



SouthWest Writers is a nonprofit organization dedicated to encouraging and supporting all people to express themselves through the written word.

If only I'd known...

by Jonna-Lynn Mandelbaum

It seemed too good to be true, and it was. I was offered an eighteen-month contract from an independent publisher for one of my historical novels. A month later they offered me a second contract on another manuscript. I was thrilled, but I never checked to see if this was a reputable publisher. I assumed that with their claim to have been the first publisher for some well-known authors was true, and that it meant this was a good publishing house. A year later, according to the contract requirements, I submitted a third manuscript using the same characters and the publisher offered me a third eighteen-month contract.

As months passed, I followed every suggestion and guideline offered on the publisher's website and in the weekly newsletter. This involved preparing discussion guides for each book, purchasing freebies to give away at anticipated book signing events and contracting with a local website designer in order to promote my books. I also prepared various lists for advance marketing.

With the approach of the release date for the first book, the publisher fell silent and unresponsive to my email or phone messages. Finally, on September 11, 2006, I received an email message that canceled all three contracts according to the publisher's rights. The contracts allow both the author and the publisher to cancel as long as it is within 30 days of the projected release of the first book, so it was legitimate, but no reason was given for the

action. Within 24 hours all of my materials—hard copies, computer files and CDs—would be destroyed.

The Aftermath

Although I did not pay the publisher, I thought I had a legitimate publishing situation and fully expected to be selling two books now. Articles on writing say that you

I question how much time and money I want to invest in an industry that is so fiercely competitive, with so little likelihood of getting published...

should celebrate the receipt and signing of a contract. A friend even gave me an expensive pen for anticipated book signings. I kept the pen. Is it a talisman for the future? Maybe, maybe not. I enjoy using it anyway.

I question how much time and money I want to invest in an industry that is so fiercely competitive, with so little likelihood of getting published and with no assistance with marketing once a book is in print. Luck, rather than hard work, seems to be the key factor for success. This has not been my only effort to get published and I learned a lot in the process. Subsequent to these experiences, however, I've written a holographic addendum to my will that all of my written materials, if they've not been published, should be destroyed on my death. I can't imagine burdening

WRITER'S GUIDELINES The SouthWest Sage welcomes articles about the craft and business of writing. Articles should be 250 to 750 words long, plus a 40-word bio. Submissions are preferred by e-mail in an RTF attachment with 11pt. Times New Roman font and single-spaced. Bylines are given. No payment. The editor reserves the right to edit articles for length and content. Published articles will appear on the SWW website. Send submissions to editor@southwestwriters.com.



The SouthWest Sage

is published monthly by the Board of Directors of SouthWest Writers, a nonprofit, tax-exempt 501(c)(3) organization.

Subscription is a benefit of SWW membership. For advertising rates and submission guidelines, see www.southwestwriters.org.

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Is it time for you to renew your SWW membership?

SWW dues are \$60 per year (or \$100 for 2 years).
 Two individuals joining or renewing together get a special rate of \$50 each.
 Full-time students under 18 with proof of status and current attendance can enjoy a special \$40 rate.
 At the \$60 rate, that's only \$5 a month to belong to a great organization!
 You can now pay your dues securely online at www.southwestwriters.org.

If Only I'd Known... cont.

someone with my papers and the daunting problem of what to do with them.

Reassessment...

I have not given up on writing and have another manuscript in progress with other book ideas crawling around my head waiting for me to get them on paper. I've also sent a query letter for a manuscript to a literary agent in New York. Whether this is a mere hobby, or something that I'll actually see through to getting published, is not at all certain.

I share my story so that before you sign a contract you check the literary agent's or publisher's reputation. Listed below are two sites that I've been told about since my experience.

Use Your Resources

www.anotherealm.com/prededitors: This site lists agents and editors with comments about their services and particular reasons for concern.

www.sfw.org/beware: This site is maintained by volunteers and will search for an agent or publisher at no charge. You can also search for a publisher's name on the site if you have a concern or want to know if others have had difficulty working with them in the past.

--

Jonna-Lynn Mandelbaum
www.jonna-lynn.com

Editor's Note: You may notice that this article is not as upbeat as we normally run in the *SouthWest Sage*, but it is important to remember that, like most things that are worth doing, writing isn't always easy. An article like this one can be just as rich and informative as a more upbeat article.

George Terrell

Novel and Short Story Author and Playwright

See My Web Site:

www.George-Terrell.com


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Free Professional Email Address for SWW Members

You can give editors, agents, and booksellers an address like JoeSmith@southwestwriters.com and their messages will be automatically forwarded to your existing address.

Send an e-mail message to LorettaHall@southwestwriters.com, including your choice of SWW address and your existing e-mail address.



The SouthWest
Sage



Eileen Stanton is an award-winning author, co-founder and past president of SWW, and long-time teacher at three universities, including the University of New Mexico. She has honed her interviewing talents over 15 years on the radio and in thousands of articles. She brings this expertise to the Sage's Markets column each month.

Let her know what questions you want answered.

Her email is estanton@cableone.net.

Stewart Miller: New Opportunities for Writers

Have you noticed that millions of dollars are being spent in New Mexico to bring in production companies that shoot movies and TV scripts? They get encouraging tax breaks from the state, and the state takes a percentage of the revenues. So far, hundreds of local citizens have earned money by being in casts and crews. Several huge studios are in the process of being built, as well.

How can writers benefit? They can turn their novels into scripts and get a California agent. Classes and books on screenwriting abound. Computer programs take care of the professional format, but finding the right screen agent can take some doing.

I'm working on the third one-day writers' conference for the University of New Mexico with the cooperation of SouthWest Writers. The date is April 28, 2007. The title is "From Start to Sales." The first speaker I went after for the program was Stuart Miller, a successful agent with offices in Studio City, California.

