



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

Gala April Poetry Fest

In celebration of National Poetry Month, each April SouthWestWriters hosts a poetry reading at the Saturday meeting. This year was no exception. Emceed by the inimitable *Queen of Everything*, lavishly dressed (as always) in shades of purple and lavender complete with coordinated jewelry, shoes, and hat, Lela Belle Wolfert (see page 9) introduced pre-registered SWW members as they presented their creations to an audience of over 100. Readers included Cheri Eicher, David Epstein, Larry Castillo-Wilson, Diane Daley, Shelly Jablonowski, Marty O'Malley, Don DeNoon, Margaret Gross, Mary Winfield, John J. Candelaria, Scott Palmer, Billy Brown, Carol Riley, Norma Walker, Karin Bradberry, Constance Hester, Margarita Montalvo, Gayle Lauradunn, Janet Harris, Karl Koestner, Peggy Herrington, Keith Moen, Joann Sheets, and Mary Winfield.

SWW thanks these poets for sharing their wonderful work, several of whom allowed us to publish them here—all of which remain the intellectual property of their respective authors.

I Love My Clichés

By John J. Candelaria

I love my clichés,
don't care what the books
or editors say.

They're like music to my ears,
lend a hand to rhythm and rhyme,
make my words dance up a storm.

My clichés speak to universal themes:
long lost love; revenge is sweet;
friends are flowers in the garden of life.
Words that tell it like it is.

Clichés come easy to my writing,
they're words sitting pretty,
for what you see is what you get.
So next time you read a cliché,
don't heap coals of fire on the writer's head.
Just go with the flow; they're words written
as a thing of beauty that is a joy forever.
How else these words,
"It was a dark and stormy night..."

More poetry inside!

Hope

By Joann Sheets

Works a 24/7 shift on the train to infinity.
pays in smiles that reach the eyes,
pays in raindrops after drought.
Bonuses given for children who will live.

Requires cotton and silk
smooth textures to cover troubled beings,
colors of earth, fire, light outshining dark of doubt,
satin slippers for the final dance.

Bursts fragrantly into air spiced with cinnamon
lily of the valley, lavender, puppy and baby
to cover dismay and decay.

Dreams in color, pastel to bright
with edges soft, moving outward to mists of sunrises.
It Monets the world of madness,
lifts the weight of war
tilts it slowly towards peace.



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Join us! First Saturday: 10am-Noon; Workshop: 1-4pm. Third Tuesday: 7-9pm. New Life Presbyterian Church, 5540 Eubank NE, Albuquerque, New Mexico

SWW Member Perks: Full listing at <http://www.southwestwriters.com>. **Show your membership card to these and many other fine merchants:**

Romero Jewelers, 2945 Wyoming NE, (505) 293-6901, offers 10% discount.

Chez Axel, 6209 Montgomery NE (505) 881-8104, extends 20% discount on their fabulous French cuisine. Applies to meals for parties up to ten, excluding alcohol, tax and gratuity.

Hastings Superstore, Tramway and Candelaria, (505) 332-8855, extends their educational discount to: 25% discount on books, varying discounts on other items. Other Hastings may participate, just be sure to sign up for the educational discount.

From the Editor

You've already noticed the poetry, but don't stop now! The Gala April Poetry Fest at our Saturday meeting was a big hit and several of the poems read there are sprinkled, like April showers, throughout this issue. The silly limerick I read is on my website (www.pegboard.com); scroll down the center section there if you must.



We also have a book review with more on the way in future issues, an informative POD article by Bob Sanchez, who will speak at our Saturday meeting in August, and a piece on freelance journalism, a profession enjoyed today by Larry Greenly and Rob Spiegel, and by me back in the day. Freelance journalism is a great career if you like living on the firing line. There's more, of course, including contests, book signings, classes and workshops, so keep on reading.



SWW's April Workshop was a Character Clinic presented by Kersten Hamilton whose latest book *Caleb, Son of None* is shown here. Ms. Hamilton, a prolific writer known for her fast-paced stories and dynamic characters, explained in detail how her characters are just versions of herself in different costumes. She taps into her

readers' "pool of knowledge" and says stick-to-it-tiveness is the path to writing success.

How She Became Caroline Keene

SWW members and guests who caught our 3rd Tuesday meeting in April enjoyed a special treat—a joint get-together with members of Croak & Dagger, the Albuquerque Chapter of Sisters in Crime. The fascinating speaker, national bestselling author Susan Wittig Albert, on tour for her latest mystery novel, *Spanish Dagger* (the type of yucca illustrated on the cover this month) held the rapt attention of the audience throughout the event. A former college professor, Ms. Albert shared how she came to be an author in the Nancy Drew mystery series (*nom de plume*: Caroline G. Keene), a history of mystery and many delightful back stories behind the distributed "reading list" of her three dozen published novels! Her advice? "Today's most powerful writing tools are the website and blog."

May Attractions

Speaking of meetings, don't miss our upcoming events: Uma Krishnaswami, an award-winning children and young adult author who lives in Aztec, NM, will explore picture



Call for Submissions!

The *Sage* needs your success stories, book signings, writing tips & ideas, questions, answers, queries, how-tos.

You've got 'em! We need 'em!

E-mail to editor@southwestwriters.com

books: *Wild Things of 2007*. And *Albuquerque Tribune* Arts and Features Editor, Nancy Salem, will explain how to turn your interest in art, music, theater and lifestyle into freelance newspaper work—with a special opportunity for submissions—on Tuesday evening, May 15. Details are on pg 6.

