



# SouthWest Sage

The Voice of SouthWest Writers

Vol. 34 No 5

May

## In Other Worlds

### Sci-Fi/Fantasy Writer's Conference

June 9th - Nativo Lodge, Albuquerque



#### Contents

Page	
2	AMF 2018 Author Festival-A Roll Call of SWW members!
3	Ad information and SWW on YouTube
4	Just a Little Too Perfect by Don Travis
5	Upcoming Class
6	Speakers for Upcoming Meetings
7	A Memoir Piece by Monika Ghattas
8	Upcoming Workshops
9	Science Fiction/Fantasy Conference
10	The Great Publishing Debate
11	Registration Options
12	Registration Form
13	It Was The Dog Doo that Did It-Lisa Durkin
14	Non-SWW Events
15	Mystery of the Dead Sisters - Lynn Andrepont
17	Ask Chaucer
19	June Writing Challenge
20	SWW General Information

May is for Mystery and Memoir .  
Check out the great stories in this edition of the *Sage* by SWW authors.

#### Apologies from the Editor

Several of you submitted mystery stories to me for the May Sage. These were happily waiting in my computer for inclusion here until KABOOOM! I GOT HIT by some kind of nasty computer bug. At this time my main computer is being repaired at Sandia Computer systems and though I hope to have it back soon, it means I don't have the stories and pictures submitted specifically for this issue.

But don't despair, we plan to use them in the July Sage. Please forward them again to me at [swwsage@swcp.com](mailto:swwsage@swcp.com). I am sorry for the delay, it was unexpected.

Thanks for your understanding,

—Rose Marie Kern  
Sage Editor

Our Illustrious President is currently touring the Emerald Isle but will be back with us in time for the Sci-Fi/Fantasy Conference in June.



## 2018 Author Festival A Roll Call of SWW Members!

The 3rd Annual Author Festival sponsored by the Albuquerque Museum Foundation will take place at the museum on November 2nd and 3rd in 2018. The event brings together 50 of New Mexico's leading authors who will be giving presentations and signing books.

Of the 50 authors in attendance about half of them are SWW members including:

- Judith Avila** (Non-Fiction) •
- Joseph Badal** (Mystery/Thriller) •
- Sarah Baker** (Romance) •
- Irene Blea** (Historical Fiction),
- Joanne Bodin** (Fiction) •
- Sue Boggio** (Novel) •
- Steve Brewer** (Mystery) •
- Don Bullis** (Non-Fiction/Western) •
- Sherri Burr** (Non-Fiction) •
- Brinn Colenda** (Fiction) •
- Louis Christen** (
- Nasario Garcia** (Children's/New Mexico) •
- Monika Ghattas**
- Lisa Bear Goldman** (Children's) •
- Melody Groves** (Western) •
- Loretta Hall** (Space History) •
- Larada Horner**
- Betsy James** (Science Fiction/Fantasy) •
- Scott Archer Jones** (Fiction) •
- Robert Kidera** (Mystery/Thriller) •
- Jonathan Miller** (Fiction/Legal Mysteries) •
- Lynn Miller** (Non-Fiction) •
- R.J. Mirabal** (Fiction) •
- Donald Morgan** (Fiction) •
- David Morrell** (Mystery/Thriller) •
- Paula Paul** (Mystery/Literary Fiction) •
- David Rakel** (Non-Fiction) •
- Sherry Robinson** (Non-Fiction) •
- Margaret Tessler**
- James Tritten** (Poetry) •
- Robert E. Vardeman** (Sci-Fi/Mystery/Western) •
- Patricia Smith Wood** (Mystery)

Congratulations to all of you! Make us Proud!



## I LOVE TO EDIT!!

Fast Affordable Accurate  
Editing Services for Your  
Memoir, Book, Article, Assignment, Document

10 years experience as an Albuquerque  
Journal writer

Francesca 505.507.9688

## SWW is on YouTube!

- Have you ever missed a SouthWest Writers meeting you wanted to attend?
- Do you ever wish you could go back and listen to your favorite speaker again?  
Are you a devoted member who just can't make it to Albuquerque twice a month?

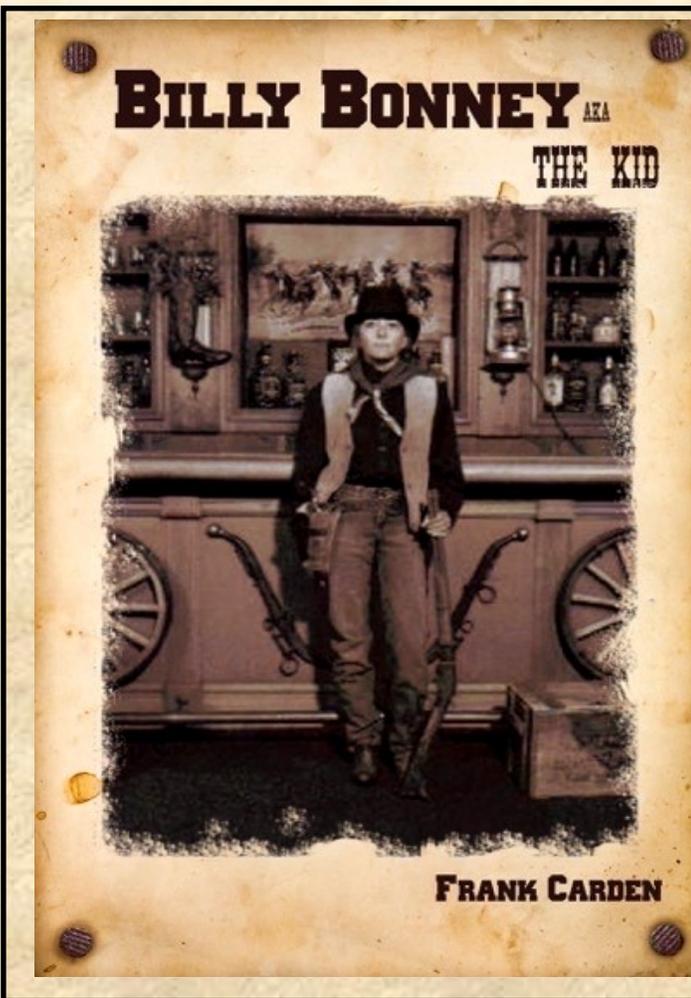


If you've said yes to any of the above, you'll be happy to hear that we record our meetings and put them on YouTube for you to enjoy—for free! Go online to the YouTube homepage :

([www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com)). Once you're there, go to the search box at the top and type in "SouthWest Writers." You'll get a page with search results, some of which will be recordings of past meetings, and one of which will be the channel itself. The channel will have the SWW pen logo. Click on that, and you'll get to the **SouthWest Writers YouTube homepage!**



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



1875, Silver City, New Mexico Territory

**It didn't matter that the deputy sheriff tried to sexually assault her.**

Wilma killed a lawman.

