



SouthWest Sage

The Voice of SouthWest Writers

Vol. 30, No. 7

July 2014



July 4th

By Nancy Marano

Each year my hometown transformed itself into a festive, flag waving, fireworks exploding, cymbal clashing celebration of this country's independence. Businesses, lampposts and homes were festooned in a sea of red, white and blue bunting.

Laughter, picnics and fireworks filled the day with fun.

My friends and I decorated our bicycles with streamers and carefully hooked cards into the wheel's spokes with a clothespin. As we rode, the cards made happy, fluttering noises. For several weeks before the big day, neighborhoods worked on floats depicting the parade theme. Children stuck crepe paper in chicken wire designs then snuck off to check out other neighborhood's floats. We always thought ours was best.

At 1:00 p.m. the parade stepped off at the west end of Central Street. Horses, bands, floats, bicycles and men on stilts moved down the street to the cheers of spectators lining the sidewalks. Floats proceeded at a stately 10 miles per hour while costumed children waved to the crowd. From a reviewing stand along the two mile parade route, judges picked winners to receive prizes at the fireworks display that evening. Once past the reviewing stand, floats turned off the main route, clogging narrow side streets as they returned to their neighborhoods.

A perennial parade favorite was the "Old Men's Bunco, Parcheesi and Weightlifting Society" float. It held fathers of various ages dressed in shorts and mismatched clothing playing their own version of jazz to a mixture of shouts and whistles from the crowd.

By 7:00 p.m. people drifted into Dyche Stadium, Northwestern's football field, in anticipation of the fireworks. Massive displays covered the eastside bleachers. Whirligigs, moving trains, waving flags, the Liberty Bell or the Statue of Liberty all waited to be lit. Once the fire licked its way around the displays, rockets soared above the seats. They filled the skies with chrysanthemums and dripping stars that kapowed in the dark. Red, green, yellow, and blue bits of fire streaked through the night accompanied by gasps from the crowd. The last display was lit, the last rocket launched and the music drifted away on soft, summer air. People stood in silent awe of the beauty they'd witnessed then filed from the stadium while reliving another perfect July 4th.

Tomorrow, planning would start for next year's extravaganza.

Each issue of the Sage contains stories written by SWW members, this month's focus was on Independence Day, so we begin with this delightful piece by Nancy Marano.

With elections for the Board coming up in October, the August issue will focus on the candidates. The next writing challenge for the membership will be in September when we will focus on Science Fiction. Stories for the September issue must be sent to swwsage@swcp.com by August 15th. 400 words, times new roman 11pt. Word Doc or as text in email.



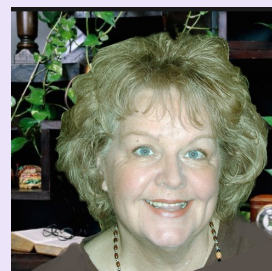
I have some sad news. Robin Kalinich has resigned both from her position as VP and from the SWW Board of Directors. She has done a great job finding interesting speakers for our meetings and in creating a strategy for SouthWest Writers. The vision that Robin helped articulate and document continues to guide SWW's evolution at our slow bureaucratic pace. And the extraordinary effort she put into creating a media presence for SWW will continue to benefit us for years.

The offsetting good news is that Peggy Herrington has agreed to be our VP for the rest of 2014. Peggy is a UNM graduate, a former editor of the Sage, and the recent SWW *Anthology*. The rest of her bio is below.

The election of officers for 2015 will at the Saturday, 4 October, meeting. All members present will be able to participate. We will almost certainly have multiple candidates for several positions so I expect that paper ballots will be used on 4 October. Between now and then, we hope to have all candidates write campaign statements for the *Sage* and to have them pitch their candidacies at a meeting or two.

Lee

Already on this year's Board as fund raiser, Peggy will serve out the year as interim Vice President. The driving editorial force behind *The Storyteller's Anthology*, from 2007 to 2010 she served on the Board and edited *SW Sage*. Professionally, Peg's now a writing coach and book editor/designer. She worked as associate editor for six years at *abqARTS*, before which she was forum manager and producer for three Microsoft divisions, and edited General Electric's *GENie LiveWire* member magazine. As a freelance technology journalist during the "computer wars," well over 500 of her feature stories, columns, articles and reviews were published.



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announcements
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swwsage@swcp.com.**

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The SWW website receives thousands of page requests every month.

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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,
Albuquerque, New Mexico



SouthWest Sage

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LOOKING FOR A CRITIQUE GROUP?

Email Rose Kern at
swwsage@swcp.com with the
following information and we'll
publish your request:

- your name
- email address
- phone number
- genre preference
- geographic location (Belen,
NW Heights, near UNM, etc.)
- preference for frequency
- day of the week.

~ WRITING MARATHONS ~

Two SWW members host an
8-hour writing marathon
on the last Sunday of every
month, 2:00-10:00 pm, at alter-
nating locations. Email
ktwag@msn.com or ruff-
wag3@earthlink.net.

SOUTHWEST WRITERS MONTHLY MEETINGS

are held at

New Life Presbyterian Church
5540 Eubank NE
Albuquerque, NM 87111

*For more information,
call the SWW office at 505-265-9485.*

*To register for classes and workshops:
sign up at SWW meetings or register
online at www.southwestwriters.com.*

Critique Groups Seeking Members

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

The Intrepids is a long-standing non-
fiction critique group that meets every
other Monday afternoon from 3:00
p.m. to 5:00 p.m. Members take turns
hosting the group. If you are looking
to join a non-fiction critique group,
please contact Gail Rubin at 505-265-
7215 or email
gail@AGoodGoodbye.com.

