

SouthWest Sage

March 2009

www.southwestwriters.com

Announcing the 2009 Annual SouthWest Writers Contest

Are you a contest junkie or honing your writing skills in anticipation of actually having something accepted for publication? According to SWW President Rob Spiegel, "Contests are training wheels for submissions." Don't miss this opportunity for your masterpiece to shine. Enter it in the 2009 SouthWest Writers annual contest. Enter as many manuscripts as you wish in any of the following categories.

1. Mainstream or Literary Novel
2. Mystery/Suspense/Thriller/Adventure Novel
3. Romance Novel
4. Science Fiction/Fantasy/Horror Novel
5. Historical/American Frontier/Western Novel
6. Middle Grade or Young Adult Novel
7. Memoir Book
8. Memoir Article
9. Mainstream or Literary Short Story
10. Middle Grade or Young Adult Short Story
11. Nonfiction/Essay Article
12. Nonfiction Book
13. Children's Picture Book Fiction/Nonfiction
14. Screenplay
15. Poetry
16. Christian Novel

Entry deadline is May 1, 2009. Late entries must be postmarked by May 15, 2009. The entry fee ranges from \$20 to \$60.

Winners in each category are notified in August, 2009. The first prize is \$150; 2nd Prize, \$100, 3rd Prize, \$50. First place winners are eligible for the \$1,000 Storyteller Award. Contest chair Kathleen Hessler is organizing a banquet which will be held in September to announce and honor the top three winners in each category.

For complete rules and information, go to www.southwestwriters.com and click on 2009 Annual Contest.

Who knows? This may be your big break.

Celebrate National Poetry Month at April 11 Poetry Reading

Since 1996, April has been National Poetry Month and what better way to celebrate it than with poetry reading? In the past, SouthWest Writers has incorporated poetry reading into the regular meetings, but popular demand exceeded the time limitations of the meeting.

So this year, the premier SWW event devoted entirely to poetry reading has been organized by poet Billy Brown. It will be held on Saturday, April 11 from 10:00 am - 1:00 pm at Immanuel Presbyterian Church, 114 Carlisle Blvd. SE, (1/2 block south of Central, east side of Carlisle).

Members of SouthWest Writers and the New Mexico Poetry Society are invited to read their work. If you would like to read your poetry, sign up early to reserve your spot. The reading time limit will be about 4 minutes and allow for 60 poets. The time limit is subject to change with notice to be given at the beginning of reading. Walk-ins will be accommodated if time allows. Readers should arrive from 9:30 to 9:45 to confirm their registrations to read or to sign-up as walk-ins.

Perhaps you don't write poetry but enjoy listening. Come enjoy the sounds for your soul. We also need help in organizing the event. To sign up to read, to make suggestions, to help with organization, or to ask questions, please contact Billy Brown: 401-8139, welbert52@aol.com. Please include your name, phone number, and email address.

*Poetry is the journal of the sea
animal living on land, wanting
to fly in the air. Poetry is a
search for syllables to shoot at
the barriers of the unknown
and the unknowable. Poetry is
a phantom script telling how
rainbows are made and why
they go away. -Carl Sandburg,
Poetry Considered*



President's Message: *Training Wheels*

Contests are training wheels for submissions.

When you follow the painstaking rules of a writing contest, you're learning the arcane details of professional submissions. The rules may seem arbitrary – sometimes ridiculous – but they must be followed or you risk disqualification. Same with submissions. Try to draw attention to your submission with lavender paper and rejection is assured.

Learning the rules of contests – while also improving your writing skills – is excellent training for submission success. I've seen countless writers move up the contest ladder, from early losses through third and second place finishes and finally to the exhilarating rush of a first-place win. Many of those writers – who just won't give up – move on to publishing success.

The apprenticeship of a writer is typically a lonely stretch punctuated by painful moments of utter rejection. Entering contests can break this dire pattern with moments of semi-success. You don't get published, but you can score a win here and there, letting you know you're on the right track after all. Plus, there's the cash.

Once you score that contest win, you get the added benefit of claiming in your query that your submission nabbed a prize in the SouthWest Writers Writing Contest. While this brag won't necessarily tip your piece into the acceptance pile, it will assure the editor that your submission is worthy of a fair read.

Rob



President Rob Spiegel



December Monthly Contest Winners

1st prize: John Orman, Albuquerque, for "How I Found Santa Without NORAD"

2nd prize: Ruth Friesen, Albuquerque, for "Silent Night"

3rd prize: Nan Barnard White, Albuquerque, for "Lovely Christmas, Unusual Gifts"

Honorable Mention:

Karen Elliott, Albuquerque, for "Christmas Anecdote"
Betty Turk, Rio Rancho, NM, for "The Truth Will Out"

Ann Marie Potter, Las Vegas, NV, for "In Good Company"

Elizabeth Ann Galligan, Albuquerque, for "The Sweetest Christmas Ever"

Elizabeth Rose, Galisteo, NM, for "Father Christmas"

Jerry R. Davis, Albuquerque, for "Gifts Should Be More Than Pretty Wrapping"



Conference Chair
Sandy Toro



Kirk Ellis



Tammy Ader

Thanks to Sandy Toro for a successful screenwriting conference with about 60 attendees and very informative presenters.



