



The SouthWest Sage

Vol. 21, No. 1

The Voice of SouthWest Writers

January 2006

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

2006 Writer's Contest Issue

The SouthWest Writers Contest encourages and honors excellence in writing.

Editors and literary agents judge all the entries and critique the top three entries in each category. All entries receive a written critique by a qualified consultant.

Finalists in all categories are notified by mail and are listed on the SWW web site with the title of their entry. First, second, and third place winners receive cash prizes of \$150, \$100, and \$50, respectively. Winners will be honored at a contest awards banquet. Date and time to be announced.

First place winners also compete for the \$1,000 Storyteller Award.

2006 General Contest Rules

1. Deadline: Entries must be postmarked by May 1, 2006. Only mailed entries accepted; no hand deliveries or email submissions. All entries postmarked after the deadline will be returned unopened.

2. Submit two copies of your entry, which must be original, unpublished, unsold, and not optioned prior to deadline. Photocopies are acceptable. Your entry **must not have been previously selected as a SWW 1st place contest winner** within the same category. 2nd and 3rd place previous contest winners may enter the contest again. One copy of your entry will go to the judge, and one copy will be critiqued by a qualified consultant, both selected by SWW for the entry category.

3. Category number: Write on the outside envelope, under your return address.

4. SASE: Please include a 9" x 12" return envelope with the same amount of postage used to mail in your entry. A critique and all contents of your submission package will be returned to you. NO metered postage on return envelopes,

and please use self-sealing (non-moisture) SASEs. *Entries with inadequate return postage will NOT be returned.*

Optional: Self-addressed, stamped postcard to be returned to you upon receipt of your entry.

5. Your name must appear in only four locations: (1) on the Contest Entry Form; (2) on the outside envelope with your return address; (3) on the SASE; and (4) on the optional notification postcard. **Your entry will be disqualified if your name appears elsewhere.**

6. Your signature and the signature of the co-author, if applicable, **MUST** appear on the Contest Entry Form.

Entry Format.

1. A separate Title Page is not needed.

2. In the header, on pages subsequent to page one, type the title or its key word(s) in the top left corner. In the top right corner, number the pages of your entry, starting with page two. Query letters, synopses, and outlines should also be numbered consecutively, but separately from the manuscript.

3. Double space your entry. Use Times New Roman or Courier New in 12 point font on 8½" x 11" paper with one(1)-inch margins. Use one (1) side of the paper only. Please paper clip your entry; NO staples or binding. (Exception: Screenplay format—see Category Specific Guidelines.)

4. Single space synopses and query letters. **Double space** proposals.

Any entry failing to comply with these rules will not be judged, but will be critiqued. Contacting a judge regarding your entry before the winners are announced is an automatic disqualification.

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 SWriters@aol.com.



The SouthWest Sage

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SWW dues are \$60 per year (or \$100 for 2 years).
 Two individuals joining or renewing together get a special rate of \$50 each.
 Students with current proof of 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.

Now the Real Fun Begins

by Tom Gibbons

By the time you read this, you'll probably be sitting at home, next to the fireplace or in front of the TV, feeling a mixture of relief and disappointment now that the Holidays are done. The gifts have been given, the weight has been gained, and there's nothing left to anticipate. Or is there? It's a New Year, and SouthWest Writers is preparing for the annual contests once again. You all have from now until May 1st to work on your entries. With our huge range of categories, no one has any excuse not to give it a go.

In the middle of this fine publication, you'll find a copy of the contest entry form, as well as the complete list of categories. Remember to go over all of the rules—following them is of the utmost importance. You can find everything you need here, as well as on our website, southwestwriters.org. This issue is so crammed full of contest stuff, in fact, that I've had to push some very good articles to the back burner! A very big Thank You to all who submitted their work.

This issue also sees the first installment of a new column by Sage regular Judy Ducharme. Every month, she will cover a different aspect of the annual contest. She's starting off with postage, a subject we all know to be very important. Also in this issue is Judy's coverage of the excellent talk by David Morell on December 3. Also, there is information about the upcoming conference, Thrillerfest, which Mr. Morell will be headlining.

Winter is here, and is barely a third of the way through. This is the perfect time to get cracking on whatever essay, short story, poem, screenplay, or manuscript you've been fussing at. This year's contest is the perfect chance to gain recognition. In addition to the annual contest, SouthWest Writers has announced a series of monthly contests to begin in 2006. The first deadline is the end of this month, so get down to it! In the world of writing, every opportunity is big.