Mainstream Fiction

Online Critique Group
Christie Keele,
ckeele10@hotmail.com

Sci-Fi

Send name and writing experience to:
Cosmic_Connections_SF_Critique_
Group@yahooogroups.com

Suspense/Mystery

Olive Balla is looking for form a cri-
tique group for fiction. Her genre is
suspense/mystery, and she would
like to meet once or twice per month
in Los Lunas, or within a fifteen mile
radius. If this sounds interest-ing
please contact her directly. Email:
ombal-la@gmail.com (505) 865-5315
(Landline) (505) 550-0011 (Cell)

Mixed genre

NE ABQ writer's critique group (mixed
genre) is looking for 2 energetic mem-
bers. We meet in members' homes every
other Wednesday at 6 PM. If interested,
email Karen at
k_glinski@yahoo.com. Include a 1 page
sample of your writing."

Workshop and Class Refund Policy

*Full refund if cancellation is received more than 7 days before class. From one week
out to 24 hours before class, participant is entitled to select another class. Inside of 24
hours, participant receives no refund or class. For multi-session classes, if you miss a
class, you receive no refund. We pay our instructors based on how many students en-
roll, so you are part of that roll count if you don't cancel as detailed above.*

Guest Speakers and Topics at SWW Meetings

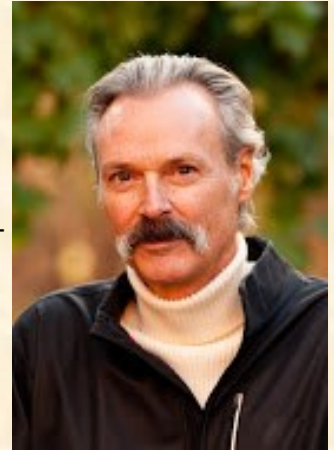
Members are free, Guests \$10, Students \$5

Saturday, July 5, 10:00 a.m. to noon

A Funny Thing Happened on My Way to the Typewriter

with Chuck Greaves

Man plans, God laughs, and a novel is born. With serendipity as his muse, Chuck Greaves has authored four novels to date, from *Hush Money* — SWW's 2010 Storyteller Award winner, and a finalist for the Shamus, Rocky, Reviewer's Choice, and Audie Awards — to his latest legal mystery *The Last Heir*. He'll discuss the art of turning life into fiction for fun and profit.



Tuesday, July 15, 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

Self-Publishing: Why do it?

with Pamela Adams Hirst

Publisher and editor Pamela Adams Hirst will draw upon 22 years of experience in newspaper and magazine publishing during her lecture: "Self Publishing: Why Do It?" After the death of her partner Beatlick Joe Speer, Pamela Adams Hirst established Beatlick Press in Albuquerque to memorialize the works of Beatlick Joe. In three years, with the support of a staff of five, Beatlick Press has segued to an award-winning publishing house with over a dozen books and a roster of more than fifty writers and poets included in the works of Beatlick Press.

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/

The Wordwrights: Don Morgan and Dennis Kastendiek moderate, all genres welcome. North Domingo Baca Multigenerational Center, Room 1, 2nd floor. Mondays, 1:30-3:30 pm. Contact Dennis: dwjkas@yahoo.com

Children's/MG/YA Writers: 3rd Saturday critique group meets monthly at Erna Fergusson Library, San Mateo and Comanche, 12:00 to 2:00 p.m. Bring five copies of five pages, double-spaced, to share.

Duke City Screenwriters:

Meets every other Thursday

6:00 - 9:00 pm Critique group, education, and fun!

Contact Terry Hicks: earthreflection@aol.com or

Marc Calderwood: marccalderwood@hotmail.com

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

Writers2Writers meets the 2nd Monday each month, 6:30-7:30 pm, Hastings Café, NE corner of Coors and Montano. Monthly speakers. All genres are welcome. Contact FAAiiken@aol.com

Last month the Sage printed the story below without its amusing ending by mistake. We apologize to Terry Civello for this error and have reprinted it here in its entirety. —editor, Rose Marie Kern

Mi Amore Italiano

The house is quiet. All are asleep. Moonlight streams through the window's sheer white curtains giving the room a soft golden glow. My lure for pleasure once again drives me to ignore the danger. Our secret rendezvous. He waits patiently in the frigid night. A visceral thrill strums my body as I open the door without making a sound and reach for him. I open the flaps of his dark overcoat. We embrace. My body warms him. We sneak into the parlor.

Anticipation flutters through me. His strong hard physique molds against my rounded softness. His face, rosy from the cold, sends shivers down my spine. A white speckled shirt hugs his broad chest. Dark brown slacks caress his steel-like thighs. So handsome. So willing to give of himself.

I spoon close to him rubbing over his body with my hands. His coarse stubble rubs against my cheek. My lips skim along his. Our tongues dance a mouth-watering duet. We melt into each other. I nibble along his white collar, opening his shirt. His brown slacks are firm against me. My legs tremble. Finally I taste him fully. Ecstasy!

Someone stirs. We break away. Our breathing ragged. Desire frustrated. My hands spread over his coat to refasten it. Our craving is never satisfied.

"Domani." I whisper as he returns into the dark cold.

I bid *Buona Notte* to my sweet Neapolitan Gelato.

By Terry Civello

What's an Author to Do?

Sell your book to the 'Big 5'?
Lots of luck. Light a candle.

Publish It Yourself?
Sure—*If You Know Enough About:*

- ▶ Editing
- ▶ Layout
- ▶ Cover design
- ▶ Proofreading
- ▶ Printing
- ▶ Ebook conversion
- ▶ Distribution
- ▶ Marketing
- ▶ And that's how you want to spend your days.

But Now There's Another Way!

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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 types of articles we publish.

Payment is in bylines and clips. Deadline is the 15th of the month prior to the next issue. Article lengths from 300-1000 words. Submissions may be edited for accuracy, readability and length.

Please send all submissions as either standard text in an email or in a word document with Times New Roman or calibri font in 11pt. Size. Do not get fancy with any formatting or fonts—the more difficult it is for me to set it into the newsletter, the less likely I am to print it.