Now on the run, she needed a disguise. Dressing in her brother's old clothes, Wilma changed her name to William (Billy for short) and took the last name of her step-dad in New York.

Billy Bonney rode into the history books, a gunslinger with twenty-two notches on a colt forty-one, a legend, even during her short life.

*Billy Bonney aka The Kid*  
is her story.

Paperback Available on Amazon

### New Book Table Policy

At every meeting a table is set out for members to set out their books and hopefully people will buy them. However, because there is no one at the table to sell the books, it has been noticed that people look at them and leave.

In an attempt to help our members sell books, Melody Groves and Rose Kern have volunteered to sit at the table and collect payment for the books which are there. At the end of each meeting she will distribute the funds to the authors when they pick up the rest of the books.

No credit cards will be accepted, cash or checks only. Other volunteers are expected to take on the responsibility at future meetings. It is hoped that this will increase sales among our members.

### Place Your Ad Here

Advertise your writing-related products and services.

**Business Card Size only \$20.00**

1/4 page, vertical: \$40 - 1/3 page, horizontal: \$50

15% discount for 3 months/20% discount for 6 months

### 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

1/2 page horizontal \$75

15% discount for 3 mos.      20% discount for 6 mos.

**Deadline:** 15th of each month for the following month.

Payment due with camera-ready ad copy in .jpg format.

## JUST A LITTLE TOO PERFECT

By Don Travis

*What time was it!*

I sat up and glanced at the clock on Luann's bedside table. One fifty-five in the morning. Good Lord! I'd fallen asleep after she wore me out around midnight. What the hell would I tell my wife?

While scrambling around in the dark trying to separate my duds from Luann's, I fabricated my yarn. I'd been at a bar. The Stoop. With two of my associates. Bart. Yeah, Bart was a barfly. And Christopher was a hanger-on.

I rushed into the kitchenette for a swig of bourbon to put alcohol on my breath before racing to my Lexus parked on a nearby street. My tires burned rubber on the way home as I delicately balanced the need for speed with the need to avoid getting a ticket.

On the approach to the broad drive of my North Valley home, the perfect symmetry of the brick and stone edifice struck me anew. A perfect home. A perfect job. A perfect wife. A perfect *life*. Except something was off about it.

An auditor with a large accounting firm, I was pissed when they brought in someone from the outside to take over management when my boss retired. This perfect home suffered from aging plumbing and a structural fracture in trusses supporting a heavy clay tile roof.

Helen, the beautiful, educated, cultured woman I married, was very good in dealing with people. A perfect mate for my profession. But all that beauty hid sharp talons capable of ripping the psyche as well as the flesh.

I entered the house through the garage to find Helen in a recliner absorbed in a New Mexico family saga novel called *The Eagle's Claw* by local author Donald T. Morgan.

"Good book?" I asked catching a scent of the rosewater she usually wore.

"It holds my interest." She arched an eyebrow. "Aren't we getting home a little late? Without even a telephone call."

"Met some of the guys at the Stoop." I spun my tale of lies, submitted to the inevitable questions, and considered myself lucky. Until I turned to walk away.

"What's that caught in your belt?" Her voice hardened a little more with each deliberate word.

A chill ran down my back. With no idea what she was talking about, I stood glued to the carpet until she bounded out of the chair and snatched something that came free with a tug of my shorts. A pair of Luann's pink, delicately laced panties. Oh, Lord! So much for carefully separating my clothing from hers.

Needless to say, my life was not so perfect any longer. Banished from the house, I now lived in a motel room. News of my marital problems spread after Helen's divorce attorney interviewed Bart and Christopher about our non-existent night on the town. My problems affected my work. I'd be immersed in a client's tax problem and find myself distracted by what had been my perfect life... before Pantygate.

After my new boss gave me a veiled warning about shaping up or shipping out, I woke to the fact that I might end up with *nothing* of that life left. Any divorce court in the land would award Helen the house and half my assets—there went the perfect house and the perfect wife. With my job in jeopardy, the rest of it could vanish, as well.

Frightened, I undertook a search for salvation—financial, not spiritual. Although I could probably use some of that, as well. I didn't realize how desperate I was until I remembered Nick Shazinski.

We'd gone to school together back in the day but didn't pal around. From the wrong side of town, Nick ran with a rough crowd. The local cops knew him well, even before we graduated. But Nick and I had al-

ways gotten along in an arms-length sort of way.

I'd lost touch with him, but we reconnected one day in the office of a client named J. Butterfield Thomas, known to be the local mob's preeminent attorney. My old friend did some of the lawyer's investigative work. Nick and I went to lunch a couple of times, and I even had him over to the house, mostly to see how my socially conscious wife would react. But Nick cleaned up well, and Helen seemed drawn to his rough side

I'd heard enough stories to suspect Nick might be the solution to my problem. So I put in a call to my old buddy to let him know I had a problem.

"I heard. You wanna talk it over?"

"Yes, but in private," I said.

"My place or Butter's office?"

"Somewhere we won't be noticed. By anyone."

"Oh ho. I get your drift. It's that serious, huh?"

Uncomfortable over saying too much over the phone, I simply agreed.

An hour later, I nosed my Lexus into a big deserted warehouse on Commercial SE. Nick had chosen well. It didn't appear anyone visited the premises often. As I got out of the car, Nick walked out of what had been the office when this was a functioning business.

"Thanks for meeting me." I licked my lips and tasted fear. *Could I go through with this?*

"Problems, huh?"

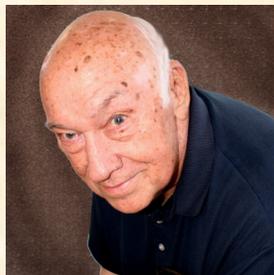
"Big time. Ones that call for desperate measures." I turned away to avoid looking at him as I spoke the fateful words. "I want to hire you. I brought \$5,000 as a down payment."