That's a Rap

Be sure to enter the SWW May Writing Competition (essays, this month! See pg. 13) and remember your Mother on her day, Sunday, May 13. You can also look forward in upcoming issues to more member contributions including a column devoted to writers' resources on the Internet.

"Today's most powerful writing tools are the website and blog."

I'd like to thank Lee Ross for his fine editorship of the *Sage* during the past year. He asked me to share his recent success: Lee Ross found someone to pay him to write; he began working as a reporter for the *East Mountain Telegraph* in April. Way to go, Lee!

In the details department, let me mention that last issue's Exceptional Member of the Month, Ron Schultz, does indeed devote a great deal of time and energy to SWW, though it is Bonnie Hayes who serves as our Class Coordinator.

I'm extremely pleased to be here and any success I have will be in direct proportion to your support and participation. Please accept my thanks in advance. I'm looking forward to writing with you.

Peggy

Book Signings

Friday, May 4, 11:30am-1pm: Meet David Stuart, author of *The Ecuador Effect*, a novel combining a liberal dose of Ecuadorian Indian culture with dark and fast-paced drama. Mannie's Restaurant, 2900 Central Ave SE, Albuquerque, NM (505) 265-1669.

Saturday, May 5: Sue Houser will sign her book, *Hot Foot Teddy: The True Story of Smokey Bear*, at the Smokey Bear Historical Park in Capitan, NM. A portion of the proceeds will be used to purchase playground equipment for the park.



Saturday, May 5: UNM Press authors will sign books at the New Mexico Horse Fair, Bookworks Booth. Melody Groves, author of *Ropes, Reins, and Rawhide: All About Rodeo* from 10am-12pm; Slim Randles, author of *Sun Dog Days* and Karen Taschek, author of *Horse of Seven Moons* from 12pm-2pm. Expo New Mexico, 300 San Pedro NE, Albuquerque (505) 344-8139 (Bookworks),

Wednesday, May 9, 6:30-8:30pm: St. John's Cathedral Book Fair. Don Bullis, David J. Corwell, Cynthia Davis, Jerry Davis, Antonio Garcez, Jill Lane, Sabra Steinsiek, Margaret Tessler, and numerous others will discuss and sign their works. St. John's Episcopal Cathedral, 318 Silver SW, Albuquerque. (505) 247-1581, www.CynthiaDavisAuthor.com

Saturday, May 12, 10am-2pm: Multiple Author Book signing. David J. Corwell, Jerry Davis, Sandy Schairer, Sarah Storme, and Lela Belle Wolfert will discuss and sign their works. Raleys, 8100 Ventura St. NE (Paseo del Norte and Ventura), Albuquerque.

Saturday, May 19, 4-6pm: Learn the secrets of stand-up comedians on the road from Ronn Perea, author of *Smiles, Giggles & Laughs*. Hastings Books, Tramway and Candelaria.

Saturday, May 19, 2pm: Raphael Cristy, *Charles M. Russell: The Storyteller's Art*. Cristy shows how Russell, well known for his sketches, paintings, and sculptures of the Old West, was also an accomplished local color writer who amused his peers with stories that delivered sharp observations and humorous treatment of the American West. Borders Uptown, 2240 Q Street NE, Albuquerque, NM.

Sunday, May 27, 2pm: Rudolfo Anaya launches and signs his latest children's book, *The First Tortilla*. This charming bilingual story is based on a traditional Mexican tale of the origins of the cultivation of corn. Learn how a young girl saves her village by making the first tortilla with the help of the Mountain Spirit. Albuquerque Museum, 2000 Mountain Rd, Albuquerque, NM (505) 242-0434.

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Announcements

Monday, May 14th. 6:30-8pm: Writers to Writers-Ethnic Writing: A Personal Perspective by Dr. Irene Blea. Westside Hastings (Coors Rd. and Montano), Albuquerque. (505) 898-0624 or dcorwell@hotmail.com.

Saturday, May 5, 8am-4pm, Includes lunch: Land of Enchantment Romance Authors local RWA Chapter. *Write from the Heart Conference; Perfect Your Pitch* with Linda Rohrbough, Keynote Speaker. Featuring guest editors (appointments available) Heather Osborn of TOR Books and John Helfers of Tekno Books, Five Star. Cost: \$55 for LERA members, \$85 for non-members (includes lunch). Only 50 seats available! To register, or questions answered contact Barb Simmons at symbar@aol.com. The Indian Pueblo Cultural Center, 2401 12th Street NW, Albuquerque, New Mexico 87107, (505) 843-7270

Deadline June 1: Seeking submissions for first person miracle stories. *I am a Miracle* is a series of books of miracle and inspirational writings, with art/photos, and a music CD. Website: www.iamamiracle.com or acederberg@hotmail.com.

Nearly Naked

by Karin Bradberry

I dress deliberately in white undergarments,
never taking them off, preferring to move
bits of cloth aside, offering you pieces of skin
like chocolates from a box,
not to be eaten all at once,
but savored slowly,
one at a time.

I want to feel the tug of elastic tight
against my skin as you enter me,
the hint of force as you push
and pull at the fabric,
white on brown.

I want to see the yellow bruise
your teeth leave tearing
the strap from my shoulder,
your thumbprints still
red on my thighs.

Tear off the foil wrapper,
suck out the soft center,
devour me whole.

SWW Annual Contest Connection

by Jeanne Shannon

The May 1st deadline for contest entries has come and gone, and we are processing the contest entry packets. To ensure that your entry is anonymous, we assign each entry a number. First, we make sure you have submitted two copies of everything, and then we send one copy to the critiquer and one to the contest judge.



