Some days, my desire to write makes me feel like I am back in the pilot’s seat of our Cessna, trying to recover my airplane from a stall as the ground rushes faster and faster towards me.

A simple explanation of a “stall”

Airplanes are held in the sky by the even flow of air molecules over and under the wings. This motion of air over wings creates lift. When a pilot maintains the correct speed relative to the angle of the wings, the air molecules flow over and under the wings like a steady river of support. The airplane has lift and stays in the sky.

But, if the pilot gets distracted by, for example, a sudden change in weather, or trying to talk to the control tower, or a mechanical problem, he or she might miss the fact that the speed of the airplane relative to the angle of the wings has changed. The smooth river of air molecules over the wings becomes turbulent, the airplane loses lift, it stalls, and its nose drops. If the pilot doesn’t recover quickly from the stall, the plane will start to spin around and around, as it hurtles faster towards the ground.

Pilots need to learn how to recover from a stall before the airplane drops into a spin. The only way to learn to do this is to intentionally put the airplane into a stall.

Intentionally stalling an airplane is the scariest thing I have ever done in my life.

My first stall lesson

I am in the pilot’s seat of our single-engine, low wing Cessna. Eric, my instructor, sits beside me in the passenger seat. I flawlessly taxi onto the runway, call the tower, “8330X-ray, ready for take off,” loving the sound of my confident, female voice.

I give the engine full power, pull back on the controls when the speed reaches 70 knots, and the little Cessna rises off the runway into the clear California sky. I go through all my safety checks (boost pumps, engine, gas, undercarriage, power, steering) at the same time navigating the plane, reaching altitude, reporting to the tower, “8330X-ray at 1500 feet, turning right, heading towards Tahoe.” I fulfill the three rules of flying: aviate, then navigate, then communicate.

Below us the green and yellow agricultural fields checker their way across the great San Joaquin Valley, bisected by the American and Sacramento Rivers, carrying the melted snow out of the Sierras, across the Delta, and into San Francisco Bay.

All the world is blue and gold and deep green as we head towards the foothills, Folsom Lake a sparkling dot below us.

(Continued on page 4)
In *Daring Greatly*, Dr. Brené Brown attributes the title of her book to a speech given by Theodore Roosevelt on April 23, 1910. “It is not the critic who counts, not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood, who strives valiantly; who errys, who comes short again and again, because there is no effort without error and shortcoming; [...] who at the best knows in the end the triumph of high achievement, and who at the worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly....”

Dr. Brown’s book examines how modern U.S. culture (1) uses shame to control and manipulate; (2) equates feelings with failings and emotions with liabilities; (3) finds vulnerability to be a weakness; (4) defines our worth by the products we produce and not the people we are; and (5) declares winning as an all or nothing proposition.

Unfortunately for writers, this is antithetical to everything we do. How can we “dare greatly” if we suppress our emotions, numb our vulnerability (i.e. avoid submitting our work because there’s no guarantee of acceptance), and write only the things that increase our Amazon rating?

When authors realize their self-worth is directly proportional to the popularity of their “product,” it’s unlikely they’ll submit it. If they do, they’ll strip out anything controversial or innovative to avoid personal risk. If they do submit it and the reception doesn’t meet expectations, they are crushed. Their work is no good; ergo, they are no good, and the chances of soliciting feedback, rewriting and crafting the piece approaches zero. And even if their work does well, this too has negative side effects. Now that the authors know what sells they become slaves to reproducing exactly what they produced before without growth and without passion.

Given these constraints, how do we maintain the courage to keep entering the arena? First, we remember that it’s a balance. If we dismiss all criticism, we lose out on helpful advice, but if we listen to every critic, internal or otherwise, we risk becoming too demoralized to continue. The key is to be selective. We need one or two colleagues who can help us do a reality check, but they must also be fellow gladiators and stand with us. They must experience the world as we do.

Second, we do not associate our personal self-worth with the writing we produce. Author George Scithers reminds us, “Editors do not reject people; they reject pieces of paper that have typing on them.” When our self-worth isn’t on the line, we become courageous and submit our writing.

Third, despite the siren’s call of the blockbuster, we do not try to please everyone. The author of *Unmarketing* Scott Stratten warns, “Don’t try to win over the haters; you’re not the jackass whisperer.” So, I challenge you to *dare greatly* in your work and your life.

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**SouthWest Sage Advertising Rates**

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**Annual Membership in SouthWest Writers**

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| Requires proof of student status |
| Outside U.S.: $75; Lifetime Memberships: $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
Members Seeking Critique Groups

**Fantasy/Sci-Fi**
Linton Bowers, lbowers27@gmail.com prefers: online/email group

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

**Mainstream Fiction (and Other)**
— and Genre
Mike Zimmerman, mikeyzman@gmail.com
Albuq./Rio Rancho
Mon.-Thu. evenings

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

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

**Young Adult Fiction**
Damita Butler
deneemarieb@yahoo.com
any day, after 4:00 pm

Critique Groups Seeking Members

**Children’s/MG/YA**
See Albuq. Area Writing Groups, below

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

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

**Mainstream Fiction**
Online Critique Group
Christie Keele, ckeele10@hotmail.com

**Sci-Fi**
Send name and writing experience to:
Cosmic_Connections_SF_Critique_
Group@yahoo groups.com

**Screenwriting**
See Albuq. Area Writing Groups, below

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**Writer's Circle Cancelled**
The writer's circle that met on the 1st & 3rd Sunday of each month at Page One Bookstore has been cancelled and will no longer be meeting.