Send questions or submissions to Rose Kern, *SouthWest Sage* Editor, swwsage@swcp.com.

**Saturday, August 2 •
10:00 am to noon**

HOW TO ADAPT YOUR BOOK FOR HOLLYWOOD AND STILL LIKE YOURSELF IN THE MORNING



Alisa Valdés

New York Times bestselling author Alisa Valdés has had her popular books in development at NBC, Lifetime, Nickelodeon, Columbia Pictures and now, with Marvista Entertainment. In this presentation she'll talk about the lessons she learned (sometimes the hard way!) about how the Hollywood machine works. She'll also offer insider tips on how to pitch your ideas, books, and vision for TV and film.

Albuquerque native **Alisa Valdés Gandy** (formerly Valdes-Rodriguez) is a *New York Times* and *USA Today* bestselling author of more than a dozen commercial women's fiction, young adult novels, and memoirs. She was named one of the 25 Most Influential Hispanics in the United States by *Time* magazine; one of the 100 Most Influential Hispanics in the United States by *Hispanic Business* magazine twice. *Latina* magazine named Alisa a Woman of the Year. *Entertainment Weekly* hailed her as a Breakout Literary Star, and CNN named her among its 20 Most Influential US Hispanics.

Alisa has a [Master of Science](#) in Journalism from Columbia University, is a Pulitzer-nominated, award-winning former staff writer for the *Boston Globe* and *Los Angeles Times*, was named the top essayist in the nation by SUN-MAG, and is an Emmy-winning former TV reporter for WHDH-TV. Alisa has also written and sold pilot scripts to Nickelodeon, NBC, and Lifetime Television. Visit Alisa at alisavaldes.com.

**Tuesday, August 19 •
7:00 pm to 9:00 pm**

TAKING CONTROL OF YOUR NARRATIVE



Tanaya Winder

The same techniques, rules, and advice that [apply to](#) crafting a poem, a story, or an essay can also be implemented in your writing and creative life. Tanaya Winder will discuss plot, story arc, the importance of a character-driven story versus a plot-driven one, the function of an image in these genres, and the power of voice. The talk will include writing prompts, so bring your pen, paper, and creative brains. Tanaya will also offer advice on becoming the protagonist and being a hero in your own creative writing life.

Tanaya Winder is a poet, writer, artist, and educator from the Southern Ute, Duckwater Shoshone, and Pyramid Lake Paiute Nations. A winner of the 2010 A Room Of Her Own Foundation's Orlando prize in poetry, her work has appeared or is forthcoming in *Cutthroat* magazine, *Adobe Walls*, [Superstition Review](#), [Drunken Boat](#) and *Kweli* among others. Her poems from her manuscript "Love in a Time of Blood Quantum" were produced and performed by the Poetic Theater Productions Presents Company in NYC. Tanaya has taught writing courses at Stanford University, UC-Boulder, and the University of New Mexico. She has a BA in English from Stanford University and a MFA in creative writing from UNM. She is a co-founder and editor-in-chief of [As/Us: A Space for Women of the World](#), a literary magazine publishing works by indigenous women and women of color. Tanaya is the Director of the University of Colorado at Boulder's Upward Bound program serving 103 Native American youth across the U.S. She guest lectures and teaches creative writing workshops at high schools, universities, and communities internationally.



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Member Successes

Gail Rubin, author of *A Good Goodbye: Funeral Planning for Those Who Don't Plan to Die*, is an ongoing contributor to Mortuary Management Magazine and just had her first article published in Funeral Business Advisor. Her TV series, also called *A Good Goodbye*, is now available on Amazon.com.

RJ Mirabal has reserved a dealer's table and an extra pass the Bubonicon 46 Science Fiction and Fantasy Convention in Albuquerque, August 1-3, 2014. He is anxious to share the 6 foot table with any interested science fiction/fantasy SWW member. This should be a good opportunity to sell books of this genre. Please contact RJ at rjmirabal@gmail.com



SWW member **Joyce Hertzoff** The Crimson Orb, the first novel in the fantasy Crystal Odyssey series, was published by Phantasm Books, an imprint of Assent Publications. The book is available from Amazon, Barnes and Noble and Smashwords. A launch was held June 17 at Smallcakes cupcakery.

Jim Tritten's humorous essay "Dad I'm on an All-plant Diet" won 2nd Place and a Silver Medal at the National Veterans Creative Arts Competition in 2014. You can read it at: <https://www.facebook.com/notes/jim-tritten/dad-im-on-an-all-plant-diet/10151687812240342>

Independence Day--A Slight Alteration

By Roger Floyd

I've always had the greatest respect for the Fourth of July holiday--Independence Day as we call it--though for a long time I've had the feeling there's something not quite right about it. I'm not talking about the *reason* for the holiday, and not the celebration itself. The fireworks and displays, the flying of the flag, the speeches, swimming in the old swimming hole, the picnics with fried chicken and potato salad and corn on the cob--yes sir, that's all a part of the greatest national celebration we have in this country. I wouldn't change a thing.

What has concerned me about the holiday was the date. We celebrate the Fourth of July as the date the Declaration of Independence was adopted and the date the announcement of that adoption was made to, as the Declaration put it, a "candid world." Fair enough.

But simply stating independence isn't the same thing as actually being independent. Especially not from Great Britain in 1776. If that notion were true, any country could declare its independence from a foreign power any time it wanted and go about its business as a new nation. It's one thing to *state* independence, quite another to *prove* it. In our case, Britain, not unexpectedly, saw things differently. They had too much invested in the colonies to let a declaration like that go without a response. We had to fight a war, a terrible war of independence, and that war didn't end until British General Lord Cornwallis surrendered at Yorktown, Virginia, on October 19, 1781. Even after that, the war continued, largely at sea, for another two years and the treaty that finally ended the war wasn't signed in Paris until September 3, 1783.