Critiquers and judges must complete their work by August 1. At that point we will find out who the top three winners are in each category. We notify you by mail if you are in the top three, but we will not announce the first-, second- and third-place winners until our awards banquet in September. If you are a winner and cannot attend the banquet, we will call you and let you know your winner's status. More information about the awards banquet will be announced soon.

A complete list of the contest judges is posted on our website, www.southwestwriters.org, under Annual Contest.

We appreciate your interest in SouthWest Writers and your participation in our annual contest. If you have any questions, you may e-mail me at js2007sww@yahoo.com

Upcoming Classes

The SWW conference room is available to members who wish to teach classes about writing. SouthWest Writers is not responsible for the opinions and teaching methods of the instructors. However, we welcome helpful criticism or comments on any class, and these should be e-mailed to the office.

June 6, 13, & 20, 7-9pm, SWW Conference Room:

Awakening Imagination & Improving Writing through Creative Visualization. \$45 members, \$55 non-members; for 4 to 15 people. This series of classes will explore your imaging skills, awaken your creativity, and improve writing at all levels of the craft. Learn basic visualization techniques to apply them to your writing techniques as well as your manuscripts. SWW Member Sandy Schairer, PhD, has used the creative visualization technique for over 20 years, and has developed specific applications for writers. She is offering this exciting and experiential technique to fellow writers. Sandy is the author of *ABC 123*, an anthology of humorous flash fiction and several e-books published under her pen name.

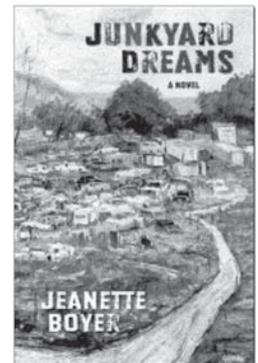
Book Review

Junkyard Dreams

by Cheri Eicher

Junkyard Dreams is Jeanette Boyer's first published book. It is a concise and insightful look into the life and culture of northern New Mexico. But more than that, it is an unsympathetic look into the often forgotten realm of normally nice people's conflicts over the change of land, the community expectations, and the how the change results in a shift in their lives forever.

The book is character driven. All of the characters are fully developed and three dimensional. No wooden people are to be found within the pages of *Junkyard Dreams*. The reader cares about all of them, with all of their strengths and flaws. The relationship between Rita Vargas and Leroy Sena is the most intriguing.



Jeanette Boyer does an amazing job of developing all the characters in her well crafted novel. She brilliantly shows the reader that we have a long way to go as humans, despite the tolerance of diversity in the Land of Enchantment.

Skillfully examining the definition of family is a central theme in *Junkyard Dreams*. The people espouse the value of the family and the land. I found it interesting which characters exemplify this value and who falls short.

Junkyard Dreams is a page turner and a quick read. Viva Jeanette Boyer! She respects the land and its people.



Pen Women in Mexico: The Art and Writing Workshops in Mexico that Sally Mathews and Sandy Hugg will teach this summer are now on the NLAPW website: <http://www.nlapw.org/sanmiguel.html>

SWW Events

SWW programs are rarely cancelled, but it is possible should the weather become fierce. If you have doubts about a program taking place, or about the time or topic, call the SWW office (505) 265-9485 during business hours, M-F, 9am- noon.

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

Saturday, May 5 from 10am to noon

Wild Things of 2007: Picture Books for Now and Tomorrow

Using selected titles and building on the speaker's writing experience, we will examine what's being published now, discuss the balance between the deeply personal and universally relevant, and explore what it means to know the competition.

Uma Krishnaswami is the author of picture books (including *Monsoon*, a Parents' Choice recommended book, *The Happiest Tree*, a CCBC Choice), and a middle grade novel, *Naming Maya* (an IRA Notable Book for a Global Society). Uma lives in Aztec, New Mexico. She teaches writing online through www.writers.com and is on the faculty of the Vermont College MFA program in Writing for Children and Young Adults.

Tuesday May 15 from 7 to 9pm

How to Turn Your Interest in Art, Music, Theater and Lifestyle into Freelance Newspaper Work

Nancy will offer details on how to pitch stories and get work with arts and lifestyle subjects.



Nancy Salem is currently Arts and Features Editor at the *Albuquerque Tribune*., formerly Business Editor for six years. She is a UNM journalism graduate who worked 15 years for the *Associated Press* in Albuquerque. She was a *Tribune* reporter and copy editor in the late 70s and early 80s, and worked two years as a copy editor for the *Omaha World-Herald*.

Saturday, June 2 from 10am to noon

Secret Agent Confidential Files:

How to Get, Keep, and Fire an Author's Agent

Let's face it – we're in the desert, far from the national publishing hubbub in the high-rise canyons of New York. This workshop explores why it's important for authors to have representation, and how to nourish the triad of author/agent/ editor. There will be funny and horrifying stories from the confidential files, to boot.

Lois Ruby sneaked in the back door as a writer for young people. That is, she was a Young Adult librarian for the Dallas Public Library, and after reading a thousand books in her department, decided she could write the stories herself. Her first book was published in 1977. Since then, twelve more have seen print. Her latest, *Shanghai Shadows*, is a spy/ survival/love story about European refugees who escaped Hitler's ravages by fleeing to China.

Raised in California and seasoned in Texas, Lois spent half her life in Kansas, the locale of several of her novels, including the best-known, *Steal Away Home*. The Rubys relocated to Albuquerque in 2003.

Tuesday, June 19 from 7 to 9pm

Cheap & Easy Web Site Building

You don't have to be an HTML whiz—or hire one—to establish your presence on the Internet. **Loretta Hall** will show how to build and operate your own website for \$5 a month or less. Her design tips will help you make your site look professional and appropriate for your writing genre.

