Vol. 27, No. 8

# **SouthWest Sage**

August 2011 www.southwestwriters.com

# **Annual Awards Banquet September 17**

The winners of the 2011 Annual Writing Competition and the winner of the Parris Award will be announced at South-West Writers' Annual Award banquet on September 17 from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. at the MCM Elegante Hotel Crest Ballroom, 2020 Menaul Blvd. NE, Albuquerque, NM.

Discounted hotel accommodations are available for three days around the banquet date: call (505) 884-2511 and ask for the "SouthWest Writers" banquet rates. A free hotel van service to and from the airport is also available for out-of-town guests.

The banquet menu includes your choice of entrée:

- 1. Grilled Chicken with Butter Herb Sauce, with Rice and Green Beans.
- 2. Marinated Beef Tips over Fettuccine, with Green Beans.
- 3. Vegetarian Pasta Primavera, with Green Beans.

The price is **\$40 per person**, payable by cash, check or credit card at SouthWest Writers; 3721 Morris St. NE; Albuquerque, NM 87111; at regularly scheduled meetings; on the phone (505) 265-9485; or on our secure website www.southwestwriters.com. Choose entrée(s) for each person attending, and note any food allergies.

Reservations are accepted through September 13, 2011.

# Non-Members Welcome at SWW Meetings \$5 Fee to Attend

In an effort to enhance the value of SouthWest Writers membership, the board has decided to begin charging non-members to attend our general meetings on the first Saturday morning and the third Tuesday evening of every month. Non-members will be charged \$5.00 to attend each meeting. Members should bring their membership card to expedite sign-in at the meeting. If you have lost your card, we will have a membership list to verify membership.

Becoming a member is as easy as joining at the membership table immediately beyond the sign-in table. Membership is about the price of a latte, or two, a month. For \$60 a year, you can receive all the benefits of belonging to a professional writers group.

#### **Find SouthWest Writers on Facebook**



We are now on Facebook. Find us from your Facebook account by searching for SouthWest Writers or look on our website www.southwestwriters.com. Find the Facebook link on the sidebar and click. You'll need to have a Facebook account to comment or to "like" us.

If you were one of the first 25 people who "liked" us, please "like" us again. We had some issues with our setup, but things are working properly now.

Facebook lists our latest events and member successes. Join us!

# SouthWest Sage Exclusively Online

Welcome to the new exclusively online *SouthWest Sage*. Going online helps us control costs, deliver the newsletter with more current news and add color and active links to the *Sage*. You can still have a print copy to read at your kitchen table by printing out the pdf file from your computer.

If you would like to receive an email link to the e-Sage when it is posted and you are an SWW member, the process is simple. If you already receive e-lerts for other SWW news, you are on the notification list and you need do nothing more. You will receive an email when the SouthWest Sage is available, and it will appear as a pdf, which you can then read on your computer, download to your computer, or print a hard copy to read under your backyard shade tree or anywhere you like to read.

If you are an SWW member and you do not get e-lerts and you'd like a *Sage* posting notice, simply send a message with your correct email address to Larry Greenly at SWWriters@juno.com with the subject line e-lert update.

If you are not an SWW member, you will not receive a posting notice. However, the *Sage* will still be available on the website at <a href="https://www.southwestwriters.com">www.southwestwriters.com</a>.

#### President's Message: by Melody Groves



In June, I attended the annual Western Writers of America convention in Bismarck, North Dakota. That organization, composed of 600+ published writers, faces some of the same problems that SouthWest Writers faces: How to keep our members happy, how to keep them renewing. I spoke with the Membership Chairman and the incoming Executive Director who both shrugged, wagged their heads, and mumbled, "Good question."

Then it hit me.

Any organization, much like a birthday or graduation party, relies on its members, the attendees, to create the fun. I thought about this a lot on my way up to Bismarck, then Canada and back to Albuquerque. Have you ever gone to a party and not had a good time, were disappointed that it wasn't "fun?" It certainly wasn't because the host/hostess didn't supply the right food, music, or drink. The key: It was the *members* of the party who didn't participate appropriately. They didn't make sure everyone else had a good time.

SouthWest Writers tries.

While the SWW board works hard to provide our members with workshops, classes, intellectually stimulating speakers and opportunities to promote work, it is the members themselves who have to step up to the plate: to make good use of what's offered, to renew membership, to attend the meetings, classes and workshops, to sign up for the conference scheduled for February 2012. To have fun.

This organization is what *you*, the member, make it. You are the one bringing the party to the place, not the other way around. Renew your membership. For five dollars a month, you get four hours of networking, education, food and yes, fun. What a deal! In today's economy—that's a true bargain.

If you've got ideas on what else you'd like to have SWW offer, or have an idea on how to retain members, let me know. I'd love to hear from you.

# Melody

Patricia Fry

Chris Eboch

Dodici Azpadu

**Bob Gassaway** 

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SouthWest Sage Advertising Rates
Worldwide Internet Circulation
The SWW website receives thousands of page requests every month.

Business card size: \$20 1/4 page, vertical: \$40 1/3 page, horizontal: \$50 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 in .jpg format.

It makes little difference how many university degrees or courses a person may own. If he cannot use words to move an idea from one point to another, his education is incomplete.

**Norman Cousins** 

#### **Annual Membership in SouthWest Writers**

Individual: \$60 (\$100 for 2 years), Two people \$50 each, Student 18 and over: \$40, Under 18: \$25 Requires proof of student status Outside U. S.: \$65, Lifetime Membership: \$750

Download the Sage from www.southwestwriters.com

Join us first Saturday: 10 AM-Noon: Third Tuesday: 7-9 PM

New Life Presbyterian Church, 5540 Eubank NE,

Albuquerque, New Mexico



#### SouthWest Sage

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## Don't Be Scammed By Your Publisher by Patricia L. Fry

If you spend any time at all researching publishers, you will find some publishing horror stories. The more time you spend, the more stories you will discover.

You'll read about authors handing over thousands of dollars and getting little in return. You'll hear about contracts from hell and broken promises. You'll learn of failure and shame, disappointment and major losses. But only a percentage of the companies you read about are scammers. And the sad thing is, they remain in business because authors keep engaging them.