"Sorry, pal. But I already got a job. But thanks for the five grand bonus."

My back prickling, my heart somewhere below my belly, I turned to find him screwing something long and chilling onto the end of a wicked-looking handgun.

\* \* \* \* \*

SWW member Don Morgan writes mysteries under the pen name of Don Travis. The latest book in the BJ Vison Series is the Zozobra Incident set in New Mexico.



## UPCOMING CLASS

Websites For Authors!

Presented by Loretta Hall

3 two-hour sessions  
Saturday afternoons,  
2:00-4:00 pm  
June 9, 16, 23 (2018)

More information about classes and speakers is available on the SWW Website Classes page.



Fred Aiken and Dollie Williams enjoy greeting members and guests as they arrive for meetings



Photo by Vincente Valenzuela

For all you who have helped with creating the KiMo History book, it is almost done! You can expect to see it in print sometime in June.



## Speakers for Upcoming SWW Meetings

### Saturday, May 5 10am-noon

- Matthew Yde
- Albuquerque Journal Theater Critic

### Tuesday, May 15 7pm-9pm

- John Cousins
- Enter the Matrix : How to maximize income from your writing through planned content production workflow

### Saturday, June 2 10am-noon

- James McGrath Morris
- "What I learned about writing from the novelists Ernest Hemingway and John Dos Passos."

### Tuesday, June 19 7pm-9pm

- Michael Backus
- Historical Fiction

### Saturday, October 6th 10am-Noon

- Gerald Hausman
- Zen and the Art of Writing

More information about upcoming speakers for SWW Meetings is available on the SWW website:  
[www.southwestwriters.com](http://www.southwestwriters.com)



Saturday, May 5th 10am

Matthew Yde

### The Irresistible Writer

#### One Writer's Circuitous Path to Writing that's Hard to Ignore

Despite multiple media competing for attention, books and articles are more abundant than ever. People read, but why should they read you? **Dr. Matthew Yde** started as an actor, moved to teaching and directing, and then to published academic author and theater critic. In this talk he will discuss the trajectory of his career and why good writing is like good acting and good teaching.



### Editing Services by Sarah Rowe

Specializing in science fiction and fantasy books. Services Developmental Editing A look at large-scale elements such as narrative structure, style, voice, pacing, characterization, organization structure, and information content. Includes one round of editing (1-2 pages of comments) and up to half-an-hour discussion by phone. Books- 50,000-80,000 words: \$300 flat rate. Short fiction or creative nonfiction- 10,000-49,000 words: \$6/1000 words. Articles and short stories up to 10,000 words: \$60 flat rate.

Content Editing: Checking for issues on the paragraph and sentence level such as sentence structure, flow, voice, style, logic, dialogue, and transitions. Includes two rounds of editing (with time for you to make revisions in between) and up to an hour discussion by phone. Books- 50,000-80,000 words: \$500 flat rate. Short fiction and creative nonfiction- 10,000-49,000 words: \$10/1000 words. Articles and short stories up to 10,000 words: \$100 flat rate.

Fact Checking: Checking the validity of details in an informative piece, from concepts to the spelling of names. Author must provide copies of or links to all references. Articles up to 10,000 words: \$250.

Proofreading On previously edited works only. A last pass to catch typos, consistency errors, and other small mistakes. Can also check for agreement with a style guide upon request. \$8/1,000 words.

For more information contact me at: [Sarah\\_Rowe@outlook.com](mailto:Sarah_Rowe@outlook.com) (575) 425-1563

## On Foot Through the Country of Painter Frantisek Moric Nágl

### A Memoir Piece by Monika Ghattas

“Kostelní Myslova”, the partially rusted sign read. How would one pronounce this? It must be the name of this village we are walking through. Forty houses or so. Obviously nothing remarkable here.

A few steps further into the village Alojz, our Czech hiking guide, motioned us to stop. He made a brief phone call and then announced unexpectedly, “A guide will give us a short talk about this village and then take us on a tour. She will be here in a minute.”

I didn’t read the walking schedule for today, so this was news to me. But a short stop was good. It was too early for lunch, so I pulled a baggie of almonds out of a side pocket and looked around. Nothing noteworthy about this small village, except perhaps the two-story house that stood on a small hill-ock behind us. Unlike all the whitewashed farmers’ houses with their tidy yards and flowering fruit trees, this one was evidently deserted and in ruins. The yard overgrown with weeds, no window glass, the roof caving in on all sides.

Today was one of our longer walking days through the Czech countryside.

We toured Vranov Castle in the morning and were scheduled to spend the night in picturesque Telc. This Sierra Club trip had been advertised as “Walking from Vienna to Prague.” Not literally, of course, but there were plenty of walking days through this lovely countryside of fields and forests, quaint villages, and, occasionally, the rusty, hidden remnants of a terrible war.

A young woman came from a side street and warmly greeted our guide. “Please welcome Anna. She will be our guide for a special journey through the countryside. But first she wants to say a few words.”

She was in her early forties, wearing faded jeans, and a large macrame’ bag on her shoulder. She smiled and began her story. “About 15 years ago I married someone from this village. I was an outsider and not really accepted by the people living here. So I spent a lot of time walking around and trying to learn as much as possible about this place. What especially intrigued me was that house over there.”

She pointed towards the dilapidated house I had already noticed.

“I asked neighbors, the grocer, everybody I met about the history of that house. It seemed that nobody knew anything about the former owners or why it was in such a poor condition.”

She paused a moment and then continued, “It seemed to me that people were anxious to change the subject. Perhaps they knew something, but didn’t want to talk about it.”

But she continued in her quest. Younger people in the village began to take an interest in her questions and she slowly knitted together the bits and pieces she learned about the former inhabitants of this house.

“It belonged to a small farmer by the name of Franticek Nágl, who lived there with his wife and two children. He was also a gifted painter who sold his watercolors at the Saturday market in Jihlava, a few kilometers from here.”

She took an envelope of postcards from her bag and passed them around. Pictures of the surrounding countryside and nearby villages. “These are some of his watercolors that we had made into postcards. Please take one “

“In 1943, they came for Franticek Nágl. Who were they? The Nazis—Germans and Czech sympathizers, who took the painter and his family to Theresienstadt, where he taught drawing to some of the other inmates. Eventually, he and his family perished in Auschwitz. He was the only Jew in this small village that numbered about 150 people.”