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**Albuquerque Area Writing Groups**


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

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

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

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

**Writers2Writers**, 2nd Monday each month, 6:30-7:30 pm, New China Restaurant, Fortuna & Coors. Monthly speakers. All genres welcome. [pmprescottenterprises@yahoo.com](mailto:pmprescottenterprises@yahoo.com)
Then Eric says, “Reduce power to engine, pull back on the controls.” These two acts go against logic when you are 2,000 feet above the ground in a little tin can.

“Why?” I said.

“Time to practice stalls.”

In one second my pounding heart overpowers all sound, my jaw tightens, and color drains from around me. I shout, “No, I can’t do this.” I want out of this airplane.

But I am trained as a pilot. It is my responsibility to aviate and navigate. With my right hand I decrease the power, slowing the engine. Everything goes eerily quiet as we float through the sky. My hands sweating, I pull back on the controls, bringing them close to my chest, raising the nose of the airplane until all I can see is sky. The nose goes up, up, then gives a dip down. A warning buzzer goes off. I have put us into a stall.

“Now,” commands Eric, “push the controls in, fast.” This is the third, most illogical step, because pushing the controls in, away from me, will aim us towards the ground, cause the airplane to gather speed, and dive, straight down, down towards the tree tops and rocks.

“How flying is like writing

As I write this, many years later, my fingers quiver on the keyboard, my breathing is shallow, and my stomach lurches. I remember being overwhelmed by fear as I pushed the controls fully forward, forcing the plane to nose-dive faster and faster towards the earth. All I wanted to do was let go, to have Eric take over, to be out of that plane. To quit.

But I didn’t let go. As our speed increased, Eric said, “Pull back, bring the nose up. Now. Keep the wings level. Give it full power.” I did. And there we were, flying level again, the engine purring, the wings lifted by a cushion of air and motion. Folsom Lake blinked its blue eye up at us, all the world green and gold and blue. Only then did I feel the dampness on the back of my shirt, the sweat flowing down my sides. Only then did I breathe.

And that is how I feel about writing some days: that I can’t write; that I don’t know how to write; that if I do write, the words will fly out of control and I will be hurtling towards the earth; that I want out of the desire to write.

But I have learned that if I hold on, keep writing through that fear, I will level out again. I will go to a place that taught me lessons about myself and fear. I will have lift under my wings and be able to navigate through the huge blue sky to where I want to go. I will be as proud as I was when I became a pilot.

And that’s what flying an airplane taught me about writing: However great your fear may be, stay with your writing, keep working at it, learn all the skills you need to get out of a stall. Practice. Know that you have within you the power to aviate, navigate, and communicate, to be a sky-writer.

Alice Winston Carney is director of Hermit’s Peak Press, which publishes original voices of Northern New Mexico. She has recently published A Cowgirl in Search of a Horse, a memoir of growing up in Las Vegas, New Mexico. Along with the authors Gerald and Loretta Hausman, Alice runs Green River Writers’ Workshops in Las Vegas, New Mexico; Sacramento, California; and Fredericksburg, Texas.
Do you remember the moment; the moment you were struck with the sudden burning desire to write? With an unmatched enthusiasm and joy you jumped right in with both feet. But at some point during the writing process things changed. Your burning desire cooled, your enthusiasm fizzled and the joy you once possessed vanished. You became bogged down and overwhelmed. It was all you could do to keep your head above water as you struggled to not sink underneath the enormity of your undertaking. Where could you find a lifeline you wondered? Is there someone out there who can understand your plight? These are the types of situations that led Roy Peter Clark to create his Help! For Writers, a life preserver in times of desperation and a compass to chart a new course.

Known as “America’s writing coach,” Roy Peter Clark has a Ph.D. in English, specializing in medieval literature. He started teaching writing in 1977 when he was hired by St. Petersburg Times. In 1979 he joined the journalism school, Poynter Institute, and has risen through the ranks as director of the writing center, dean of the faculty, senior scholar and vice president. He is the author of multiple books in both fiction and nonfiction, but is best known for his books on journalism and writing. Some of his contributions to the world of writing include; Writing Tools, The Glamour of Grammar, and Writing Tools: 50 Essential Strategies for Every Writer. He has served several times as a juror for the Pulitzer Prize committee and has been featured on “NPR,” “Oprah” and “Today Show.” He is also on iTunesU and has had his podcasts downloaded over a million times. As both a teacher and a writer, he has credibility to back him up.

In Help! For Writers, recommended by my dear mother-in-law who is on her own grand voyage of writing self-discovery and craft development, Clark addresses basic issues in all of the seven steps of the writing process from formulation to creation to completion. This book is perfect for the beginning writer or the veteran looking to iron out some wrinkles. It is a quick, non-taxing read with plenty of food for thought. The subjects are far ranging and the suggestions are simply laid out and doable and at times highly creative. I especially enjoyed the section about finding inspiration and how to work with an assignment.