What if every author took the time to research the world of publishing before getting involved? What if they all studied any contracts presented and hired a publishing attorney before signing one? Do you know what would happen? The out and out scammers and those charging exorbitant amounts of money for services they do not perform, for example, will be run out of town. Those that are trying to fool unsuspecting authors with fancy footwork will be forced to either quit or start flying right. And those good guys among the many publishers will flourish.

Please, if you are ready to choose a publisher:

- 1. Spend several weeks or months studying the publishing industry, how it works, your options and your responsibilities as a published author.
- 2. Research the type of publishing option you are considering. Open your mind to all of the negatives and positives.
- 3. Do a thorough investigation of the company you choose (and I'm talking traditional publisher as well as pay-to-publish services).
- 4. Make sure you thoroughly understand any contract presented. If you don't, hire a publishing attorney.

How do you research publishing companies? Here's what you don't do—you don't rely on their websites and their press releases to give you the information you need about their reputation. You do a Google search using keywords, "publisher name" + "warning" or "complaint" or "scam," for example. And you also might speak with some of the company's authors.

Here are a few warning sites for authors:

<u>www.anotherealm.com/prededitors</u> <u>www.todayswriting.com/poetry-scams.html</u> (Not only for poets.) <u>www.sfwa.org/for-authors/writer-beware</u>



Patricia Fry is the author of 34 books, including her latest, Promote Your Book, Over 250 Proven, Low -Cost Tips and Techniques for the Enterprising Author available at popular stores or www.allworth.com/
Promote Your Book p/1-58115-857-1.htm

everal years ago I ghostwrote a novel about a well-known girl sleuth. The series used cliffhanger chapter endings. That seemed easy enough — find a dramatic moment and end the chapter.

Turns out writing strong cliffhangers is trickier than that. The editor responded to my effort with this comment: "I would like to see more of a slow build-up toward the intense action. In horror movies, it's always the ominous music and the main character slowly opening the closet door that scares us the most, not the moment right after she opens the door."

She's noting the difference between *suspense* and *surprise*.

When something happens suddenly and unexpectedly, that's a surprise. If you're walking down the street and something falls onto your head, you'll be surprised. But since the surprise came out of nowhere, it wasn't suspenseful.

When writing we may be tempted to keep secrets and then let them out — *bang!* But suspense comes from suspecting that something will happen and worrying about it or anticipating it.

To build up dramatic chapter endings, give the reader clues that something bad — or excitingly good — is happening. Here's an example from *Haunted: The Ghost on the Stairs*, a novel for ages 8 to 12. The narrator, Jon, isn't sure he believes his sister Tania saw a ghost, but goes with her to look as their stepfather films his ghost hunter TV show.

At the top of the stairs, my stepfather stood in the glare of a spotlight, a few feet away from a camera. I took a step backward and tugged at Tania's arm. No one had seen us yet, and we could still escape.

Tania turned to me. The look in her eyes made my stomach flip.

The moment isn't bad for a cliffhanger, but it needs more buildup. Here's the published version:

At the top of the stairs, my stepfather stood in the glare of a spotlight, a few feet away from a camera. I took a step backward and tugged at Tania's arm. No one had seen us yet, and we could still escape.

She didn't back up. She swayed.

I took a quick step forward and put my arm around her so she wouldn't fall. I looked down into her face. I'd never seen anyone so white. White as death. Or white as a ghost.

"Tania," I whispered. I gave her a shake. She took a quick breath and dragged her eyes away from the staircase and to my face. The look in them made my stomach flip.

To get the most out of dramatic moments, you actually slow the pace by using more detail. Focus on sensory details with emotional impact.

#### Powerful Paragraphing

Long paragraphs are fine for description. Short paragraphs are best for action, because the eye moves more quickly down the page, making the story read faster. You can also emphasize an important sentence by putting that sentence into a paragraph by itself. Compare these examples:

My car picked up speed as it rolled down the steep hill. The light at the bottom turned yellow so I stepped on the brakes. The car didn't slow down. The light turned red as I pressed harder, leaning back in my seat, using my whole leg to force the brake pedal toward the floor. I sped toward the intersection while other cars entered from the sides. I sailed into the intersection, horns blaring and brakes squealing around me as I passed within inches of two cars coming from each side.

My car picked up speed as it rolled down the steep hill. The light at the bottom turned yellow.

I stepped on the brakes. The car didn't slow down.

The light turned red.

I pressed harder, leaning back in my seat, using my whole leg to force the brake pedal toward the floor.

I sped toward the intersection. Other cars entered from the sides.

I sailed into the intersection. Horns blared and brakes squealed around me.

I passed within inches of two cars coming from each side.

These use nearly the same words, but in the second version I broke up long sentences, and I used seven paragraphs instead of one. The second version better captures the narrator's breathless panic.

\*\*Continued on page 8\*\*



Chris Eboch is a popular teacher with SouthWest Writers, SCBWI, and the Institute of Children's Literature. Discover more tips for making your novel into a page turner in Chris's book Advanced Plotting, available in paperback for \$9.99 or as an e-book in all formats, priced at \$.99 for a limited time



Dodici Azpadu, MFA, PhD is the author of three published novels, numerous short stories, and many poems. Her third novel, Living Room, was a finalist for the 2010 NM Book Awards in Fiction. Visit her website at <a href="https://www.dodici-azpadu.com">www.dodici-azpadu.com</a>.

M ost standard grammar texts include a section of pairs of words that are frequently misspelled and misused. If you are in doubt about a usage, look it up. You can't rely on the computer grammar checker. If you don't keep a grammar text and a dictionary at your work place or you don't want to leave the computer screen you're working on, you can settle for a quick fix. Highlight the word in ques-

tion and right click on it. Among your option in Microsoft Word is *Thesaurus* and *Look up*. The *Look up* option delivers information that is far from complete, but it enables the user to stay focused on the draft in progress.

One pair of words frequently misused is *farther/further*. The guidelines are simple, but the applications can be tricky. The rule of thumb is *farther* refers to distance. If distance is not an issue, *further* refers to quantity or degree.