She detailed the arduous process of prying information from the reluctant villagers. It was as if a communal amnesia had erased the memory of something that happened a long time ago.

“But I persisted in my quest to restore the details of this tragic event. And gradually a few other villagers offered their help,” she recounted quietly.

“We began thinking about some kind of memorial. It was difficult. We didn’t have the means to restore the house. Besides, there were no artifacts that recalled the life of Franticek Nágl. But we did find many of his watercolors.”

Our little group of 11 hikers waited quietly for her to continue. A sadness had touched all of us, but we were also hoping, unconsciously perhaps, for something good to emerge.

“So please follow me and let me show you what we put together.”

A few hundred feet down a narrow path, she stopped. In front of us were fields of yellow rape seeds in bloom. And to the right was a pole with a postcard image of these exact fields printed from one of Nágl’s watercolors. From there we walked to a pond with overhanging willow branches and a small fishing dock. Again there was the same postcard image printed from a painting finished years ago. It was attached to a pole and wrapped in a protective film together with a brief explanation. Our next stop was a forest clearing filled with dappled light. The identical postcard picture was displayed on a pole. And so we followed the painting route of Franticek Nágl for over an hour.

Eventually we reached a little hill that overlooked the valley below. Two long benches surrounded a large, rectangular table made from a rough limestone slab. A colonnade of birch trees defined that special spot.

“By the time we reached here, the whole village was engaged in our project,” Anna explained.

(continued next page)

“The men hewed this limestone slab from those mountains over there and planted all of the trees you see here. We also received some help from civic associations in Telc and in Berlin.”

A shiny brass plate attached to the slab marked the ceremonies that celebrated the completion of this memorial in 2002. Officials from Prague and the German ambassador joined the village and surrounding countryside to mark this special occasion.

—Monika Ghattas

## Upcoming Workshops

**These workshops take place after the regular Saturday meetings from 12:30pm to 2:30pm.**

**Saturday June 2, 2018**

**Where’s the Funny Part?**

**with Steve Brewer**



**Saturday, October 6th, 2018**

**Spontaneous Writing  
With Gerald Haussman**



More information about the workshops and speakers is available on the SWW Website Workshops page. All workshops cost \$20 for SWW members, \$25 for OSHER members and \$30 for non-members.

**Saturday May 5th**

## Writing Historical Fiction that Sells!

**with Sandra Toro**



Are you excited about a certain period in history? Or has a particular historical figure caught your imagination? Are you more storyteller or historian? What motivates you to write this particular novel?

This workshop will focus your project by raising necessary questions such as:

- What other books are out there about this period or person?
  - Are they history books or fiction, and when were they written?
  - Where will you find research materials about your subject? Will it require travel or other expenses?
  - Who will buy this book? Academics? The general public?
  - If you are writing about World War II, for example, what is your special take on it?
- Finally, ask yourself what motivates you to write this book?

These questions and many more will be discussed in the two-hour workshop led by **Sandra Toro** who has published six historical novels. She has taught creative writing at the University of Nebraska and the University of New Mexico over the last twenty years

### 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 for the class. For multi-session classes, if you miss a class, you receive no refund. We pay our instructors based on how many students enroll, so you are part of that roll count if you don't cancel as detailed above.*

# In Other Worlds

## Sci-Fi/Fantasy Writer's Conference

June 9th - Nativo Lodge, Albuquerque

Do your dreams range beyond the Stars? Can you see the gnomes working alongside you in the garden? Are you prepared for a Zombie Apocalypse?

Then bring your pen, pad or laptop to the SWW  
**Science Fiction/Fantasy WRITERS CONFERENCE!**

Every one of our award winning presenters is ready to help you with creating strange new worlds, new life, and new civilizations. Come attend presentations on:

- Creating Fantasy Races Indigenous to Unique Settings - R.J. Mirabal
- How to Create Your Book from a Role Playing Game - Kirt Hickman
- 5 Secrets To Keep Your Readers Spellbound - Shea Berkley
- Copyrights & Contracts for Writers - Sherri Burr
- Is this Actually a Publishable Story? - Melinda Snodgrass
- How to Score a Movie Adaptation - Zachry Wheeler
- Book Cover Aesthetics: The Good, The Bad, and the Fugly - Fiona Jayde
- Steps to Self-Publishing - Robin Cutler
- Writing Science Fiction Fast Enough to Stay Ahead of Reality  
- Eric Michael Craig

**AND THERE'S MORE!**

# The Great Publishing Debate!

## Not into Sci-Fi/Fantasy?

Want to examine publishing options and hone your craft?

Are you asking yourself “Should I follow the path of traditional publishing where I submit my manuscript to an editor or agent...or should I try to self-publish my book? This is a dilemma facing many authors today.

At this conference there are two tracks of presentations going on – one is for Sci-Fi/Fantasy and the other focuses on the craft of writing regardless of genre. The conference begins with an opportunity for all attendees to attend a debate highlighting the pros and cons of traditional publishing versus self publishing.

The directors of three publishing companies will give their views of why traditional publishing is the best route for authors while two self-published authors and the vice-president of an Indie publishing house will offer opinions to the contrary! After the debate the traditional publishers will take pitches from the attendees, and the representative from the Indie publishing group will give a presentation on what steps need to be take to self-publish.

## THE GREAT PUBLISHING DEBATE PANEL



### The Traditional Publishing Team

(L to R)

Marty Gerber - Terre Nova Books  
Kurt Mueller - Speaking Volumes  
Geoff Habiger - Artemisia Publishing

### The Self-Publishing Team

(L to R)

Robin Cutler - Director of Ingram Spark  
Eric Michael Craig - Author of  
*Prometheus Rising*  
Zachry Wheeler - Author of *Transient*

Read more about this dynamic group on the website! [Www.southwestwriters.com/conferences](http://www.southwestwriters.com/conferences)

# Sci-Fi/Fantasy Writer's Conference

June 9th - Nativo Lodge, Albuquerque

## AND THERE'S MORE!

### *You Have Options*

SouthWest Writers is dedicated to helping authors succeed, so the cost of the conference is kept low. Persons wishing to attend can sign up for the full experience, or they can choose to only attend a portion of the event.