The writing itself, however, is rather dry and not particularly engaging. Though that should in no way diminish the usefulness of the information or its ability to effectively solve issues. It should also be noted that I personally tend to suffer from the millennial curse of constant need for entertainment (what can I say, we all have our own issues) so that definitely affects my perspective. Also this book does tend to lean toward the nonfiction side of writing, but a fiction writer shouldn’t completely dismiss it because a lot of writing issues are fairly universal.

The writing voyage can be fraught with storms, rocky seas and hidden undertows, but the true writers who believe in the power of their craft can find Help! They just have to be willing to look for it.

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**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. Go to http://www.southwestwriters.com/critiqueSubmissionGuidelines.php for guidelines and information.

- 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 $3.50/page)
- $35 - Minimum charge for up to 10 double-spaced manuscript pages (additional pages $3.50/page)
I love subplots. They complement and thicken the main plot, besides adding layers and depth to my story. Generating them gives me a chance to flex my writer’s muscles through character development. But after setting my novel aside for a few weeks, and then re-reading it, I discovered a level of disjoint-ment. That’s a made-up word that means not only did the thing not flow as well as I thought, some scenes were chronologically mixed up. Even though each scene included the essential elements of conflict and a cliff-hanger ending, my novel seemed to be more a compendium of vignettes than a cohesive tale.

Some say subplots, if overdone, hazard eclipsing the main story line. But I’m of the more-subplots-the-merrier crew. Remember the television series “24”? Just one tense subplot piled on top of the next—along with that marvelous running main plot, of course. Good subplots can add depth and dimension to characters. But just as weaving an intricate tapestry requires the weaver to keep careful track of various colored threads, careful development of subplots is critical. It’s all too easy for the writer to drop a thread. Or worse, put it in the wrong place thereby making her story a tacky kaleidoscope, instead of a tightly woven, meaningful chronicle.

So, out of necessity I’ve come up with an idea of how to keep all the subplot threads straight. This may not sound like a grand achievement, but coming from a goal-oriented person who abhors process, it’s no small feat.

Disclaimer: It’s possible that someone somewhere has already come up with an efficient way to keep track of subplots. It could even be that some problem solver has included a variation of said item in his published discourse upon the best-kept secrets of writing. But my research (if it isn’t on Google, it doesn’t exist) indicates other writers struggle with the same issue and that this need is not completely met via the usual story outline. I did learn to generate character sheets and scene cards, but I’ve not seen anything quite like this simple subplot template. Although fairly time-consuming, it has helped me see at a glance exactly where each subplot thread is headed. And it has helped me decide where I want to tie up each one.

Here’s how it works:

1. Open a blank spreadsheet. (I use a spreadsheet because it can be infinite in length and width, and it’s easier to work with than a Word document.) In the event you don’t know how to open or use a spreadsheet, Google “spreadsheet how to use” for your choice of free tutorials.

2. Hit “Save As” and then type in a name for your subplot. I like to save the documents to my desktop—it saves key strokes, never mind that my desktop resembles the cluttered floor of a teenager’s bedroom.

3. Type in the following column headings: POV Character, Scene, Page, Action, Main Questions, and Page Answered. As an example of a subplot for one of my Protagonist’s POVs scenes, I might type in “Dealing with her compulsions.” The Main Questions might be: “Will she overcome her compulsions? When? How?”

4. Go through your completed manuscript or draft. For each subplot and character type the pertinent details into your template.

5. If you’re just beginning a manuscript, using this template may help you put your thoughts into order.

6. As needed, cut and paste any scene from one place to another on your template. Let’s say my protagonist refers to an event on page 10 that doesn’t actually take place until page 50. It’s easy enough to cut the scene from its location in the template, paste it into the appropriate row, and then cut it from the manuscript, and paste it into the appropriate place. You will probably need to edit or re-write the scene for cohesion.

7. Once you’ve finished with each character’s involvement in the subplot, open a folder on your desktop. Label it “Subplots.” Stash the completed spreadsheets into the folder.

You may want to tweak the spreadsheet to meet your own needs. But the result should be a compact chronology of subplots that will allow you to follow each thread to its ultimate conclusion. Then, as they say, one thing will lead to another, until you victoriously tie it all up in a bow at the dénouement.

Happy weaving.
Thanks to all of you who bring snacks to share at our monthly meetings. The board and attendees appreciate (and enjoy) your thoughtfulness.

Saturday, August 3
10:00 am to noon

Publisher as Author

David Holtby

This talk will look at lessons learned during a career in publishing that guided and misguided the speaker when he began a second career as a nonfiction author. His goals are threefold: to be a bit of a devil’s advocate in probing the crafts of writing and editing; to use his experiences to demystify editor-author relations; and to foster a bit of awe for processes that affect all who cherish books and the indispensable voices of their authors. Those creating a manuscript or seeking to have one ushered into print will find this talk practical, engaging, and encouraging.

David V. Holtby trained as a historian and received his Ph.D. from the University of New Mexico, writing an award-winning dissertation on the social origins of the Spanish Civil War. In his 28 years at UNM Press he filled both editorial positions and administrative roles, including Editor in Chief and Associate Director. His book Forty-Seventh Star: New Mexico’s Struggle for Statehood, published by the University of Oklahoma Press in September 2012, received the Julian J. Rothbaum Prize and was selected as a best book for 2012 in the Southwest Books of the Year competition.