Loretta admits to being enough of a control freak to resist delegating any aspect of her freelance writing business. In 2001, she developed what is now an inexpensive 25-page website to stimulate interest in the subject of one of her nonfiction books. Each day, the site averages 550 page views by 150 unique visitors from around the world. Despite being HTML-illiterate, Loretta received a regional Award of Excellence for that website from the Society for Technical Communication in 2007.

SWW Workshops

Fees for workshops: \$20 for members, \$30 for non-members

Saturday, May 5 from 1 to 4pm

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

Tick-Talk: A Journey Through the Pathways (and Minefields) of Dialogue in Fiction

This workshop will build on a faculty lecture I gave this spring at Vermont College and will include exercises in dialogue writing. For the most part the information will be applicable to chapter book, short story, or novel writers. If there is interest I will include picture book dialogue.

Uma Krishnaswami is the author of picture books (including *Monsoon*, a Parents' Choice recommended book, and *The Happiest Tree*, a CCBC Choice) and a middle grade novel, *Naming Maya* (an IRA Notable Book for a Global Society). Uma lives in Aztec. She teaches writing online through www.writers.com and is on the faculty of the Vermont College MFA program in Writing for Children and Young Adults.

Saturday, June 2 from 1pm to 4pm

Fiction Workshop

After taking this workshop by **Deborah Finkelstein**, you will improve dialogue and description in your writing. Humans spend most of their time relying on vision. In this workshop, you will heighten your awareness of other senses, and discuss how these details can reveal place, time, characterization, and other important elements in your writing. You will learn ways for writing to show more and tell less, and discuss writing realistic dialogue. You will participate in interactive writing exercises, and discussions.



Although the focus will be fiction, elements of the class may be useful to writers in other genres; such as travel writers or poets trying to enrich their description. For the past six years, Deborah Finkelstein has taught Creative Writing: Short Stories at Santa Fe Community College, where several of her students have gone on to publish books, and win awards. She also teaches in New York and Maui, and is an adjunct lecturer at UNM. Currently, she works as a Literary Project Manager, where she works with fiction writers, journalists, playwrights, and others on editing their work, and submitting it to festivals and publishers. Visit her website at www.seminarsuite.com



Maybe it sends a little old man shuffling off wearily up the stairs and along the corridors to see if the book is still on the shelf



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

This Li'l Porker Goes to Market

by Bob Sanchez

For years, the idea of self-publishing was anathema to me, all tangled up in my mind with vanity publishing. *Serious Writers Don't Go There*, I thought. We are supposed to write our novel and then beg perfect strangers for approval. But life is too short—and in my family that's more than a simple cliché. Why waste it chasing after agents and publishers? I decided to make my latest novel, *When Pigs Fly*, a test case for self-publishing. My friends called my book “the li'l porker,” and it was time to go to market.



Granted, some self-publishing companies give off a bad odor. But research showed that iUniverse has a good combination of quality, reputation and price, so I signed up with them.

For the most part, they've done well by me. They have an orderly and businesslike publication process requiring input from the author; in fact, they leave most decisions to the author, the biggest exception being the pricing. For my 300+ page book they selected \$18.95. That's high for a paperback, but apparently not for one printed with print-on-demand (POD) technology.

Is the \$18.95 a gating factor for buyers? I think so, but some people are buying it at full price. For a while, Amazon offered it at a 30% discount, but not anymore. iUniverse sells it at full price and always has. I keep a stock in the back of my car for readings I do in the Las Cruces area, and those copies generally go for \$15, a price that leaves me a little margin. My goal is not to maximize income, but to maximize readership while recouping the bulk of my expenses.

Before you join me on the self-publishing path, you need to decide on your goals and evaluate companies with those goals in mind. My own goal is to gain a wide readership while earning back my investment. I no longer care about agents or traditional publishing houses, and will almost certainly self-publish any subsequent novels. On the other hand, credibility for my work is important.

Oops. Do “credibility” and “self-publishing” belong in the same paragraph? A lot of people turn up their noses at the whole business as though they were passing a pig sty. Just try to get your book reviewed. Very few people will review your book. Kirkus Discoveries reviewed mine, but I paid them for it. Midwest Book Review specializes in reviewing

self-published and small-press books, so they reviewed mine. A couple of other reviews are in the works, and I actively sought out all of them.

Anyway, when my book came out in November 2006 I sent an email to all of my friends and some of my old neighbors and acquaintances. I tried to use a light tone in keeping with that of the book, so I made silly but true statements along the lines of “It'll make you laugh, but won't improve your love life.” It was a reasonably effective launch to my most likely market niche, and sales got off to a good start.

Also, I converted my personal website into a platform for promoting *WPF*, though driving traffic to that site is an ongoing conundrum. An inexpensive Google ad seems to make a small difference.

It's not clear how much help Amazon reviews are for sales, but I solicited friends to post reviews if they liked the book. Right now I have 14 reviews, 12 of which are there because I asked for them. Mind you, not everyone values Amazon reviews, because they are assumed to be biased.

Do “credibility” and “self-publishing” belong in the same paragraph?

It's hard to gauge my online sales in the short term, as iUniverse reporting lags two months behind (they have to wait for reports from Amazon, etc.). So sales reporting is one area where I'm not completely satisfied with iUniverse.