According to Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary (11th edition), however, farther/further are often used interchangeably as adverbs when spatial, temporal, or metaphorical distance is involved. That liberty is part of the historical usage of this pair. Standard English follows the guideline about distance or degree.

Nothing could be *farther* from the truth. [Correct] How much *farther* is the swimming hole? [Correct] Your support will *further* her career. [Correct] There is no *further* discussion. [Correct]

A second pair of frequently misused words is *few/less*. The rule of thumb is that if you can count the persons or things in question, use *few*. If you cannot count the items, use *less*.

*Few* of the graduating class could afford the trip. [Correct]

*Less* candy is better for your diet. [Correct]

Trusting again to the Merriam-Webster source, *less* is likely to modify collective nouns, mass nouns, or nouns denoting an abstract whole. *Fewer* applies to matters of numbers and modifies plural nouns. Although grammar purists dislike interchanging *few* and *less*, *less* can modify plural nouns when distance or sums of money are involved.

*Less* also appears in a few fixed phrases such as:

- ... less than 100 miles
- ... an investment of less than \$20,000
- ... in 25 words or less

This explanation is *less* than helpful. [Correct]

Take a *few* cookies and forget about it. [Correct]

**That** and **which** are often used incorrectly depending on the phrase or clause they introduce. If you are speaking about persons, avoid **that** or **which**. Persons take **who**.

The boy which the coach picked was tall. [Incorrect]

The boy *that* the coach picked was tall. [Incorrect]

The boy *who* the coach picked was tall. [Correct]

Notice, however, a group of people can take *that*.

The teams that coaches like win games. [Correct]

In addition to this caution, use *that* when the phrase or clause attached to it is restrictive or essential to the meaning. If the modifier is essential, do not use a comma with it.

Trained dogs, *that sniff for drugs*, are essential for law enforcement. [Incorrect]

The phrase *that sniff for drugs* is essential to the type of dog referred to, restricting the dogs to those trained for sniffing drugs and excluding other types of dogs such as dogs trained to roll over.

Trained dogs *that sniff for drugs* are essential for law enforcement. [Correct]

If the modifier is non-restrictive or not essential, use **which** and use a comma to separate it from whatever it modifies.

New Orleans *which is my favorite city* is below sea level. [Incorrect]

*Which is my favorite city* is not essential to a sentence regarding the location of New Orleans at sea level. Therefore, it needs commas to set it off.

New Orleans, *which is my favorite city,* is below sea level. [Correct]

You will occasionally see *which* used in a restrictive manner, but the rule of thumb is relatively easy to remember.

Some sources about usage are prescriptive; they explain what should be done. Some sources are descriptive; they explain what is actually in use at a specific time. Writers should make friends with their dictionaries and grammar texts in order to make educated decisions about the sources they favor.



Former journalist and journalism professor Bob Gassaway writes murder mysteries. He holds a Ph.D. in sociology.

istening is a vital skill for writers.

Most people are only casually attentive to the things they're hearing. For them, listening is a less-thandemanding undertaking. Their attention waxes and wanes, depending on how interested they are in whatever they are hearing.

But for writers--whether we write fiction or non-fiction or poetry--listening is a way of drawing in information about the world around us.

Often people are poor listeners because their egos get in the way. If we're involved in an argument or some sort of conflict with another person, we're usually more focused on what we want to say than we are in what the other person is saying. But even in casual conversation, the ego can be a barrier to good listening. Often, at least part of our attention is engaged in thinking about what we are going to say when the other person finishes speaking. Sometimes we're agreeing, but often we're champing at the bit, ready to rebut what the other person is saying.

The key to being a good listener is becoming an active listener. But that's a little easier said than done. Being an active listener involves doing several things:

- 1. Listen attentively. Turn off your iPod, put down your cell phone, close your computer and otherwise shut out distractions.
- 2. Show that you're listening. Look at the speaker. Give the speaker occasional cues that say you're listening: nod, smile (if appropriate), shake your head (if that's fitting at the moment), raise your eyebrows or otherwise show a bit of animation and follow the speaker's gestures with your eyes.
- 3. Put your own agenda on hold. Quit worrying about what you're going to say until the other speaker finishes. (Don't worry, your brain is quick. You'll probably come up with the right phrase without running it around in your head over and over.) Then say your piece.

If I'm interviewing someone for a non-fiction article, I have to add other behavior into the equation. Rather than watching the speaker so closely, I have to take notes so I can be accurate in reporting what the person says. Even then, however, I look up from my notes often, nod, mutter uh-huh or offer some other encouragement that reassures the speaker that I'm paying attention.

And I ask questions. They're often simple: What does that mean? How could I explain that to my readers? Could you explain that to me? When did you first notice..., etc. My mind can easily form these questions when the other person finishes speaking. Thus even the need to follow up with a question is not too distracting--either to me or the speaker.

These days I write a lot more fiction than I did when I was a full-time journalist. But that doesn't mean I don't listen to other people as part of my preparation for writing.

In the first place, I don't believe in the traditional dictum for writers: Write what you know. I think the much better guidance is to write what you can find out. That's why I went to a couple of dozen crime scenes.

I had spent time on many crime scenes as a journalist, but not in the past several years. So I wanted to update my knowledge. I wanted to know how today's cops talk, what they talk about, how they analyze a crime scene, and what they think about the next day as they try to put together a case that is going to convict the criminal--who Albuquerque cops call "the offender."

And after I'd had enough time "on scene," and looked at enough dead bodies, I wanted to know what happened to the bodies when they left the crime scene. So I managed to watch three dozen autopsies. Then I figured I could sit down and start writing murder mysteries.

But I didn't stop listening to people. If I'm sitting near you in a restaurant or some other public venue, I'll probably be listening to you. But I'm usually not listening to the content of your conversation as much as I am to your speech patterns and word choices. That's a part of becoming adept at reproducing normal speech as a writer.

Of course, when I'm eavesdropping, I'm not so obviously attentive. But I might open my two-pound computer or take out my notebook and jot some notes. After all, I want to get it right.