Peace,



Contest Formatting Tips

- Use 8½" x 11" white paper, non-erasable bond, with 1" margins all around.
- Double space manuscripts and poetry.
- A separate Title Page is not needed. Type the book/story/article title in CAPS, centered and halfway down the first page, and drop two double spaces to begin your text. Begin each subsequent chapter the same way.
- Beginning on page two, use a running header. On the top left, type the title or its keyword(s). On the top right, number sequentially. Headers should appear on every page except the first. Query letters, synopses, and proposals should also be numbered consecutively, *but separately from the manuscript. Your name should never appear on the manuscript, query letter, synopsis, or proposal.*
- Text should be printed in black ink. Manuscripts and poetry use 12 point Times New Roman or Courier New, and screenplays use 12 point Courier New only. Avoid the use of other fonts.
- Care should be taken not to overuse question marks, exclamation points, and parentheses.
- *Single space query letters and synopses.*
- Query letters should be **one page long** and contain a brief description of the book's purpose, its market, and the author. Begin with a strong hook. Prove to the editor/agent that you can write, that you know the market, and that you are a professional. If the query letter is intriguing enough, a request for a proposal can follow. This is your most important sales tool.
- Synopses reveal the plot and main characters of your book in a concise and exciting way. It should be **one page long** and written in third-person present tense. Include the ending.
- Double space proposals.
- Nonfiction book proposals pitch your idea, your books' marketability, and your expertise. For the SWW contest, double space your entry; include a summary, a table of contents (chapter headings), market competition, and target audience. (Always request the guidelines from the publisher or agent with whom you plan to deal.)

Would You Like To Be Published Here?

We need articles for the Sage!

The articles need to be saved as an .rtf (Rich Text Format) file and attached to an email.

We prefer the font to be 11pt Times New Roman, and we like single-spacing.

Please send something on a writing-related subject to SWriters@aol.com.

Thank you so much!



The SouthWest
Sage

For twenty-four years, SWW has been bringing editors and agents from the very best publishing houses and agencies in the country.

Eileen Stanton, a co-founder and past president of SWW, 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@cablone.net.

Markets

by Eileen Stanton

Tracy Bernstein is one of three editors and two agents committed to speak April 29 at UNM's Continuing Education center. The writers' seminar, *From Start to Sales*, is sponsored by UNM, with the cooperation of SWW. To Register, call (505) 277-0077.

Q. What education and career path took you to this position at New American Library, a division of Penguin?

A. The summer between my sophomore and junior year at Yale, I got an internship at Houghton Mifflin. I really took to the publishing business. After graduation, I held editorial positions at such houses as Farrar, Straus & Giroux, Henry Holt, Warner, Kensington, and Pocket Books. Currently as Executive Editor at New American Library, I publish commercial fiction and nonfiction while also overseeing the Signet Classics line.

Q. What genres of books do you handle?

A. As executive editor, I wear several hats. I acquire commercial fiction in the categories of mystery, suspense, thriller and women's fiction. I acquire practical nonfiction (e.g., parenting, health, diet, how-to, self-help, inspiration), but also quite a few memoirs. In addition, I run our Signet Classics program, commissioning introductions to everything from Austen to Zola.

Q. What are you looking for in a novel?

A. Writing style is number one—an original voice that makes you want to read on. Then, of course, a compelling story.

Q. What do you want to see in a nonfiction book?

A. A captivating voice that satisfies the reader who is looking for information, help, and inspiration. Many of our memoirs are of celebrities, but not all. Our latest memoir describes six months

in the life of a military wife, whose husband is deployed to Iraq. It's got a lot of humor as well as being quite moving.

Q. What's the best and worst thing about your job?

A. The best is working with authors and their material. It's never tedious. I'm never bored. Authors are unique, and I never would have met such interesting people in any other job. As for the worst thing about my job, it's publishing a book that nobody buys. Editors really pour themselves into a book, and we hate to see it fail.

Q. How many books come out of your department at NAL?

A. We bring out 400 a year; a large majority is mass-market paperback.

Q. If after you have the one-on-one meeting with a writer at our mini-conference you are interested in either a novel or nonfiction book, what will you specifically ask to see from the writer?

A. I will only read a novel if it is complete. A nonfiction submission can be in the form of a proposal, the proper elements of which I can elaborate on at the conference!

Q. Will you ask for a manuscript from a writer without an agent?

A. Yes, I will consider an unagented submission from a writer whose pitch piques my interest. Normally, NAL does not consider unagented work.

Eileen Stanton, writer, college instructor and past president of SWW, is heading the second From Start to Sales seminar. To obtain a five-minute one-on-one pitch session with the editor or agent of your choice, contact estanton@cablone.net starting February, 2006.

New SWW Email Address is Here

SouthWest Writers has retired its old AOL address, SWriters@aol.com, and has replaced it with SWWriters@juno.com. We are using both email addresses concurrently until we pull the plug on AOL. Please make note of this fact in your email address book.

Three Mistakes Writers Usually Make, with David Morell

by Judy Ducharme

SouthWest Writer's program on December 3 featured David Morrell, the "daddy" of Rambo. Over 130 people enjoyed David's talk.

It was not unusual that David, at 17, enjoyed the TV program "Route 66"—all of America did. Each week the two protagonists had moved farther along the Mother Road with entertaining adventures. Enjoying the writing above all else, David decided to become a writer. In 1968, David was a professor of English at the University of Iowa and was the same age as many Vietnam veterans who ended up in his classes. This became the inspiration for "First Blood." In 1972, the book was published. Later, David wrote "Lessons from a Lifetime of Writing."

For the hour allotted to his talk, David covered the top three errors new writers commit.

- Punctuation—Get rid of semicolons completely, make judicious use of commas, and unpack long sentences into short ones.

- Over-use of visual description—concentrate on the other senses.

