my life*; and *The Girl's Like Spaghetti: Why, You Can't Manage without Apostrophes!* Her awards include the Morley Medal, Rosa Morrison Scholarship and George Smith Prize (apparently her status as a punctuation fairy godmother has yet to be universally acknowledged). Lynne Truss currently works as a book reviewer for the *Sunday Times of London* and continues to do pieces for BBC Radio 4.

I thoroughly enjoyed *Eats, Shoots & Leaves*, and I learned a lot of new things, though the magical light of clarity didn't quite shine brightly enough to cure my sickness. To be completely fair I am rather inclined to place most of the blame on myself and not my punctuation fairy godmother: Lynne Truss is a treasure. And I imagine that if you give her a chance—with you being so clever—she should be able to work some magic on your writing, too.

Meetings

Members are free, Guests \$10

Saturday, October 5
10:00 am to noon

Pump Up and Publish:
Fiction and Creative Nonfiction

Phaedra Greenwood

Taos author and creative writing teacher Phaedra Greenwood will cover the basics of how to create a solid structure, set the setting, change point of view, maintain pacing and tension, create colorful characters and listen for authentic dialogue in fiction and creative nonfiction. She will also give advice on entering contests and writing for newspapers and magazines.

Phaedra Greenwood is a professional freelance writer/photographer and editor who has taught creative writing in Taos for 15 years. Many of her award-winning photographs, essays and stories have appeared in newspapers, magazines and anthologies. Her nature memoir *Beside the Rio Hondo* was published by Sunstone Press in 2007 and was chosen as a finalist in 2008 for the New Mexico Book Awards. During the five years she earned her living as a compositor and staff reporter for *The Taos News*, she won awards from the New Mexico Press Association and New Mexico Press Women.



Tuesday, October 15
7:00 pm to 9:00 pm

Topic to Be Announced

Speaker: Jill Lane

Watch for e-let updates or check the SWW website at SouthWestWriters.com for more details about upcoming speakers and topics.

SOUTHWEST WRITERS CRITIQUE SERVICE

An experienced critiquer, picked from a panel of professional writers and editors, will be matched with your genre and will critique your manuscript for a reasonable price below the usual market rate.

The SWW Critique Service accepts all genres, including:

- Query letters
- Synopses
- Articles
- Essays
- Nonfiction books
- Book proposals
- Short stories
- Mainstream/literary fiction
- Genre fiction
- Children's/middle-grade/YA
- Screenplays/stageplays
- Poetry

COST

\$15 - Poetry of no more than 3 pages

\$15 - Query letter of no more than 3 pages

\$25 - Synopsis of up to 3 pages
- additional pages are \$3.50/page

\$35 - Minimum charge for up to 10 double-spaced manuscript pages
- additional pages are \$3.50/page

SWW critiquers follow genre-specific guidelines, but feel free to include specific questions you want answered and any points you want the critique to focus on (such as point of view, plot structure, etc.).

Go to SouthWestWriters.com for guidelines and information on how to submit your manuscript to our critique service.

Coming Up in 2014

Classes:

Jacqueline Murray Loring
SO YOU WANT TO WRITE A BOOK
January

Sarah Baker
WRITING GENRE FICTION & GETTING PUBLISHED
February

Shirley Raye Redmond
WRITE A CHILDREN'S BOOK IN 7 WEEKS
February

Workshops:

Sarah Baker
GETTING AROUND BEGINNER'S BUMPS
January



Help Support SouthWest Writers • SWW receives a commission on books ordered via the Amazon link on SouthWestWriters.com.

October & November Classes

Classes and Workshops are held at the SWW Office, 3200 Carlisle Blvd NE, Suite 114, Albuquerque 87110, 505-830-6034

SENSE & SENSIBILITY: HOW TO TAKE GOOD NOTES, WRITE A BETTER STORY & SELL IT with Karen Coates

**4 Sessions: October 3, 10, 17, 24
Thursdays: 6:00 - 8:00 pm**

\$160 members, \$200 non-members



Life is a story. Great narratives are all around us, every day. The key is plunging into the world, recording the experience, and making sense of it all. THEN structure the piece, pitch the right editor, and market when it's published. Class sessions focus on using our senses to record the world around us with clarity, accuracy and pizzazz; story structure and organization, applying journalistic techniques for writing our best regardless of genre; finding the right market, capturing an editor's interest, selling the story; and building our audience and marketing.