SouthWest Sage

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

Subscription is a benefit of membership.

President Rob Spiegel
robspiegel@comcast.net
Vice-President Larry Greenly
SWWriters@juno.com
Secretary/Parliamentarian Keith Pyeatt
keithpyeatt@comcast.net
Treasurer Pat Bost
pjb19@comcast.net
Conference Chair Sandy Toro
storo32567@aol.com
Writers Contest Chair
Kathleen Hessler swwriters@juno.com
Critique Service Edith Greenly
SWWriters@juno.com
Speakers Rob Spiegel
robspiegel@comcast.net
Membership Jeanne Shannon
JSPOETRY@aol.com
Public Relations Melody Groves
MelodyGroves@southwestwriters.com
Class Coordinator Dianne Layden
dlayden@earthlink.net
SWW Sage Editor Ruth Friesen
ruthsww@comcast.net
Workshop Coordinator Gary Ness
ness66@comcast.net
Volunteer Coordinator Bob Gassaway
bgassaway@gmail.com
Historian Peggy Herrington
peg@msn.com
E-lert Mistress Gail Rubin
grpr@flash.net

SWW Office:

3721 Morris St. NE, Suite A
Albuquerque, NM 87111
phone: (505) 265-9485
fax: (505) 265-9483

e-mail: SWWriters@juno.com

website: www.southwestwriters.org

Articles are copyright © 2009 by author.
Facts, views and opinions expressed are
those of the authors and do not necessarily
reflect the viewpoints or opinions of South-
West Writers. SWW does not necessarily
endorse the advertisers.

Contests and Poetry

In this Issue

- 1 Annual Contest
- 2 President's Message Rob Spiegel
- 2 Contest Winners and Conference Photos
- 4 What to Do with That First Draft Kirt Hickman
- 5 Live Your Life in Search of Material Sherri Burr
- 6 Meetings
- 7 Workshops
- 8 Poetry Blossoms Forth Harold Burnett
- 9 Successes, Contests and Announcements
- 10 Successful Booksignings Melody Groves
- 11 Volunteers, New Members
- 12 Critique Groups

Annual Membership in SouthWest Writers

Individual: \$60 (\$100 for 2 years), Two people \$50 each,
Student over 18: \$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: Workshop: 1-4 PM, Third Tuesday: 7-9 PM
New Life Presbyterian Church, 5540 Eubank NE, Albuquerque, New Mexico



*Don't tell me the
moon is shining;
show me the glint
of light on broken
glass.*

Anton Chekhov

Photo by Ruth Friesen

Taming the Beast: What to Do with That Frightful First Draft

by Kirt Hickman

You've gotten your first draft onto paper, but it doesn't look anything like the novel you envisioned. Somewhere along the way, it took on a life of its own. It became grotesque: overblown, disorganized, and rife with inconsistencies. Your writing is flat, your characters are boring, and your plot contains so many dead ends it resembles a maze for some masochistic lab rat. Somehow it got so out of control that you can't imagine now how to rein it in.

While this article doesn't address all of these problems, it will answer this question: What now? Before you examine the structure of your scenes or the tautness of your narrative style, you've got to tame the monster you've created. You've got to trim the fat and organize the rest.



To do this, create an index card for each scene. Give each scene a name and number and write it on the scene's card. Then read through your manuscript and take the following notes on the cards:

Scene Purpose

Each scene must have a purpose; it must advance the plot or develop character (preferably both). Any scene that doesn't is either a digression or it just conveys information. Delete it. Find another way to provide the necessary information. Make a note on the card of any scene you plan to move information to. Ideally, each scene that you keep should also show conflict between characters, create suspense, and show how the day-to-day life in your world is different from your reader's life. Jot down ideas to enhance these characteristics of each scene.

Organization

Is the scene an action scene? A romance scene? A dialogue scene? Something else? Write it on the card. Don't string too many action scenes in a row. You want to excite your reader, not fatigue him. Similarly, don't put several passive scenes together; you'll risk boring your reader.

Color-code the title row of your scene cards with highlighter markers (pink for action scenes, yellow for passive, orange for others) and lay the cards out on a table with the highlighted title showing. This will give you a good visual display of the distribution of the action. Look for scenes that you can move to create a better balance.