- Dialogue—Nothing's wrong with using "said" or "asked." Also, describe a character's actions instead of using "speech tags (snarled, hissed, moaned)."

The rest of the talk concerned getting a book published, and how it differs from techniques before the nineties. Because book publishers are bought by conglomerates, books become a commodity—sold by the platform on which the story rests. At Tony Hillerman's Mystery Conference, a writer tried to explain to David the plot of a mystery book he'd written. A quick conversation revealed that the story also concerned "the inside world of NASCAR racing." Seems the fellow rode in the cars, hung out at the pits, and knew the drivers and their world. That was his platform, the way to market the book.

David's latest book, "Creepers," set in Asbury Park, New Jersey, concerns people who infiltrate old buildings that were abandoned with all the furniture intact. Marketing at his distribution company googled "urban exploration," got 300,000 hits, and said the book could be marketed since there was a large audience.

David also set up a web site for Paragonhotel.com, where much of the action of the book takes place. This is called "viral marketing," and was used by the "Blair Witch Project" to great success.

Judy Ducharme, MLS University of Alabama, 1982, is retired from 18 years as Senior Medical Librarian at UNM Health Sciences Library. Judy is revising her historical novel set in New York at the turn of the twentieth century.

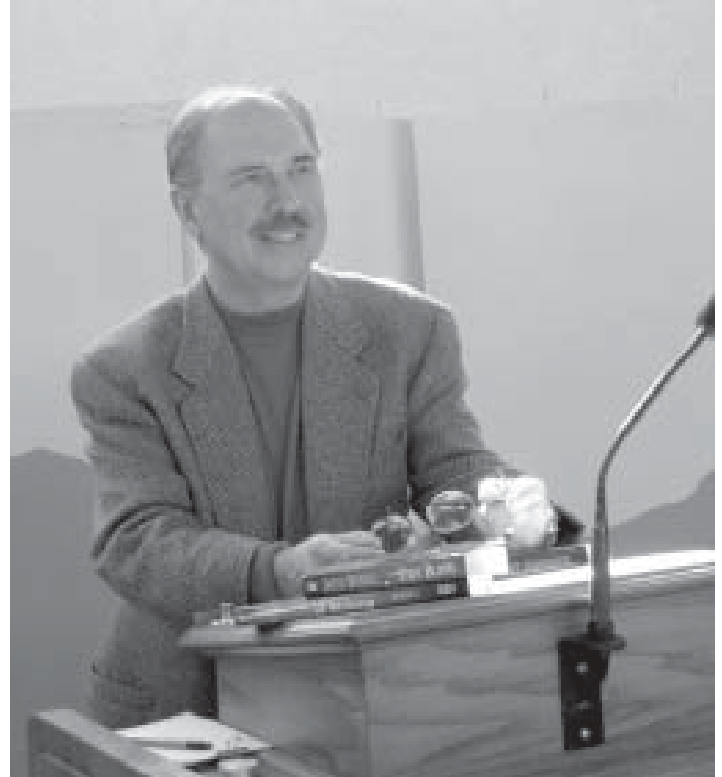


Photo © Diane J. Schmidt

The International Thriller Writers organization is having its first reader/author conference, ThrillerFest, a gala event that will take place from June 28 to July 1, 2006 at the historic Arizona Biltmore resort in Phoenix. This will literally be a who's who of thriller writers—they will give presentations and mingle with readers in the first event of its kind. Brad Meltzer, John Lescroart, R.L. Stine, Douglas Preston, Lee Child, Gayle Lynds, Barrie Eisler, James Rollins, M.J. Rose, Steve Berry, Lee Goldberg, Katherine Neville, F. Paul Wilson, JA Konrath, and David Hewson will be there, among many others. I'll discuss the evolution of my novel *First Blood* into the Rambo films and analyze the cultural implications. Top thriller editors and agents will attend. There'll be all kinds of workshops about writing thrillers. For information, please go to thrillerfest.com.

—David Morell

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Jennie

The Write Way

by Penny Rogers

Pointers on Apostrophes

The two main uses of apostrophes are to show omission or ownership. Sounds simple enough, *doesn't* it? Use an apostrophe in the exact place of the letter or letters you left out. It's not difficult, but don't confuse it with the rules for possessives of pronouns. I'll (omission of two letters) deal with that a bit later.

Showing possession by a singular noun (that's the name of a person, place, thing or idea such as honesty) requires adding "apostrophe s ('s)." As long as the noun is singular, it doesn't matter what the final letter is, e.g., one princess's ball gown, one dog's tail.

Showing possession by a plural noun usually requires only an apostrophe after the "s" that made the noun plural, e.g., three princesses' dresses, seven dwarfs' names. Naturally, if the plural does not end in "s", you will add the complete symbol of possession, "apostrophe s," e.g., three deer's tracks, two children's feet.

Possession by pronouns is a different matter. They *never* use an apostrophe. You wouldn't think of putting one in the word *mine* or *his*, so why would you put one in the word *its* when you don't mean it is or it has? The dog wags its tail (not "it's," which would mean "the dog wags *it is* tail").