Selling books directly is quite satisfying. So far, my sales in signing events have averaged five books—modest, but the interaction is fun. The other day I even turned down a sale because a lady who hadn't heard me read wanted a copy for her 13-year-old granddaughter. I explained about the profanity (“only a little”) and adult situations, and we agreed my book was a bad choice for a child. The nice lady was probably thinking it was like *Charlotte's Web*. But then other customers give me a big smile and say how much they're looking forward to the read, and that personal interaction I'd miss if only bookstores and websites carried the li'l porker.

August 8, Saturday meeting: Bob Sanchez will speak on self-publishing versus subsidy publishing, and the advantages and pitfalls of the do-it-yourself approach. Bob is a retired technical writer who has written fiction and non-fiction for twenty years. A recent transplant from Massachusetts, Bob lives in Las Cruces. Visit his website at <http://www.bobsanchez.com>

The Queen of Everything

by Cheri Eicher

Spring is in full glory.
Pansies are smiling up to God.
Last spring we almost lost the Queen of
Everything.

While holding court Lela Belle shared,
if it hadn't been for family and friends
she would have slipped away.

Lying on her bed,
she gave me her critique.
She could write in my voice.

When Lela Belle is called home,
She will be missed.
Who will hold my hand before a colon test?!?!

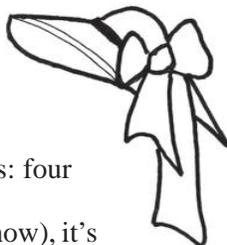
Lela Belle padded down the hallway where
visitors were off limits.
Pushing her 'cool stroller' her friend's grand-
daughter
named her walker when she was three.

No one stopped the Queen of Everything.
When I lost my mother,
I thought no other could fill the loss.

My grief counselor said, there are plenty of
funny, loving people in the world.
I thought he was a loon, until, Lela Belle.

I'm grateful to be her guest on Christmas Eve.
I'm grateful for the Saturday rides to SWW.
I'm grateful for her LOVE.

My mother was called home in spring.
My friend is here to share the glory of spring.



Spell Checking answer: 11 homonyms: four (for), revue (review), sea (see), threw (through), your (you're), too (to), no (know), it's (its), weigh (way), tolled (told), and sew (so).

The Dangers of Spell Checking

by Peggy Herrington

Having dutifully run your latest masterpiece through a spell checker, you believe it's finally ready to publish, right? Well, you might want to think again. If you were Pennye Harper, for instance, you'd know that a spell checker (such as SpellCheck at <http://www.spellcheck.net>) won't turn up the errors in her illustrative poem:

Spellbound
by Pennye Harper

**I have a spelling checker
It came with my PC;
It plainly marks four my revue
Mistakes I cannot sea.
I've run this poem threw it
I'm sure your pleased too no.
It's letter perfect in it's weigh.
My checker tolled me sew.**

Even Word 2003 (which claims a grammar checker) found only two errors: "your" in line 6 (should be you're) and "it's" in line 7 (should be its). Like SpellCheck, Word found no spelling errors whatsoever.

The solution to this conundrum is to study words that sound the same as others but are spelled differently. They're called homonyms, of course, and Pennye's poem is purposely loaded with them. How many homonyms can you find? (Count them and check the answer below. No peeking!)

A homonym is a word that sounds or is spelled the same as another word but has a different meaning. Homonyms are divided into two overlapping subcategories: homographs and homophones. Examples: *die* and *dye* are homophones but not homographs; the fish *fluke* and *fluke*, part of the tail of a whale, are homophones and homographs; and the metal *lead* and the verb form *lead* are homographs but not homophones.

Reading widely—and attentively—is a good way to increase your vocabulary and lessen the dangers inherent in spelling and grammar checkers.

Other ways to bone up on homonyms are the games at *A Feast of Homonyms* (<http://www.quia.com/jg/66106.html>) and *Alan Cooper's Homonyms* (<http://www.cooper.com/alan/homonym.html>) where you'll find some delightful ideas—such as using homonyms as fodder for puns—plus a listing of hundreds to which you can contribute. Remember: puns are for children and groan writers alike, so get busy on yours today!

What is Freelance Journalism?

by Brian Konradt

Freelance journalism is one of the more hectic forms of freelance writing. If you want to become a successful freelance journalist, you'll need to be comfortable with spending much time hunting down stories, traveling from place to place, and writing under short deadlines. If you enjoy all of that, and if you're interested in some of the best opportunities for personal creativity, then freelance journalism may be for you.

When we talk about freelance journalism, we need to distinguish between two types: newspaper journalism and magazine journalism. As a rule, newspaper journalism involves a much narrower range of subject matter than magazine journalism, significantly shorter articles, and a greater focus on form. Typical newspaper articles follow a hierarchical format: the most pertinent information first, the least pertinent last. For example, an article about a local parade would start with "The X Parade will travel down Main Street at 10:00 Saturday in support of Y," while it might end with "Onlookers are advised to bring umbrellas."

Additionally, writing as a newspaper journalist means that you need the ability to find out about the news. Often, a journalist's day looks like this: the editor assigns the journalist an article topic at 6am. By 8am, the journalist is making phone calls to various parties related to the topic. For a story on rising gas prices, this may include CEOs of oil companies, local gas station owners, car owners (interviewed on the street or at gas stations), car manufacturers, and local policymakers. Journalists usually interview anyone with a meaningful connection to the topic, and who can provide some good, succinct quotes and information.

Information-gathering goes on for most of the day, usually ending around evening. The journalist then works on the article, fact-checking where appropriate, before submitting it for publication sometime that night, with the deadline depending on the individual paper. Then the journalist is able to go to sleep—until 6am rolls around again, and the next article topic comes in. More leeway is available with the larger "feature" articles. These appear in film sections, lifestyle sections, health sections or other less breaking-news-focused parts of the daily paper. Often newspapers publish these sections weekly, rather than daily, to save on printing costs.