#### **Full Day Conference**

Access to all presentations and an optional Pitch session:

\$100 for SouthWest Writer members, \$120 for Non-Members -

**10% off Full Day if you register before May 15th!**

#### **Half Day afternoons**

Choice of attending either the Sci/Fan or the Craft of Writing Tracks - no book pitch option

\$50 for SWW members, \$60 for non-members.

#### **Half Day Morning event**

Publishing Debate plus either the Self-publishing session or an opportunity to Pitch.

\$50 for SWW members. \$60 for non-members

\*NOTE: Pitch session opportunities are limited. Full Day conference attendees are given first priority. Those attending the Half Day morning event will have second priority and will be assigned in the order the registrations are received.

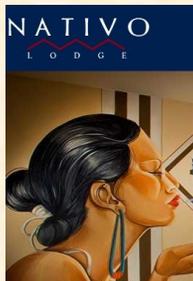
Student registration fee is \$35 with current Student ID.

### **Pre-Conference Dinner Buffet**

You can meet and mingle with the publishers and speakers at a reception buffet/dinner the evening before the event, Friday June 8th at the Nativo Lodge. Cost of the Buffet is \$39.00

**For more information or to register go to [www.southwestwriters.com/conferences](http://www.southwestwriters.com/conferences)**

### **Nativo Lodge**



The Sci-fi/Fantasy Conference will take place at the Nativo Lodge located at 6000 Pan American Freeway NE, Albuquerque, NM (Just off I-25 at San Mateo)

The Sci-Fi/Fantasy Conference room Rate is **\$69.00** (before tax) for an Artist or Mountain king or Artist or Mountain double room at single or double occupancy.

To make reservations: Call **1-866-505-7829** or front desk **505-798-4300** and ask for the "SWW 2018" rate. Guests can also make a reservation on [www.NativoLodge.com](http://www.NativoLodge.com) by entering the date of arrival and **SWW 2018** in the group code field (it is not case sensitive).

# Sci-Fi/Fantasy Writer's Conference

June 9th - Nativo Lodge, Albuquerque

## Registration Form

You may also register on the [SouthWest Writers.com](http://SouthWestWriters.com) website

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Registering for: (Check One)

**All Day Conference -**  
**\$100 Members, \$120 Non-Members \$70 Students\***

Access to all Sci-fi/Fantasy, Business of Writing, and Publishing Presentations, and panel on Traditional Publishing versus Self-Publishing options, opportunity to participate in the Book Pitching session with Publishers.

**Half Day - Limited Conference -**  
**\$50.00 members, \$60.00 non-members, \$35.00 Student \***

**Circle 1 half day option below (A B or C)**

- A** Science Fiction/Fantasy writing topics only. Half Day - Afternoon  
**B** The Business of Writing and Publishing Presentations only. Half-day afternoons.  
**C** Panel on Traditional Publishing versus Self Publishing and opportunity to participate in the Book Pitching Session. Half day - morning only.

A **Pre-Conference Buffet Dinner Reception** is being held for Conference Presenters, Publishers and Participants. This will take place the evening of Friday, June 8th in the Sabina Room at the Nativo Lodge. **Cost is \$39.00**

**\_\_\_\_\_ [check here if you will attend the pre-conference dinner/reception](#)**

5 -minute Pitch Times will be assigned. Participants must be there at least 5 minutes early - if they miss their slot they may request a later one, but are not guaranteed to receive one if all slots are filled. *Only the **All Day** or the **Half day Option C** are eligible for Pitch sessions.* Pitch Session Participants will receive an email two weeks prior to the event with the time of their pitch session and instructions from the Publishers as to what they want you to bring. The Publishers participating are listed on the SWW website - we do not guarantee which publisher you will be assigned to.

Check here if you are requesting a 5 minute book pitch slot. Slots will be given out in the order the registrations are received. There are 50 slots available at this time but more possible later.

**10% Discount on FULL DAY conference fees if Registered by May 15, 2018**  
**(discount does not include dinner/reception or Half Day Options)**

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ **Registration Fee**

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ **Pre-Conference Buffet Dinner Reception**

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ **Total**

**Payment Options:** Online at [www.southwestwriters.com](http://www.southwestwriters.com) or

Send a check with this registration form to: SouthWest Writers, 3200 Carlisle Blvd NE, Suite 114 Albuquerque, NM 87110  
SWW Main Office 505-830-6034 Monday-Thursday 10am-Noon

# It Was the Dog Doo that Did It

By Lisa Durkin

Pounding along that day, misty air tingled my face. What a wonderful day to jog through the alley and around Maple Street Park. I splashed through puddles and leapt over a fresh pile of dog doo dimpled by a shoe tread. It glistened in the gentle light. Then, around the next corner, I almost stepped on a plump old woman sprawled on the pavement. There was blood pooling around her frizzy gray head.

*Oh My God!*

Someone needed to call the police. I searched, whirling in every direction.

*I'm the only one here!*

Patting my pockets, my bra, my socks, I finally found my cell phone in my left hand. After quite a bit of fumbling, it took three tries to punch 9-1-1 on those little bitty keys with shaky hands. My eyes stung with sweat. And it was really hard to concentrate with John Denver singing *Rocky Mountain High* through my earbuds. Cursing at the sky, I yanked them out yelling, "Bird-brained-idiot!"

The operator probably didn't like that comment, but being a diligent person, she merely asked, "Where are you located?" in a flat, don't panic, tone.

I told her, "I'm in the alley, just past the squished dog poo."

Somehow, that didn't suffice.

Eventually it was all straightened out. The police arrived and took my statement. Afterward, they told me to wait in the park. I wobbled over to a bench under a maple tree and sat next to a woman with a big black bag. It felt like I had been put through a blender.

In a grass patch dappled with sunshine, a fluffy white dog barked while dragging a giggling girl by a leash through the gathering crowd. Her ponytail bobbed as she zigged and zagged. The woman next to me said, "That looks like Patty's dog. Is that her granddaughter?"

"Patty has a dog?" I said as if I knew Patty. Some people just love to talk. So do I.

"Yes," she said, her eyes wide beneath a bad dye-job. "Patty's going to make a fortune when her dog has puppies. She told me about it last week. The dog's some fancy breed, or some such thing."

"What a great thing for Patty." I said.

A man, so fat, his back filled a shirt that was shaped like a giant leaf, caught the little girl and yanked her hand, "Come on Lily." He glanced around, eyes darting at everyone in the crowd. "We have to go."

"No," the girl shook her head, "I wanna stay with the doggie."