And sometimes I find a physical description I need. I was sitting in a restaurant one day eating a sandwich when a model-thin woman walked by, headed for the restroom. She had limp, dull brown hair that no doubt had a few split ends if I'd been close enough to see them. She was perfect. Thin face, thin body, almost ascetic--just the character I wanted to divorce her husband and enter a religious order. She was the embodiment of the murder victim I was writing at the moment. I quickly opened my computer and wrote a description of the woman.

My wife frowns on my eavesdropping. And she'd no doubt frown on me borrowing a murder victim from real life.

But she's not always watching. Fortunately.

#### **Meetings**

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

Saturday, August 6 10:00 a.m. to noon

Joe Badal

#### **Fictioncraft**

Joe Badal, a multi-published fiction author, will discuss fiction craft, but he wants to cover the craft questions that are most important to SWW members. So, Joe will take your ques-



tions and frame his presentation around questions that are most frequently asked. Members can email their questions to Joe at <a href="mailto:josephbadalbooks@aol.com">josephbadalbooks@aol.com</a>

Joe has worked 37 years in the financial services industry. He retired in 2007 after six years as director and senior executive of a New York Stock Exchange-listed mortgage company.

Joe has had three suspense novels published: *The Pythagorean Solution, Terror Cell* and *The Nostradamus Secret*. His next novel is due to be released in late 2011. Joe has written dozens of published articles about various business topics and is a frequent speaker at conferences and civic organization meetings.

Saturday, September 3 10:00 a.m. to noon

**Lois Bradley** 

Not Just a Pretty Picture (or Why Your Nephew's Cousin's Sister's Friend Should Probably Not Design Your Book Cover)



Artwork, whether a single cover for a novel or 32 paintings to complete a picture book, plays a symbiotic role in the production of a traditionally printed book.

production of a traditionally printed book or e-book. Lois will cover art and production topics, including the process of creating artwork for print, formatting, file preparation and an explanation of the printing process, the emerging world of e-books and the pros and cons of using stock photography for book production.

Lois Bradley has been involved with the illustration, design and/or production on several book projects, including the cover illustration and design for *Rattled* by Kris Boch and *The Eyes of Pharaoh* by Chris Eboch, and illustration of *Blind Tom: The Horse Who Helped Build the Great Railroad* by Shirley Raye Redmond. Lois has been a working New Mexico artist since 1992. Her award-winning paintings can be viewed at Framing Concepts Gallery, Albuquerque, and at The Old Schoolhouse Gallery in San Antonito, New Mexico.

Tuesday, August 16 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

#### **Edward D. Isenberg**

#### Research for Writers

Ed Isenberg will explain why, for virtually anything except poetry, research that is targeted, limited in time and bulletproof is absolutely required. You'll learn the



penalties for not doing proper research, which vary from "Ticket Infractions" up to "The Death Penalty." Ed will explain "The Rule of Errors," the Four Levels of Errors, the Three Levels of Research, the Two Attitudes on Research Accuracy, and the One Golden Rule of Research. You'll learn the best sources for different levels of research, and what you can and cannot trust on the Internet. There will be a handout and time for audience questions.

Ed has spent his adult life in different lines of work that required fast and accurate research. He has been an award-winning investigative journalist; a senior marketing executive for start-ups, small, medium and large; president of two non-profit societies whose central mission included disseminating the latest and most trustworthy information; and is now finishing his first novel (science fiction). He also wrote and sold a treatment and act one of a Star Trek television special.

Tuesday, September 20 7 to 9 p.m.

#### Alan Carlson

#### **Songwriting 101**

Alan will cover basic lyric writing, matching music to lyrics. He will also look at how lyrics vary according to genre, where to get ideas for subject matter, making demos, pitching songs and the business side of the music business.



Alan Carlson wrote his first song at age 15. Since then, he has written nearly 150 songs, from country and folk to adult contemporary and blues. He has been a member of several music organizations and has attended numerous songwriting workshops, including seven trips to the Durango Songwriters Expo. In 1987, KOAT-TV used one of his songs during their coverage of the Albuquerque Balloon Fiesta, and in 2000 he placed 3rd in an international songwriting competition. He co-wrote two songs with Nashville writer Marc-Alan Barnette and is a judge for the Texaco Country Showdown (formerly the Colgate Country Showdown).

# **Class and Workshop**

HOW TO WRITE FOR MAGAZINES How You Can Bag Your First Magazine Assignment

**Melody Groves** 

Wednesdays, August 3, 10, 17 and 24, 6:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m. \$75 members, \$85 non-members

Class limited to 14 students

SouthWest Writers Conference Room 3721 Morris NE, Ste A (NW corner of Comanche and Morris)

In today's writing world, the opportunity to write for magazines is almost endless. With over 9,000 published yearly, in addition to online magazines, the world is your oyster. But, there are tricks to bagging an assignment.

Finding the right market, finding the right editor, finding out about the competition—all tricks of the trade. So if you've got a good idea but don't know where to go and how to start, look no more. This class is for you.

In four short weeks we'll cover finding your story, finding the market, tweaking the same idea for different magazines, photo requirements, and approaching an editor. And that's just for starters.



**Melody Groves** is the author of two published non-fiction books and three fiction books and writes for *New Mexico Magazine, True West, American Cowboy, Enchantment, Chronicles* (online), *Albuquerque the Magazine, abqARTS* and *Desert Exposure*.

# **Workshop And Class Refund Policy**

To ensure that SouthWest Writers can cover the cost of space rental, meals and instructor fees, we have implemented a new workshop and class refund policy. If you cancel one week before the workshop or class beginning date you will receive a full refund. Cancellations less than one week prior up to 24 hours prior to the beginning of the workshop or class will receive a credit only toward a future workshop or class of your choice. If you do not cancel or don't show up for the workshop or class you will receive no refund and no credit. For multi-session classes, if you miss a class, you receive no refund. We pay our instructors based on how many students enroll, so you are part of that roll count if you don't cancel as detailed above.

If you have any questions, call Joanne Bodin, workshop coordinator at 505-880-8326 or Kathy Kitts, class coordinator at 505-867-2751 or email kkitts@kkitts.net.