Q. Tell me about your background.

A. I spent more than forty years as a Hollywood-based talent agent and consultant. I established the literary department of Agency for the Performing Arts (APA), a medium-size, full service international talent agency, after a merger with my own successful independent agency. Before joining APA, I owned and operated The Stuart M. Miller Co. literary agency for more than five years, with all representational and business management responsibilities for a staff of five people and a list of twenty-five to thirty clients, including Academy Award winning screenwriter David Ward ("The Sting"), Emmy Award winner Caryl Ledner ("Mary White") and the writers of such hit movies as "Trading Places," "Twins" and "Kindergarten Cop."

Q. As long as you're dropping names, who else have you represented?

A. Other major clients included Aaron Sorkin ("A Few Good Men"), Mark Victor and Michael Grais ("Poltergeist"), Barry Blaustein and David Sheffield ("Saturday Night Live" and "Coming To America"); novelist James Ellroy ("L.A. Confidential"), Eric Bercovici ("Shogun," "Tai Pan," "Washington Confidential"), MTM Enterprises co-founder and former NBC Chairman Grant Tinker ("Tinker On Television"), as well as Academy Award and two-time Emmy Award winner Abby Mann, eight-time Emmy Award and two-time Cable Ace Award winner Stan Daniels, six-time Emmy Award winner Ed Weinberger, four-time Emmy Award winner Allan Burns, (co-creator of "The Mary Tyler Moore Show"), two-time Tony Award winner Rupert Holmes, Academy Award and Emmy Award winner Arnold Shapiro, and such distinguished and successful producers as David Brown, Joe Wizan, Michael Levy, Ron Roth, Steve Mills and many others. Also actively supervised or was the responsible department head for the packaging and sale of such network television hits as "Home Improvement," "Roc" and "Rescue 911" and many network and cable movies, specials and other programs.

Q. Will you give a talk and also give advice when you take pitches?

A. Absolutely. I'd prefer longer sessions with each writer who has a story idea or script. I'll also give out "Coming to Terms," a glossary of buzzwords you need to know if you're writing for the big or small screen.

Q. I love your definition of a writer. May I use it?

A. Certainly.

Writer—An individual, or individuals, driven by an irresistible compulsion to memorialize thoughts into words on one or more platforms (e.g. ink-on-paper, computer memory, blood-on-wall) for the purpose of sharing stories, poems, information, ideas, insights, epiphanies or other kinds of communications with fellow humans, whether they like it or not.

Friday, December 1st

Cristina Ortega, *The Eyes of the Weaver*. Cristina Ortega shares with children her memories of visits with her grandfather, who taught her to weave when she was ten years old. From 6-8pm at Treasure House Books, 2012 South Plaza NW, Albuquerque, New Mexico. (505) 242-7204.

Karen Taschek, *Death Stars, Weird Galaxies, and a Quasar-Spangled Universe and Horse of Seven Moons*. In *Death Stars*...Karen Taschek introduces young readers to the wonders revealed by the VLA telescope, beginning with basic information on our solar system and Milky Way galaxy. *Horse of Seven Moons* relates the story of a sixteen-year-old Apache boy, a fourteen-year-old Anglo girl, and the horse they share, unbeknownst to each other. Time to be announced. Hastings, 12501 Candelaria NE, Albuquerque, NM, (505) 332-8855.

Saturday, December 2nd

Pari Noskin Taichert, *The Belen Hitch* and *The Clovis Incident*. Two-time Agatha Award finalist Pari Noskin Taichert signs her witty mystery novels *The Belen Hitch* and *The Clovis Incident*. From 11am-2pm at Hastings, 12501 Candelaria NE, Albuquerque, NM, (505) 332-8855.

Marc Simmons and Ron Kil (illustrator), *Billy Blackfeet in the Rockies*. Noted historian Marc Simmons and award winning illustrator Ron Kil will sign the fifth volume in their acclaimed Children of the West Series. Author Phyllis Morgan will join them. From 1-3:30pm at the Albuquerque Museum, 2000 Mountain Rd. Albuquerque, NM (505) 242-0434.

Emmett "Shkeme" Garcia, *Coyote and the Sky*. Emmett "Shkeme" Garcia will read and sign *Coyote and the Sky*, the Santa Ana Pueblo creation legend that shares with children the story of the beginning of the stars and constellations. 3pm at Borders—West Side, 10420 Coors Bypass NW, Albuquerque, NM, (505) 792-3180.

Saturday, December 9th

Mary Sundstrom (illustrator), *The Little Cow in Valle Grande*. Illustrator Mary Sundstrom will sign *The Little Cow in Valle Grande*, a bilingual children's story that shares the adventures of a young calf, Buddie, in his beautiful New Mexico home on the range. Borders—West Side, 10420 Coors Bypass NW, Albuquerque, NM, (505) 792-3180.

Cristina Ortega, see December 1st listing. Time to be announced. Hastings, 12501 Candelaria NE, Albuquerque, NM, (505) 332-8855.

Sunday, December 10

Amador's 20th Anniversary Celebration (and a new book by Harry Willson). Author readings, open mic, music, books, refreshments and art with Adela Amador, Harry Willson and Zelda Gatuskin and other Amador authors, artists and special friends with music by Frank Johnson. From 2-5 pm at Art is... OK & Company, Gallery & Sculpture Plaza, 3301 Menaul NE, Suite 28, Albuquerque, NM 87107. (505) 883-7368, (505) 877-4395. (Amador), www.artisok.com, www.amadorbooks.com.

Saturday, December 16th

Richard Peck, *Philly Amateurs*. Car heists and colorful characters set the stage for mayhem in Philadelphia. From 3-6pm at Hastings, 12501 Candelaria NE, Albuquerque, NM, (505) 277-7494.

Sunday, December 17th

Mystery & Romance: David J. Corwell, Sandy Cline, Stephen Hazlett, Rae Perls, Sabra Steinsiek, and Pari Taichert will be on hand to talk and sign their books at this holiday book event. From 1-3 pm at Borders Cottonwood (Westside), 10420 Coors Bypass NW, Albuquerque, NM. (505) 792-3180; www.nmbookcoop.com.