Karen Coates, a senior fellow at the Schuster Institute for Investigative Journalism, has 20 years of experience in newspapers, magazines and books. She writes about food, environment, health and human rights, often in the developing world. She also teaches journalism in emerging democracies. Her latest book is *This Way More Better: Stories and Photos from Asia's Back Roads* (ThingsAsian, 2013). Visit her at www.karencoates.com, <http://ramblingspoon.com/blog>, and www.thiswaymorebetter.com.

THE DEEP FIELD: WRITING SCIENCE FICTION AND FANTASY with Betsy James

**8 Sessions: October 2, 9, 16, 23, 30
and November 6, 13, 20**

Wednesdays: 5:45 - 7:45 pm

\$320 members, \$380 non-members



Speculative fiction (science fiction, fantasy, horror, magic realism, and slipstream) offers a canvas big as the universe, vast as time, fresh as the human imagination. Perhaps the most entertaining of Betsy James's popular workshops—it's her personal favorite—this course jump-starts your creativity and gets you working and critiquing like a spec fic writer. In 8 weekly assignments of 1000 words or less you'll explore your quirks and your craft, learn respectful peer critique, and develop a camaraderie with the spec fic community. Class is limited to 10 students.

Betsy James is the author-illustrator of sixteen books and many stories for adults, teens and children. Her latest fantasy, *Listening at the Gate*, is a New York Public Library Best Book for the Teen Age. Visit her at www.betsyjames.com and www.listeningatthegate.com.

CRAFTING A NONFICTION BOOK PROPOSAL with Loretta Hall

**4 Sessions: October 5, 12, 19, 26
Saturdays: 2:00 - 4:00 pm**

\$160 members, \$200 non-members



You dream of hordes of readers ordering your book from Amazon.com or happily discovering copies on the shelf at their local book-store. But that's not going to happen unless you can sell your manuscript to a publisher first. (Even if you decide to self publish, you'd better evaluate your book like a publisher would!) Loretta will explain the steps for selling to your first, and most important, customer. Topics include planning a marketable book, finding appropriate publishers to submit to, and preparing a thorough, professional book proposal.

Loretta Hall has worked with four different publishers to produce her five nonfiction books. The lessons she learned from these experiences will give you a head start with your quest to get published. Loretta served on the SouthWest Writers board for four years and received the 2007 Parris Award.

HOW TO WRITE FOR MAGAZINES: OR HOW YOU CAN BAG YOUR FIRST MAGAZINE ASSIGNMENT with Melody Groves

**4 Sessions: November 4, 11, 18, 25
Mondays, 6:00 - 8:00 pm**

\$160 members, \$200 non-members



In today's writing world, the opportunity to write for magazines is almost endless. With over 9,000 magazines published yearly, in addition to online versions, the world is your oyster. But, there are tricks to bagging an assignment. Finding the right market, finding the right editor, finding out about the competition—all tricks of the trade. So if you've got a good idea but don't know where to go and how to start, look no more. This class is for you. In four short weeks we'll cover finding your story, finding the market, tweaking the same idea for different magazines, photo requirements, and approaching an editor. And that's just for starters.

Melody Groves has written for *Wild West Magazine*, *New Mexico Magazine*, *True West*, *American Cowboy*, *Enchantment*, *Chronicles* (on line), *Albuquerque the Magazine*, *abqARTS*, and *Desert Exposure*.

Go to southwestwriters.com to read the class refund policy.

If you Google “how to write a book,” that all-knowing search engine responds with over 900,000,000 links. That’s nearly one billion publications, magazine and newspaper columns, blogs, and online newsletters written by writers for writers. The act of reading through the titles alone would take up several lifetimes. And sadly, not all of the offerings are of stellar quality. Some, according to one blogging agent, are downright misleading.