#### FINDING THE POETRY IN YOUR WRITING

by Stewart S. Warren

#### Saturday, September 24, 9:00 a.m. to noon

\$45 members \$75 non-members (includes a 6 month membership to SWW) New Life Presbyterian Church, 5540 Eubank (just north of Spain)

This workshop will offer participants an opportunity to delve into the inner workings of the mind: how the mind is not as tame as we would like, how it looks for repetition, how it loves to leap into the unexpected. That's the world in the next moment, the truth of our lives. Poetry can occur in the arc of a story, a paragraph, a phrase.

nherent within us. Where else t to more deeply trust what they

We'll do a lot of writing, but not necessarily to make poetry nor to make poets. Using gently guided exercises we'll let go of manufacturing and trust the images and rhythms which are inherent within us. Where else would we look? This play-shop is recommended for writers of any genre and style who want to more deeply trust what they have always known. "It's unlearning. It's contraband."

**Stewart S. Warren** is the author of eight poetry collections and is published in various journals and regional anthologies. His poetry is both personal and transpersonal with a mystic undercurrent. As publishing coach and organizer of community events, Stewart assists others in deepening their creative experience and realizing their artistic visions. <a href="https://www.heartlink.com">www.heartlink.com</a>.

**Workshop refund policy:** If you cancel before September 17 (one week before workshop date) you will receive a full refund. Cancellations after September 17 but before the workshop begins will receive a credit only toward a future workshop or class of your choice. If you do not cancel or don't show up for the workshop you will receive no refund and no credit. If you have any questions, call Joanne Bodin, workshop coordinator at 505-880-8326.

## **September Classes**

**WORKING FICTION: Challenges** and Peer Critique

**Betsy James** 

Wednesdays, September 7, 14, 21 and 28; October 5, 12, 19 and 26, 5:30 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.

\$240 members and \$300 nonmembers (includes one year of membership)

Class limited to 10 students
SouthWest Writers Conference Room
3721 Morris NE, Ste A (NW corner of Comanche and Morris)

By popular demand: the fiction class that gets you working. Its manageable assignment size—not more than 1000 words/week—is adaptable to any form of fiction, from mainstream to speculative, including older juvenile. Handson fieldwork looks at structure, point-of-view, dialogue, sentence carpentry—even the infamous comma splice. No red pencils! Through editorial conversations, writers at any level learn from the nitty-gritty of one anothers' work. Respectful peer critique is taught and modeled: weekly, each writer receives a spectrum of response, both professional and general. By class end, writers have the skills to form a critique group of their own. Highly interactive, the class is limited to ten students.

**Betsy James** is the award-winning author of books and short stories for adults, teens, and children. Her most recent fantasy, *Listening at the Gate*, is a Tiptree Award Honor Book and a New York Public Library Best Book for Teens. Visit her at <a href="www.listeningatthegate.com">www.listeningatthegate.com</a> and <a href="www.betsyjames.com">www.betsyjames.com</a>

#### Fingernails, Eboch

continued from page 4

#### **Quiet Cliffhangers**

You can have dramatic chapter endings even if the characters aren't in physical danger. In a young adult romance, for example, the drama may come from social humiliation at school and awkward or exciting moments with the love interest. Play up those moments for maximum effect.

Not every chapter has to end with a major cliffhanger. You can end in a quieter moment, so long as you're still looking forward, reminding the reader that the character's troubles are not over.

Cliffhangers are a powerful tool to build suspense. Choose a dramatic moment and expand the moment with sensory details for drama. You'll keep readers turning the page.

EXPLORE INDIE PUBLISHING -How to Develop Your Own Business Plan

**Chris Eboch** 

Saturdays, September 10 and 17, 1 p.m. - 4 p.m.

\$90 members and \$120 nonmembers (includes 6-month membership)

Class limited to 14 students SouthWest Writers Conference Room 3721 Morris NE, Ste A (NW corner of Comanche and Morris)

You've heard the buzz about self-publishing. New authors are using it to get past the gatekeepers. Midlist authors are bringing back their out-of-print books and continuing series dropped by the publisher. Even big name authors are self-publishing new books because they'll have more control and make more money.

But is it right for you? And if so, how do you make it happen? On the first day of this workshop, we'll discuss who should and shouldn't self-publish (and why), explore the pros and cons, and study an overview of the process. You'll start making a list of your goals, resources, and expectations.

The following week, we'll develop those initial lists into step-by-step business plans with timelines. You'll receive resources for editing, proofreading, cover art, and more, plus information on how to get the word out about your book. This class will help you decide if this is the path for you, and if so, get you on your way.

Chris Eboch has 12 traditionally published books and two self-published books, with one more of each on the way. Her novels for ages 9 and up include the indie-published title *The Eyes of Pharaoh*, an ancient Egyptian mystery, and the traditionally published novels *The Well of Sacrifice* and the Haunted series: *The Ghost on the Stairs, The Riverboat Phantom*, and *The Knight in the Shadows*. Learn more about Chris at <a href="https://www.chriseboch.com">www.chriseboch.com</a>. Chris also writes for adults as Kris Bock. *Rattled* launches her new romantic suspense series featuring treasure hunting adventures in the Southwest. Read the first three chapters at <a href="https://www.krisbock.com">www.krisbock.com</a>.

To register for classes and workshops sign up at SouthWest Writers meetings, register online at www.southwestwriters.com or call the SWW office at 265-9485

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#### **Successes and Announcements**

Three poems by **Dodici Azpadu** have been accepted for the next issue of *Malpais Review*. "Holy Terror," a cento that was accepted more than three years ago, is finally forthcoming in an anthology from Red Hen Press.

**Merry Haugen** placed second in the National Federation of Press Women's Communication Contest in the Web Content division for her writing for *National Geographic's Explorer Magazine*.

**Jeanne Shannon** has a poem in the first issue of *Solo Novo*, a new series from Solo Press in California, and a prosepoem in *Descant* (the Canadian journal, not the one of the same name published in Texas). She also has two poems in the inaugural issue of *Found Poems Review*, an online journal. http://www.foundpoemsreview.com.