Inconsistencies

As you wrote your first draft you may have made decisions that created inconsistencies in your characters or plot. If so, decide how best to resolve them, and in which scenes. Note any necessary changes on your scene cards.

Suspense Elements

A suspense element is any question you've raised in your reader's mind, any loose end you need to tie up in another scene. On your scene cards, note the suspense elements you introduced or resolved in each scene.

Then go back through the cards. On a separate sheet of paper, list each suspense element. Next to it, write down the number of the scene in which you introduced it and the number of the scene in which you resolved it. Did you resolve them all? If not, tie up each loose end. Either find a scene in which to resolve it, or don't bring it up in the first place. Make notes on the appropriate scene cards.

Rewrite Your Scenes

Before you rewrite your scenes, save your manuscript and begin working on a separate draft. If you decide later that you need something you've altered or deleted, you'll be able to retrieve the original.

During this rewrite, you'll throw whole scenes away, write new scenes, and revise some so extensively you'll have to start them over from scratch. Every scene will need some form of revision. Don't let this discourage you. You must trim the fat from your first draft and bolster the weak or missing elements. You already know what changes you need to make; you've noted them on your scene cards. Now rewrite each scene using these notes as your guide. When you're done, review your notes to make sure you didn't miss anything.

Now your manuscript is ready for the more detailed editing required to clean up your scene structure, narrative style, and dialog. Those, however, I must leave for future articles.

Kirt Hickman has Bachelor and Master degrees in Electrical Engineering from UNM. He has worked with high-energy laser optics, microelectronics, and other technologies relevant to science fiction, and leverages his knowledge and experience to enrich his stories. Worlds Asunder is his first novel.

Live Your Life in Search of Material

by Sherri Burr

At the SouthWest Writers meeting in October 2008, I gave a talk on "Live Your Life in Search of Material." I postulated that for a writer, there is no such thing as a bad experience, but perhaps only good and bad material. Individuals are experts on their lives, and thus that's the perfect place to search for material.

Here are some tips for mining your life for the fabric of articles and books.

Tip 1: A bad date can lead to a good play

At an Albuquerque restaurant, I ran into a chef who I had met at a Taos writers' conference. We set up a dinner date in Albuquerque the following week. When he showed up at our meeting place, he reeked of alcohol. The smell blasted through his pores. I drove a convertible at the time, and unzipped the top to air him out. Driving along I-40, we were conversing about posing nude for photographers when he decided to take off all his clothes. As I exited the freeway, I suggested he put his clothes back on. Walking into the restaurant, he said, "I hope you brought your credit card because I don't have much cash on me."

As horrible as the experience was at the time, the naked chef incident became inspired material. Indeed, the date happened in the nick of time, the week before the end of a playwriting class I was taking at the University of New Mexico's Theater Department. I had an assignment to write a five-to-seven minute scene that could be truth or fiction. Having written two failed scenes, I doubted my ability to pass the class.

After penning the scene, I found two actors from the class to play the principal characters. The actor who played the chef said he would wear his "penis boxers" for the stripping part. After the actors finished, the class voted on whether the scene was truth or fiction. Exactly half said it was fiction because nothing like that would *ever* happen to Sherri. The other half said it was true because something like that would *only* happen to Sherri. When I revealed that it was true, the professor congratulated me on writing a successful scene, and I got an A+ in the class.

Mastering the scene concept has helped me craft newspaper stories and write sections of law books. The naked chef date could easily be considered a bad experience, but it helped shape me as a writer and therefore was excellent material.



Tip 2: Get Permission or Document your Story

I asked the chef if he minded if I wrote up this experience for my class, and he said that was fine with him. While individuals do not necessarily need permission when writing truthfully about their lives, you will be surprised at how often people are willing to give it. You are subject to libel laws if you present others in a false light. Some memoirists have been sued for violating this rule. You also have to be careful about violating someone's right to privacy, particularly when you are talking about sexual matters. If the person gives you permission, you are home free. If they do not, tread carefully and document the truth of the matters you discuss.

Tip 3: Even the worst experience can lead to a bestseller

Even the worst of experiences—such as becoming a victim of a crime like rape or incest, being in a car accident that severely damages your body, or suffering a heart attack—has been turned into material by writers. I would not wish any of these events on anyone, yet one woman wrote a book about having an affair with her father and ended up with fortune and fame. While many of us might deem this incident appalling, she turned the experience into a New York Times bestselling memoir.

The writer's creed should be to live fully and then write about it. Happy writing and happy living!

Burr is a long-time member of SouthWest Writers and the author of 11 books. She is a tenured professor at the University of New Mexico where she teaches Entertainment Law.

Education is when you read the fine print.

Experience is what you get if you don't.

Pete Seeger

Call 505.480.8396 for your free consultation!