Like Jason’s Argonauts, I’ve spent years searching for the writer’s Golden Fleece of how-tos. I subscribe to a couple of writers’ magazines, several online newsletters and e-zines. I follow writer and agent blogs. I carry a small spiral notebook into which I jot snippets of overheard conversation and bursts of thought. I’ve accumulated dozens of books on writing and have attended conferences and workshops.

Yet agent responses to my queries, when they respond at all, have continued to consist mostly of terse rejection boilerplate: not our genre, not right for us, not accepting unsolicited manuscripts at this time.

A retired educator, I told myself that what I need is more information. More tips, more self-help books, more writing prompts, more subscriptions, less sleep, and less time-sucking outside interests. I even went so far as to give away my high maintenance houseplants, keeping only the two that thrive on neglect.

So I spent hours searching online catalogues for the latest I’m-Published-and-Here’s-How-I-Did-It. Like a crazed deep-sea diver searching for sunken treasure, I read through dozens of book covers and their bulleted backs. Each one honed in on me—their target audience—like a laser pointer.

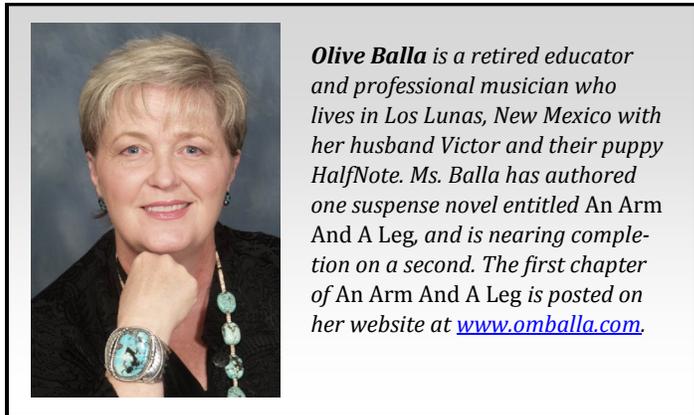
I wasn’t alone, I cried. These people understood. They’d all tripped, staggered and slogged through the same morass. They knew things.

With building excitement, I narrowed my selection down to two books. One guaranteed me its insider tips and strategies would not only hook an agent but would fire him up so he’d not rest until he found a publisher and secured an exceptional contract for us both. The other promised if I followed the author’s instructions to the letter, my first five pages would electrify the hungry reading public and catapult my name to household-word status.

I bought both books.

With renewed élan I avidly (I’m allowed one adverb) studied the books. A prodigious user of sticky-notes and highlighters, I tabbed pages and marked epiphanal passages. Then I re-read and highlighted again—in a different color. I even slept with the books under my pillow in hopes the law of osmosis would perform its magic while I dreamt.

And as with Paul on the road to Damascus, scales fell away from my eyes. I knew THE SECRETS to getting published.



Olive Balla is a retired educator and professional musician who lives in Los Lunas, New Mexico with her husband Victor and their puppy HalfNote. Ms. Balla has authored one suspense novel entitled An Arm And A Leg, and is nearing completion on a second. The first chapter of An Arm And A Leg is posted on her website at www.omballa.com.

Secrets known only to the stratospheric few, but which had been gifted me by the authors of the two books for which I’d paid a handsome price. Secrets the authors avowed the industry didn’t want me to know.

I returned to my manuscript. Like a woman possessed, I carved and slashed. I poked holes in weak passages and then refilled them with sizzling prose. I peppered time-honored suspense builders into each scene. I morphed two antagonists into one and changed the chronology of scenes. I chopped dialogue into smaller bites: characters interrupted each other, sentences trailed off, commas replaced periods.

Exhausted, I re-read my manuscript. In a state of high anticipation, I sent off another flurry of e-queries. I waited in hopeful agitation for the promised delighted, positive responses.

Meanwhile, I picked up an outdated and well-worn book on creative writing from the bottom shelf of my bookcase. Something I’d purchased so long ago that I’d forgotten it existed.

I smirked as I thumbed through the pages. My eyes glazed over at the passé language and the examples from a generation ago.