**Scott M. Tyson** has been elected to the Board of the New Mexico Book Association as Member-at-Large.

Marilyn Stablein has a new book out from a publisher in Kathmandu, Nepal. The book, More Night Travels to Tibet, is available at Acequia Booksellers. Her book Splitting Hard Ground won the National Federation of Press Women's Book Award for poetry. The book was reviewed in the Notre Dame Review. Other reviews appeared in Reading New Mexico and in the Midwest Book Review's Small Press Bookwatch. She was recently interviewed on KRSN Radio in Los Alamos and gave readings and book signings in New York and Placitas where she was a featured writer in the Duende Poetry Series. Her artist books were featured in Bound & Lettered Magazine and in The Book: A Contemporary View, a catalog for an exhibition in Delaware.

**Keith Pyeatt's** paranormal thriller, *Dark Knowledge*, is being re-published by Etopia Press (<a href="http://etopia-press.net">http://etopia-press.net</a>). It will be available as an e-book this summer, with a print version to follow. See Keith's website for more information. <a href="http://keithpyeatt.com">http://keithpyeatt.com</a>

# 2011 Fourth Bi-Monthly Writing Contest

# **Flash Fiction**

Tell a story -- with a beginning, middle and end -- in 200 words or less. Any subject, any genre will do. Postmark deadline: August 31, 2011. Please include your contact information (address, phone and email) and permission to publish or not on a separate sheet. Do not include any identifying information on the manuscript itself. All entries \$10. Prizes: \$150/1st prize; \$50/2nd prize; \$25/3rd prize. Mail entries to SWW Bimonthly Contest, 3721 Morris NE, Albuquerque, NM 87111.

**Ruth Friesen** has been named the editor of *Spanish Traces*, the journal of the Old Spanish Trail Association. <a href="https://www.oldspanishtrail.org">www.oldspanishtrail.org</a>.

**Literacy Day at the Main Albuquerque Library,** 501 Copper NW, is Thursday, September 8, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Sell your books at this event. There are a limited number of tables available and it is first come. The fee is \$20 per table. At this price space is selling fast. Contact the Main Library at 505-768-5141 for more information.

Artistic Director, Gail Mangham, announces "Path 2012-The Artist's Response to Love." The Artist's Path invites playwrights in Arizona, California, New Mexico and Texas to submit 5- to 15-minute monologues or solo pieces written in response to the theme of Love. The pieces are to be performed by one performer only. A selection of pieces will be chosen for public performance to take place in April, 2012 at The Elks Opera House and Other Venues in Prescott, AZ. Selection will be based on a combination of attention to theme, artistic value and how the piece works with other submissions. The deadline is January 14, 2012. www.TheArtistsPath.org

Authors are invited to bring their books to promote independently and sell at **Page One's** Self-Publishing Fair. This excellent networking opportunity occurs the first Saturday of every month from 3 to 5pm in the Page One Cafe. Check out their <u>Small Press and Local Author page</u> to learn more about selling your book at Page One or check out the <u>Local Author Fair page</u> about participating in our Local Author Fair. <u>www.page1book.com</u>

Five Star Publications, Inc, of Chandler, Arizona, invites submission of book or books to **The Royal Dragonfly Book Awards**, a national writing contest conceived to honor published authors of all types of literature, fiction and nonfiction, in 50 categories. Deadline for submissions is February 1, 2012. Submissions postmarked December 1, 2011 or earlier that meet all submission requirements are eligible for the Early Bird reward: Free e-copy of *The Economical Guide to Self-Publishing*, Or *Promote Like a Pro: Small Budget, Big Show.* www.fivestarpublications.com/bookcontest.

Open to Interpretation brings together photographers and writers in a new book project. Each book begins with a themed call for photos. The current theme is Water's Edge. The chosen photos become the literary inspiration for the writers' submissions. A book is created that matches each winning photo with two stories or poems that offer different interpretations of the image. The photographs for the Water's Edge theme have been chosen. And it's time for writers and poets to interpret the images. Entries are juried by Anastasia Faunce, and deadline is October 20.

www.open2interpretation.com

**Frank Carden's** new novel, *Billy Bonney*, is now available as an ebook on Amazon and with a different twist.

#### **President**

Rita Herther, current SWW membership chair, loves to work with people to help bring out their creativity, their self-esteem and their belief in themselves. She taught at international and national conferences in three states for nine years. She has taught several classes for 20 years at UNM's Division of Continuing Education, including journal, non-fiction and creative writing. She was a freelance writer



in the 1980s, and then sought a graduate degree in counseling. She worked as a mental health counselor and hypnotherapist for 18 years in private practice. With other obligations writing had to be put on the shelf for too long. Now she is back with SWW and is enjoying writing fiction (two novels) and non-fiction.

#### Vice-President

**Dr. Kathy Kitts, current SWW Class Coordinator**, is a recently retired geology professor who served as a science team member on the NASA Genesis Discovery Mission. Before that, she directed a planetarium for nine years. Having been born and raised in the Southwest, she always planned on moving to Albuquerque and joined SWW before leaving Northern Illinois University. She has dozens of non-fiction publications encom-



passing everything from professional papers to general interest articles to textbooks. However, she no longer wishes to talk about "what is" but rather "what if." To that end, she has moved to writing both short literary fiction and novellength science fiction.

# Secretary

Larry W. Greenly, current SWW secretary and SWW office manager, has been a member since 1992 and has held every position on the board except treasurer. Greenly is a recipient of the SWW Parris Award and several Service Awards. He has published hundreds of magazine articles and has won a number of awards as a writer and editor. In an outreach program for



SWW, Greenly has taught writing classes as a volunteer at Bear Canyon Senior Center for the past eight years with current Vice President Rob Spiegel. Greenly, a three-time SWW president, is aiming to improve SWW's financial status and to maintain the highest standards of ethics in the organization.

#### **Treasurer**

Teresa "Terry" Civello, current SWW Treasurer, a member of SouthWest Writers since May 2010, was appointed to the Board in June as the Publicity Chair, and has been spreading the news in the Albuquerque Journal, Alibi, undergroundArts, and ABQ, the Magazine.



Terry has participated in SWW membership efforts, proposing the New Member KaffeeKlatch, the December

Book Fair, and an "Open Mic" venue for member readings at the Tuesday evening meetings. In April of this year, Terry stepped in to become Treasurer and immediately began working on the 2010 financials to ensure audit standards are met. She has been working on the 2011 budget and financial reports which will appear in the August and September issues of *Sage*.