There are many specialized uses of the apostrophe. No one has trouble using an apostrophe instead of the first two digits in the year '05. Most writers know that to make the plural of letters or numbers you add "'s." e.g. there are four "s's" in Mississippi, or a European writes his "7's" with a crosshatch. According to Webster's New World Dictionary,

the plural of a word follows that rule as well, e.g., "Don't use too many *and's* in one sentence." However, the Associated Press Style book does not use an apostrophe in the plural of a word.

Beware of homophones, words that sound the same but have different meanings (whether spelled the same or not).

- Theirs (a possessive pronoun) and there's (there is)
This book is theirs, but there's another book that is mine.
- Your (a possessive adjective) and you're (you are)
Your cats will play when you're away.
- Whose (a possessive adjective) and who's (who is)
Whose child is it who's crying?

A good reference book can help you deal with special cases. There are several available in the local library. Editors will have their own thoughts on some uses. This column has been aimed at two of the most common errors made by misplacing or not using an apostrophe in contractions and possessives.

Penny Rogers has a master's degree in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. She has taught English for eighteen years including three years at the Centro de Estudios Norteamericanos in Valencia, Spain, and ten years at Albuquerque T-VI.


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Continental Cuisine from the Heart

If you missed out on the wonderful Continental cuisine at the SWW 2005 Contest Banquet, now is your change to experience one of the best restaurants in Albuquerque!

Show your SWW membership card to Nellu or Elena at Baci's Bread & Wine Restaurant, 2740 Wyoming NE (corner of Wyoming and Candelaria) and receive a 10% discount (cash only).

Now open for lunch 11am to 4pm; dinner 4-9pm. Beer and wine available.

2006 SWW Writing Contest Connection

by Joanne Bodin

It's a new year and that means another opportunity for you to focus on your writing. Who knows? Maybe you even made a New Year's resolution to finish that novel, to write that short story, or to complete that romance novel you've been working on for years.

Why not enter the 2006 SWW Writing Contest this year? You've been procrastinating long enough. It's time to get serious. After all, with 19 categories this year, there must be something you can submit.

This year we have added a new category: Spanish Language Nonfiction Article/Essay for writers who want to submit in the Spanish language.

SWW has editors who are eager to read your entries. This is a great opportunity for you! If you enter your manuscript postmarked by the May 1, 2006 deadline, it will be read by acquisitions editors who will critique the top three in each genre. All entries receive a written critique by a qualified consultant.

Finalists in all categories are notified by mail and are listed on the SWW website with the title of their entry. First, second, and third place winners receive cash prizes of \$150, \$100, and \$50, respectively. First place winners also compete for the \$1,000 Storyteller Award. Winners will be announced at a contest awards banquet in the Fall of 2006 (date tba).

Remember, nothing ventured, nothing gained! The 2006 SWW Writing Contest offers a unique opportunity for you to send an exclusive submission that has the status of a solicited manuscript.

The 2006 SWW Writing Contest is open to all SWW members and all writers in the world. Updates will be found each month on our website and newsletter.

Follow the **Contest Rules and Guidelines** carefully on our web page at www.southwestwriters.org. For specific questions, email drjsbodin@hotmail.com.

Joanne Bodin, Ph.D., is the 2006 SWW Writer's Contest Chair. She is a retired teacher of the gifted in Albuquerque. Her book, Step By Step Storytelling: A Narrative Language Curriculum, is used throughout the school district. She is currently working on a novel and is learning jazz piano.

Let's Talk About... Postage

by Judy Ducharme

The SouthWest Writers Annual Contest 2006 is around the corner, with Contest Chair, Joanne Bodin. A series of articles to help you enter successfully begins with this Sage. The series will cover all aspects of entering contests, no matter how mundane.

When you enter a contest you have certain expectations—will I get a good critique? Will I win? In order to receive your critique(s) from the critiquer, and/or the judge (some judges critique all the entries, although they're asked to critique only the top three), your return envelope must have the *same amount* of postage as the original contest entry. If the critiquer and/or judge should write on your entry, you'll want that information. This year we returned only the critique to some contestants, and not the writing on the piece. Not enough postage.

The majority of contestants did everything right, including the postage to send their packet. They used paper clips instead of staples, which made checking in the manuscripts much quicker—we didn't have to remove them. They inserted the entry with the *signed application* on top, so the first thing we saw was your name. They sent a check. They included a return envelope *the same size* as the outer envelope, with a "no-lick" closure. They included *the same amount of postage*. If you need to save money, don't drink that second Starbuck's coffee. Put the money on the return envelope instead.

Last year we did not supply the missing postage. More than thirty contestants did not affix the correct postage and did not get the packet returned. They received only the critique sheet. Thirty people missed getting explicit help from the writing on the manuscript.

Don't let postage deficiency ruin a good contest.

<p>Need a new book? Save Money and Support SWW! Go to www.southwestwriters.org and click on the amazon.com box. You save money & SWW receives a commission.</p>
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Free Professional E-Mail Addresses For SWW Members

You can give editors, agents, and booksellers an address like IManAuthor@southwestwriters.com. Their messages to you will be automatically and invisibly forwarded to your existing address.

Just send an e-mail message to LorettaHall@southwestwriters.com, including your choice of SWW address and your existing e-mail address where you want messages to be forwarded.