"Leave the dog, and let's go." He glared, "NOW." With a tug, he hustled the girl to a burgundy sedan parked on Maple Street. As he opened the driver's side door, he scanned the park and then ducked inside the car.

"That was strange," said my new friend on the bench. "If

that's not Patty's granddaughter, then where's Patty?"

The white dog loped after the girl but soon became distracted by a paper bag. The breeze whisked its fur as it sniffed. Red taillights flickered as Lily and the leaf-man pulled out.

"Do you have a pen?" I asked bad-dye-job-lady. "We need to get the license plate number of that guy's car."

"Oh yes we do." She dove into the black bag perched on the bench between us.

I squinted to read the letters and numbers on the license plate, repeating them over and over until the sequence got so muddled it dissolved like a sandcastle in the surf. When my bench-mate emerged with an eyebrow pencil and a gum wrapper, she was very disappointed with me.

Like a pair of louvers, we both turned when we heard barking. A man clad in jeans and white tennis shoes was playing with Patty's white dog. The pup bounced back and forth while the man cooed for the dog to come to him. Just as the leash was within reach, the dog bounded away, tongue lolling while it yipped. It was all great fun – for the dog.

"Could you help me?" He smiled. "I need to get her back to her owner."

He was handsome, with blue eyes and a square jaw. Someone needed to tell him that the jeans and white tennis shoes had been over in the 90's.

"Sure!" I jogged over.

It was when we were corralling the playful white rug that it hit me. The man smelled like fresh dog dookie.

Snatching the leash with my best coy smile, I lead the pooch to a muddy patch next to a public drinking fountain. The man followed me across the puddle.

Clever me, I figured it out. His footprint in the moist soil matched perfectly with the dimpled tread in the dog doo I'd leapt over in the ally. He must have stepped in the poo while stalking Patty and her pooch.

That's how I caught the murderer. It was the dog doo that did him in.

\* \* \* \* \*



**Lisa Durkin** is a high school science teacher with a masters degree in Earth and Environmental Science. She contributes articles regularly to the quarterly publication of *The Beacon* by the Coalition of Excellence in Science Education. Her novel *Out of Her Skin* is ready for publication and waiting for a lucky agent.



Speaker Ben Radford had the members cracking up as he described how he came to become an expert on Scary Clowns at the April 7th meeting.

Delicious poetry was served by many members at the meeting on Tuesday April 17th,

"Nobody reads a mystery to get to the middle. They read it to get to the end. If it's a letdown, they won't buy anymore. The first page sells that book. The last page sells your next book."

**MICKEY SPILLANE**

### **2 HOUR WORKSHOP PRICES:**

SATURDAYS AFTER THE MEETINGS

**\$20 SWW MEMBERS**

**\$25 OSHER MEMBERS W/CARD**

**\$30 NON-MEMBERS**

### **Want to Write a Memoir?**

SWW hosts a memoir writing group which meets at the Domingo Baca community center on Carmel (just north of Paseo del Norte and West of Wyoming) on Wednesday evenings from 6:30 to 8:00 pm. This is a SWW program and it is free of charge to anyone who wants to attend. For more information contact

Gabriella Savarese savaresegabriella@gmail.com

## **Eleventh Annual Green River Writers Workshop: "Turning Memory into Story"**

July 12-15, 2018

Location: the historic Plaza Hotel, Las Vegas, NM

Begins 7 pm Thursday - ends 4 pm Sunday

Using memory as a starting point, the Green River Writers Workshops focus on the craft of storytelling through memoir, fiction, historical writing, & poetry.

Both experienced and beginning writers are welcome

Workshop limited to 15. Fills early.

[greenriverwritersworkshop.com](http://greenriverwritersworkshop.com)

### **Evidently**

The Croak & Dagger Chapter of Sisters in Crime is putting on an all-day seminar on Saturday, May 19, 2018. This came to be because Sisters in Crime provided us with Edgar award-winning mystery writer Jan Burke for a day. We are excited to have her as our Keynote speaker, along with other speakers and panelists, such as Anne Hillerman, David Morrell, and Joe Badal.

You can register through PayPal (but only until May 12). After that, you must mail in their intent to attend and check for \$50 along with contact info and your luncheon choice of either Roast Beef, Turkey, or Vegan. All the information is at the Croak & Dagger website ([www.croak-and-dagger.com](http://www.croak-and-dagger.com)) The price is \$50. At the door, it will be \$60.



# Mystery of the Dead Sisters

By Lynn Andrepont

Dead of night, October 1940. Outside the rain turns to sleet. I hear it rapping on the windows of our small office. My partner and I gulp down strong, black cups of java as we try to make sense of a double-murder case gone ice cold, just like the weather.

“Let me get this straight,” I say to Diane. “All we have is a single secondhand witness, someone’s auntie, who hears the story from her niece, who’s off her nut, about two dames, sisters, snuffed out at different but unknown times, at unknown locations, up north somewhere, and we have no motive, no evidence...and no bodies, right?”

“You got it, boss. I grilled the aunt on all the details.”

Diane’s a real sleuth, the best partner a private dick...make that a private jane...could ever hope to have.

“Maybe,” she adds, glancing at her notes, “none of it even happened. The whole bit just a homicidal scam, a ruse, a waste of our time. Still, auntie wants reassurance her niece isn’t headed for the slammer.”

If you need someone to crack a case wide open, retrieve stolen goods, infiltrate the mob, pinch a couple of goons, keep some innocent kid out of the clink, then I’m your gal. At least I was. Not much ever happens out here in the dustbowl boonies these days. At least this cock-and-bull story intrigues me.

“Oh, yeah,” Diane crosses over to the window. “There’s a pair of shoes, reportedly belonging to the first tomato done in.”

“The sister supposedly crushed to smithereens by some large falling object?” I ask.

“That’s her,” Diane snickers, “one splattered tomato.”

“Could’ve been an accident.”

“The niece claims the monkey men were sure it was no accident.”

“Monkey men?”

“Yeah, the other sister’s hatchet guys. Seems they had a vendetta for the niece...and then there’s her little dog.”

“What’s the lowdown on the mutt?”

“Got in a scrap with some neighbor back home so was nabbed for the pen, the big house for pooches. The niece tells auntie she thinks this neighbor might be a third sister because she looks just like them.”

“Could this be a motive?”

“Nah, the pup managed to bolt and return home.”