But my attention kept returning to the chapter on finding one’s writer’s voice. According to this author, each of us has a distinctive Voice, a voice enriched and seasoned by our unique life experiences.

He said finding that Voice is perhaps the single greatest struggle for most writers, and the really successful writers are those who find a way to tap into that one-of-a-kind creative potential—those who discover how to use its special tone and color to tell their stories.

And he said a good way to give the Voice its rein is to free-write a lot and often.

(Continued on page 13)

Though a disclaimer is no guarantee against a lawsuit, most authors and publishers use them in an attempt to cover all bases, to have some claim to a defense just in case they are sued. Even Penguin Books uses its own particular disclaimer: “Penguin is committed to publishing works of quality and integrity. In that spirit, we are proud to offer this book to our readers; however, the story, the experiences, and the words are the author’s alone.”

It seems fiction authors have it easy when it comes to disclaimers. We’ve all read the requisite paragraph at the front of a novel with some form of, “This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places, and incidents either are the product of the author’s imagination or are used fictitiously. Any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, events, or locales is entirely coincidental.”

But a disclaimer for a memoir is a different beast. Readers of creative nonfiction don’t expect a memoir to represent a fictionalized anything—they expect it to represent the truth. And it should.

However, memoirists often face a dilemma when writing “the whole truth and nothing but the truth”—people’s feelings can be hurt, authors can be sued. But what if a particular truth is essential to the telling of one’s story? How much should be revealed? The answers to those questions will determine if names, characteristics, etc. should be changed. Being upfront with the reader and disclosing these changes is the prudent thing to do, as I did in AJ Jackson’s memoir *This New Mountain*:

This is a work of creative nonfiction. The events are portrayed to the best of AJ Jackson’s memory. While all the stories in this book are true, some names and identifying details have been changed to protect the privacy of the people involved.

Another problem a memoirist deals with is memory itself, which tends to be imperfect to begin with but also fades with time. The disclaimer for Dave Eggers’ memoir *A Heartbreaking Work of Staggering Genius* handles such a problem in this way:

This is a work of fiction, only in that in many cases the author could not remember the exact words said by certain people and exact descriptions of certain things, so [he] had to fill in gaps as best he could. Otherwise, all characters and incidents and dialogue are real, are not products of the author’s imagination, because at the time of this writing, the author had no imagination whatsoever for those sorts of things....

Likewise, Debbie Reynolds and Dorian Hannaway deal with the issues of memory and retelling of dialogue in their disclaimer for *Unsinkable*:

The conversations in the book all come from the author’s recollections, though they are not written to represent word-for-word transcripts. Rather, the author has retold

them in a way that evokes the feeling and meaning of what was said and in all instances, the essence of the dialogue is accurate.

Some authors feel comfortable altering their creative nonfiction to make it more readable. Those kinds of changes should also be noted in a disclaimer, as in these two examples:

Everything here is true, but it may not be entirely factual. In some cases I have compressed events; in others I have made two people into one. I have occasionally embroidered. I learned early that the most important thing in life is a good story. ~ Ruth Reichl, *Tender at the Bone*

For all the author’s bluster elsewhere, this is not, actually, a work of pure nonfiction. Many parts have been fictionalized in varying degrees, for various purposes. ~ Dave Eggers, *A Heartbreaking Work of Staggering Genius* (Eggers goes on to give a detailed list of what was fictionalized including dialogue, characters and their characteristics, locations and time.)

The Internet is filled with examples of disclaimers, but Joel Frielander from The Book Designer website gives a concise list for fiction and nonfiction manuscripts in [this post](#). Here is his suggestion for memoir and autobiography:

I have tried to recreate events, locales and conversations from my memories of them. In order to maintain their anonymity in some instances I have changed the names of individuals and places, I may have changed some identifying characteristics and details such as physical properties, occupations and places of residence.