2006 Category Specific Guidelines

There is no limit to the number of entries you may submit. However, each entry must be submitted separately in its own envelope with a separate Contest Entry Form and a non-refundable entry fee.

NOVELS: The first 20 pages or less, beginning with the prologue and/or first chapter, plus a one page synopsis.

1. **Mainstream and Literary**
2. **Mystery, Suspense, Thriller, or Adventure**
3. **Romance**
4. **Science Fiction, Fantasy, or Horror**
5. **Historical or American Frontier/Western**
6. **Middle Grade (4th-6th grade) or Young Adult (7th grade and up).** You must type *Middle Grade* or *Young Adult* in the top right corner of the first page.

SHORT STORIES: 5,000 words or less (put word count in the upper right corner).

7. **Science Fiction, Fantasy, or Horror**
8. **Mainstream and Literary**
9. **Mystery or Romance**
10. **Other Genres: Historical, Western, etc.**
11. **Middle Grade (4th-6th grade) or Young Adult (7th grade and up).** You must type *Middle Grade* or *Young Adult* in the top right corner of the first page.

SHORT NONFICTION: (put word count in the upper right corner)

12. **Nonfiction Article or Essay:** 800-3,000 words, any topic, plus a one page query letter to the appropriate target publication. May address any topic. No charts or pictures.
13. **Children's Nonfiction Article:** Middle Grade (4th-6th grade) or Young Adult (7th grade and up). 500-800 words, plus a one page query letter to the appropriate target publication.

OTHER:

14. **Nonfiction Book:** The first 20 pages or less, plus a one page query letter and a three page proposal (include market competition, audience, summary, and chapter headings). May address any topic. No charts, etc.
15. **Children's Nonfiction Book:** Middle Grade (4th-6th grade) or Young Adult (7th grade and up). The first 20 pages or less, plus a one page query letter and a three page proposal (include market competition, audience, summary, and chapter headings). No charts, etc.
16. **Children's Picture Book (Fiction and Nonfiction):** Target age: 4-7 years old. No more than six pages (text only) for a 32-page book. NO illustrations.
17. **Screenplay:** The first 20 pages, plus a **one** page single-spaced synopsis **that tells the complete story**. Use accepted screenplay format; 12 point Courier only and **MUST** be bound with brads. NO stage plays or TV series, please. You must include the total page count of the screenplay in the top right corner of the first page.
18. **Poetry:** 5 pages or less, even if more than one poem. NO graphics, please.
19. **Spanish Language Nonfiction Article/Essay :** Written in Spanish only; 800-3,000 words, any topic, plus a one page query letter to the appropriate target publication.

The outside envelope for each submitted entry must be labeled with one of the category numbers above; write the number on the envelope, under your return address. Use Category Specific Guidelines with the General Contest Rules and the Contest Entry Form.

Complete this form for each entry. Please print legibly. The form may be photocopied or duplicated from southwestwriters.org, but all signatures must be original. Mail each entry separately.

Name: _____
Address: _____
City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____
Phone: _____ E-mail Address _____
Entry Title: _____

Category (Circle one): 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19

How did you hear about the contest? _____

Entry Fees NON-REFUNDABLE. Please circle one.

All categories (except poetry): \$29 SWW Member \$44 Non-Member
Poetry: \$18 SWW Member \$28 Non-Member

Mail by May 1, 2006

- Check or money order (in US \$) payable to SouthWest Writers. Do not send cash.
• This Contest Entry Form, completed and signed.
• Two (2) copies of your entry. Consult the General Contest Rules.
• SASE (self-addressed, stamped envelope). This envelope must contain the same amount of postage used on the outside envelope. NO metered postage on return envelopes, please. Entries with inadequate return postage will NOT be returned.
• Write the category number entered under your return address on the outside envelope.
• Optional: Self-addressed, stamped postcard (acknowledges receipt of entry).

Mail To:

SouthWest Writers Contest 2006
3721 Morris NE, Suite A
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87111

Contestant's Agreement

In consideration for SouthWest Writers' (SWW) acceptance of my work for review in the SWW Contest 2006, I hereby submit my entry and fee, and agree to be bound by the contest rules stated herein. I understand that any questions regarding the interpretation of these rules, and any matters relating to the contest, which are not specifically covered by the rules, will be decided solely at the discretion of the contest officials. I will accept as final and be bound by all judges' decisions. I understand and agree that my manuscript will be subjectively evaluated, and SWW cannot accept liability for consequences arising from any opinion expressed. I hold harmless and indemnify SWW, its agents, employees, and volunteers for any and all losses, costs, or expenses incurred from any dispute arising from my participation in the contest. I acknowledge by my signature below that I have read, understood, and agree to be bound by these rules. I understand that my contest submission will not be accepted without my signature below, and that under no condition will my entry fee be refunded.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Co-Author's signature, if applicable: _____ Date: _____

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.