- * Web sites for Writers
- * Book Lay-out for Self-Publishers
- * E-Book Conversions
- * Cover Design
- * Businesscards
- * Blog Set-up



@AURORA design

Graphic and Web Design for a Healthier Planet

www.auroradesign.us

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

Saturday, March 7
10:00 a.m. to noon

Shirley Raye Redmond

***All I Need to Know About Writing,
I Learned from Nellie Bly***

This is a bit of a pep talk during which I'll share fascinating writing tidbits I've gleaned from this 19th century reporter's career, focusing on the importance of informing and inspiring one's reader—regardless of whether one writes fiction or nonfiction.

Shirley Raye Redmond has sold 17 books and over 450 magazine and newspaper articles. Shirley Raye, who has an M.A. in English from the University of Illinois, has taught a variety of writing and literature courses at various colleges and universities. She's currently a part time instructor with the Institute for Children's Literature and a former columnist for *The Santa Fe New Mexican*.

Her first book, *Stone of the Sun*, was a romantic suspense published by Avalon in 1991. Her first children's book, *Grampa and the Ghost* (Avon's Camelot Books –1994) sold as a result of a meeting at SWW conference with the editor. The title also became a Weekly Reader Book.

Tuesday, March 17
7 to 9 p.m.

Barb Simmons

Writing Contests: How They Can Help Improve Your Writing and Move You Forward In Your Writing Career

Writing contests are a wonderful approximation of the whole write, submit and wait for feedback aspect of the business. They give us actual practice in getting our stuff out there. Come see how contests can fit into your particular writing focus.

Barb Simmons has entered more contests than she'd care to own up to. She writes contemporary paranormal romance, and is published in erotica. She has also worked as a staff writer at a small newspaper. Barb has a BA in Journalism from the University of Oklahoma.

Saturday, April 8
10:00 a.m. to noon

Jonathan Miller

***Writing Pain into Gain: Using Your Personal History
to Create a Successful Writing Career***

Attorney/Author **Jonathan Miller** will offer techniques on how to convert your life stories into fiction and non-fiction. In addition to discussing motivating yourself to finally finish your manuscript, Jonathan will discuss how to edit, sell, and ultimately market your story. Most importantly, he will offer some safeguards so you'll avoid getting sued by your friends (and enemies).

Jonathan is the author of five successful books, including the just released *La Bajada Lawyer*. He is a graduate of Albuquerque Academy, Cornell University, University of Colorado Law School and the American Film Institute. He also wrote on the nationally syndicated show "Arrest and Trial." He has lectured at USC, Cornell, as well as several times at Southwest Writers meetings.

Tuesday, April 21
7 to 9 p.m.

Steve McKee

When Growth Stalls

Steve McKee knows that regardless of what's going on outside of an enterprise, it's what inside that counts. His new book, *When Growth Stalls* (Josey-Bass/Wiley) grew out of an eight-part series he wrote for BusinessWeek.com focusing on how and why companies lose their way and practical advice about how they can rekindle growth. Come hear Steve speak on how writing what you know can unexpectedly turn into a book.

Steve McKee is the president and co-founder of McKee Wallwork Cleveland, a full service advertising agency that has been recognized by the American Marketing Association with two Effie Awards, one of the industry's highest honors. A marketing strategist for over 20 years, Steve has been a columnist for BusinessWeek.com since 2005.

See Cover Story on the Special Poetry Reading Event in April

Saturday, March 7

1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

\$20 for members, \$30 for non-members

No registration. Pay at the door.

Location: New Life Presbyterian Church, 5540 Eubank NE

Shirley Raye Redmond**Make More Money with Market Analysis—No Matter What You Write**

I can't emphasize enough how important market analysis is if you want to make money. For instance, two of my Random House kids books, *Lewis & Clark: A Prairie Dog for the President* and *Tentacles! Tales of the Giant Squid*, have both sold more than 150,000 copies each—that's more than a quarter of a million books! In fact, in 2010, when my Houghton Mifflin deal goes through for *The Dog That Dug For Dinosaurs*, originally published by Simon & Schuster, I'll have more than 2 million books in print! It boggles my brain sometimes.

However, the workshop will also include info on making more money for those writing for magazines. I believe in recycling what I've written so I can sell the same piece over and over again, making more money with little or no effort.

Shirley Raye Redmond has sold 17 books and over 450 magazine and newspaper articles. Shirley Raye, who has an M.A. in English from the University of Illinois, has taught a variety of writing and literature courses at various colleges and universities. She's currently a part-time instructor with the Institute for Children's Literature and a former columnist for *The Santa Fe New Mexican*.

Saturday, March 21

8 a.m. - 5 p.m.