So, looking back on everything, I'm beginning to feel the real date we should celebrate as Independence Day is the date of Cornwallis's surrender. It was then we proved we could take on the best army in the world and defeat it. We showed we had the guts and determination to run our own country and take our place among the other nations of the world. After all, if we could come together as a new national entity and raise an army and fight as one to end the tyranny of the British King, we certainly proved we could function as an independent state. Who could deny us?

Upcoming Workshop

Websites for Writers

With Loretta Hall

1:00 - 5:00 pm

Saturday, September 27, 2014

Meeting space: TBA

\$40 SWW members/\$50 OSHER members, \$55 Non-members. All categories add \$10 at the door if not registered in advance



Learn how to design a website that will be attractive and effective. Topics include domain names, purpose of your website, website design concepts, hosting options, search engine rankings, and inexpensive (or free) site-building software. We will explore options for creating and maintaining your own website without knowing any programming language. Using the types of template-based programs and reliable but inexpensive hosts we will discuss, the cost of your site can range from \$0 to about \$10 per month. If you decide to have someone build your site for you, this workshop will prepare you to talk knowledgeably with that person about what you want.

Nonfiction author Loretta Hall maintains four websites that she built using template-based software. One of them, SubsurfaceBuildings.com, has won several awards and is the top search engine result for "underground buildings." The others are NMSpaceHistory.com, SpacePioneerWords.com, AuthorHall.com. As the author of six nonfiction books, Loretta's passion is explaining technical concepts to non-technical people.

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 Rose Kern, Sage Editor,

swwsage@swcp.com

Fourth of July

"Cut!" Shy and surprised I was released to my next dance partner. He guided me easily around the ballroom. "I'm Hudson, from New York. I'm spending July with my aunt. What brings you to celebrate Independence Day with the Ambassador?"

"I'm Phyllis from New Jersey, staying the summer with my sister. Mexico is her husband's first Foreign Service post. He trained when he got back from the war."

Hudson smiled.

He was literally the handsomest man I had ever seen up close. "I'm a senior at Princeton, thesis on Quaker pacifists during the war. Tell me something characteristic about yourself."

"I'm a senior at Connecticut College, English Major, in love with Yeats."

We whirled around. The music ended. Hudson thanked me and departed.

Fifteen minutes later he reappeared. "Here's my method. I arrive at a crowded hall like this, I look it over, I focus on all the attractive girls shorter than I am, I try them out, and I settle on one." He grinned down at me. "I'm five feet six, short enough to make me a bombardier in the war. Something else. This Fourth of July is my 26th birthday. I'm celebrating in Mexico City with you. Let's begin talking."

"Oh my!", I said. "I'm honored." We danced. We talked. He called the next day and the day after. I fell in love for the first time, deeply, transcendently, forever, blessed in my happiness, whatever might come later.

One evening Hudson stood outside the window of the school where I took a class and loudly yelled my secret nickname three times. Nobody identified me, but I blushed fiercely. One day he showed off a performance of complex gymnastics at a gym. I was astounded. We went to the pyramids together and to a bull fight. At summer's end we went to the Jersey shore together.

When he visited me at college, he brought with him the gift of a book. "Wait a minute. I have one for you. I bet it's the same one."

It was. He asked me to marry him. I said yes. He never mentioned it again. I was mad with happiness.

A week before Christmas his mother telephoned me. Hudson had killed himself, a Quaker pacifist bombardier. The war was over, the love, never.

Phyllis Hoge Thompson

Members endorse Brown Bag Seminars Following Saturday Meetings

By President Lee Higbie

As many of you know, we are starting Brown Bag Seminars following our regular Saturday morning meetings. These sessions should last 30 to 90 minutes. Our first BBS on 7 June, discussed a few of the mechanics of critique groups and asked for input on topics for the BBSs.

Kathy Kitts will conduct a more comprehensive critique group or critique circle BBS in August. We hope that this will both introduce you to some of the etiquette and responsibilities of critiques and help you find a critique group. One characteristic of critique groups that we discussed at the last BBS was the need for group homogeneity. A best selling author in your group might seem like a ticket to a publishing contract, but that's not likely. The ticket to publication is good writing (sentence and paragraph level structure) and good story telling (chapter and novel level structure).

Many writers make snide comments about the writing in best-sellers. "It's not very good." "I can do a lot better than that." Once Dan Brown had been on the best-seller list for months, his writing sins all were forgiven. His story telling carries the day, leaving the smug unpublished authors to wonder why he doesn't hire a better editor. Come to the August BBS and let Kathy's insights into critique groups be a guide to improve your writing and storytelling.

In the interim, at the July BBS, I will discuss copyright law, practice and reality at the BBS. I will discuss the aspects that are of interest to writers and describe some of information that relates to copyrights: ISBN, BISAC, DDN, LCCN and so so on.

Copyright protects your expression. If you have a great idea, copyright offers no protection until you write it down. The novel you plan about Osama Bin Laden's fourteenth wife is only protected by your tight lips. On the other hand, once written, and as soon as it is written, copyright law protects you. If you show your synopsis to a critique circle, the synopsis is protected (you wrote it down), but not the idea. So when Ms. Plager Eyes writes her novel, *The Fourteenth Wife*, you have no legal recourse. But if she copies a paragraph from your synopsis for her own, copyright law is on your side.

To find out all about these nuances and about the importance of all the various book numbers, pack a lunch or plan to eat late and come to the July BBS—half an hour after the Saturday meeting.

That's My Baby! **A Gathering for Picture Book Critique** **September 6, 2014, 1:30 - 4:30 pm.**

Do you have picture book manuscripts you've always wanted feedback on?

Join children's author-illustrator Betsy James and fellow writers for an afternoon of constructive peer critique and insight into writing and illustrating for children.

Bring manuscripts that do not exceed 800 words (most first picture books should be 500 words or less). To help your readers help you, the best format for your work is double-spaced, 12 point Times New Roman.