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

Tuesday, January 17, 7-9 pm

How to Improve your Writing Style by Madge Harrah

You may know how to construct a plot and build a character, but if your writing style is flat and colorless you probably won't sell your novel. Award-winning novelist Madge Harrah presents ten ways to spice up your writing style so that an editor will sit up and take notice. Madge Harrah has published five novels for adults, five novels for middle-grade and young adult readers, over two hundred articles and short stories, a book of plays, a biography, and has had plays produced. She has won twenty-six state, national and international writing awards. Her latest book, a biography called *Blind Boone, Piano Prodigy*, received First Place for Best Juvenile Book in the 2005 state-wide competition sponsored by New Mexico Press Women. This entitled it to be entered in the national competition, sponsored by the National Press Women Association, where it competed against the First Place winners for Best Juvenile Book from the fifty states. At the national level it won Third Place. Madge Harrah lives in Albuquerque and is a member of SWW.

Saturday, February 4, 10 am-noon

Myths About Writing by Jerry Weinberg

Many aspiring writers dampen their own success because they allow themselves to be affected by dangerous myths, such as:

- Write about what you know about.
- Write one thing at a time, and finish before you start another.
- Start with an outline.
- There's a shortage of good ideas.
- Write at the same time every day.
- Writer's block exists, and I suffer from it.

Jerry Weinberg is the author of *Weinberg on Writing*, in which he presents his "Fieldstone Method" by which he has produced over 40 books and 400 short pieces, in non-fiction and fiction. He has coached hundreds of writers to finish and sell their projects. He can help you.

Tuesday, February 21, 7 pm-9 pm

Blogging 101 by Marianne Powers

Are you ready to start blogging?

Marianne Powers will conduct a class that will get you blogging five minutes after you get home and log in to the internet. You will walk away with copies of screen prints and detailed instructions for one of the most popular blog services, Blogger. Blogs are your personal connection to everyone else in the world: readers, agents, editors, and other writers. And they're free! Services like Blogger give you a free web address, free server space, a choice of free templates, free archiving, and free comments for your readers. Marianne will also give tips on getting your blog noticed and "hit." Don't miss this chance to learn how to become an internationally published writer!

Marianne Powers is a writer and public speaker in the areas of management, conflict resolution, working relationships, and personal growth. Her blog and book, *Doing the Right Thing and Achieving All Your Goals at the Same Time*, is published on her website, mariannepowers.com. She can be reached through her website and at marianne@mariannepowers.com.

Donations of refreshments at the regular SWW meetings will be gratefully accepted!
Please consider providing this valuable service to our organization.

Is it time for you to renew your SWW membership? Check the website.
It is now secure for online renewals and new memberships.

We request that you e-mail your announcements about writing-related activities to SWWriters@juno.com no later than the first day of the month preceding publication. Please limit the announcement to 60 words or less.

***Seeking History of SouthWest Writers** The SWW Board is compiling a historical archive of the beginning and early development of SouthWest Writers Organization. All members with memories of SWW to share, please send them to sandyschairer@southwestwriters.org.

***Craft of Writing Workshops** in Taos, NM. Every Tuesday, 10-11:15 a.m. at Wired Cafe. \$10. Drop-ins welcome. Taught by author/essayist/poet Linda Sonna. 505-737-9092.

***Selling to the Sisterhood.** Learn the secrets for breaking into the women’s magazine market in an online course with full-time freelancer Jennifer Nelson. Ongoing course is six weeks long. Spaces are limited. Absoluteclasses.com/Nelson/womenmag.htm.

***PR Writing.** An online course with internationally recognized PR professional Tori Jacob. Ongoing course is six weeks long. Register at absoluteclasses.com/Jacob/prwriting.htm.

***Stories of Strength** The proceeds of this new anthology will go to disaster relief charities such as the Red Cross, Operation USA, and the Salvation Army. Visit storiesofstrength.com for details.

***Land of Enchantment Romance Authors** meets *second Saturday of each month* at noon. Potential members can attend three meetings to see if they would like to join. leranm.org.

***Steffanie Gibbons** is the editor of *New At Home*, a magazine for people who have just bought a house in Albuquerque or Santa Fe. They are looking for writers for assigned feature topics. steffanieg@aol.com.

***The Second From Start to Sales Seminar**, headed by Eileen Stanton, at UNM Continuing Education. Call 277-2527 for the catalog in *January 2006*.

***Endorse your writing on the radio** Airleaf Publishing and Book Selling Services offers the opportunity to talk about and sell books on 32 radio stations. For details, call Brien Jones at (800)342-6068 or email brien@airleaf.com.

***The Language of Liars** is a four week interactive course taught by a former federal agent. Learn to write authentic deceptive dialogue and spice up your interrogation scenes. Log on to rwamysterysuspense.org and click on "Murder One."

***A New Forum** for all things poetry is up at abqslams.org. Go there and poke around, join, and post.

***Sabra Steinsiek** is looking for New Mexican Fiction authors who have a book coming out in April or May of 2006 for an article she is writing. Please contact her at writersabra@hotmail.com.

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

The SWW International Monthly Writing Competition

Now there's a quick and easy, low-cost writing competition at SWW to sharpen your skills. A different category will be offered each month. Enter them all!

And note that, while you don't have to be an SWW member to enter, SWW members enjoy a reduced entry fee. So join today! Visit southwestwriters.org for secure online payment, phone our office with your credit card information, or send us a check or money order.