\$65 + \$10 lunch (\$75) register by Feb 1

\$75 + \$10 lunch (\$85) register by Feb 28

\$85 + \$10 lunch (\$95) register at door

Revising Fiction**Making Sense of the Madness****Kirt Hickman**

With all the books, talks, classes, and workshops out there on self-editing, a writer can be quickly overwhelmed by all the advice. There's so much to edit. How do you catch it all? How do you know when you've got it right? How do you even know where to start? In this class, Kirt Hickman will offer a practical approach to self-editing that covers everything from planning your novel, to first draft, through self-editing to final product. You'll also receive a set of presentation notes, including numerous examples, a self-editing checklist, and a list of recommended references—resources

that you can take home and use to better your writing.

Topics to be covered:

World Building

Plot

Research

Chapter Breaks

Scenes

Dialog

The Role of Critiques

Characterization

First Draft

Manuscript Organization

Exposition

Narrative Style

Finishing Touches

Kirt Hickman, author of the 2008 science-fiction conspiracy thriller *Worlds Asunder*, was born in Albuquerque, New Mexico in 1966. Kirt was a technical writer for 14 years before branching into fiction. He has participated in discussion or critique panels for multiple SWW conferences and contributes a monthly column titled "Revising Fiction" to the *SouthWest Sage*. During his technical career, he made a living out of taking complex sets of requirements, or in this case advice, and boiling them down into simple, effective procedures. His methodical approach to self-editing has helped many make sense of the mass of writing advice available to the novice reader.

Saturday, June 20

9 a.m. - 5 p.m.

All prices include lunch

\$59 register by May 1 (early bird special)

\$69 register by May 31

\$75 register at door

Non-members add \$10

Location: New Life Presbyterian Church, 5540 Eubank NE

Jeanne Shannon**Constance Hester****Traveling the Highways and Byways of Poetry**

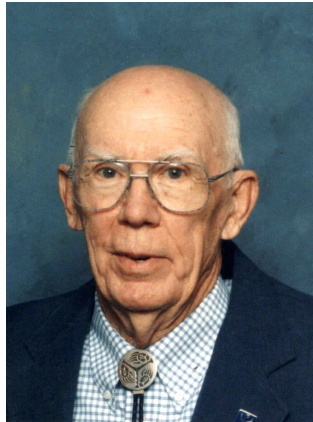
Whether you want to write poems or would simply like to be able to read poetry with more pleasure and deeper understanding, this workshop is for you. We will look at the work of well-known poets and less famous poets and try our hand at writing in various poetic forms. Writing prompts will help free our imagination and stimulate the flow of creativity.

Jeanne Shannon has been writing poetry since childhood. She has published three full-length collections of her poetry and ten chapbooks. Her work has appeared in numerous small-press and university publications. She is currently the editor/publisher of The Wildflower Press, a small-press book publisher in Albuquerque.

Constance Hester has published many poems in poetry journals and anthologies and in 2004 published her first book, *Call Me Myriad*. She helped found Fresh Ink, New Mexico and has taught several all-day workshops.

Poetry Blossoms Forth by Harold M. Burnett

My! How time does fly by—especially to one entering his ninth decade. Spring brings flowers and poetry blossoms. Thanks to President Clinton, National Poetry Month was created by proclamation on April 1, 1996. Members of SouthWest Writers (SWW) and many others are preparing their works for programs, classes, slams, and contests. Exact schedules are not in place yet, so stay alert to media announcements, websites, and other postings for details. The SWW Annual Contest's Poetry Category asks for submissions in any form, format, spacing or number of poems on no more than five pages.



On July 17, 2008, Librarian of Congress James Billington announced the selection of Kay Ryan as the 16th Poet Laureate for 2008-2009. Ryan has considerable flexibility in what she may want to do to promote poetry. The year usually begins in late fall with readings, lectures, and other special events in the Washington D.C. area. Ryan is the fourth woman to be so honored.

Even though the Library of Congress has been involved with poets since 1936 and is the home of the Poet Laureate Consultant, there have been name changes so that as of 2008 our 16th Poet Laureate Consultant in Poetry was named. This terminology started with the passage of Public Law 99-194 on December 20, 1985. President Reagan should receive credit for this action.