Saturday, September 7
10:00 am to noon

Voices from the Past

Robert Torrez

A former New Mexico State Historian will discuss the vast resources in the state’s extraordinary archival collections and review some of the materials that have provided him with story ideas for more than thirty years.

Robert J. Torrez served as the New Mexico State Historian from 1987 to 2000. He has published, co-authored and contributed to more than thirty books and published more than 100 articles in local, regional and national publications. He also writes “Voices From the Past,” a monthly history column for Round the Roundhouse.

Tuesday, August 20
7:00 pm to 9:00 pm

How to Get an Agent and How to Work with an Agent, Editor, and Publisher

Happy Shaw

No doubt publishing is changing, but there are things that have not changed. Literary agents are still the gatekeepers of traditional publishing. Happy will speak about what it’s like to be on the other side of the desk and what it takes for a writer to break into the current book market for novels and non-fiction books.

Kay Lewis “Happy” Shaw is a former literary agent and now a small publisher who has helped many writers get published, improve their work, and place and win in contests. After 30 years in the writing arena, she is published in children’s picture books, magazines, newspapers, novels, inspirational nonfiction and books for writers. One Smart Cookie, the first novel in her comic mystery series set in Albuquerque, was released in March 2013 under her pen name of Joanna Blalock.

Tuesday, September 17
7:00 pm to 9:00 pm

The Story Speaks

Rosemary Zibart

Rosemary Zibart has worked in almost all media including documentary scriptwriting, plays, screenplays, articles for newspapers and magazines, websites, picture books and middle-grade fiction. She will explain why she can’t resist delving into so many different genres. How she chooses which genre for which story. How many elements, like the story-telling arc and character-building, are relevant to all. Yet there are some big differences as well. She’ll also discuss the ups and downs of switching around and how working in different media can improve your abilities for each one.

In her early career, Rosemary Zibart scripted film documentaries and worked as a freelance journalist with articles in Parade, the Christian Science Monitor, and Time that featured issues such as how art transforms the lives of at-risk teens. More recently, she created the new award-winning series Far and Away—True Brit, Beatrice 1940—about children displaced and relocated during WWII. Rosemary lives in Santa Fe, New Mexico with her family. Visit her website at www.rosemaryzibart.com.
THE BASICS OF BUILDING
A SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORM

A Half-Day Workshop
with Robin Kalinich

August 10
Saturday, 1:00 - 4:00 pm

See workshop pricing on the next page.

Frustrated by social media? Want to promote your creative work, but not sure how to start? This workshop will describe the basic concepts of social media and will show you techniques for building and maintaining an effective platform. We'll discuss how to get organized, the crucial elements of success, and practical ways to build a customer base. We'll even talk about what NOT to do. You'll leave equipped to set up the basic foundations of your platform and will be given information, resources, and recommended reading to assist you during your new adventure. Bring your laptop or tablet to class. If you don't have one to bring, you can watch others and learn during the hands-on portion (approximately 1 hour).


BUILD YOUR WEBSITE
with Fred Aiken

3 Sessions:
September 4, 11, 18

Wednesdays: 7:00 - 9:00 pm

$140 members, $190 non-members

The Business of Writing class is for those individuals wishing to take the next step towards becoming a professional writer by starting their writing business. In this class, the participants will: Learn the IRS requirements for professional writers to deduct writing-related expenses from their income tax; Construct a Business Plan for their writing business; Discuss record keeping requirements; Discover the myriad of legal tax deductions for professional writers. (The fee for this class is tax deductible!)

Fred A. Aiken has written professionally since 1996. His articles appear in Guideposts and Angels-on-Earth. He holds a BS from Grove City College, an MBA from Cleveland State University and a Master of Education from The College of Santa Fe in Albuquerque. He belongs to SouthWest Writers, Sisters-in-Crime, Romance Writers of America, and the Albuquerque Science Fiction Society. He teaches classes on the business of writing and has won several awards.

GETTING YOUR FOOT IN THE DOOR
A Half-Day Workshop
with Sarah Baker

August 24
Saturday, 1:00 - 4:00 pm

See workshop pricing on the next page.

Find out how to submit your fiction manuscript through traditional publishing channels including who to submit to, what your submission should look like, and what happens during each step of the process. We'll also talk about synopses and elevator pitches. Bring your questions and get ready for the next step to getting published! The workshop will be interactive. Proceeds for the workshop go to SWW.

Sarah H. Baker is the author of more than 20 published novels. She holds an MS in engineering and works full time, but also writes fiction under S. H. Baker, Sarah Storme, and Lydia Parks. Sarah’s publishers range from Kensington and Harlequin to small presses, one of which she worked for as an acquiring editor. She has also written award-winning full-cast audio books, and has self-published her backlist. Sarah teaches for Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at UNM.

Build Your Website with Loretta Hall

4 Sessions:
September 8, 15, 22, 29

Sundays: 2:00 - 4:00 pm

$160 members, $200 non-members

In this 8-hour series, you will learn to design an attractive and effective website. Topics include domain names, website design concepts, hosting options, search engine rankings, and inexpensive (or free) site-building software. You 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 that will be discussed, the cost of your site can range from $0 to about $10 a month. If you want someone to build your site, this class will prepare you to talk knowledgeably with that person. In-class demonstrations and take-home exercises will get you started establishing your Internet presence.