For example, the film section may only appear on Fridays, the food section on Tuesdays, etc. The upshot of this is the freelance journalist has more time to research and to work on an excellent, well-rounded article. Using the same research methods (calling everyone connected to the topic, scheduling choice of subject matter. Perhaps you know about an excellent

local band in need of a profile? Maybe you volunteer in a community organization that does interesting work and deserves a write-up? How about writing an article on the health benefits of soybeans? A newspaper's "features" section can be an excellent venue and a personal one, which can be rare in freelance writing. Additionally, feature articles don't depend heavily on the hierarchical "news" format, making your job much easier (or harder, if you find it difficult to structure an article without set guidelines.)

Magazine journalism is similar to the "feature" style of newspaper journalism, albeit with much more generous word limits (and often more generous pay rates.) The downside is that a magazine may not have as many opportunities for publishing your work. The broader subject matter of a magazine may also result in topics that require more legwork and potential travel expenses (hopefully paid for by the magazine) than just a profile of a local policymaker. To be an effective magazine writer, you'll need to look much harder for article ideas, but the payoff can be well worth it.

The career of a journalist isn't for everyone.

How do you scout out freelance journalism jobs? For newspapers, have some sample articles written, a good working knowledge of style guides (especially Associated Press style), and a willingness to work on whatever is available until the editor or publisher promotes you to working on more enjoyable assignments. For magazines, it's best to research your articles and write them in advance; afterwards you can send query letters to the appropriate editors in hopes of becoming published. In either case, submission information is printed on the staff page of magazines and newspapers. You can also find submission information online at the publications' web sites.

The career of a journalist isn't for everyone. Whereas many freelance writing projects are about a predictable routine of research and writing, the variety and novelty of writing news and feature articles eschews all routine in favor of a constant flurry of ad hoc interviews, phone calls and general information-gathering. But to some people, this is far from a drawback. If you're one of those people, start developing your portfolio now, get in touch with some editors (either by appointment or by query), and prepare yourself for a successful career in freelance journalism.

Brian Konradt has been a professional freelance writer for more than a decade. Mr. Konradt is the author of the book, *Freelance Poker Writing: How to Make Money Writing for the Gaming Industry*. Visit his website at <http://www.BusyEntrepreneur.com>.



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 Markets column each month. Contact her at estanton@cableone.net.

May Markets

by Eileen Stanton

Patricia Moosbrugger is an independent literary agent. Her client list includes several national bestsellers in both fiction and narrative nonfiction. Prior to her recent relocation to Albuquerque, she spent 15 years in the New York publishing world where she was director of subsidiary rights at Walker Books and Golden Books and acted as agent and rights director at the Stuart Krichevsky Literary Agency.

Q. What was your background before coming to Albuquerque?

A. I spent 15 years working in the New York Publishing Industry. First at Curtis Brown Literary Agency where I assisted Marilyn Marlow and Peter Ginsburg before moving into their foreign rights department. I then went to Walker Books as subsidiary rights director, moved onto Golden Books as rights director, and started a company where I sold subsidiary rights for a number of independent publishers like Graywolf and Overlook presses. From there I joined the Stuart Krichevsky Agency as rights director and literary agent and left after two years to start agenting independently.

Q. You were kind enough to give me six books which came out in the last few months. They span a number of genres and mainstream novels, and were sold to several large publishers. What genres are you interested in?

A. Like many agents, I am interested in a variety of subjects. I love good narrative nonfiction in the subject areas of art, culture and history. I like fiction that is well written and has a good storyline. I represent a number of mysteries. And I like general nonfiction in various subjects which interest me including women's issues, cookery, crafts.

Q. What do you hope to see in a manuscript?

A. In manuscripts, I like to see well-developed ideas, good writing, and focus.

Q. Just before the Conference, you flew to London on business. What event were you attending?

A. The London Book Fair, one of two major rights selling venues in the industry. Along with the Frankfurt Book Fair in October, the London Book Fair is a venue where foreign editors and agents from around the world meet to buy and sell foreign book rights. I bring my authors' books and try to sell them for translation.



A writer died and was given the option of going to heaven or hell. She decided to check out each place first. Descending into the fiery pits, she saw row upon row of writers chained to their desks in a steaming sweatshop. As they worked, they were repeatedly whipped with thorny lashes. "Oh my," said the writer. "Let me see heaven now."

Moments later, as she ascended into heaven, she saw rows of writers chained to their desks in a steaming sweatshop. They, too, were whipped with thorny lashes as they worked. "Wait a minute," said the writer. "This is just as bad as hell!"

"Oh no, it's not," replied an unseen voice. "Here, your work gets published."

Contests

The following information is provided as a convenience. Before entering a contest, be sure to check the listed website information or write the sponsors to make sure a contest is right for you. And don't forget to enter SWW's International Monthly Contest.

Deadline: 5/10/07 (postmark). Short stories. Howard Frank Mosher Short Fiction Prize (Vermont College), judged by Wally Lamb. Prizes: \$1,000 and publication. Entry fee: \$15. Original, unpublished, short story not to exceed 10,000 words. No multiple submissions. All entries considered for publication. Submission guidelines and information at: <http://www.tui.edu/hungermtn/hfm.asp>.