Best-selling author James Frey recently came under fire when his own memoir was found to be partly fictionalized. In a [Bad IDEA interview](#) he expressed his opinion that “memoir is whatever you want it to be, it’s a book based on your life. Obviously I’m not a guy who believes it should be factually perfect, and frankly I don’t think any of them are.” Frey ended up facing the wrath of Oprah Winfrey and lost in a lawsuit after the truth came out. Subsequent issues of his memoir include:

This book is a combination of facts about James Frey’s life and certain embellishments. Names, dates, places, events, and details have been changed, invented, and altered for literary effect. The reader should not consider this book anything other than a work of literature.

No matter how strictly an author adheres to keeping the “non” in creative nonfiction, disclosing changes to the truth through a disclaimer represents an author’s belief in being true to the story, as well as the reader.

KL Wagoner (writing as Cate Macabe) is the author of This New Mountain: a memoir of AJ Jackson, private investigator, reposessor, and grandmother. Cate blogs about writing memoir and living more and fearing less at www.ThisNewMountain.com/blog.

Member Successes

Dodici Azpadu read from her collection of poems *Wearing the Phantom Out* at Page One on September 10 and at Los Griegos Library on September 21.

John J. Candelaria's poem "Don't Call Me Jesse, My Name is Carlo" will be published in late October or early November in *OASIS Journal* 2013 by Imago Press in Tucson, Arizona.

HARD TWISTED, **Chuck Greaves'** Depression-era true crime novel that won first place in the historical fiction category of the 2010 SWW contest, will be released in U.S. trade paperback on October 22. Called "a gritty, gripping read, and one that begs to be put on film" by the *Los Angeles Times*, the book was a finalist for the 2012 Oklahoma Book Award in Fiction.

Larry Greenly's young adult biography *Eugene Bullard: World's First Black Fighter Pilot* will be released on October 1 by NewSouth Books.

Winter of the Metal People: The Untold Story of America's First Indian War by **Dennis Herrick** has been published by Sunbury Press. This is the first historical novel about the Tiguex War told from the Puebloan point of view. Visit his website at dennisherrick.com/.

Joyce Hertzoff signed a contract with Phantasm Books to publish her fantasy trilogy. *The Crimson Orb* is the first in the series and will be available as an eBook by summer 2014.

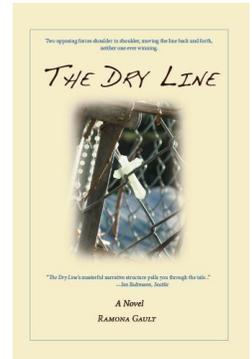
Jonathan Miller's *Laws & Loves, Real Stories of the Rattlesnake Lawyer* is scheduled for eBook release by Casa de Snapdragon in mid-October. The book merges *Legal Lapidances* and *Law, Lust & Love*, both winners in past SWW annual contests.

Albert Noyer's third 5th century novel *Death at Pergamum/ A Getorius and Arcadia Mystery* has been published in Kindle edition.

Member Books

The Dry Line by Ramona Gault
"Are we outlaws, Mom?" Anna Darby's daughter wants to know.

"A novel about facing up to secrets and the pain of change, *The Dry Line's* masterful narrative structure pulls you through the tale in a hurry to know more, to connect with these achingly real characters you wish you had as friends." — Jan Bultmann
\$18 incl. S&H. Email Ramona at ramonagault@yahoo.com.



SWW Members:

**Place an ad for your book with cover art
and a blurb of 50-60 words**

\$10/month or \$25/three months

**Contact Kathy Wagoner, Sage Editor,
JustWriteSWW@gmail.com**

**If you are a SouthWest Writers member
with a success or announcement
you'd like to share, send it to
Kathy Wagoner, SouthWest Sage Editor,
JustWriteSWW@gmail.com.**



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based on Tony Hillerman's famous characters

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Contact Sherri Burr at burr@law.unm.edu or RSVP to
Mary Dewey at 505.277.0680/dewey@law.unm.edu.

This project was organized by the School of Law's Art Committee. It features works by artists with connections to the University of New Mexico as staff members, students, faculty, alumni or friends. *Proceeds from book sales will fund a scholarship for a Creative Law Student.