After Terry retired as a Senior Executive for NYC Medicaid, she founded her own healthcare consulting business. She holds a BA in Social Science and Spanish from St. Joseph's College, Brooklyn, NY and was awarded a Masters Degree in Health & Social Welfare Policy from the University of Michigan School of Social Work. "I'm so lucky to have the best of both worlds: NYC and ABQ. " Terry is a new writer and loves the programs and classes offered by SWW. She's been published in the 2010 *OASIS Anthology* and won a SWW Bimonthly writing contest.

**The election of SWW officers** will be held on October 1, the first Saturday meeting of the month. Nominations of additional candidates may be made prior to the meeting or from the floor at the October 1 meeting. You must have the consent of the candidate whom you are nominating and they must meet the qualifications as stated in the SWW bylaws.

According to SWW bylaws, to be eligible for either of the offices of president or vice-president, a person shall have been a member of SouthWest Writers in good standing for no less than one year immediately preceding the date of nomination and shall have served one year on the South-West Writers Board in the past five years. The secretary and treasurer shall have been a member of SouthWest Writers in good standing for no less than one year immediately preceding the date of nomination, unless waived by the Board, and have the necessary qualifications for the job. If you or someone you know is interested, please contact either Larry Greenly at SWWriters@juno.com, 265-9485 or Joanne Bodin, Nominating Committee Chair, at jsbodin@msn.com.

Mail-in votes and email votes will be accepted and must be received at the SWW office by noon on September 30.

### Financial Status Report as of June 30, 2011

Prepared by Terry Civello, Treasurer

SouthWest Writers ended 2010 with a loss of \$6,700. The June SAGE contains the 2010 Balance Sheet and the Profit and Loss Statement. Thanks to all of you who supported our financial reports at the June 21 and July 2 meetings. Currently, the P&L for July-December 2011 projects a downward turn due to the following:

Membership, which represents close to 30 percent of our annual revenue, has dropped significantly since 2010 with a net loss of more than 90 members. We have a target of 500 sustained members and another \$16,420 to generate in membership revenue between July and December 31, 2011. Currently we have 437 members and are at 45 percent of our annual revenue target. This is a serious matter and on June 14 the Board appointed Rob Spiegel, Susan Alexis and me to develop a Membership Renewal Strategic Program. The completed report, along with sample letters, was presented to Membership Chair, Rita Herther, for her implementation beginning in July.

**Canceled conferences** resulted in a loss of \$8,000 into our coffers. That loss plus the drop in membership fees resulted in a problem for the annual contest.

**Annual writing contest**, while successful, experienced a drop in revenue that required we withdraw \$12,000 from reserve savings. The \$12K will not be used for operating expenses and has been placed into a discrete account set aside to pay contest prizes and judges due in September.

**GOOD NEWS!** The new online Sage, which has been well received, saves us \$3,000 for the next six months.

**Reminder**: The new \$5 attendance fee for non-members, visitors and guests begins with **August 6 meeting**. The Board enacted this change to add value to our dues-paying members and to honor their choice to support SWW. We thank those of you who have joined, renewed or extended your membership during June and July and appreciate that you have placed your trust in SWW to help you achieve your writing goals.

If you have any questions, you can email me at <u>terry-rose150@yahoo.com</u> or leave messages for me at the SWW office: 505-265-9485.

And on a personal note, I appreciate all your support and refraining from "shooting the messenger."

Terry Civello, Treasurer

#### Thank You Note from a Passerby

I am starting my own collection of writers' clubs. And in my collection, the Southwest Writers Club is one of my prizes.

My collection started a few years ago shortly after I joined the Berkeley Branch of the California Writers Club. At the annual meeting for nominating officers, the president asked that anyone who'd like to serve as the next prez should take a step forward.



AL Levenson

Everyone took a step backward except me.

My life as an organizer, motivator, networker, and gladhander changed. I was energized by the fact that Berkeley, the founding branch of the 18-branch California Writers Club, was entering its centennial year.

In the subsequent two years, in order to learn my job, I visited a number of other branches. And, when in October of 2010, I started a cross-country odyssey in my motor home, I decided I would try to look in on other writers' clubs. The SouthWest Writers club is the third club outside of California in my collection.

Among the clubs I've visited, the SWW stands tall. A warm and welcoming club, energetic and lively mingling of the members and animated and charismatic leadership gives the newcomer an instant sense of belonging.

The meeting moved along unrushed but accomplished a hefty agenda, which included such nifty features as newcomer intros and personal shoutouts. SWW has as broad a range of writer support resources of any club I know.

I am so glad I googled Writers Club/Albuquerque as I easted my way from Arizona. And added a jewel to my collection of writers' clubs. Thanks Don, Melody, Bob, Alana and everyone else for the hospitality.

AL Levenson is a Life Member of the California Writers Club. He is on a traveling sabbatical of a year or two in his 28' motor home, the Jolly Swag. He blogs at <a href="www.allevenson.wordpress.com">www.allevenson.wordpress.com</a>. Four of the five most hit-upon blogs of the last month were posted from Albuquerque. Al's email is AL94501@Gmail.com



# Join SouthWest Writers Today!

otive, Attitude and Purse equals a M A P to self-publishing. I came to this conclusion after 2010, when I self-published my book of short stories.

What is your motive? Where do you want to go? Ask: why do I want to publish my book? Be honest. There are four possible answers: 1. be a full-time professional writer; 2. reap fame and fortune; 3. share wit, information and creativity with others and 4. have the experience and fun.



Shirl Brainard is a retired design and color theory instructor from a community college. Just after she retired, her college textbook was published and is now in its 4th edition. Shirl writes non-fiction articles, her memoirs and is working on several fictional short stories.

Now ask: how realistic are numbers 1 and 2? If you're young enough, experienced enough and an exceptional writer, number 1 may be possible. Number 2 is iffy. Very.

My personal choice was numbers 3 and 4. I've had my career. I'm retired. I want and need to exercise my writing potential and not waste my energy on dreams. I've written all my life, but now it's for pleasure – call it a hobby if it needs a label. How could I justify spending the money to self -publish my hobby, a bunch of stories? Well, some people play golf or shop. I chose to publish.