I’ve been around the block a few times, but I’ve never had a case like this. You need three things in this gumshoe business to succeed: smarts, compassion, and guts. I think I have things figured out and suddenly the tables turn on me. I feel for this aunt and her niece. But perhaps my sympathy is misplaced. Maybe I got it all wrong. Could even be a lousy frame up. But I won’t back off. I’ll gather all that’s clever, devoted, and gritty in me to get to the bottom of this.

Murder is murder.

“So when,” I ask, “does the niece spill the beans on these murders?” Something doesn’t add up.

“After the tornado,” Diane looks at her notes again. “She tells auntie about walking for miles on some brick road to a field where she’s served up lullaby juice, some poppy-pollen drug that puts her to sleep. Who knows what’s real and what could just be a dream?”

“Are there other players in this escapade?” I pour myself another cup o’ joe to keep my own eyes open.

“A carny guy, a midget gang, some princess doll, and a trio of clowns.”

Clowns. The world if full of them.

“Auntie also mentioned the big cheese, some wise guy said to have all the answers.”

“Wish I could meet that bird. I’d have a few questions for him.”

“Turns out, he’s just a chiseler, a con, a crumb. At least that’s what the niece told her auntie.”

(Continued Next Page)

“And the other sister, how does she bite it?”

“Acid.”

“Jeeze!”

“But the niece swears she didn’t know it was acid. She’s a prisoner in the sister’s joint, see. The monkey men have the place locked up tight. The sister wants to put the screws on those shoes the niece is wearing, the ones belonging to the other vamp and gifted to her by the princess, but they won’t come off, see, unless she’s iced. The niece just wants to go home and manages to escape with the help of Fido and the three clowns. But before they get away, the sister stops them, see, and torches one of the clowns. The niece grabs a nearby bucket and tosses whatever’s in it to douse the fire; some splashes on the sister’s puss, and so long Irene.”

“Was that the sister’s name?”

“Nah, boss, it’s just an expression, like Fido ain’t the name of the dog neither. Funny thing, though, the sister disintegrates but the clown ain’t hurt at all. Must’ve been wearing protective rags, some kind of flame- and acid-retardant underclothes. But then, this stuff doesn’t happen every day in Kansas.”

“And all we’ve got to go on are a pair of shoes.”

“Yep, ruby-red slippers.”

You think you know where you stand and someone throws you behind the eight-ball. You’ve got nothing. You’re left looking like some kind of sucker. Sure, you think you’ve got some Ace, some Bruno pegged for theft, kidnapping, maybe murder, but turns out you’re fingering the wrong ringer—your

main suspect is a little lost girly who just wants to go home.

“Diane, seems to me these sisters got what might’ve been coming to them, and the niece...”

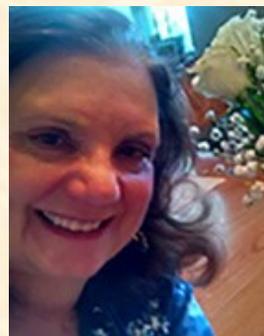
“Her name is Dotty, boss.”

“Well, I say Dotty was in the wrong place at the wrong time.”

Oh well, the rain has stopped. Time for us to head home. There’s no place like it.

Maybe I’ll just leave this one for that know-it-all wizard to solve.

• \* \* \* \*



**Jennifer Trotter**, writing under her middle and maiden names, Lynn Andrepont, holds a Master’s Degree in English from the University of Southwestern Louisiana (now the University of Louisiana at Lafayette) and has enjoyed a long and successful career as a teacher, marketing manager, communications professional, writer, and editor. She’s written award-winning press releases, newsletters, business articles, etc., as well as several one-act plays—one of which was performed at the Quaigh Theater in New York City. She hopes her finished first novel finds its way into publication soon, *Escape from Moon Village*, about a flourishing community that mysteriously disappeared 3,000 years ago at the archeological site today known as Poverty Point in northern Louisiana.



Ask

Chaucer!

Dear Chaucer,

*I want to pitch my book at the upcoming conference but don't know what to say or do and I tend to get tongue tied—got any advice?*

*Bashful*

Dear Bashful,

There are two elements at play here. One is knowing what you are going to say in 5 minutes or less and the other is doing so with confidence.

Prepare yourself by writing down a VERY short description of your storyline—up to two sentences under 50 words. This is your Pitch.

Practice walking up to a mirror, introducing yourself and giving the pitch. Do this over and over until you find yourself doing it in your sleep.

Watch the website and the June *Sage* for a list of what printed items the publishers want you to bring for them.

Confidence is the best way of defeating stage fright—knowing what you are going to say initially and having the right documents in hand will give you the confidence to approach the editor.

The last step is to remember—give your pitch, then shut up and wait for them to ask questions.

—Chaucer

\* \* \* \* \*

Do you have questions about writing or about SWW you'd like to ask Chaucer? Send them to [swwsage@swcp.com](mailto:swwsage@swcp.com) with the subject line: ASK CHAUCER before the 20th of the month for the next month's *Sage*.

NOTE: Questions should be restricted to one paragraph and one topic.



Judy Avila speaks at the SWW Tuesday Evening meeting before an enrapt audience!

### 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.

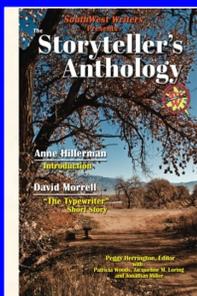
*The SWW Critique Service accepts all genres, including:*

- Query letters
- Synopses
- Articles
- Essays
- Nonfiction books
- Book proposals
- Short Stories
- Mainstream/literary fiction
- Genre fiction
- Children's
- Middle-grade
- Young Adult
- 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](http://SouthWestWriters.com) for guidelines and information on submitting your manuscript to our critique service.



## *The Storyteller's Anthology*

is available to order in paperback on Amazon. A great addition to any library, it exemplifies the diversity of talent we bring to the literary world. Please consider leaving a positive comment on the Review page with a 5-star rating to enhance salability of this excellent example of outstanding authorship by members of SouthWest Writers!

### SouthWest Writers Meetings

#### Visitor/Guest Policy

SWW encourages new people to come and look over our award winning writers' association. Since it is our membership dues that pay for the outstanding speakers, however, we request that visitors or guests limit their attendance to no more than three meetings, after which we hope they will join the organization.