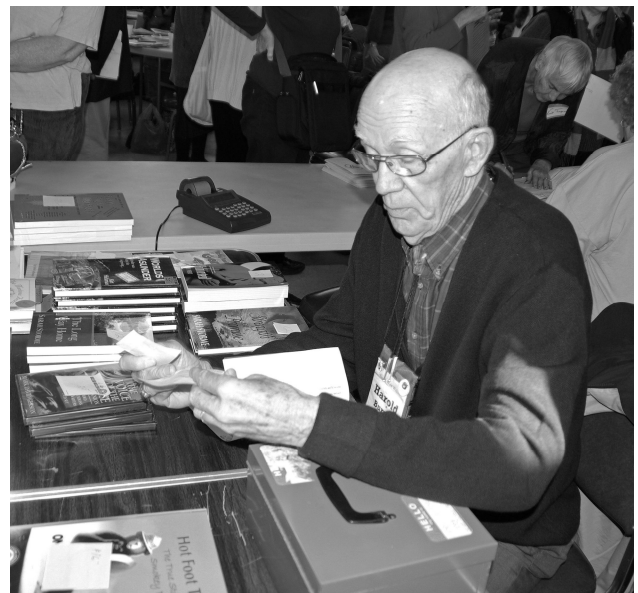
Kay Ryan was born in 1945 in San Jose, California and was raised in towns in the Mojave Desert and San Joaquin Valley. She received bachelor's and master's degrees from the University of California at Los Angeles. She decided at a very early age that her dedication would be to poetry. Professional responsibilities would be limited to part-time teach-

ing of remedial English at College of Marin in Kentfield, California. For more than thirty years she has lived in Marin County with her partner Carol Adair who was also a teacher at the College of Marin. Carol died in early January of this year.

Before writing about accomplishments, I think it appropriate to quote briefly from Ryan's own writings:

"I have never taken a creative writing class...I have never taught a creative writing class ...I don't like orchestral music...I don't like team sports...I love the solitary, the hermetic, the cranky self taught..." She seldom uses the first person in her poetry. Ryan has six collections of her works—three published since 1997. Those titles *Elephant Rocks*, *Say Uncle*, and *The Niagara River* are located in Albuquerque libraries and bookstores, but in very limited numbers. Her poetry has appeared in many magazines, collections, and anthologies. Most of her poems are short—even very short. A good selection of poems, audios, and writings can be found on the website www.poetryfoundation.org. Her poems are brief lines, short stanzas with quirks of logic and language—sometimes compared to Emily Dickinson and Marianne Moore. Ryan has been the recipient of many awards: National Endowment for the Arts fellowship, Guggenheim fellowship, and the Ruth Lilly Poetry Prize in 2004. Ryan summarizes her works with these words—"Poems are transmissions from the depths of whoever wrote them to the depths of the reader."

Harold M. Burnett is a retired chemist, Lt. Col. US Air Force, and business owner. He has a doctorate in chemistry from the University of Texas and a meteorology degree from Penn State. During his 34 years in Los Alamos, NM, he worked for the laboratory 13 years and owned/operated a bookstore during the '70s and '80s. He operates the book table for SWW.



*Is your precious manuscript meandering
or dangling its participles?*

The Writing Nanny

Transforming knotty manuscripts

Editing Rewriting Proofreading Manuscript Typing Writing

www.writingnanny.com

writingsvcs@gmail.com

(505) 603-5280

10% discount to
SWW members

Successes

Karin Bradberry held a well-attended poetry reading and slide show of her poetry shrines downtown in January, and sold her first poem, Buzzword Sestina, which appeared in the February issue of *Albuquerque Arts*.

MaryLou Dellafiora's article entitled, "Borrowing Husband," appeared in the February issue of *The Gallup Journey* and her article entitled, "Digital Heretic," was published in *The New Social Worker Magazine On Line* February 10, and also on-line in their *E-News*.

Rose Marie Kern, who recently moved to the Washington, D.C. area, is taking over the job of editor for the Lockheed-Martin's flight service employee newsletter, *The 21st Century Briefer*. The *Briefer* goes to over a thousand Lockheed employees in the aviation division. Also, Rose Marie's cookbook, *The Solar Chef*, has just been released in its sixth edition.

Rob Spiegel and **Larry Greenly** each had an article in the February *Sunset* magazine's "Southwest Insider Tips" section.

A number of **SWW members** won awards in the New Mexico Press Women's communication contest. The full list was not available at press time, so they will be acknowledged in the April *Sage*.

Melody Groves' book, *Border Ambush*, which should be out in April, is listed in UNM Press' Spring 2009 catalogue.

Sheila Delaney has signed a contract with the South Dakota State Historical Society Press for her book, *Spike's People*. a remembrance of her father Spike during the Depression, the Great Drought, World War II, and the ensuing years.

Nancy La Turner's article about hiking the La Luz Trail was published in the *Albuquerque Almanac*.

Contests and Announcements

The Rag monthly poetry broadside is seeking submissions, especially shorter poems (36 line Max.). Simultaneous submissions and previously published work are OK. Email submissions to theragabq@yahoo.com or mail to Karin Bradberry, 11322 Campo del Sol NE, Albuquerque, 87123. The Rag is available free at various bookstores in Albuquerque and by subscription, \$15/yr. payable to Karin Bradberry. *The Rag* is now in its 11th year.