SWW Members \$40

OSHER Members \$50

Non-members \$55

Plus \$10 if not registered in advance

Southwest Writers

Carlisle Executive Offices

3200 Carlisle Blvd NE, Suite 114

Albuquerque, NM 87110

<http://www.southwestwriters.com>



Betsy James is the author and illustrator of sixteen books for adults and children.

<http://www.listeningatthegate.com> (older readers)

<http://www.betsyjames.com> (younger readers)

Born on the Fourth of July (With Music)



Dianne R. Layden

The Fourth of July is the best birthday in the calendar – a national holiday with fireworks across the United States. My extended family made a fuss about my birthday, a sumptuous picnic at a neighborhood park with sparklers. *“Saturday in the park, I think it was the Fourth of July . . .”*

My hair, before turning white, was light brown with red highlights, and I have fish-belly-white skin and blue eyes. So when people learned I had a Fourth of July birthday, I would say, “That’s why I’m red, white, and blue.” *“I’m a Yankee Doodle Dandy . . . born on the Fourth of July”*

I’ve worn a special outfit on my birthday – white Bermuda shorts, white blouse with a sailor collar, both with red and blue trim. *“I can remember the Fourth of July, running through the backwood bare . . .”*

A child of the 1960s, I joined the civil rights movement and counterculture with beads, a headband around my forehead, and ideals about democracy and equality. *“It’s a desperate cry for freedom and a better way of life. Let’s make every day the Fourth of July . . .”*

I’m a patriot just because of my birthday, even when I opposed the Vietnam War. At the University of New Mexico in 1970, I participated in one peaceful anti-war demonstration, but violence occurred on the other side of the building. The anti-war movement is credited with stopping the war, yet violence teaches a harsh lesson about social protest. *“Love must forever and ever stand . . . All on the Fourth of July”*

On my birthday I’ve always felt hope. At summer camp in my teens, fireworks exploding across the lake would move me to tears. Life was unfolding and I sensed I had prospects. I turn 71 in 2014, with ailments and regrets but also American optimism. *“It was twilight on the Fourth of July . . .”*

“Saturday in the Park”
“Yankee Doodle Dandy”
“Born on the Bayou”
“Cry Freedom”
“On the Fourth of July”
“Fourth of July”

Chicago
George M. Cohan
Creedence Clearwater Revival
Franky Perez
James Taylor
Mariah Carey



Dianne Layden is a writer and retired college professor in Albuquerque. Her field is American Studies. She came to New Mexico in 1969, left twice for university faculty posts in Houston and Southern California, and returned twice. In 2003-2014, she taught English at Central New Mexico Community College. The subjects of her research and publications include public violence, New Mexico history and culture, and social justice. She also has written award-winning essays, poetry, and book and film reviews.

Welcome New Southwest Writer’s Members!

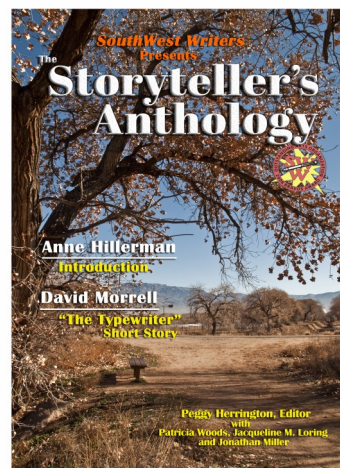
Marilea Carter Rabasa

Adam Campbell

Angus Robb

Nadine Takahashi

Susan Pearson



The Storyteller’s Anthology is now available to order in paperback on Amazon [here](#). Please consider leaving a positive comment on the Review page with a 5-star rating to get things rolling.

On Persistence

Column no. 17

by Olive Balla

I've been working on a novel for nearly seven years. The path has been slow-going and fraught with frustration. Trial-and-error learning, especially in the absence of any real feedback, is incredibly time consuming. So it is in the interest of helping those kindred spirits who dream of getting published before the next millennium that I humbly offer this brief overview of my journey.

Things I didn't know seven years ago: whether or not I needed an agent, which publishers accept unsolicited submissions, acceptable word count, genre requirements, how to build suspense, importance of conflict, what makes for good dialogue, the uber-importance of the first words of the novel, consistent POV, back story placement, and how to make use of all five senses, to name a few.

The first iteration of my novel weighed in at 45,000 words. It opened with a description of the weather (a huge no-no), and I hadn't yet learned that each chapter needed to include conflict and end in suspense. However, excited to have managed to get the story down on paper at all, I sent out a spate of submissions to potential agents. Most didn't respond; others sent boiler-plate rejection letters.

So I signed up for a creative writing class and bought a couple of how-to's. Armed with fresh information, I edited. Along the way, potential scenes bubbled up from what Stephen King calls "the boys in the basement," and my novel grew to 55,000 words. I confidently sent out another salvo of submissions to potential agents. Result? See the preceding paragraph. A slurry of rejection mixed with feelings of ineptitude formed in the pit of my stomach. I questioned whether I actually had what it took to be a published writer.

However, determined not to give up, I bought Strunk & White's *Elements of Style*, along with enough books on writing to fill a small bookstore. I read each one, highlighting salient points in pink, yellow, blue, and green. I took another class then edited some more. I entered a couple of contests and paid extra for critiques; I attended a couple

of conferences. I established a daily writing schedule and stuck with it. My novel grew to its current 75,000 words.

Having learned that first-time, unpublished authors have about as much chance of acquiring an agent as they do getting hit by a monkey falling from a spaceship, I plumbed Predators and Editors' website for small publishers (I started at the end of the alphabet, figuring most writers would start with the A's). Carefully following guidelines found on each publisher's website, I again began the submission process. I hit pay dirt. After having accumulated enough rejections to paper our guest bathroom, I was offered contracts from three publishers within a space of about four days. Thrilled into near-catatonia, I researched each, and decided on the one that had most authors in their stable as well as most titles in print.