Saturday, December 23rd

Melody Groves, *Ropes, Reins, and Rawhide: All About Rodeo*. Melody Groves offers a behind-the-scenes look at the workings, workers, and animals of the heartstopping world of rodeo. Time to be announced. Hastings, 12501 Candelaria NE, Albuquerque, NM.

Workshops and Events

Land of Enchantment Romance Authors (LERA). Meets on the second Saturday of every month, from noon to 3pm, LERA, the local chapter of Romance Writers of America, meets at Heights Cumberland Presbyterian Church, 8600 Academy Rd. NE, Albuquerque, NM, on corner of Academy and Moon, in the education building off the back parking lot. Please see www.leranm.com for details. Visitors welcome, memberships available.

Rick Reichman will teach Beginning and Advanced screenwriting classes at Santa Fe Community College this spring. Rick Reichman's students have sold scripts to Fox, Warner Brothers, HBO, Showtime, PBS, TNN, all the major networks and such shows as "Roseanne," "Home Improvement," "Friends," "Buffy The Vampire Slayer," and "Strong Medicine," to name a few. Register between now and January 20th at (505) 428-1270.

Every Tuesday, 10-11:15am: Craft of Writing Workshops Taught by author/essayist/poet Linda Sonna. \$10, Drop-ins welcome. Wired Café, Taos (505) 737-9092.

Every Friday, 6-7pm: Poetry and Short Prose Readings. Newcomers are welcome to participate. For more information or questions, call Kamden weekdays at Title Wave Books, 1408 Eubank NE (505) 294-9495.

Author Services and Calls for
Submissions

Blogger John Knudson has a weekly poetry post. He wants poems by local poets. Contact him if you'd like to post a poem at johnknuds@ix.netcom.com or see his blog at: <http://albbloggerque.blogspot.com>.

Cezanne's Carrot, a Santa Fe-based literary journal is accepting submissions of fiction, nonfiction, poetry and visual art. Find current and past issues and full submission guidelines at the website, www.cezannescarrot.org.

Local Book Clubs and Published Authors wanted for the Author Book Club Connection (ABCC). When the information is put together it will be put on a web site so book clubs can contact the authors. If you are in a book club or a published author and would like to be part of ABCC contact Scott at alley0412@msn.com.

New company to help writers for performance. The Screen-Play Trio is a team of experienced screenplay and stage play writers who help you write, adapt, and critique works for performance. Contact Cliff Gravel, 505-888-1747 or see the New Mexico Film Directory at www.nmfilm.com.

NM Poetry Tangents: Call for submissions for local poets and writers for a NM based poetry anthology to be published in January. The project will feature selections by Sandra Cisneros and Jimmy Santiago Baca. <http://nmpoetrytangents.com> or e-mail Zach at tigerbrighttiger@yahoo.com.

Seeking History of SouthWest Writers The SWW Board is compiling a historical archive of the beginning and early development of SouthWest Writers. All members who can contribute information, please send email to [judyducharme](mailto:judyducharme@southwestwriters.org) or sandyschairer@southwestwriters.org.

Very rarely are SWW programs cancelled, but it is possible should the weather become fierce. Please remember, if you have doubts about whether a program will happen, or about the time or topic, call the SWW office number (505) 265-9485 during business hours, M-F 9am - noon.

In observation of the holidays there will be no Tuesday meeting in December

Program Location:
New Life
Presbyterian Church
5540 Eubank NE,
Albuquerque

Saturday, December 2, 10 am to Noon

Your Life as a Book: Crafting the Memoir

Everyone has a story. Our lives are rich tapestries of event and emotion. But how do we turn that experience into a book? Author and writing coach Lisa Dale Norton shares the basics of crafting a book-length life story, and signals the pitfalls that trip most writers as they work to craft a tale from the material of their life. Included will be short writing exercises that access “launch” memories, the key moments that drive story arc.

Lisa Dale Norton is the author of *Hawk Flies Above: Journey to the Heart of the Sandhills* (Picador/St. Martin's Press), a work of narrative nonfiction that combines memoir and nature writing. She serves on the faculty of the UCLA Extension Writers' Program and the Whidbey MFA Program, teaches workshops across the country and works with private clients crafting books. Her book *Audacious Memoir* is forthcoming. Norton is currently at work on a book of creative nonfiction entitled *Ogallala: The Life and Death of the Great Plains Aquifer*.

Saturday, January 6, 10am to Noon

Translating Ideas into Books: Writing for Children, Nonscientists, and Your Own Audience

Karen Taschek will talk about how to translate ideas into words and then into books for your chosen audience, based on her experience as a trade, science, and children's book editor and writer for HarperCollins, Random House-Alfred A. Knopf, Scientific American, Inc., and the University of New Mexico Press. All authors address fundamental questions in simplifying, clarifying, and editing their ideas for an audience, including what is the truth.

Karen Taschek began her career in publishing as an editorial assistant at *Scientific American* magazine in New York City. While freelancing in New York, she edited science books for children, then became copy chief at Random House-Alfred A. Knopf Children's Books. At the University of New Mexico Press, Karen Taschek is one of the authors and co-editors of a new science series for children ages 9 to 14. She has written 12 books in the Thoroughbred Horse series for young readers (HarperCollins), two romances (Bantam), and two books for UNM Press: *Horse of Seven Moons*, a historical novel, set near Deming, about a ranch girl, a Mescalero boy, and a mysterious pinto horse they share, and *Death Stars, Weird Galaxies, and a Quasar-Spangled Universe: The Discoveries of the Very Large Array Radio Telescope*.