Nonfiction author Loretta Hall has built six websites using template-based software. Her site AuthorHall.com is the top result on Google for <Loretta Hall author>. SubsurfaceBuildings.com is the top search result for <underground buildings>. A Top 20 Architecture site and an Xmarks Top 10 Site, it also received a Regional Award of Excellence from the Society for Technical Communication. NMSpaceHistory.com is the third result on Google for <New Mexico Space History>.
THE DEEP FIELD: WRITING SCIENCE FICTION AND FANTASY
with Betsy James

8 Sessions: 
October 2, 9, 16, 23, 30 and November 6, 13, 20
Wednesdays: 5:45 - 7:45 pm
$320 members, $380 non-members

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


CRAFTING A NONFICTION BOOK PROPOSAL
with Loretta Hall

4 Sessions: October 5, 12, 19, 26
Saturdays: 2:00 - 4:00 pm
$160 members, $200 non-members

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

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

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

4 Sessions: November 4, 11, 18, 25
Mondays, 6:00 - 8:00 pm
$160 members, $200 non-members

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

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

Half-Day Workshop Prices:
$40 SWW Members • $50 Osher Members w/Card
$70 Non-Members • $75 At the Door
In looking at the publishing world today, it is difficult to imagine the Age of Pulp Fiction when there were hundreds of magazines in genre fiction whose editors bought stories that writers, even beginning writers, mailed in to them. Thousands of pages of fiction needed filing month after month. That bygone age is called the Age of Pulp Fiction, which spanned four decades from the 1910s to the 1950s.

Writers back then wrote in whatever genre interested them, and readers were willing to follow. One such writer was Lester Dent, best known as the creator and main author of the series of novels about the superhuman scientist and adventurer Doc Savage. In addition to novels (an average of ten novels per month), Lester wrote numerous short stories every year.

In 1926, one of Dent’s co-workers had a story published in a pulp magazine that earned $450. Lester, being a voracious reader, was very familiar with pulp magazines of the day and was sure he could write at least as well, if not better. His magic formula for writing a saleable 6000-word short story was to divide the yarn into four equal parts.

**FIRST 1500 WORDS**

1. First line, or as near thereto as possible, introduce the hero and swat him with a fistful of trouble. Hint at a mystery, a menace or a problem to be solved—something the hero has to cope with.

2. Hero pitches in to cope with his fistful of trouble. He tries to fathom the mystery, defeat the menace, or solve the problem.

3. Introduce all the other characters as soon as possible. Bring them in on action.

4. Hero’s endeavors land him in an actual physical conflict near the end of the first 1500 words.

5. Also near the end of first 1500 words, there is a complete surprise twist in the plot development.

SO FAR: Does it have SUSPENSE? Is there a MENACE to the hero? Does everything happen logically? At this point, it might help to recall that action should do something besides advance the hero over the scenery. Suppose the hero has learned dastards or villains have seized somebody named Eloise who can explain the secret of what is behind all these sinister events. Hero corners villains, they fight, villains get away. Not so hot. Hero should accomplish something with his tearing around, if only to rescue Eloise. And surprise! Eloise is a ring-tailed monkey. The hero counts the rings on Eloise’s tail, if nothing better comes to mind. They’re not real. The rings are painted on. Why?

**SECOND 1500 WORDS**

1. Shovel more grief onto the hero.

2. Hero, being heroic, struggles, and his struggles lead up to:

3. Another physical conflict.

4. A surprising plot twist to end the 1500 words.

NOW: Does the second part have SUSPENSE? Does the MENACE grow like a black cloud? Is the hero getting it in the neck? Is the second part logical? DON’T TELL ABOUT IT. Show how the thing looked. This is one of the secrets of writing; never tell the reader—show him. He trembles, roving eyes, slackened jaw, and such. MAKE THE READER SEE HIM. When writing, it helps to get at least one minor surprise to the printed page. It is reasonable to expect these minor surprises to sort of inveigle the reader into keeping on. They need not be such profound efforts. One method of accomplishing one now and then is to be gently misleading. Hero is examining the murder room. The door behind him begins slowly to open. He does not see it. He conducts his examination blissfully. Door eases open, wider and wider, until—surprise! The glass pane falls out of the big window across the room. It must have fallen slowly, and air blowing into the room caused the door to open. Then what the heck made the pane fall so slowly? More mystery.

Characterizing a story actor consists of giving him some things which make him stick in the reader’s mind. TAG HIM. BUILD YOUR PLOTS SO THAT ACTION CAN BE CONTINUOUS.

**THIRD 1500 WORDS**

1. Shovel the grief onto the hero.

2. Hero makes some headway and corners the villain or somebody in:

3. A physical conflict.

4. A surprising plot twist, in which the hero preferably gets it in the neck bad, to end the 1500 words.

DOES: It still have SUSPENSE? The MENACE getting blacker? The hero finds himself in a hell of a fix? It all happens logically?

These outlines or master formulas are only something to make you certain of inserting some physical conflict, and some genuine plot twists, with a little suspense and menace thrown in. Without them, there is no pulp story.

These physical conflicts in each part might be DIFFERENT, too. If one fight is with fists, that can take care of the pugilism.