Best how-to's I've found to date: anything by James Scott Bell (I have them all), *Self-editing* by Kirt Hickman, *The First Fifty Pages* by Jeff Gerke, and *On Writing* by Stephen King. As a poly-published author once said at a conference I attended: I'm not aiming at the Pulitzer Prize. (Huzzah to those who are.) I'm just aiming to pull my Readers out of their reality and into another for a bit.

I'll let you know how that pans out.

Next on my list: developing a marketing plan. I'll share that process in a later column.



Olive Balla resides in Los Lunas with her husband Victor and their puppy Dazee. Ms. Balla has authored one mainstream mystery novel entitled *An Arm & A Leg*, soon to be released under the Crimson Rose imprint of Wild Rose Press.

Search New and Used
amazon.com.

Help Support SouthWest Writers
SWW receives a commission on books ordered via this link to [Amazon](#).

SWW Members Reach out to the Next Generation of Authors



Above: Lee Higbie and Ben Bogenschutz exchange thoughts for fractured fairy tales. Their topics ranged from Jack and the Beanstalk to a Little Red Riding Hood picture

At Right: Kaylee Counts and Betty Higbie think about a lion in the Three Bears story setting

Two SouthWest Writers met some emergent writers, ages four to ten years old, at the Chinook Spirit Children's Academy in Taylor Ranch, NM. The director, Holly Wu, wanted the children to meet writers and be able to ask questions and share ideas with her students. The sharing circle demonstrated critiquing skills such as making connections, asking questions and what made you laugh.

Betty Higbie shared her picture book **Flossie Q Fish** with the group. Caryl McHarney's colorful and emotive illustrations kept the story swimming along.



Above: Anna Bogenschutz makes a title page for her **Two Chicks** story



This Odd Calling Help for Tangled Thoughts

Article and
Illustration
by Betsy James

Quotes in American English:

"Hey," he said.

"Hey—a manhole!" he said, and vanished.

"Hey..." Dang. A manhole hadn't been in his plan. His last words—"Hey, a manhole!"—were duly recorded.

"Hey." Had he taken the manhole into account?

When you fall in a manhole, yell, "Hey!"; not that anyone will hear.

When you fall in a manhole, yell "Hey!": it alerts the rats.

"If you fall in a manhole, yell 'Hey,'" she said. "Then swim like hell."

Quotes and Commas:

Oh god. You would ask about commas. As you can

see above, American commas and periods live *inside* the quote marks because they're irrational, like our health system, or maybe they prefer a gated community. Colons and semicolons live *outside* with the Brits. Go figure.

Thoughts:

As a rule the dialogue tag, plus capitalization and context, are enough:

Sally thought, Wow, that alien's got great legs. Lots of great legs. I'd like to see him in a Speedo*, she thought. In several Speedos, actually.

The exception is if you're writing for kids under twelve, who are less skilled readers:

If I sic Rex on that leggy alien, Buddy thought, I can start World War Three.



*Personally I prefer the British term, "budgie-smuggler."

Betsy James is the author and illustrator of sixteen books for young adults and children. Visit her on the web at www.listeningatthegate.com and www.betsyjames.com

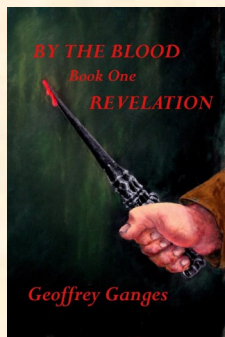
An Interview with SWW Author E. H. Hackney

by KL Wagoner

E. H. “Hack” Hackney is a retired engineer turned fantasy writer who lives on the east slopes of the Sandia Mountains of New Mexico. His articles and essays have appeared in *East Mountain Living* magazine, *Albuquerque the Magazine*, *East Mountain Telegraph*, *The Independent*, and *SouthWest Sage*.



He published his first novel *By the Blood, Book One: Revelation* in 2013 under the pen name Geoffrey Ganges. You can find Hack on his website at <http://www.ehhackney.com/> and on Twitter at @ehhackney.



1. What is your elevator pitch for *By the Blood, Book One: Revelation*?

Quint is a wizard and healer—and a dwarf, abandoned by his mother as an infant and tortured by his stunted, distorted body. By accident he discovers that the Torg, an ancient enemy of his people, are returning. While he and his apprentice are drawn into a dangerous quest to find

the Torg, Quint begins to discover his own history. As the wizard confronts his origins his world is shaken. He doesn't know that of all the dangers he faces his own heritage may be the most deadly.

2. What unique challenges did this work pose for you?

The biggest challenge was creating this world and making it and the characters believable. It is a fantasy, so there's magic, but I tried to make everything, including the magic, genuine and rooted in nature. My goal was to set it in a real place you would like to visit, populated with characters and creatures you would want to meet.

3. What was the most rewarding aspect of writing it?

Regardless of sales and reviews, writing a book is an achievement. That is a reward in itself. Most rewarding is that a number of readers have enjoyed the book and *get* what I'm trying to do.

4. Tell us more about *By the Blood*.

The seed of the novel was the first chapter of the book, which was to be a short story. When I got into it, I realized there was a great deal more to tell. I didn't know it would be a trilogy until halfway through the book. It took a year and a half to reach a version I was willing to show my first readers. That's a long time, but I was writing a book and learning how to write a book at the same time (and still am). A little less than a year passed between sending drafts to my first readers to completing the final version. Some of my characters surprised me along the

way. For example, I didn't know Quint, my main character, had a lopsided walk until I saw him walking in my mind. That's one of the reasons I don't develop extensive character profiles beforehand. I don't really know the characters until I see them in action and involved with other people, even animals.

5. How has your experience with nonfiction/technical writing helped with your fiction? What did you have to learn in order to write fantasy?