Tuesday, January 16, 7-9pm

Don't be Left out in the Cold: Insider Secrets Every Writer Should Know

Having been on the inside, the outside, and caught in the middle, Joan will share with attendees her story of personal (if not financial) success and many of the insider secrets that she learned the hard way. Topics will include: what to read when you're not reading a good book; how to uncover a literary agent; why you need three good descriptions of your masterpiece; and how to put your blog to work for you.

Joan Schweighardt has worked in every area of the publishing industry. An award-winning four-time novelist herself, she is also a self-taught publisher who single-handedly published 14 titles over a period of six years. Among her titles is a Barnes & Noble “Discover Great New Writers” selection, a Borders “Top Six Read-to-Me” children's book selection, and a *ForeWord* magazine Editor's Choice Book of the Year Award winner.

Collectively, her authors have appeared on CNN Headline News, the Paula Zahn Show, PBS/NYC, radio shows (particularly NPR member stations, including KUNM) across the country, and in such magazines as *Book*, *Writer's Digest*, *The Writer*, *Pages* and many more. Their books have been published in Holland, Japan, South Korea, and Israel. Joan has also worked as a consultant and publicist for other larger presses, a freelance editor for a number of writers, and as a literary agent.

SouthWest Writers Workshops

All workshops are \$20 for members, \$30 for non-members

Saturday, December 2, 1 to 4pm

Self-Publishing: The Other Path to Print

The maze of the traditional publishing industry is a tough one to navigate. With today's technology of digital printing, publishing a novel or short story is much easier with no need to lock-step through a rigid process of publishing. Writers are no longer tied to submitting their work to the big publishing houses but are able to see their stories in print much sooner. This workshop will explore many of the different ways to get their work into print and into stores. A panel of self-published authors will explain the process.

Melody Groves is the author of *Ropes, Reins, and Rawhide: All About Rodeo* (May, 2006, UNM Press), *The Quest* and *Sonoran Rage* (novels published by print-on-demand). She recently received a book contract from the University of North Texas Press to produce a book on ranch rodeo. Melody has also published articles in *New Mexico Magazine*, *True West Magazine*, *Desert Exposure* and *Albuquerque the Magazine*. She is a columnist for *albuquerqueARTS* and has written two screenplays.

Melody is publicity chairman for the Western Writers of America, and PR chair for SouthWest Writers. She's a member of The Westerners, the New Mexico Book Co-op, and she is a gunfighter with the New Mexico Gunfighting Association.

Saturday, January 6, 2007, 1-4pm

Revising Fiction - Making Sense of the Madness

With all the books, talks, classes and workshops out there on self-editing, a writer can quickly become overwhelmed by all the advice. There's so much to edit for: plot, characterization, scene structure, digressions, consistency, setting, back story, point of view, passive voice, showing vs. telling, dialog, cliches, pacing, grammar, format, and much, much more. How do you catch it all? How do you know when you've got it right? How do you even know where to start?

This workshop will expand on the talk presented at the SWW meeting on Oct. 17, 2006 with greater emphasis on questions, discussion, and examples. It will offer a practical approach to self-editing that covers everything from planning your novel to first draft to final product. You'll receive a complete set of presentation notes, including numerous examples, a self-editing checklist, and a list of recommended references—resources that you can take home and use to better your writing.

Kirt Hickman was a technical writer for fourteen years before branching into fiction. He's made a living out of taking complex sets of requirements, or in this case advice, and boiling them down into simple, effective procedures. His methodical approach to self-editing can help you convert your first draft from mess to masterpiece. Kirt has completed four novels and has a fifth in the works. He's been an SWW mentor since the inception of the mentoring program and has participated in discussion or critique panels for multiple SWW conferences.

Donations of refreshments at the regular SWW meetings will be gratefully accepted!

Please consider providing this valuable service to our organization.

Contest Connection



Hello from the 2007 Contest Chair

I'm happy to be serving as the Chair for the SouthWest Writers 2007 Contest. I look forward to working with other volunteers to make the annual contest a success once again. There's much to be done, of course, and the process is just beginning. Ads have been placed in three major writers' magazines, qualified authors have agreed to serve as critiquers for all 19 categories, and the search for judges is under way.

Many thanks to Joanne Bodin for her guidance and for the detailed records of last year's contest that she provided. And thanks to those who have generously offered to help with the many tasks involved in conducting this year's contest—you'll be hearing from me soon.

--

Jeanne Shannon

SouthWest Writers Critique Service

A thorough critique and assessment of your manuscript by published writers, teachers, or agents. Books, articles, short stories, stage plays, and screenplays, even poetry!

Turnaround of approximately two weeks. Query letter up to three pages: \$15; synopsis up to three pages: \$25; all other manuscripts up to ten pages: \$35; thereafter: \$3.50/page.

Love Books?

Get your feet wet doing a book review, collect a writing sample, and even keep the book. This month's book, *Hot Coffee and Cold Truth* is a collection of thirteen stories inspired by our western landscape and culture.

The *Sage* is very open to new writers, so don't be shy. Email a few lines about yourself and why you should be the one to do the review to editor@southwestwriters.com.

Book Review

Philly Amateurs

by Richard E. Peck

reviewed by Luann Wolfe



Richard E. Peck takes us on a wild ride through the City of Brotherly Love in his latest crime novel, *Philly Amateurs*.

On the first day of his training program at a Philadelphia insurance company, twenty-four year old Mike Bradley celebrates by buying a brand new car on his lunch break. Minutes later, he walks out of a deli to see as his newly purchased, cherry-red Honda Prelude hauled into a moving van and driven away.

Bradley recovers his stolen car thanks to Paulie Klein, a free-lance wallpaper designer and fellow insurance trainee. Klein traces the theft to Lester-the-thief, a New Jersey entrepreneur who steals cars to order. Always looking for easy money, Bradley devises a foolproof plan to snatch 20 brand new Cadillacs in one day. With the help of his girlfriend Lee, Lee's live-in father, Harry, and Klein, Bradley steals the vehicles, which he delivers to Lester-the-thief.