Check out the call for entries for the 2009 **San Francisco Book Festival** at www.sanfranciscobookfestival.com. They're looking for a wide range of books, and the grand prize is \$1,500 cash and a flight to San Francisco for the gala awards ceremony. Deadline is a postmark of April 25, 2009.

High Prairie Poets, a chapter of the New Mexico State Poetry Society, offers bi-monthly contests open to all poets. Entries must be postmarked by the 20th of the month, i.e. March 20, May 20. Contact Carol Dee Meeks at c_pmeeks@hotmail.com for details.

The University of Iowa Summer Writing Festival offers 140 workshops across the genres, all levels. It will be held June 7 through July 24, 2009. For more information visit www.uiowa.edu/~iswfest.

The Pikes Peak Writers Conference, "High Attitude Writing: Cut to the Craft" will be held April 23-26, 2009. Visit the website at www.pikespeakwriters.com. Winners of their fiction contest will be recognized during the conference.

The New Mexico Breeze is looking for literary submissions; book reviews, poetry, essays and more. Contact Larry Greenly, literary editor, at larry@newmexicobreeze.com.

The **Woodlands Writers Guild** of Houston, TX, is pleased to announce the start of its annual short story writing contest. Stories written in any genre of narrative prose fiction of five thousand words or less are eligible for entry, provided they have not been read or critiqued at any meeting of the Woodlands Writers Guild or been previously published on paper or online. Entries must be received by May 1, 2009. Multiple submissions are encouraged. Prizes are \$100 first prize, \$50 second, and \$25 third. Visit www.woodlandswritersguild.org for entry details.

SWW Quarterly Writing Contest

SWW's monthly writing contest has changed to the SWW Quarterly Contest. Winners will receive larger prizes, and entrants will have more time to prepare their manuscripts. Winners may be optionally printed in the *SouthWest Sage*. Indicate whether or not it's okay to publish your entry. The first 2009 Quarterly Contest is:

A Memorable Event: Write a personal anecdote (where you were, how you felt, or how you were affected, etc.) about a memorable event in your life. Some examples: Pearl Harbor, JFK's assassination, 9/11 or other such important event. Double-spaced, 500 words maximum. Postmark deadline: Tuesday, March 31. All entries \$10. Prizes: \$150/1st prize; \$50/2nd prize; \$25/3rd prize. See more details at southwestwriters.com. Click on Quarterly Contest.

How to Win Friends and Influence Booksellers: Tips to Successful Booksignings

by Melody Groves

The big day has finally arrived. It's BOOKSIGNING day and you're ready. Or are you? If you're like me, you've already decided what to wear—that's a big issue there. And you've made sure you have a pen—that's kind of a "duh," but I've forgotten one a time or two. And you've contacted everyone in the world to let them know about this big event. Oops.



Okay, two out of three isn't bad.

Let's start with the basics. (1) Either you, or someone representing you, have set up your booksigning event. These are usually on the weekends and go for two hours. Bookstores know their clientele and will set you up for the optimum amount of traffic (re: people). The idea is: the more books you sell, the more money they make. It's a win-win situation. So, **double check the day and time with the store.** And while you're doing that, ask if they have your books already there. If not, you can toss twenty or so of your own stock into the car (you should always take a few, in any case).

The above-mentioned near-catastrophe happened to me. I was traveling in the Northwest and had a booksigning in Prescott, Arizona. I was swinging by on my way back to Albuquerque. Prescott is out of the way, but I wanted to sign there. I called Prescott from northern Oregon asking if things were on track. They said, no, the books hadn't arrived yet, but they assured me they would. Still uneasy, nevertheless, I made it to Prescott by noon for my 1:00 signing. **The books had arrived moments before me on the "noon stage" and weren't inventoried yet.** Trust me, they were inventoried by 1:00.

(2) Show up a bit early. Fifteen minutes is plenty of time. Be sure to check in with a manager or clerk and let them know you're there. The relief on their faces is always well worth the trip. **If you can't make it—and it needs to be a darn good reason why you can't—let them know as soon as possible.**

Be polite to the staff because they are the ones who will sell your books after you're gone. Make it a point to at least introduce yourself. A tip I haven't tried, but certainly intend to do: bring a box of donuts to the staff with a little thank you note. Trust me—they'll remember you!

(3) While you're there, you represent not only yourself, your publisher, your editor, but also the store. Be kind when a patron asks: (a) where the bathroom is (find out for yourself, too); (b) where to find a book on seashells; and (c) do

you work here? Even though it doesn't look like it, the store employees are keeping an eye on you, and they really appreciate your smile and kindness to their customers. They invited you in—it's their house. They don't have to invite you back.