(Continued on page 15)
While most poets have their favorite novels, some of which have won Pulitzer Prizes, few poets get the chance to turn the stuff of those novels into poetry. In April 2013, 85 poets around the world had just such an opportunity by participating in Pulitzer Remix, a National Poetry Month project sponsored by Found Poetry Review. Not only was I lucky enough to participate, but I also got to work with one of my all-time favorite books, the 1986 Pulitzer Prize-winning Western Lonesome Dove by Larry McMurtry.

Found poetry is defined as poetry in which the words must come from another source text. Those sources can be as diverse as signs, newspaper headlines and articles, non-fiction books, novels or even other poems. However, the author of found poetry may not simply copy long passages and rearrange the words on the page; she must use the found language to create something new and unique.

Each Pulitzer Remix poet was to create 30 poems from his or her chosen novel and post those poems to the project’s website every day during April. I had never taken on a 30-poem challenge before, but figured that since I took on the assignment in January, I would at least be able to write 10 poems a month during February, March and April. By April 1st I had 18 poems written, so I was confident I could keep to the assigned schedule, and I did, but I have to admit I was glad when the pressure came off.

I used a variety of methods to write the poems, half of which were free verse, and the other half form poems. One method was to take a chapter and highlight interesting phrases, and then work those into a free verse poem. Another method involved an on-line tool called Bonsai Story Tree Generator, that scrambles the words and phrases of any text typed into it, producing new combinations to work from. I used this tool twice, but was not particularly impressed with the results. Yet another technique was the scramble poem, in which I typed every word from a paragraph, then cut up the text and physically rearranged the words to create a poem. My one foray into “visual poetry” used this technique. I posted a picture of the resulting poem as well as the text. Some poets posted very interesting erasure poems, blacked-out poems, and other variations on visual poetry.

Sometimes I took a free verse draft and revised it until I had a form poem. I created several villanelles using this technique. Villanelles are well suited to dramatic narratives as they have two repeating lines. One villanelle was based on the novel’s villain: Blue Duck took scalps, abused women, cut up men/What he didn’t steal, he burned. Another dramatized a stampede caused by an encounter with a grizzly bear. One poem started out as free verse and evolved into a pantoum, which also has lines that repeat from one stanza to the next, but in a more circular fashion; it is recommended for slower-moving narratives. I found the pantoum effective for conveying the story of a long trip upriver, beginning and ending with the line, the whiskey boat stank.

I particularly enjoyed working with cinquains and their variations, which run between 5 and 30 lines, as I could usually move directly from the source text to these forms without a free verse draft. I also wrote two Shakespearean sonnets. It was challenging to find words that rhymed within a few pages, but using slant rhyme helped, and I loved finding the rhythm in these poems. I tried a sestina, but discovered a shorter variation that worked well, the tritina. My original attempt at portraying the dramatic scene in “Trouble at the Buckhorn Saloon” was a pantoum, which proved too slow, whereas the 10-line tritina allowed me to capture the essence of the exchange between an impatient Texas Ranger and a surly bartender while using some juicy dialogue.

One of the biggest challenges for me was to move away from the original text to the degree that I felt I had created something entirely new. Perhaps I was handicapped by my love of the novel. I read about one poet who seemed to be proud of the fact that he never read his novel at all, relying on random page selection for his source texts. I, on the other hand, loved Lonesome Dove’s characters, settings, and situations, and sought to portray them through my poetry. In doing so, I found a “cowboy poet” voice I never knew I had, as well as deepening my appreciation of Larry McMurtry’s work. I am looking forward to producing a chapbook of my found poems and performing them at cowboy poetry gatherings. Yodelay-hee-hoo!
Member Successes

Dr. Irene Blea has been selected as a TEDxABQ speaker in September. The mission of this national and international event is to highlight New Mexico’s biggest ideas and to inspire others. Dr. Blea will speak on creative aging. She is also being awarded the Distinguished Alumni Award by the Pueblo Community College in Pueblo, Colorado.

Joanne Bodin’s poem “Ode to Peach” was published in the July 2013 issue of The Rag. Her poem “From Distant Shores,” along with one of her splash ink paintings, was published in the 2013 NMSPS Albuquerque Chapter Anthology, Poetry From the Other Side.

Jim Tritten won 2nd and 3rd places in the National Veterans Creative Arts Festival for two short pieces in the category of humor and memoir. He also published “En pocos segundos” (A few seconds) in ¡Avanzamos!, Edición No. 19, pgs. 3-4 (a publication of the National Alliance on Mental Illness).

Katya Miller was recently awarded a United States Capitol Historical Society Fellowship to pursue further studies for her book FREEDOM: A Quiet Beauty, the history of The Statue of Freedom atop the US Capitol Dome. She is currently researching at the Architect of the Capitol’s office, Library of Congress, and National Archives in Washington D.C. for the term 2012 and 2013. Her second article “Behold the Statue of Freedom: Sculptor Thomas Crawford and Senator Charles Sumner” is being published in The Capitol Dome, the US Capitol Historical Societies Publication.

Gayle Lauradunn’s poem “Chaco Canyon” won third place in the Land of Enchantment poetry contest.

Lois Duncan’s new book One to the Wolves: On the Trail of a Killer has been released as an eBook by Planet Ann Rule and is now available for download from Amazon.com and Barnes & Noble.

If you’re a member of SouthWest Writers send your success or announcement to Kathy Wagoner, SWW/Sage Editor, at JustWriteSWW@gmail.com.