Unfortunately, for Bradley, he stole the Cadillacs from a dealership owned by a Philly mob boss. These vehicles are too hot even for Lester. Now Bradley is stuck with two hijacked auto carriers filled with hot luxury cars. Wanted by the police and the mob, Bradley must figure out how to survive his first foray in the world of crime.

Set over seven days in the life of a novice scam artist, Peck's lively writing style makes *Philly Amateurs* a fun read. Filled with eccentric and unforgettable characters, this dark comedy moves quickly to a surprising—yet very satisfying—conclusion.

I hope this isn't the last we read about Mike Bradley and his cohorts; I look forward to the sequel.

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In addition to being the author of twelve books, including *Something for Joey* and *Dead Pawn*, Peck is a playwright and a former president of the University of New Mexico.



Philly Amateurs by Richard E. Peck

University of New Mexico Press,
September, 2006

237 pages, \$24.95, hardcover

**SWW INTERNATIONAL
MONTHLY WRITING
COMPETITION,
December 2006**

Deadline (postmark): 12/30/06. Holiday Poetry. Let your imagination soar. Write a single-spaced poem of any type and of any length with a holiday theme.

This quick, easy, low-cost writing competition will sharpen your skills. You don't have to be an SWW member to enter, SWW members enjoy a reduced entry fee. A different category will be offered each month. Enter them all!

You can pay by secure, on-line payment at <http://southwestwriters.com>; phone our office with your credit card information; or send check or money order.

Allow up to sixty days for the results to be posted. Entries are shipped to judges after the middle of the month following the deadline. This allows snail-mailed entries to reach our organization. Winners are posted on the website and Sage. Prizes and certificates follow soon after.

EASY INSTRUCTIONS

- Open to any writer in the world.
- All entries must be postmarked by the date listed.
- Original, unpublished work only.
- No cover sheets.
- Print the following information on first page:
Name; Address; Phone; E-mail (if any); Category Name.
- Manuscripts prepared in standard format: 1" margins, double-spaced unless otherwise specified.
- Entries are not returned, so there's no need for an SASE.
- \$5 entry fee for SWW members; \$10 entry fee for nonmembers.
- You may enter more than once, but an entry fee must accompany each entry.
- Decisions of the judges are final.
- Prizes: \$50 1st Prize; \$30 2nd Prize; \$20 3rd Prize + certificates.
- Mail entries to:

SWW Monthly Writing Competition
3721 Morris St NE, Ste A
Albuquerque, NM 87111
(Print name of category under your return address)

CONGRATULATIONS

**to the winners of the September
2006 SWW International Monthly
Writing Competition
Short Biographical Profile**

1st Prize: Taylor Chase, Durango, CO for *Britten Chase*

2nd Prize: Terry Anne Sachko, Albuquerque, NM for *Renaissance Man*

3rd Prize: Joan R. Saks Berman, Albuquerque, NM for *Nicholas Martin Perón, Community Artist*

HONORABLE MENTIONS (alphabetical order):

Susan J. Alexis, Albuquerque, NM for *Gerhard T. Alexis: Driving the Vehicles of Knowledge*

Joan R. Saks Berman, Albuquerque, NM for *Janet Kerley of Lead-Rite, Inc.*

Joan R. Saks Berman, Albuquerque, NM for *Rebecca Neri Zagal*

Lela Belle Wolfert, Albuquerque, NM for *Cindy Hill*

The judges say the entries above were all very well-written. One bit of advice, though, is to always include a title for your work.

**How Would You Like To See
Your Byline Here?**

We need your articles for the Sage!

The Sage Editor wants articles on SWW meetings and events. This is your chance to flex your reporting muscles, send in your opinions, test out a new style, have fun writing and get published in the Sage.

We prefer articles be saved as Word documents and sent by email. Don't forget to tell us what the article is about and a little bit about yourself.

Please send to
editor@southwestwriters.com.

Note: This information is provided as a convenience. Before entering, be sure to check the listed website at the end of each listing for submission guidelines and information or write the sponsors to make sure a contest is right for you.

Deadline: 12/15/06 (postmark). Short fiction. Boulevard Short Fiction Contest for Emerging Writers. Prize: \$1,500 and publication for winning story. Entry fee: \$15/each story submitted (includes one year subscription to *Boulevard*). No maximum length. Submission guidelines and information can be found at: <http://www.richardburgin.net/boulevard/id15.html>.

Deadline: 12/16/06 (postmark). Short stories. Crazyhorse Fiction Prize. Prize \$2,000 and publication in *Crazyhorse*. Single short story of up to 25 pages. Entry fee: \$15 (includes subscription to *Crazyhorse*). Submission guidelines and information at: <http://crazyhorse.cofc.edu/prizes.html>.

Deadline: 12/16/06 (postmark). Poetry. Lynda Hull Memorial Poetry Prize. Prize \$2,000 and publication in *Crazyhorse*. Up to 3 poems (up to 10 pages of poetry). Entry fee: \$15 (includes subscription to *Crazyhorse*). Submission guidelines and information at: <http://crazyhorse.cofc.edu/prizes.html>.

Deadline: 12/20/06 (postmark). Poetry. Writer's Digest Poetry Awards. Prizes: \$500 first, \$250 second, \$100 third, \$25 fourth through tenth. Winners' names printed in *Writer's Digest*, which reserves the one-time publication rights to the top 25 winning entries. Entry fee: \$10/first poem and \$5/each additional poem. All entries must be 32 lines or fewer. No style or subject restrictions. Must not be published (even on a personal website) or submitted elsewhere. Submission guidelines and information at: <http://www.writersdigest.com/contests/poetry>.