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.
- 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 will be final.
- Prizes: \$50 1st Prize; \$30 2nd Prize; \$20 3rd Prize.
- Mail entries to:

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

Monthly Categories

January 2006: Restaurant Review

Review a restaurant (real or imaginary) for a magazine or newspaper. Length: up to 750 words. Deadline postmark: *January 31, 2006.*

February 2006: Query Letter

Craft a well-written, single-spaced query letter to an editor or agent (real or imaginary) pitching a book or magazine article. Length: 2 pages maximum. Deadline postmark: *February 28, 2006.*

March 2006: Anecdote

Write an anecdote from your youth aimed for a magazine that prints short "reminisce" type articles. Length: up to 300 words. Deadline postmark: *March 31, 2006.*

For those members wishing to receive an e-mail notice of SWW Events and Meetings,
please send a request to be placed on the E-lert system.
Send the request to Gail Rubin at publicity@southwestwriters.org.

Note: Do not send your entry without writing to the sponsor or checking a website for guidelines and entry fees, and always include an SASE!

Deadline 1/5/05. 8th Annual Scriptapalooza Screenplay Competition. scriptapalooza.com.

Deadline 1/15/06. *Literal Latte* Fiction Award. literal-latte.com. Offered annually to any writer “to provide talented writers with three essential writing tools for continued success: money, publication, and recognition.”

Deadline 1/30/06. Writers’ Journal Fiction Contest. Send to: “Fiction Contest” Val-Tech Media, PO Box 394, Perham, MN 56573-0394.

Deadline 1/31/06. The Cornelius Ryan Award. www.opcofamerica.org. Offered annually for excellence in a nonfiction book on international affairs. Entry Fee: \$125.

Deadline 2/18/06. The Land of Enchantment Romance Authors present The Rebecca Contest 2006. Visit leranm.com.

Member Successes

Send information by e-mail in rich text format (.rtf) to SWWriters@juno.com. Please be brief.

Connie Harrington’s short story “September Light” will be published in the May 2006 issue of *Bryant Literary Review*.

Dorothy Noe’s second profile will be published in the January issue of *New Mexico Magazine* and an interview with the authors of *Horse Housekeeping* published in *Passport* magazine.

Correction from last month: Nancy King’s new book is called *Dancing With Wonder: Self-Discovery Through Stories*, published by Champion Press.

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 SWWriters@juno.com. Don’t miss this unique chance for free publicity and fame...and your right to brag!

Screenplay Reading Service

Need affordable assistance with:

- * Character Structure
- * Drive Elements
- * Story Structure
- * Formatting

* Quick turnaround * Detailed written notes * Discussion of notes and suggestions

Marc Calderwood, Award Winning Screenwriter

Also available for screenwriting business consultation and coaching.

Call (505) 897-6474 or Email marccalderwood@hotmail.com

for appointment and prices

Everyone Spread the Word to:

Writers, Publishers, Sales, Reps, etc.

SouthWest Writers has office space for rent.

\$250/mo. gets you/them NE business location with private lockable space, conference room, five cent copies, Internet access,

local number fax machine, kitchenette.

Call 265-9485, M-F, 9 am - noon.

Critique Groups

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

*Wanting to Start Groups/
Looking for a Group*

Poetry:

Billy Brown
(505) 401-8139
welbert@aol.com

Short Nonfiction:

Suzann Owings
(505) 867-0567

**Any Genre,
Rio Rancho area:**

Winnie Keith
(505) 771-8059
w.leone@giftsbyleone.com

**Any Genre,
Rio Rancho area:**

Alice Harpley
riograndema@cableone.net

**Any Genre,
Rio Rancho area:**

Bob Harpley
(505) 867-1408
quasiburro@cableone.net

Historical Romance:

Leah Dodd
(505) 890-0210
patandleah@peoplepc.com

SF/F:

Joel Holt
(505) 265-1938
loki265@hotmail.com

Fantasy/Romance:

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

Any Genre in Santa Fe:

Mary Mazza-Anderson
cmmom@zianet.com

Fantasy/Poetry:

Janet Belovarsky
(505) 891-9529
royalbloodseries@aol.com

Groups Seeking Members

Any Genre:

Tina Ortega
2nd and 4th Thursday 6 pm
at Moriarty Library
(505) 832-2513
jleksutin@hotmail.com

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

Susan Burns
(505) 474-8268
thursday51@aol.com

Novels/Short Stories:

Saturday afternoons at
Albuquerque Main Public
Library on Copper
Jack Phelan
(505) 292-0576
(505) 256-3500

Albuquerque Nonfiction:

Meets weekly at the old
Albuquerque Press Club
Marianne Powers
(505) 892-4990
drifty@aol.com

**Westside Scribes,
Screenwriters:**

Every other Thursday
Flying Star on Rio Grande Blvd.
Marc Calderwood
skatingkokopelli@hotmail.com
897-6474

Mystery/SF:

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

Novels/Short Stories:

Janeen Anderson
(505) 899-5624
janeen@janglya.com

Fiction & Nonfiction:

Paula High
(505) 271-0837
plhigh@abq.com

Any Genre:

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

New SWW Members

Carl Koestner

Melva Gellenthien

Jamey Lathrop

Trish Brewer

Luann White

Lexi Petronis

Peggy Conger

Hennelore Hendricks

Terry Hicks

Kimberlee Johnson

Diane Thome

John R. Miller

Sala E. Chapman

Molly Weber

Judith Costello

Bill Bryant

**SouthWest Sage
Ad Rates**

**Worldwide Circulation
on the Internet**

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

Business card size: \$16

1/8 page: \$24

1/4 page: \$36

1/3 page: \$45

1/2 page: \$75

Full page: \$100

15% discount for 3 mos.