I was an engineer in a previous life and contributed to many proposals to government agencies. Proposals are page limited, so you need to make your words count. The second thing that carried over from my earlier work is to strive for clarity. Regardless of how brilliant your ideas might be, they will be lost on your readers (or proposal reviewers) if they don't understand them. The one thing I'm learning now is to trust my instincts. As an engineer I planned and worked with reason and logic. I relied mostly on my technical ability. Now, writing fiction, it is hard for me to trust in my creativity (or that I have any).

6. Does music play a part in your creative process?

I feel a kinship between music and writing. Sometimes I can see rhythm and tempo in dialog, or in short or long paragraphs, or short vs. long sentences. I can sometimes see theme and variation, one of the foundations of music, in writing—varying words with similar meanings or changing word order.

7. Why did you decide to use a pen name?

My full name is Ewing Haywood Hackney. There was no form of that name that sounded like a good author's name to me, especially for a fantasy. I have used the nickname, Hack, for half a century, but that was no help. Geoffrey Ganges sounded like a good name for a fantasy author. Also, I have started two action-adventure books, a young adult novel and a contemporary morality book, and have written several short stories. If I were to publish in another genre, I would want a different pen name, anyhow.

8. What writing projects are you working on now?

I am 20,000 words into Book Two of *By the Blood*. I am also working on what might be called a self-help book, about how to live life. It is the closest I have come to writing a journal. I doubt if it will ever be published, but if it is, the subtitle will be “Life lessons from seventy years of dumb decisions, most of which seemed like good ideas at the time.”



KL Wagoner (writing as Cate Macabe) is the author of *This New Mountain: a memoir of AJ Jackson, private investigator, repossessor, and grandmother*. Visit her at www.ThisNewMountain.com/blog and her blog devoted to speculative fiction at <http://klwagoner.wordpress.com/>.

Announcements

The New Mexico Film Foundation is now taking submissions for the George RR Martin Screenwriting grant.

- The grant is for a Sci-Fi or Fantasy script open to New Mexico residents 18 and older.

- Submission deadline: Sept 15th.

The winner will receive \$5000.

For details on submission requirements and how to apply:

<http://www.nmfilmfoundation.org/grrm-grant/>

Three SWW writer members, **Karin Bradberry, Jacqueline Loring, and Caroline LeBlanc** will perform in the *The Museum of the American Military Family* program, **POETRY & SPOKEN WORD: 4 VOICES ON THE 4TH** at the Nuclear Science Museum, (601 Eubank) July 4th at 2 PM.

4 VOICES is a collage performance presented as part of *Sacrifice & Service: The American Military Family*, the Museum of the American Military Family's summer long exhibit. Come hear military daughter, son, wife, husband, mother, father & veteran interweave their stories. While you are at the museum, please visit our exhibit.

More information at: <http://americanmilitaryfamilymuseum.wordpress.com/>.

TELLING ALBUQUERQUE is a local run of the national Telling Project produced in partnership with the Albuquerque based Museum of the American Military Family, and funded in part by a grant from the Bob Woodruff Foundation. TELLING ALBUQUERQUE will be a stage performance of veterans' and military family members' stories. We are looking for Albuquerque veterans and military family members (including close companions) ready to tell their stories as performers. No stage experience is necessary. All generations are welcome. There are 4 steps: **1.** Videotape interviews of story scheduled for mid-July. **2.** Project staff will script stories for stage. **3.** Four days of intensive rehearsals during first week of September will help veterans/military family members turn story into performance. **4.** Six public performances beginning on 9/11.

We also welcome volunteers interested in helping with various tasks involved in the production. Contact Caroline LeBlanc, wildernessheart@msn.com for more information, or go to <http://thetellingproject.org/>. Sign up for interview by July 12 by going to info@thetellingproject.org.

SCBWI-NM HANDSPRINGS CONFERENCE 2014

Please mark your calendars for the upcoming Handsprings Conference on **Oct. 24 and 25, 2014** at the Ramada Inn, Eubank and I-40. Faculty will include the following publishing professionals:

- Diane Muldrow, Senior Editor, Random House
- Patti Ann Harris, Senior Art Director, Little, Brown Books for Young Readers
- Sara Megibow, Agent, Nelson Literary Agency
- Julie Ham, Associate Editor, Charlesbridge

The conference will include an evening social event on Friday, as well as a First Impressions Panel. Individual faculty presentations, plus the opportunity to attend two of our five targeted breakout sessions will take place on Saturday. Written manuscript and portfolio critiques will be available at an additional cost. Registration will open online at scbwi.org on July 30. For more information, contact handsprings@scbwi-nm.org.

Third Annual **Shelf Unbound Writing Competition for Best Independently Published Book**, sponsored by Bowker has just been launched. Details can be found at : <http://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/shelf-unbound-magazine-launches-third-annual-contest-to-discover-the-best-in-self-published-books-262515201.html>.



Kimberley Mitchell smiles from behind her laptop. Kimberley designs and runs the slide show that accompanies announcements at the SWW Meetings—Thanks Kimberley!

Penteli Mountain

By Marilea Rabasa

My son and I loved to fly kites when he was growing up in Virginia. The right kind of wind could propel his paper bird high and far, with us right on its tail giving it enough slack to keep it soaring in the air currents.

He's a grown man now, but I remember a day twenty-five years ago when we were living in Athens, Greece. We were driving home from his friend Chris' house. Chris lived on Penteli Mountain, one of my favorite haunts outside of Athens. From the crest of this hill on a clear day in winter you could see the whole bowl of Athens, with the smog hovering overhead, and even beyond. This was where the Brits came to celebrate Boxer Day every December 26. They hiked up more for the whiskey than the view, but that's another story.

As we turned the corner, we saw the tail of a kite peeking out from under a pile of rubbish. We knew it was a kite tail because it had flags zigzagging down the string. Also, everyone came to fly kites on Penteli Mountain in December when the weather changed. This kite had lost its wind and lay abandoned in the field, its owners having no more use for it.