Deadline: 5/15/07 (postmark). Short stories, articles, poetry, scripts, plays. Writer's Digest 76th Annual Writing Competition. Over \$30,000 in cash and prizes, including a grand prize of \$3,000 and 3-day trip to New York City to meet and dine with four editors or agents of your choice. Cash prizes (\$1,000 first, \$500 second, \$250 third, \$100 fourth, \$50 fifth, and \$25 sixth through tenth) awarded in each of ten categories — Inspirational, memoirs/personal essay, magazine feature article, genre short story, mainstream/literary short story, rhyming poetry, non-rhyming poetry, stage play, tv/movie script, and children's/young adult fiction. Entry fee: \$10 first poem, \$5 for each additional. All other entries are \$15 for first ms., \$10 for each additional ms. Submission guidelines and information at: <http://www.writersdigest.com/contests>.

Deadline: 5/15/07 (postmark). Short Story. Lorian Hemingway Short Story Competition. Prizes: \$1,000 first place, \$500 second place, \$500 third place. Entry fee: \$10 if postmarked by 5/1/07, \$15 otherwise. Stories must be original, unpublished, typed and double-spaced, and 3,000 words or less. No theme restrictions. Fiction only. Only open to writers whose fiction has NOT appeared in a nationally distributed publication with a circulation of 5,000 or more. Submission guidelines and information at: <http://www.shortstorycompetition.com/>

Deadline: 5/18/07. Poetry, Essay, Short Story. New Letters Magazine Contests. Prizes: \$1,500 for poetry, \$1,500 for essay, \$1,500 for short story. Includes publication. Entry fee: \$15 first entry, \$10/each additional. Poetry contest is for the best group of 3 to 6 poems (don't need to be related). Fiction and essay contest submission must not exceed 8,000 words. Submission guidelines and information at: <http://www.newletters.org/awards.asp>.

Deadline: 5/18/07 (postmark). Short stories. St. Louis Short Story Competition. Prize: \$5,000 grand prize (winner take all). Entry fee: \$10. Entries must be under 3,500 words. No limitations on genre or topic. Multiple entries accepted (with individual entry fees). Submission guidelines and information at: <http://www.stlshortstory.com>.

Deadline: 5/31/07. Flash Fiction. Women on Writing Quarterly Flash Fiction Contest. Prizes: \$200 first, \$150 second, \$100 third. Winning entries and 7 runners up will be published on *WOW!* Entry fee: \$5/entry. Fiction must be between 250 and 500 words, light-hearted and creative, and geared toward women readers. Here's your prompt: You fly

into town for your childhood friend's wedding. You can't believe your eyes when you meet the groom. Who is he? Submission guidelines and information at: <http://www.wow-womenonwriting.com/contest.php>.

Deadline: 5/31/07 (postmark): Short stories, short stories for children, personal essay/memoir, poetry. The Society of Southwestern Authors 2007 Writing Contest. Prizes: \$300 first, \$150 second, \$75 third in all four categories. Honorable mentions: \$25. Entry fee: \$10/entry. Critiques are an additional \$25/entry. No simultaneous entries. Short stories - 2,500 words max. Short stories for children - 1,500 words max. Memoir - 2,500 words max. Poetry - 40 lines max. Submission guidelines and information at: <http://www.ssa-az.org/contest.html>.

Deadline: 6/1/07 (postmark): Novels. Rocky Mountain Fiction Writers (RMFW) 24th Annual Colorado Gold Contest. Four categories: general fiction, mystery, romance, speculative fiction (sf, fantasy, horror). Prizes for each category: \$100 first and \$25 for each of five finalists. Entry fee: \$25/entry, \$50 for entry plus in-depth critique. Two RMFW judges evaluate each entry. The top 6 in each category will be judged by an acquiring agent or editor for that genre. Submit 20 pages and synopsis according to very specific requirements found at: <http://www.rmtw.org>



Deadline: 6/1/07 (postmark). Novels. Silver Sage Excellence in Writing Competition sponsored by Trois Riviere Fiction Writers (TRFW). Prizes: \$50 and review by an acquiring editor in each of 3 categories — historical fiction, contemporary fiction, children's novel. Grand prize winner receives an additional \$100 prize. Entry fee: \$10 for TRFW members, \$15 for non-members. Submit first twenty pages and 1 pg ss synopsis of original, unpublished novel. All sub-genres within three categories welcome except futuristic and erotica. Submission guidelines and information at <http://www.trfw.net>.

Deadline: 6/30/07 (postmark). Poetry. 4th Annual Margaret Reid Poetry Contest for Traditional Verse. \$4,500 in prizes: \$1,000 first, \$400 second, \$200 third. Online publication of top ten entries. Entry fee: \$6 for every 25 lines. Must be in traditional verse forms. Submission guidelines at: <http://www.winningwriters.com/margaret>.

Keith Pyeatt is the outgoing conference chair at SouthWest Writers and the incoming treasurer. He writes psychological, paranormal thrillers. Visit his website at <http://www.keithpyeatt.com>.