How? My purse was the first consideration. With a finished manuscript, I researched publishers and asked questions of other self-published authors. I taught two workshops, one for SWW and one for an art group. Seed money. I gave myself \$1,000 to begin this venture. I parsed my chosen publisher's website for a bargain. In May they offered one: my choice package (under \$1,000) included a free ISBN number and ten free copies, plus \$300 of freebies. (My choices were the library of Congress registration, copyright and back copy promo.) I clicked.

The young representative assigned to me couldn't seem to

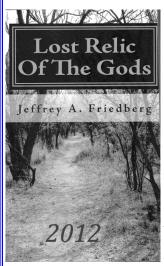
answer a forthright question. My attitude (yes, that one) asserted itself. I complained. It was my money. I was assigned a new rep – sharp, attentive and informed. Except for the lack of my computer skills, things went smoothly. Based on my first profession as an artist, I designed & executed my own cover and bookmarks. A guy at Staples was invaluable.

Late August my book was done. I was excited receiving my free copies. However, I was prudent ordering my first shipment of books. That money came from speculation of future sales and I had never done selfmarketing. A different attitude kicked in. I have no shame. I sent out e-mails to everybody. Yup, friends, acquaintances, doctors, dentists, bankers, business associates and family – I sent an enthusiastic publishing announcement. I was amazed at how that was met by enthusiastic buyers. I sold a third of my books. With this money I paid for the order and invested in some marketing props.

Back to Staples for mailing packets. I learned to send books via media mail. It's cheaper. My Staples guy and I designed an advertising notice to put into a plastic stand for signings. The publisher offered a special Labor Day Sale of books with no shipping charge. Again my order was modest.

I had four contacts for signings before Christmas: an Xmas Bazaar, an art gallery where I've shown my art, SWW's Book Fair and NM Book Co-op's book sale. I sold books at all. Before one signing, a local radio host interviewed me on his show to promote my book. I sold none due to that exposure, but it was fun. I sold the most by personal contact and at the Bazaar.

\*\*Continued on page 14\*\*

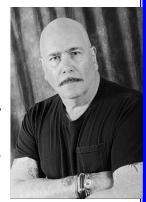


What if you could *live forever by moving heaven and Earth?*...but heaven and Earth *suddenly moved by themselves!* 

Private investigator Jack Vane is forced into a mythic journey by murder. Half-crazed, he is trapped by discovery of ancient secrets, vengeance—and a chance to save the world. Follow Jack through a labyrinth of doom-confronting situations, shadow-governments, the menace of a world overlord, and a climactic battle with an ancient Power—deep into the most terrible secret ever *not* known.

"Makes Indiana Jones look like child's play...action, love, magic, secrets, good and evil, and flat out outrageousness. Every surprise is topped by an even bigger, more unexpected explosion. Had me going right up to the end. ~Jenny Nathans, Book Review."

Amazon Bestsellers Rank: #15 Kindle Occult; #40 Kindle Science Fiction



Jeffrey Avalon Friedberg

http://lostancientknowledge.com a1.detective@gmail.com Available at Amazon.com, and elsewhere online, or order at any bookstore

#### Map to Self-Publishing

#### continued from page 13

I had checked out local bookstores and found that, at many, to obtain a signing and opportunity to sell I'd let go of up to 60 percent of my book's price. One only gives credit for future sales of other books at their store. Doing it myself, I kept 100 percent of the sale price. At the last two venues, I knocked off a buck on each book. A friendly, healthy egoattitude talking about my book helped sales.

Another announcement in the once-a-year Christmas correspondence brought a few more direct sales and I was told of purchases on Amazon.

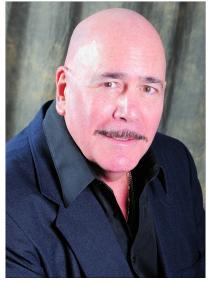
At the end of the year, my financial accounting to myself as well as the IRS showed I was in the black. Another monetary reason I chose this year to self-publish is that the IRS still considers me a professional artist/writer as I continue to receive royalties for my textbook. I can, therefore, write off my publishing and marketing costs. The strict budgeting paid off. I ended up with almost \$400 profit. That's more than bank CD's are paying in a four-month time period for the initial investment. If Amazon and Barnes & Noble report my book's sales, I'm ahead a bit more.

The best part is that I had a great time, met and networked with new people, and learned a lot. Although I had someone proofread and edit my stories, there were still slip-ups, but I still received two decent published reviews with favorable comments on my stories' content. An acquaintance in the non-fiction publishing business for fifty years told me, "There's no perfect book."

I had eleven books left to start 2011. At least I'm not driving around with my car's trunk full of unsold books. And who says you have to sell them all the first year? I'm looking for new ideas, but in the meantime, I'm still cranking out new stories.

#### **WELCOME NEW MEMBERS**

Mindy Zacks Lynne Robbins Diane Wheeler Ann Marie Mueller Molly Rogers Matthew Sherley Wally Gordon Alice Winston Carney Bonnie Ivener Corinne Cisneros Iohn Baca-Saavedra Shirley Jones Jacquelyn Yznaga Barbara Garvey Randy Cooper Paul Rhetts David McElhanev Linda Lopez McAlister Libbye Morris **Pat Browning** Priscilla Trowbridge Rosalind Lieberman Fancy Ruff-Wagner Patricia Jackson Liz Copeland **Bentley Clark** 



# A Short-Cut Pamphlet On Writing By the Amazon E-books Best Selling Author Jeffrey A. Friedberg

You could spend hundreds of dollars on 20 or 30 books to get all the great nuggets you get in Jeffrey Friedberg's Secret Pillars of Writing! -- Hank Magoo Reviews

Quite bluntly, Friedberg's book stands heads and shoulders over Elmore Leonard's...If you want to be a writer. Read this book. --Saint Dubricius Reviews

Available On Amazon as E-Book (\$3.99) and Paperback (\$5.39)

Amazon Bestsellers Rank, #19 in Kindle Store: Reference, Publishing & Books