Announcements

Lumina 2013 Nonfiction Contest will be judged by Cheryl Strayed. Submissions up to 5000 words. Entry fee \$12. Prizes: 1st \$500; 2nd \$250, 3rd \$100. Deadline **October 15**. <https://lumina.submittable.com/submit/22478>

Redux, the online journal of previously published work, is accepting submissions of fiction/poetry/essays during its annual open reading period ending **October 15**. They seek literary work of high quality that has been previously published in a print journal but that is not available elsewhere on the internet. Read [our guidelines](#) for submission information.

Red Hen Press and *The Los Angeles Review* announce the first annual **Wild Light Poetry Contest**. Submit up to three poems of up to 200 lines each, previously unpublished. \$25 entry fee. A prize of \$1,000 and publication in *The Los Angeles Review*, Issue 16. Deadline **October 15**. <http://redhen.org/losangelesreview/wild-light-contest/>

Scribe Publishing Company's Inaugural Short Fiction Contest is open for entries of up to 500 words of any genre of fiction (no poetry). Entries must begin with the word "First." \$10 entry fee. Prizes: 1st \$500; 2nd \$100; 3rd \$50. Deadline **October 31**. <http://scribe-publishing.com/writerscontest/>

Seneca Review is accepting submissions for its *Beyond Category Special Issue*, January 2014. The issue will be a print-and-online cyborg, featuring a perfect-bound portion of the issue complemented by an online, digital portion. The hybrid format allows for a broad range of digital and analog projects. They like anything that resists a single genre or medium. If in doubt, send it! Deadline **October 31**. For more information, email SenecaReview@hws.edu.



Story Quest Short Story Contest is open for stories written with an emphasis on speculative fiction genres (horror, science fiction, and fantasy). Submissions must be 1000–3000 words in length. No children's stories. The judges look

for fresh, character-centric stories with depth of skill in theme and plot construction. Zombies, vampires, elves, hobbits, and orcs are unlikely to get past round one. No entry fee. Deadline **October 31**. See contest rules regarding content. www.ifwgpublishing.com

Creative Nonfiction seeks essays about mistakes exploring the nature and outcomes of human fallibility. Must be vivid, dramatic; combines compelling narrative with informative/reflective element; reaches beyond personal experience into universal/deeper meaning. Must be true and factually accurate. Unpublished, up to 4000 words, \$20 reading fee. \$1000 Best Essay, \$500 runner-up. Deadline **November 1**. www.creativenonfiction.org/submissions/mistakes

National Novel Writing Month (NaNoWriMo) begins at midnight on November 1. If you're ready for thirty days and nights of literary abandon, taking on a 50K word challenge that will silence your inner critic and get your creativity flowing, sign up on their website at www.nanowrimo.org.



2013 TONY HILLERMAN WRITERS CONFERENCE
Santa Fe, New Mexico • November 7–9, 2013
www.wordharvest.com/registration.php

2013 Women's National Book Association Writing Contest is looking for entries of unpublished work. Fiction: 2,500 word limit—short fiction only; no novel excerpts or memoirs. Poetry: 3–5 pages maximum. WNBA Members: \$15 per entry. Non-Members: \$20 per entry. Online Submission Deadline: **November 15**. www.wnba-books.org/contest

Tupelo Press Dorset Prize is open to anyone writing in English. Submit a previously unpublished, full-length poetry manuscript of 48 and 88 pages (of poems). Reading fee: \$28. Award of \$3000 plus publication. Deadline **December 31**. <http://www.tupelopress.org/dorset.php>

Hobby Farms is a general-circulation magazine, directed to hobby and small farmers or those simply living (or wishing to live) in the country. They need informative, in-depth, upbeat articles of 2,000–2,500 words that will help readers better understand and enjoy the rural lifestyle. Short pieces accepted up to 500 words. Also considered personal experience essays up to 1,000 words. www.hobbyfarms.com/corporate/writer-guidelines.aspx

The Horn Book Magazine is accepting article submissions of a critical nature on some aspect of children's literature, up to 2000 words in length. <http://www.hbook.com/about-us/submissions/>

Compose: A Journal of Simply Good Writing publishes two digital issues per year, in spring and fall, with work by both emerging and established writers: fiction, poetry, creative nonfiction, articles on the craft of writing, interviews, excerpts from traditionally published works, photography and artwork. <http://composejournal.com/submissions/>

Darker Times Fiction hosts a monthly short story contest focusing on horror stories up to 5000 words but they accept entries linked to the theme of "darker times." Deadline: **the last day of each month**. For more information, go to www.darkertimes.co.uk.