International Monthly Writing Competition

January 2007 Winners
Christian Writing



1st Prize: James Marco, Albuquerque, NM, for *Christianity Uncovered* (nonfiction book)

2nd Prize: Marilyn Neuber Larson, Albuquerque, NM, for "Don't Bother God" (personal experience)

3rd Prize: Lesley A. Goddin, Albuquerque, NM, for "What I Noticed" (personal experience/memoir)

Honorable Mention:

Donald DeNoon, Albuquerque, NM, for "Prayer in the Streets of Baghdad" (poem)

Vicki H. Moss, Chattanooga, TN for *Shakespeare's Pink Cadillac* (YA novel)

Carol Riley, Albuquerque, NM, for "The Mission" (short story)

Enter the SWW May Contest

Write a 500-word personal, narrative or descriptive double-spaced essay concerning any of the arts (music, painting, sculpture, dance, writing, stage, film, etc.). Essays, by definition, are subjective in tone and are written in first person present or first person past tense. Include actual word count. Winners will be considered for publication in *albuquerqueARTS magazine* (www.abqarts.com) and are subject to editing. Payment is one issue of publication and SWW prize money. This is a great way to build up your writing clips. **Postmark deadline: Friday, June 1, 2007.**

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 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 no need for an SASE.
- \$5 entry fee for SWW members; \$10 non-members.
- 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 and certificates.
- Mail entries to:

SWW Monthly Writing Competition
3721 Morris St NE, Ste A
Albuquerque, NM 87111

(Print category name under your return address)

SouthWest Writers Board Meeting Highlights

Reported by Sandy Schairer, Secretary

Official minutes of SWW board meetings, including the annual meeting and all financial reports, are on file in the SWW office for any member in good standing to access. Official office hours are M-F, 9 AM to Noon.

Membership remains steady despite many new members joining at each program and event. This is due to members not renewing in a timely manner. Please remember to renew prior to the first of the month when it expires so your membership doesn't lapse. We are non-profit but we do have expenses for the organization to keep running in a timely manner.

New Member Breakfast: The membership breakfast was a huge success due in part to the genre tables where members could meet and network with people writing in the same genre.

Book Table: The book table has expanded and is increasingly successful. Members may sell their books at the table during meetings. Speaker and presenter's books are also available. Please remember to pick up your unsold books at the end of the meeting. The proceeds are mailed from the office to the author less a \$1.00 donation to SWW for each book. Please support your organization and fellow writers by purchasing these books as many of the authors have special prices just for SWW attendees.

Classes and Workshops are going well. They are held in the SWW office boardroom. Members may contact the board if they have a class about any facet of writing to teach. Membership in SWW will be offered at a discount for non-members signing up for classes.

SWW Speakers Bureau is up and running. If you would like to talk about the craft of writing to students of all ages, please do volunteer. It's a service to the community, an encouragement to future writers, which also supports the organization with potential new members. Reminder: We have a special reduced membership fee for full-time students.

Door prizes: Tickets for the drawing are now given to everyone who attends our programs: members, visitors and potential members.

Members are requested to send any articles or blurbs about SWW from publications and newspapers to the SWW office for inclusion in the **Historian's archives**.

SWW e-mail is still available. It must be accessed separately with ID and Password and is not forwarded to other email services. Details on signing-up for this free service are in each issue of the *Sage*.

Critique Groups

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

*Wanting to Start Groups/
Looking for a Group*

***Any Genre, Albuquerque:**

Meet every two weeks on Friday in NE Heights
Krys Douglas
505-830-3015

***Any Genre, Albuquerque:**

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

***Any Genre, Las Cruces:**

Barbara Villemez
505-522-5734

***Fiction Writers**

Will meet every three weeks at Erna Fergusson Library, 6-8pm.
Bill Howden, 505-341-4474

***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 genre. lesterml1@comcast.net.

***Poetry:**

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

***Sci Fi/Fantasy:**

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

Odds & Ends

*Groups Seeking
Members*

Any Genre:

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

***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@cableone.net
riograndema@cableone.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 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 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.

For information about benefits for SWW members contact:

Cheri Eicher

**INDEPENDENT
MEANS**

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

Independentmeans@comcast.net

SWW Board Meeting will be held at the SWW office on Tuesday, May 1 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>

Welcome New SWW Members

Nancy Gordon Nancy LaTurner

Tina LaTurner Monique Parker

Nena Davis Linda Jeffcoat

Jose Gonzales Druanne Cushman

Michelle Moore Wayne Micas

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

**Go to <http://www.southwestwriters.org>
click the amazon.com box.**

**You save money and
SWW receives a commission.**

New SWW Email Address

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

SWW is happy to announce the expanded list of writers' resources website links is now on the SWW website.
Check it out!

President/Office Coordinator

Larry Greenly
SWWriters@juno.com

Vice-President

Rob Spiegel
(505) 275-2556 · RobSpiegel@comcast.net

Secretary/Parliamentarian

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Workshop Coordinator

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Conference Chair

Pending

Historian

Judy Ducharme
(505) 256-9659

JudyDucharme@southwestwriters.com
Book Table/New Member Breakfast

David Corwell
(505) 898-0624 · dcorwell@hotmail.com

Writer's Contest 2007 Chair

Jeanne Shannon
(505) 296-0691 · js2007sww@yahoo.com

Class Coordinator

Bonnie Hayes
(505) 821-5372 · BonnHayes@aol.com

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(505) 980-3057 · peg@msn.com
editor@southwestwriters.com

E-lert Mistress

Gail Rubin
publicity@southwestwriters.com

Speaker Coordinator

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

The SouthWest Sage

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SWWriters@juno.com

Check your label for expiration date. Renew to retain your membership benefits.



Spanish Dagger Yucca

New Sage Editor

Join the SWW Board in welcoming a new editor to the *Sage* this month. An active SWW member, Peggy Herrington has years of writing and editing experience having “served time” as a freelance computer magazine journalist during most of the 1980s, and provided writing, editing, and management expertise to the General Electric Network for Information Exchange (GENIE) and the Microsoft Network through the 1990s and early 2000s. Now home in Albuquerque with her own communications company, Peggy invites your contributions and feedback to the *Sage*. Welcome her aboard at an SWW meeting or by e-mail to editor@southwestwriters.com, and check out her website at <http://www.pegboard.com>.