Member Books

The Dry Line by Ramona Gault
“Are we outlaws, Mom?” Anna Darby’s daughter wants to know.
“A novel about facing up to secrets and the pain of change, The Dry Line’s masterful narrative structure pulls you through the tale in a hurry to know more, to connect with these achingly real characters you wish you had as friends.” — Jan Bulmann
$18 incl. S&H. Email Ramona at ramonagault@yahoo.com.

“GREEN-EYED LADY” by Chuck Greaves is the wickedest read of the year: smart, real, and vivid as hell. . .Greaves is a master of the language. I loved this book.” — DOUGLAS PRESTON, #1 NYT bestselling author.

Getaway Weekend for Authors
August 23-24

You are invited to participate in a REJUVENATE, RECHARGE AND RE-EVALUATE weekend in Chama, New Mexico for writers, publishers, and book trade partners.

The folks at NM Book Coop have put together a weekend PACKED with great info, presentations, speakers, sales opportunities and FUN...for a very reasonable rate. Here’s your chance to plan that end-of-the-hot-summer weekend getaway that will rejuvenate and recharge your writer’s instincts, and leave you with lots of great info to re-evaluate how to successfully write, publish and market your work.

Family and guests are welcome to join in for the weekend and enjoy many fun optional activities like:
1) Cumbres & Toltec Scenic RR Sunday Express Special train ride
2) WHINE & CHEESE reception (to benefit the Chama Valley Humane Society—Travelin’ Jack’s inclusion in the weekend plus FREE pet stay!)

Space is LIMITED for this event, so plan now to add this to your Summer-Must-Do List! For a flyer and registration form, contact Jill Lane at 505-220-4933 or jill@trvl.org.
The Aesthetica Creative Writing Contest is open for entries. Now in its sixth year, the competition celebrates creative writing and nurtures talent, inviting writers to submit imaginative work that pushes the boundaries of two categories: Poetry and Fiction. Deadline August 13, 2013. Visit www.aestheticamagazine.com/creativewriting.

Writing Contest hosted by Inland Empire branch of the California Writers Club. Fiction, nonfiction and poetry, previously unpublished. Up to 2500 words, $15 entry fee. 1st, 2nd, 3rd place prizes ($125, $75, $50) in each category. Deadline is August 15, 2013. Theme: “The truest wisdom” must be touched upon but need not be written to. www.angelfire.com/amiga/iecwc/

**BUBONICON 45**

Science Fiction & Fantasy Convention

BUBONICON ● ALBUQUERQUE MARRIOTT UPTOWN HOTEL

August 23-25, 2013

The theme this year is “Superstitions.” Register through August 3: $40 for adults, $23 for youth. www.bubonicon.com

The Ninth Annual Black Warrior Review Contest is underway. Winners in each genre receive $1,000 and publication in the Spring/Summer 2014 issue. Reading Fee is $15 for short story and nonfiction (up to 7000 words), and poetry (up to 3 poems). Deadline September 1, 2013. http://www.bwr.ua.edu

Hummingbird Fall Retreat: September 20-22 sponsored by SCBW. Theme: Build Your Best Book. Authors Chris Eboch and Jen McVeity will present workshops. Scholastic editor Emily Seife will provide critiques for those wanting an editor’s feedback. Optional critique groups available. Plenty of time to write, hike, reflect, chat with fellow writers. Optional work day September 19. Register August 1-29. Those who want a critique with Emily Seife must register by August 22. Limited to 19 participants. Contact Caroline Starr Rose at carolinstarr@yahoo.com.

CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS: Maine writer seeks personal essays and poems on grief/grieving for loss of person, pet, or figurative loss of someone to Alzheimer’s, etc. for anthology in progress. Essays up to 2,000 words; poems up to 4 pages double-spaced. Deadline September 30, 2013. Send queries and submissions by USPS to M. Leamon, PO Box 113, Casco ME 04015, or e-mail to griefanthology@gmail.com.


CLASS CHRISTIAN WRITERS CONFERENCE

October 17-19, 2013 ● Albuquerque’s First Baptist Church

Comprehensive classes in fiction, nonfiction, children’s writing, marketing, and article writing. Teens interested in writing have a track again this year. Early bird discount deadline: August 16. http://classeminars.org/training/writing

Seneca Review is accepting submissions for its Beyond Category Special Issue, January 2014. The issue will be a print-and-online cyborg, featuring a perfect-bound portion of the issue complemented by an online, digital portion. The hybrid format allows for a broad range of digital and analog projects. They like anything that resists a single genre or medium. If in doubt, send it! Deadline October 31, 2013. For more information, email SenecaReview@hws.edu.

Creative Nonfiction seeks essays about mistakes exploring the nature and outcomes of human fallibility. Must be vivid, dramatic; combines compelling narrative with informative/reflective element; reaches beyond personal experience into universal/deeper meaning. Must be true and factually accurate. Unpublished, up to 4000 words, $20 reading fee. $1000 Best Essay, $500 runner-up. Deadline November 1, 2013. www.creativenonfiction.org/submissions/mistakes

2013 TONY HILLERMAN WRITERS CONFERENCE

Santa Fe, New Mexico ● November 7-9, 2013

www.wordharvest.com/registration.php

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

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

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

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

The Bakery is looking for poems to feature online every day Monday through Friday. www.thebakerypoetry.com
You don’t need me to tell you that writing is a lonely occupation, sustained at our most desperate moments by sheer tushie power (the ability to sit in front of the computer or legal pad until the words come).