The Poisoned Pencil (a Poisoned Pen Press imprint) is open for submissions of YA mystery novels, 45,000–90,000 words. www.thepoisonedpencil.submittable.com/submit

Avon Romance, a HarperCollins imprint, publishes 400 romance novels per year, and they take submissions directly from authors. www.avonromance.com/impulse

GL: What are some of the other awards and recognitions you've received for your translations?

TN: The American-Scandinavian Foundation Translation Prize; the Lewis Galantieri Translation Prize, given by the American Translators Association; the Independent Foreign Fiction Prize, awarded in the UK; and the PEN/Book-of-the-Month Translation Prize. In 2003 I also held a Translation Fellowship from the National Endowment for the Arts.

GL: *Kristin Lavransdatter* is now one of my favorite novels. But I read the original English translation 30 years ago and found it poorly written and misleading in some areas. It was only after reading your translation more recently that I could appreciate Undset's beautiful writing. That comparison underscored for me the importance of good translations. Years before we met, I read *Smilla's Sense of Snow* which is one of the Danish novels you have translated. What are the differences, if any, in translating between your three languages?

TN: I learned to speak fluent Danish at the age of 17 when I spent a year in Aarhus as an exchange student. Danish continues to be the easiest for me to translate of the three Nordic languages. I have a Masters in Scandinavian Studies, so I learned to read Norwegian and Swedish. Then I worked for Scandinavian Airlines for ten years and used my languages on a regular basis. After translating more than 50 works of fiction, I'm comfortable working with all three languages—but of course I always use my dictionaries and other reference books! And the Internet is an invaluable resource for translators.

GL: What other mysteries have you translated?

TN: Lately I've been translating mysteries by the popular Swedish writer Camilla Läckberg. My husband Steve translated the first four of her books, and I've now done four. The latest one, titled *The Lost Boy*, was just published in England. She is quickly gaining a huge audience among readers of English (although her fame is nothing like that of Stieg Larsson—as you may know, Steve translated those bestsellers into English). Other mysteries that I've translated include *The Last Good Man* by A.J. Kazinski (a pen name for two Danish writers), seven detective novels set on the island of Gotland by the Swedish writer Mari Jungstedt (only a few are available in the U.S.), and *The Library of Shadows* by the Danish author Mikkel Birkegaard.

GL: What are the titles of your own original work? What are you writing now?

TN: I've written two mysteries, *Runemaker* and *FATE OF RAVENS*, with a translator (of course) as the amateur sleuth. I've also written a novel about three generations of a Finnish-American family titled *Maija*. All three are now out of print, but I plan to bring them back as eBooks. I recently posted a YA dystopian novel, *Sam and Havilah*, on Amazon as an eBook. And last year I completed a mainstream adult novel titled *Reindeer in the Desert*.

Thank you, and congratulations on your knighthood, Sir Tiina!

Gayle Lauradunn has published poetry in numerous journals and anthologies. She worked as a feature writer for a California newspaper and as a free lance for a Massachusetts paper. She is currently finishing her first full-length poetry manuscript and a chapbook. A novel set in 18th century Scotland and Iceland is also in progress.



STUDENT SCHOLARSHIPS

SouthWest Writers is seeking deserving high school and college students for one-year scholarship memberships in our organization.

To be eligible, an applicant must be enrolled in high school or college.

If you know someone with the interest and desire to pursue a writing career or if you wish to apply yourself, please print the application form on page 16 and mail it to:

*SouthWest Writers
3200 Carlisle Blvd NE, Suite 114
Albuquerque, NM 87110*

You Can Write for SouthWest Sage

Want to add a byline to your portfolio? We welcome submissions focusing on all aspects of researching, writing, and publishing any genre. See past issues of *SouthWest Sage* for the type of article we publish. Payment is in bylines and clips. Deadline is the 15th of the month prior to the next issue. Article lengths from 300 to 1000 words. Submissions may be edited for accuracy, readability and length.