Deadline: 12/31/06. Essay. Lantern Books Essay Contest. Prizes: \$1,000 first, \$500 second, \$250 third. May include publication in catalogue, website, or other venue. Entry fee: None. Essays can be on one of three subjects: 1) What are the most pressing US or world issues in next five years, 2) what are best forms of activism in today's political climate, or 3) describe a turning point in your consciousness/why do you believe what you believe. Essays should be 1500 words or less and submitted electronically to essay@lanternbooks.com. Submission guidelines and information at: <http://www.lanternbooks.com/essay.php>.

Deadline: 12/31/06 (postmark). Short fiction and essay. River Walk Journal Fiction and Essay Contests. Prizes: \$500 and publication for first in each category, second and third place in each category get publication. Entry fee: \$10/entry. Short stories up to 15 double-spaced pages (no erotica or genre fiction). Short personal essays up to 15 double-spaced pages (no erotica). Submission guidelines and information at: <http://www.riverwalkjournal.org/contest2.html>.

Deadline: 12/31/06. Southern Shady Ladies Home Remedy Contest. Submit a home remedy and the story behind it. 1500 words or less, double-spaced, include cover page with your full name, title of remedy and story, current mailing address, telephone number and SASE. Prizes: \$100 grand prize, \$50 first prize, \$25 second and third prize. All winners' stories and remedies will be published in the Southern Shady Ladies Home Remedy Book. All other winners receive one copy of the book and 25% discount on additional books. After publication, all rights revert back to author. All unselected work will receive comments where appropriate. Entry Fee: \$10/entry. Larnette Phillips, 7877 Highway 4, Jay, Florida 32565, Chelsearichards@aol.com.

Deadline: 12/31/06 (postmark). Novel or collection of short stories. Jefferson Press Prize for Best Voice in Fiction. Prizes: \$5,000 and publication first prize, \$500 for four other finalists. Entry fee: \$35/manuscript. Open to any work of book-length fiction by any writer who has never published a book and is not under contract to do so. Self-published writers and their self-published titles are eligible. Submission guidelines and information at: <http://www.jeffersonpressprize.com>.

Deadline: 12/31/06 (postmark). Short story. Thomas Wolfe Fiction Prize. Prizes: \$1,000 first prize and possible publication in *The Thomas Wolfe Review*. Entry fee: \$15 members North Carolina Writers' Network, \$25 non-members. Unpublished fiction manuscript not to exceed 12 double-spaced pages. Submission guidelines and information at: <http://www.ncwriters.org/programs/competitions/wolfe.shtml>.

Deadline: 12/31/06 (postmark). Nonfiction. X.J. Kennedy Award for Nonfiction (by *Rosebud*). Prizes: \$1,000 and publication in *Rosebud*. Entry fee: \$10/per entry. Original, unpublished nonfiction 3,500 words or less (longer will be considered). Any kind of nonfiction including essays, nature and travel writing, and memoir. Submission guidelines and information at: http://www.rsbd.net/x__j__kennedy_award.htm.

Deadline: 1/22/07. Poetry. Elinor Benedict Poetry Prize. Prize: \$1,000. Entry fee: \$10 for 1 to 3 poems. Submission guidelines and information at: http://www.webdelsol.com/Passages_North.

Deadline: 1/22/07. Nonfiction. Thomas Hruska Nonfiction Prize. Prize: \$1,000. Entry fee: \$10 per story. 7,500 word limit. Submission guidelines and information at: http://www.webdelsol.com/Passages_North.

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Keith Pyeatt is the new conference chair at SouthWest Writers, and a paranormal author. He refuses to clarify what's paranormal—him or his novels.

Recent Board Meeting Highlights

by Sandy Schairer

Larry Greenly introduced Jeanne Shannon, a technical writer (retired) from Honeywell and EG & G. She has been in the publishing business for seven years. She was appointed SWW's contest chair for 2007.

Rob Spiegel reported on the up-coming speakers and workshop presenters. There is no Tuesday program in December. Since Rob will miss the next Saturday meeting, he is arranging to have the sandwiches for the workshop picked up from him and delivered to the workshop/meeting facility.

Sandy Schairer reported that the SWW sign-up sheet for meetings has been revised and is pending final approval by the office coordinator. The policies and procedures inset regarding workshops and sale of books has been updated. Sandy has not seen the documentary and interviews so the 3-fold-flyer revision has not been completed. Loretta Hall gave the Treasurer's report. All members received a copy, and the Minutes notebook in the SWW office will have the final copy of the report attached to the minutes as well.

Larry Greenly reported that the paying membership stands at 576, which is only one down from last month. People continue to join at the conferences and programs, so evidently renewals are slow or non-existent.

Edith Greenly reported 35 critique service submissions year-to-date. Income: \$4,612.00, expenses: \$3,311.00, with a net of \$1,300.00. Letters complimenting the critiquers and the service—especially for Elsie Kreischer—are still coming in. The secretary will get the list of current critiquers from the office (verifying same with Edie) and send them appreciation letters that the board suggested last month.

Keith Pyeatt reported the details and plans for the November 18th and 19th Conference. Suggestions included SWW hold the dinner for presenters at a board member's house. The presenters receive no honorarium. Three dinners for the three speakers will be included for the Saturday Night Banquet. The cost for the meals for the presenters is included as budgeted expenses for the conference.

Melody Groves noted that SWW made the headlines in the *Albuquerque Journal* newspaper.

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Sandy Schairer, Ph.D., is the author of Extremely Short Stories for Busy People and writes romantic fiction under a pseudonym. She can be reached at her southwestwriters.com email address.

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A thorough critique and assessment of your manuscript by published writers, teachers or agents.

Books, articles, short stories, stage plays and screenplays... even poetry. Turnaround is approximately two weeks.

Query letter up to three pages: \$15, Synopsis up to three pages: \$25

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Thereafter: \$3.50/page



Rob's Rules of Freelance

On Saturday, February 3rd, Rob Spiegel and Larry Greenly—SouthWest Writers' vice-president and president, respectively—will be presenting the workshop, *Writing Magazine Articles that Sell*. To help you know a little more

about them and warm up for their joint presentation, the *Sage* will run an interview with Rob this month and Larry next month.