20% discount for 6 mos.

Deadline:

1st of each month
for the following month.

Payment due
with camera-ready
ad copy.

**Because SWW
is a nonprofit
organization,
we cannot accept ads
for financial
institutions,
insurance,
or real estate.**

For information
about benefits for
SWW members contact:

Cheri Eicher
INDEPENDENT MEANS
Group Benefits
(505) 299-5919
(800) 883-4310

SWW Board Meeting will be held at the
SWW office on Tuesday, November 1, 2005, at 6 pm

Here we are:

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

Recent Board Meeting Highlights

The 2005 Board has two new members: Ron Schultz is the Volunteer Chair, and Joanne Bodin is the Contest Chair for the 2006 Annual Writing Contest. The elected executive officers consist of the following:

- President Larry Greenly conducts SWW meetings, represents the organization in the community, and presides over Board meetings. In addition, Larry is liaison for the Sage and SWW website, as well as the coordinator of the SWW office with regular office hours Mon-Fri, 9am to 12 noon.
- Vice President Rob Spiegel selects the speakers for the regular meetings (first Sat and third Tues of each month). He has initiated a series of workshops—a 2 to 4 hour presentation after the Sat. meeting—in months when there is no all-day conference. These workshops have been quite successful thus far. Check the announcements as they may feature a different speaker than featured at the meeting.
- Loretta Hall is the Treasurer and a hardworking asset to the organization. She keeps track of the finances and budgeting for SouthWest Writers assisted by the office coordinator, the board president, and committees such as Budget and Finance and Audit committees.
- Sandy Schairer is Secretary of the Board. She generates the official minutes of the meetings, which can be viewed in the office by any interested SWW member the following month after minutes are approved and signed. The Secretary also assists several of the committees, e.g. the conference and contest committees doing desktop publishing and other work. In addition, Sandy is giving the Parliamentarian report at board meetings in 2006.
- Other board members head up various committees. Since the board is limited in size, each member may serve on more than one committee or help out when needed. Some of the chairs have to start their committee work earlier than the new year—for example, advertising and paperwork for the conferences and contest, which need to be organized well in advance. The individual board members are an enormous benefit to the organization as efficient and professional volunteers in their service to the board, the organization and you, the members. Members of SWW can also serve on these committees. If you are interested let the volunteer chair know by signing up at the tables at SWW meetings. All members are welcome to serve as greeters and refreshment providers for meetings.

All members of SouthWest Writers are welcome to attend a board meeting, which is the first Tues. of every month at 6:00 PM in the SWW office conference room. The Board Highlights in 2006 will be reported after the official minutes are written and approved by the Board. Contact the secretary at sandschairer@southwestwriters.com for further information.

Members may see the complete minutes for the year (and previous years) on file in the SWW office. Office hours: M-F, 9am-noon.

President/Office Coordinator

Larry Greenly
(505) 293-8550 · LarryGreenly@southwestwriters.com

Vice President

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

Secretary/Parliamentarian

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

Treasurer

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

Membership

Larry Greenly
(505) 265-9485 · SWWriters@juno.com

Public Relations

Melody Groves
MelodyGroves@southwestwriters.com

Critique Service

Edith Greenly
(505) 265-9485 · SWWriters@juno.com

Policies, Procedures, and Audit/Historian

Lela Belle Wolfert
(505) 899-2952

Volunteer Coordinator

Ron Schultz
(505) 323-9252 · RonSchultz@southwestwriters.com

Members At Large

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

Writer's Contest 2006 Chair

Joanne Bodin
(505) 880-8326 · drjsbodin@hotmail.com

Other Key Positions

SWW Sage Editor

Tom Gibbons
sageeditor@southwestwriters.com

E-lert Mistress

Gail Rubin
publicity@southwestwriters.org

Speaker Coordinator

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

Interim Conference Chair

Lela Belle Wolfert
(505) 899-2952



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.

SWW's NEWEST PERK! LINK TO OUR WEBSITE!

Writers! Do you have a book to promote? Or do you want to promote yourself? Now you can increase the visibility of your Web site by linking to SWW's popular Web site, which gets hundreds of thousands of page hits per month from writers, editors, publishers, readers and other people from around the world. Linking to SWW is easy and inexpensive, but it's available only to SWW members, so if you aren't already a member become one now. As a member of SWW, you need only to send your URL and a check or money order for \$5.00 to:

SouthWest Writers
3721 Morris St NE Ste A
Albuquerque, NM 87111-3611

As long as you remain a SWW member, your link will remain on our Web site for the entire world to see. Imagine the increase in business your Web site will generate, so link with us today!

Please note that SWW reviews each site for appropriateness.