Send questions/submissions to Kathy Wagoner, Sage Editor, JustWriteSWW@gmail.com.

NEW MEXICO-ARIZONA BOOK AWARD FINALISTS

Congratulations to all the finalists in the 2013 NM-AZ Book Awards. The following SWW members are on the list:

Badal, Joseph • Fiction, Mystery/Suspense
The Lone Wolf Agenda, Suspense Publishing
Evil Deeds, Suspense Publishing
Shell Game, Suspense Publishing

Boggio, Sue & Mare Pearl • Fiction, Other
A Growing Season, UNM Press

Brown, David • History Book, Arizona subject
Bringing Back the Game: Arizona Wildlife Management 1912-1962, Arizona Game & Fish Dept

Davis, Jerry • Nonfiction, Other
Barns of the Land of Enchantment, Artemesia Publishing

Davis, Jerry • Best Cover Design, Large Format
Barns of the Land of Enchantment, Artemesia Publishing
Michigan Barns, Artemesia Publishing

Gordon, Wally • Anthology (individual or collection)
A Reporter's World, Terra Nova Books

Hey, Nigel • Biography, New Mexico subject
Wonderment, Matador

Kennedy, John • Fiction, Historical Fiction
Coyote, Book Baby

Petton, Maggi • Fiction, Historical Fiction
When Rain Remembers, Booklocker

Mirabal, RJ • Fiction, Science Fiction & Fantasy
The Tower of Il Serrohe, Black Rose Writing

Noyer, Albert • Best Cover Design, Small Format
One for the Money, Plain View Press

Rose, Elizabeth • Children's Picture Book
Dotty Ditties, Quillrunner Publishing
Daft Doggerels, Quillrunner Publishing

Rose, Elizabeth • History Book, Other
Poet Under a Soldier's Hat, Quillrunner Publishing

Shannon, Jeanne • Poetry Book (individual or collection)
At the Horizon Line, Finishing Line Press

Sutliff, David • Religious Book
The Directors

Tessler, Margaret • Fiction, Mystery/Suspense
Casting Shadows, BookLocker

Wood, Patricia • Fiction, Mystery/Suspense
The Easter Egg Murder, Aakenbaaken & Kent

Wood, Patricia • First Book
The Easter Egg Murder, Aakenbaaken & Kent

Snake Oil?

(Continued from page 8)

Free-writing means just what it sounds like it means: it's the act of writing anything that comes to mind, without editing and without stopping to consider verbiage, tense, POV, or any of the other rules by which we're bound. Even if we write the same word over and over or just gibberish, what we will have done is dip our quills into the liquid gold that is our own Voice.

I'd spent so much time trying to emulate famous authors, I wasn't even sure I had a Voice. But I tried it anyway. I sat at my dining room table with a lined tablet in front of me, picked up my pen and, to quote the Rooftop Singers, I let my mind roll on.

Something wonderful and unexpected happened. A scene poured through my pen—a marvelous scene which would add a cool twist to my story.

I'd touched my Voice. And the feeling was one of amazing satisfaction and excitement.

I'll never again settle for struggling to write the way I think someone else would. I'll never again be satisfied to use language other than what pours from deep inside myself.

Instead, I'll spend my writing time with my Voice's valve wide open. And the results of that will be something I'm hoping people will want to read.

Are You Looking For a Critique Group?

At SouthWest Writers, we love helping authors connect with each other. If you're a current member of SWW and are searching for a critique group, or are looking for another member to join your already existing circle, send an email to Kathy Wagoner at JustWriteSWW@gmail.com and we'll publish your request.

Please include in your email:

1. Your name
2. Email address and/or phone number (this will be posted publicly in the *Sage* and on our website)
3. Whether you prefer fiction/nonfiction or a mix of both
4. Which genres you are looking for
5. Geographic location (Belen, NW Heights, near UNM, etc.)
6. Anticipated frequency and date of meetings if known (e.g. second and fourth Tuesday, evenings)