Q. What is your education and background?

A. I have a B.A. in English from UNM. I've spent 30 years in the publishing industry. Twenty of those years I've been writing. I spent 10 years as owner/publisher of *Chile Pepper*, a national food magazine.

In writing I've done a lot of different things. I've been senior editor on a couple of national trade magazines. I've written non-fiction books for major publishers. I've been editor for a number of newsletters and websites. I now work as a freelancer, covering technology and environmental compliance for a number of trade publications. As such, I write email newsletters, web stories, feature articles, news and blogs. I also participate in webcasts and will soon start producing podcasts. The life of a writer is quite varied these days.

Q. What section of the library/bookstore do you linger in, or is there a particular author you read?

A. The children's section, both because I have kids and because I've started writing children's novels.

As for favorite writers, I include Larry McMurtry, Tom Friedman and Judy Blume... I read at least one book on writing each month. I also read heavily in the genres I pursue.

Q. What is the greatest tool in a writer's arsenal?

A. MS Word. Word processing saves me 10 to 15 hours per week over the days of the typewriter.

Q. What, in your opinion, is the most often-repeated bit of false wisdom told to writers?

A. The worst wisdom is "write what you know." I believe you can fire up your writing by covering that you don't know. I just wrote a sample (or test) article for an aviation newsletter and I got the job. I don't know anything about the aviation industry, but I'm curious. I also just finished a novel with a 13-year-old girl as the main character, and I'm not a 13-year-old girl. I like writing what I don't know.

Q. What is your favorite rule of grammar, punctuation or style?

A. I like short sentences, especially fragments. If I can write a one-word sentence, great. One-word paragraphs are even better. It works if it sounds right when you read it out loud. Watch out for the subjunctive, though (was versus were), as it sounds right when it's wrong. The rule of breaking rules: it only works if you know you're breaking the rule.

Q. How do you suggest a new writer break in?

A. Find a website or local weekly that will let you write often. Writing often will help you find your voice.

Q. What is your biggest weakness as a writer? What is your greatest strength?

A. My biggest weakness is taking on too much work. As a freelancer, I'm always terrified that I'll not have enough work, so I take on too much. My strength is my ability to write volumes. I recently put in a 15,000-word week. I think I broke something in my brain.

Q. What is your favorite thing about being a writer?

A. I like the hours. But I particularly like the feeling that I'm doing what I'm supposed to be doing with my life.

What I like to share is fear, both in fiction and non-fiction. In fiction, I like to put my characters in fear. In non-fiction, my favorite question to ask my sources is, "What about (the topic) keeps you up nights?"

Q. How important are social skills for a writer?

A. Critical for a journalist. Not important at all for fiction writers.

—

Interview by Lee Ross

Member Successes

Shellie Jablonowski, who writes under the pen name Shellie Windsor, will have a poem called “Ivy’s Dream” in the January/February 2007 issue of *Mystic Pop Magazine*.

Anna Redsand’s first YA biography, *Viktor Frankl: A Life Worth Living*, will be released by Clarion Books.

Jeanne Shannon’s book of poetry, *Angelus*, has been nominated by the publisher, Fithian Press of McKinleyville, California, for a Pushcart Prize. Jeanne recently recorded several of her poems for broadcast during the next year on the Poetry Plaza website (www.plazapoetry.com).

Your successes could be on this page and our worldwide website to be seen by agents, editors, publishers, producers, and search engines. But you have to do more than just talk, you have to e-mail your successes to editor@southwestwriters.com. Don't miss this unique chance for free publicity and fame...and your right to brag! Send information by e-mail in rich text format (.rtf) to editor@southwestwriters.com.

NEW DEADLINE FOR ARTICLES

The new *Sage* deadline is the 10th of each month.

The *SouthWest Sage* welcomes articles about the craft and business of writing. Articles should be 250 to 750 words long, plus a 40-word bio. Submissions are preferred by e-mail in a Word attachment with 11pt. Times New Roman font and single-spaced. Bylines are given. No payment. The editor reserves the right to edit articles for length and content.

Send submissions to editor@southwestwriters.com.

Free Professional Email Address for SWW Members

You can give editors, agents, and booksellers an address like JoeSmith@southwestwriters.com and their messages will be automatically forwarded to your existing address.

Send an e-mail message to LorettaHall@southwestwriters.com, including your choice of SWW address and your existing e-mail address.

Critique Groups

Submit addition or deletion requests or changes to SWWriters@juno.com.

**Wanting to Start Groups/
Looking for a Group**

***Any Genre, Albuquerque:**

GLBT Writers
Jim McDonough
505-688-2954
jim@queerwriters.com

***Any Genre, Las Cruces:**

Barbara Villemez
505-522-5734

***Any Genre, Santa Fe:**

Mary Mazza-Anderson
cmmom@zianet.com

***Fantasy/Romance:**

Heidi Punke
505-271-9772
heidiandmitch@yahoo.com

***Historical Romance:**

Leah Dodd
505-890-0210, patandleah@peoplepc.com

Lester Libo

is looking for a critique group in the fiction genera. lesterml1@comcast.net.

***Poetry:**

Billy Brown
505-401-8139, welbert@aol.com

***Sci Fi/Fantasy:**

Joel Holt
505-265-1938, loki265@hotmail.com

***Writing-for-fun:**

East Mountains near Edgewood
Sandy Schairer
sandschairer@southwestwriters.com

***Short Nonfiction:**

Suzann Owings
505-867-0567

**Groups Seeking
Members**

***American Theater Ensemble Screenwriters and Playwrights:**

Meets 1st and 3rd Tuesdays of the month, 7pm at Puccini's Golden West, 620 Central Ave SW, 505-242-2353, elreytheater@qwest.net.