Visitors are requested to sign in with name, email and/or phone number and wear a name tag. They will be invited to stand, introduce themselves and tell what kind of writing they do so that other writers in that genre can network with them during breaks in the meeting.

The "Successes and Announcements" made at our meetings are limited to SWW members.

As always, we encourage visitors to join SWW – a bargain at only \$80 per year.

#### Are You Taking Full Advantage of your SWW Membership?

SWW sponsors four types of ongoing educational experiences:

1. Every meeting has prominent SPEAKERS who offer our members new insights into the art of writing at no charge.
2. WORKSHOPS are one-time events which take place after the Saturday meetings. These offer more extensive presentations and/or hands on experiences.
3. CLASSES take place at the SWW office and are in-depth information useful for authors who are serious about getting published.
4. CONFERENCES are held twice a year and bring in big name writers, artists, screenwriters, and sometimes publishers or agents.

**Annual Membership in  
SouthWest Writers**  
**Individual: \$80 as of Jan 1, 2018**  
**Student: \$25**  
**Requires proof of student status**  
**Outside U.S.: \$75,**  
**Lifetime Membership: \$750**  
**Download the Sage from**  
**[www.southwestwriters.com](http://www.southwestwriters.com)**

### Santa Fe Science Writing Workshop

Applications are being taken for the 23rd annual Santa Fe Science Writing Workshop, which runs from Monday evening, May 7, 2018 through Saturday morning, May 12, at the Inn of the Governors in downtown Santa Fe, New Mexico.

The workshop was founded and is directed by

- [Sandra Blakeslee](#), longtime science writer for the *New York Times* and co-author of *Sleights of Mind*, [The Body Has a Mind of its Own](#) and other books, and
- [George Johnson](#), two time winner of the AAAS Science Journalism Award and author of [The Ten Most Beautiful Experiments](#), [The Cancer Chronicles](#), and other books

We will be joined by three guest instructors:

- [Henry Fountain](#), climate reporter for the *New York Times* and author of [The Great Quake](#)
- [Cornelia Dean](#), former Science Editor of *The New York Times* and author of [Making Sense of Science](#), [Against the Tide](#), and other books

[Robert Lee Hotz](#), Pulitzer-prize-winning science journalist for *The Wall Street Journal*

<http://sciwrite.org/>

# "The Best of the Sage" Anthology Will You Take a Chance to be Included?

**Have you noticed** that many of our membership's contributions to the Sage are excellent?

**Well, we have!**

Next Fall the board is considering publishing another anthology - this time it will contain articles and stories published in the Sage and written by SWW members.

You have three ways of possibly being included:

- Write an article for the Sage related to the craft of writing, getting published, etc...
- Enter stories, poems, or articles inspired by the monthly writing challenges announced in each Sage.
- Send in a short story/poem/essay of your own - 800 words or less - on any topic. (inclusion in the Sage is subject to the discretion of the editor)
- Artwork/photographs related to writing in general or accompanying your stories.

In September of 2018 the editor of the Sage will submit stories and articles received over the past three years to a Board appointed committee who will review the pieces without names attached for inclusion in the "Best of the SouthWest Sage Anthology".

The plan is for the Anthology to be in print and available by November of 2018.

## STUDENT SCHOLARSHIPS

SouthWest Writers is offering one-year scholarship memberships in our organization to high school and full time college students. 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, contact the SWW office at [swwriters@juno.com](mailto:swwriters@juno.com).

**Are you ready to be published?**

### JUNE Sage Writing Challenge

Sci-Fi or Fantasy Story

1000 words or less.

Send your masterpiece to Rose Kern :

[swwsage@swcp.com](mailto:swwsage@swcp.com) by May 20th for inclusion in the June Sage. The editor has the final say as to whether the piece will be included.

### 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 12pt. size. Do not get fancy with 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](mailto:swwsage@swcp.com).

### SouthWest Writers

#### Volunteer Opportunity!

#### Do you Tweet? Or Facebook?

SWW needs a social media coordinator to work with Kimberly Rose. This fun task brings SWW into the public eye and allows members an avenue for intercommunication. Improve your own e-marketing skills, be innovative in your support of your fellow authors.

Kim Rose is the one behind the cameras at the SWW meetings - go up and introduce yourself - she'd love to mentor you in the basics of using social media!



## 2018 SouthWest Writers Board of Directors

President Sarah H. Baker,

Vice President Rob Spiegel,

Treasurer Kent Langsteiner

Secretary Kimberly Rose

Sage Editor Rose Marie Kern

Facility Coordinator Sam Moorman

Publicity Su-Ellen Lierz

Donald DeNoon

Dollie Williams

Jim Tritten

Joanne Bodin

Office Manager, Larry Greenley

Contact board members through the  
SWW Office email at [swwriters@juno.com](mailto:swwriters@juno.com)

## 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  
505-830-6034.

To register for classes and workshops: sign up  
at SWW meetings or register online at  
[www.southwestwriters.com](http://www.southwestwriters.com)

Member meetings are held on the 1st Saturday of the month from 10am to noon, and on the 3rd Tuesday of the month from 7 to 9pm. There are nearly 350 members, all of whom are encouraged to come together in celebration of the art of writing. At each meeting, many members announce their recent successes and have an opportunity to network with other writers. Most meetings feature prominent speakers who bring their expertise in the arts of writing, publication, editing, and many other topics of interest to those in the profession.

Frequently after the Saturday meeting, an additional workshop session is held to provide members with training in a variety of areas.

### SWW Office:

3200 Carlisle Blvd NE, Suite 114

Albuquerque, NM 87110

phone: (505) 830-6034

e-mail: [SWWriters@juno.com](mailto:SWWriters@juno.com)

website: [www.southwestwriters.com](http://www.southwestwriters.com)

Articles and stories are copyrighted by the author, sending them to the Sage implies the Sage has permission to print. Facts, views and opinions expressed are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the viewpoints or opinions of the SouthWest Writers organization. SWW does not necessarily endorse the advertisers.

## Do You Have a Published Book?



The SouthWest Writers Website scrolls member book covers across the Homepage. If you'd like us to add yours to the group, feel free to send it to [swwsage@swcp.com](mailto:swwsage@swcp.com). No more than one book cover per author. Can be updated as your next book comes out. Send a small picture file .jpg no more than 140dpi. The book covers will be a bit larger than icon sized. Webmaster reserves the right to edit to fit.