And so, our curiosity taking over, we stopped the car, got out, and went to investigate. Right away our curiosity turned into compassion and we wanted to breathe new life into this broken and tattered old kite. I never thought that something inanimate could come to life. But at this time in my life there was a dying in me that I knew I had to defeat or it would defeat me. My son was part of this tragedy, and somehow we knew that the road to healing could start with repairing this kite and watching it fly again. A dust-covered old TV pinning it down to the ground was holding the kite hostage. Its colorful tail saved it from certain death.

So we took the kite home and repaired it with glue and tape. We waited for a good day with just enough wind to try and fly it. The day finally came, a clear sunny day with a nice breeze. Together we took the kite back to the mountain and flew it. We watched it continue to rise and float in the air until all the string was used up. We ran with it as it leaped in the wind. It was flying like it was brand new – a miracle!

We didn't let that kite go. We brought it down and carefully put it in the car. We knew we would probably never fly it again, but we couldn't let go of something that had taught us such an eloquent lesson: I was sure from that day on that there are second chances in life for those who have the heart to reach for them.

Marilea Carter Rabasa, M.A., taught English as a Second Language in northern Virginia for seventeen years. She and her partner retired from full-time teaching and moved to New Mexico where they have lived since 2009. They grow fruit on their orchard and enjoy hiking and backpacking all over the United States.

Marilea is a member of SouthWest Writers, Story Circle Network, based in Austin, Texas, and National Association of Memoir Writers.



Interview with Author

Eric Shonkwiler

By Leah Angstman



*Eric Shonkwiler is a University of California–Riverside MFA graduate and the author of the literary fiction novel, **Above All Men**, a 2014 Midwest Connections Pick released in March from MG Press. Born and raised in Ohio, Eric is currently residing in Deming,*

New Mexico, where he is putting finishing touches on book two and researching local history for book three, completing a trilogy. You can find him at eric-shonkwiler.com.

Start with your *Above All Men* elevator pitch:

Above All Men is the story of David Parrish, a war veteran and farmer trying to keep his family and farm together in the wake of the economic collapse of America. When a local child is murdered, old demons are loosed in David, and he goes on a hunt for the killer.

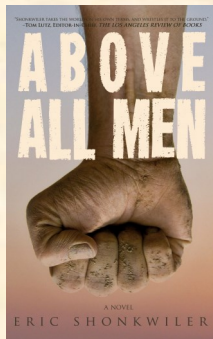
When we think “apocalypse,” we think zombies. How do you shake that stigma with your “slow-pocalypse,” and why is it important to paint a realistic near-future?

The last part answers the first—*Above All Men* is grounded in realism, and despite its trappings of taking place in the future and all of the changes that have occurred since then (immense climate change and societal collapse), there's nothing magical, biblical, or sci-fi about it. I tried my best to paint a future that I see coming. I think its importance is self-explanatory. There's nothing to laugh at, here. Nothing is ironic. This may be coming.

Your protagonist, David, was influenced by your Vietnam-veteran uncle, who passed away before the book was released. Did it become easier or harder to continue with the book after his passing? Did you feel a duty to remain true to any part of your uncle's character, and at what point did David truly start taking

on a life of his own?

I don't think it became more or less difficult, though his passing may have given me more drive. I don't let much stand in the way of a story, but I do feel that I stayed as true as I could to my uncle's experiences, as horrific as some were. While David's background is pastiche, I never felt that David was ever being guided or led by anything other than the story's mandates.



Your writing is also heavily influenced by landscapes. What appeals to you about the Southwest?

I find desolation to be particularly, strangely beautiful. An open reach of desert to me is more appealing than a field of flowers. There's something wonderful about a landscape that tests you. Which isn't to say that all of the Southwest is desolate. It's a varied landscape, and my favorite region of the United States.

You're researching New Mexico's history for your third book. Is there anything you can tell us about that?

The third book is going to look into the idea of a frontier becoming new, vibrant, and tumultuous all over again. In looking into New Mexico's history, I intend to find some key facets of human experience that repeat, and recast them in a different light. Or perhaps simply from a different angle.

Leah Angstman writes historical fiction and poetry and is the Editor-in-Chief and Director of Publicity at *Alternating Current Press & Promotions*. You can find her at leahangstman.com and alternatingcurrentarts.com.

Twister

By Donald DeNoon

Sirens broke silence at four thirty-five
Warning of danger to come
As twister was churning and soon would arrive

A dad, with his son, went out for a drive
Then hastily turned back toward home
Sirens broke silence at four thirty-five

Dad strained at the wheel, with crosswinds did strive
His vision was dimmed and senses were numb
As twister was churning and soon would arrive

Said son to his dad, *We have to survive*
To see Sis again and give hugs to Mom
Sirens broke silence at four thirty-five

Trees creaked as winds surged into overdrive
Low branches were beating on car like a drum
As twister was churning and soon would arrive

Winds raged, vehicle rocked
Dad steered dented car within sight of home
Sirens broke silence at four thirty-five
As twister was churning and soon would arrive

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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:

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| • Query letters | • Mainstream/literary fiction |
| • Synopses | • Genre fiction |
| • Articles | • Children's |
| • Essays | • Middle-grade |
| • Nonfiction books | • Young Adult |
| • Book proposals | • Screenplays/stageplays |
| • Short Stories | • 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 submitting your manuscript to our critique service.



SouthWest Writers

2014 Student Scholarship Application

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 a student with the interest and desire to pursue a writing career or if you wish to apply yourself, please complete this application and mail to the address at the bottom of the form.

Name: _____

Address: _____

E-Mail: _____ **Phone:** _____

Current School: _____

Current Level: _____

Area(s) of Interest: _____

(In 250 words or less tell us why you would like to be a student member of Southwest Writers):

Recommended by: _____

Contact (phone/e-mail): _____

Send this application to SouthWest Writers, 3200 Carlisle Blvd NE, Suite 114, Albuquerque, NM 87110