Any Genre:

Meets once a month on Sunday afternoons
Michael Franco
MDLindell@aol.com

Odds & Ends

**Groups Seeking
Members**

***Any Genre, including childrens, Albuquerque:**

Meets the first Wednesday of the month, 7-9pm, Hastings Superstore, Wyoming and Montgomery
Sabra Steinsiek
505-260-1837

***Any Genre, Moriarty:**

Second and fourth Thursday each month, 6pm at the Moriarty Library
Tina Ortega
505-832-2513, jleksutin@hotmail.com

***Any Genre, Rio Rancho:**

Alice Harpley and Bob Harpley
505-867-1408,
riversedgebob@cablone.net
riograndema@cablone.net

***Land of Enchantment Romance Authors:**

Meets the second Saturday of each month at noon. Potential members, attend three meetings to try it out. leranm.org.

***Mystery/Sci Fi:**

Fred Aiken
505-856-2145
FredAiken@southwestwriters.com

***Novels/Short Stories:**

Janeen Anderson
505-899-5624, janeen@janglya.com

***Novel/Memoir**

Meet online and monthly, NE Albuquerque.
Nancy Costea, 505-323-9681
costeawood@comcast.net

***Novels/Short Stories:**

Meets Saturday afternoons Albuquerque Main Public Library on Copper.
Jack Phelan, 505-292-0576 or 256-3500

***The Santa Fe Screenwriter's Group:**

Susan Burns.
505-474-8268, thursday51@aol.com

***The Screaming Ninja Screenwriters:**

Meets every other Thursday, Flying Star on 7th and Silver. Marc Calderwood
505-897-6474,
skatingkokopelli@hotmail.com

SouthWest Sage Ad Rates

**Worldwide Circulation
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The SWW website receives hundreds of thousands of page requests every month.

Business card size: \$16

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15% discount for 3 mos.

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Deadline:

1st of each month for the following month.

Payment due with camera-ready ad copy.

For information about benefits for SWW members contact:

Cheri Eicher

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(505) 299-5919
(800) 883-4310

Independentmeans@comcast.net

SWW Board Meeting will be held at the SWW office on Tuesday, December 5, 2006, at 6 pm

**3721 Morris St. NE Suite A
Albuquerque, NM 87111-3611
phone: (505) 265-9485 fax: (505) 265-9483
e-mail: SWWriters@juno.com
web: http://southwestwriters.com**

New SWW Members

Teresa Allen	Mary Lois Sennewald
Teresa Meleski-McGuire	Natalie Ramirez
Don Yont	Carol Riley
Gloria Rodriguez	Jim Riley
Darlene Collins	Peggi Randolph
Dina McQueen	Michelle Holtby
Cheryl Abeita	Richard J. Cramer
Julie Carter	

**Need a new book (or almost anything else)?
Save Money and Support SWW!**

*Go to www.southwestwriters.org
and click on the
amazon.com box.
You save money &
SWW receives a commission.*

New SWW Email Address is Here

SouthWest Writers has retired its old AOL address and has replaced it with SWWriters@juno.com. Please make note of it in your email address book.

President/Office Coordinator

Larry Greenly
SWWriters@juno.com

Vice-President

Rob Spiegel
(505) 275-2556 · RobSpiegel@southwestwriters.com

Secretary/Parliamentarian

Sandy Schairer
(505) 281-0546 · SandySchairer@southwestwriters.com

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(505) 764-9906 · LorettaHall@southwestwriters.com

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MelodyGroves@southwestwriters.com

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(505) 265-9485 · SWWriters@juno.com

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Lela Belle Wolfert
(505) 899-2952

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Ron Schultz
RonSchultz@southwestwriters.com

Workshop Coordinator

Bonnie Hayes

Conference Chair

Keith Pyeatt
(505) 890-5545 · keith@keithpyeatt.com

Conference Chair and Historian

Judy Ducharme
(505) 256-9659
JudyDucharme@southwestwriters.com

Board Member at Large

David Corwell
(505) 898-0624 · DavidCorwell@southwestwriters.com

Writer's Contest 2007 Chair

Jeanne Shannon
(505) 296-0691 · jspoetry@aol.com

Other Key Positions

SWW Sage Editor

Lee Ross
editor@southwestwriters.com

SWW Sage Assistant Editor

Jeanne Shannon
(505) 296-0691 · jspoetry@aol.com

E-lert Mistress

Gail Rubin
publicity@southwestwriters.com

Speaker Coordinator

Rob Spiegel
(505) 275-2556 · RobSpiegel@southwestwriters.com



SWW is happy to announce the enormously expanded list of writer's resources website links is now on the SWW website. Check it out.



The SouthWest Sage

SouthWest Writers
3721 Morris NE
Albuquerque NM 87111
www.southwestwriters.org
SWWriters@juno.com

See your membership card or mailing label for renewal date. Renew to retain your membership benefits. You may now do this securely online.

Saturday, February 3, 1-4pm

Writing Magazine Articles That Sell

The workshop covers all aspects of writing magazine articles:

- Developing a great idea
- Matching the idea with the right magazine
- Turning the idea into a pitch
- Finding the right sources
- Drafting the article meeting deadlines
- Turning an assignment into a working relationship

The workshop will also look at the different type of magazine articles:

- Feature articles
- Sidebars
- Recurring columns
- Beat reporting
- Profiles
- Reviews
- Section editing

Larry Greenly is widely published with his non-fiction articles. He is the literary editor of *albuquerqueARTS*, a former copy editor for several publications, and the current president of SouthWest Writers. As well as writing feature articles and profiles, Larry has also written recurring columns on a variety of subjects.

Robert Spiegel is contributing editor to a number of trade publications. He has held the senior editor position at *Ecommerce Business* and *Electronic News*. He is also the former owner and publisher of *Chile Pepper* magazine. He is currently vice-president of SouthWest Writers.