We could be doing a million other things, some of which might make us some money.

Samuel Johnson declared capitalistically, “No man but a blockhead ever wrote, except for money.”

Kurt Vonnegut wrote, “... the best books earn nothing, usually.”

(Note: More power to all of you who are fattening your bank accounts with collaborations such as screenplays, scripts, pilots and more. I wish I were more of a collaborator, but here I’m talking about writing books, alone.)

“Writing is a ridiculous thing to do for money.” — Gish Jen, many-award-winning fiction writer.


Despite the new conventional wisdom about social media and/or self-publishing as the path to literary success and riches, very few people make their living entirely from writing. That doesn’t stop us from believing and trying though — again and again.

So why do we do it?

Is it because the words “writer” and “author” carry a secret, magical cachet for many of us? (Guilty!) If so, I suspect that most of the rest of the world doesn’t share our viewpoint.

A Southern writer friend tells this one on himself: He was at a country music concert in Nashville when a lovely woman approached him and asked expectantly, “Are you a musician?”

“No,” he responded, elated to be noticed by a lovely woman. “I’m a writer!”

As he tells the story, she just turned and walked away without a word. He shrugs it off now with a wry smile. “I guess if you know what you’re looking for, why waste time?”

So if it’s counterproductive to write for money or sex, why do we write?

I’ve been digging into a book titled Why We Write: 20 Acclaimed Authors on How and Why They Do What They Do, edited by Meredith Maran, in which Ms. Maran interviews mostly fiction authors about their work, how they got started and why they kept at it until they found success.

Walter Mosley said he was working as a computer programmer with no passion for the job. One day, during a lull in the work, he wrote this sentence: “On hot sticky days in southern Louisiana, the fire ants swarmed.” He thought, “This sounds like the first line of a novel.”

And it was. Mosley went on to pen the Easy Rawlins Mysteries series and dozens of other books and to win numerous awards.

Other comments:

“I write to explain myself to myself.” — Armistead Maupin

“I write to dream; to connect with other human beings; to record; to clarify; to visit the dead.” — Mary Karr

“I didn’t choose to write. It was just something that happened to me.” — Terry McMillan.

What’s worth pointing out is that some of these authors declared that even if they weren’t making money, they would continue to write.

Best-selling fiction writer David Baldacci said, “If writing were illegal, I’d be in prison. I can’t not write. It’s a compulsion.”

I can identify with compulsion. As a child, I devoured Nancy Drew mysteries and other fiction. One day, I started writing down titles and plot lines for my own mysteries. Then I began scribbling teen romances. No one made me do it—it was my own desire and drive, but where it came from, I haven’t a clue.

How about you? What was the initial event or urge that made you think: “I want to write”? What gets you to sit down and string words together?

Send a reply to ramonagault@yahoo.com and I’ll compile responses for a future column here. And know that you’re part of a community of folks who, though we might not know each other’s faces or names, we share each other’s mysterious urge.

(Note: All quotations except Johnson and Vonnegut are from Why We Write.)
until the next yarn. Same for poison gas and swords. There may, naturally, be exceptions. A hero with a peculiar punch, or a quick draw, might use it more than once. The idea is to avoid monotony.

ACTION: Vivid, swift, no words wasted. Create suspense, make the reader see and feel the action. ATMOSPHERE: Hear, smell, see, feel and taste. DESCRIPTION: Trees, wind, scenery and water. THE SECRET OF ALL WRITING IS TO MAKE EVERY WORD COUNT.

FOURTH 1500 WORDS

1. Shovel the difficulties more thickly upon the hero.
2. Get the hero almost buried in his troubles. Figuratively, the villain has him prisoner and framed for a murder rap; the girl is presumably dead, everything is lost, and the murder method is about to dispose of the suffering protagonist.
3. The hero extricates himself using HIS OWN SKILL, training or brawn.
4. The mysteries remaining—one big one held over to this point will help grip interest—are cleared up in the course of the final conflict as hero takes the situation in hand.

5. Final twist, a big surprise. This can be the villain turning out to be the unexpected person, having the “treasure” be a dud, etc.
6. The snapper, the punch line to end it.

HAS: The SUSPENSE held out to the last line? The MENACE held out to the last? Everything been explained? It all happens logically? Is the punch line enough to leave the reader with that WARM FEELING? Did God kill the villain? Or the hero?

Fred A. Aiken holds a BS from Grove City College, an MBA from Cleveland State University and a Master of Education from The College of Santa Fe in Albuquerque. He belongs to SouthWest Writers, Sisters-in-Crime, Romance Writers of America, and the Albuquerque Science Fiction Society. He will teach The Business of Writing in September (see page 7 of this newsletter).

Welcome New SouthWest Writers Members

Mary E Dorsey           Mary Seal
Chris Enke              William Tinsley
Woz Flint               Jerry Zimmerman
Jon Griffith

STUDENT SCHOLARSHIPS

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

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

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

SouthWest Writers
3200 Carlisle Blvd NE, Suite 114
Albuquerque, NM 87110
2013 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):

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Recommended by: ________________________________

Contact (phone/e-mail): _______________________________________

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