(4) Plan on the full two hours. Some authors like to sit behind the table, pen in hand, and wait for the next person to slide a book toward them. That's fine. I prefer standing by my book, by the table, pen in my pocket. This gives me a chance to shake hands easily, meet people more eye to eye, and hand out my business cards without having to reach over the table. On the down side, my feet usually tell me when it's time to go.

Don't overstay your welcome. You don't want to be the guest at the party who refuses to go home. Two hours, maybe three, is enough. If you're selling well, check with the manager to see if they want you to stay.

(5) Bring business cards and/or brochures. Business cards are great because many people come in with a specific book in mind. Your book may be tantalizing, but their budget, time, kids, or spouse doesn't allow them the opportunity to buy your book. A business card with how to get your book is ideal. Plus, it makes a dandy bookmark. Hand them one. Business cards are not expensive.

I'd suggest getting them professionally printed. Staples does mine, and for about a penny apiece, it's as close to free advertising as I can get. My card uses the same logo as my name badge.

(6) What to wear. Hmm. Speaking of name badge, I highly, highly recommend getting one and wearing it (there's a trick to remembering it). Mine is the kind that clips on, but you can buy them with pins if you prefer poking holes in your clothes. A name badge identifies you as "somebody"—whatever that means. Of course you have a higher chance of being asked if you work there, but, hey—you're "somebody." People are visual learners, and if they see your name, they're more likely to remember it than if you just say it.

Clothing. Whatever your "theme" is—romance, adventure, memoir, sci fi, western—you need to dress the part. Find something either on the cover of your book or your genre and dress the part. If you write romance, wear a pink scarf or red shirt, or a hat. Since I write westerns, I usually wear some sparkly Western gear, sometimes a cowboy hat, and boots. You want people to be able to easily identify you and your genre. Put some thought into it. Once you know what you're wearing, pin or clip your name badge to your shirt.

(Continued on next page)

Food Volunteers Needed

We need volunteers to help with food preparation at meetings of SouthWest Writers. One task involves shopping for food that SouthWest Writers buys for the group. But we also need people who are willing to help set up the food table and make coffee before meetings. And we need help with clean up after the meeting. If you are available to help, please e-mail the volunteer coordinator, Bob Gassaway, at bgassaway@gmail.com. And, as always, we need food donations for meetings.

(Booksignings, cont.)

Wearing my red sparkly shirt and cowboy hat one day, I walked into a bookstore. The clerk came rushing up to me and said, "You're the author." I asked how she knew and she said, "You look like one."

(7) Last but certainly not least, is a follow-up thank you note. Yep. Address one to the manager, but be sure to include names of helpful staff. It's not only a polite thing to do, but it gets your name out there one more time.

Good luck! Hope you sell a ton.

Melody Groves writes about the West--magazines, novels, non-fiction, and screenplays. She is publicity chair for Western Writers of America and public relations chair for SouthWest Writers. As a performer with the New Mexico Gunfighters, she "shoots" outlaws every Sunday in Old Town. Her novels include: Arizona War, Sonoran Rage, and Border Ambush.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

James Widland	Gary Logsted	Marilyn Novak
Tyra Rodriguez	Stella de sa Rego	Jamie Kassay
Diane Kozelka	Amanda Foor	Harish Sharma
Carol Fidel	Alissa Bandy	Ernest Tucker
Victoria Fleming	Mike Higgins	Terri Brock
Georgette Whittler	Jeannette Moore	Sally Severino
Kathy Richter-Sand	Joanna McMillan	Vicki Hagen
Jack Hudson	Marcia Finical	
Neil Turner	Julia Martin	
Penny Camarata	Frederico Read	

Antiquarian Book Fair

Friday April 3 from 5-9 PM

Saturday April 4 from 10 AM-4 PM

UNM Conference Center, 1634 University NE

www.unm.edu/~alshal/aabf.html

UNM Offers Writing Workshop

WRITING: FROM START TO SALES UNM Continuing Education Course 14899

Instructor: Eileen Stanton

April 25, 2009

Saturday, 8:30 AM - 4:30 PM

Cost \$140 - Available Discounts

Location: Albuquerque - CE North Building

Important: Section RAA.

Register through UNM Continuing Education

Courses: Personal Enrichment: Reading & Writing

We re-organized the fifth year of this writers' conference. Due to suggestions from writers in the area, we will start with a keynoter who is a humorous speaker and prolific author of 19 novels. A poll of 100 writers revealed that they wanted either editors or agents interested in the following fiction genres: General fiction; Mysteries; Children's Chapter and Y.A. books; Historic; all kinds of Women's Fiction; Paranormal; Christian Romances and Mysteries, as well as Short Story collections. Nonfiction book categories included Biographies and Memoirs; Contemporary Culture; How To books; and Nature and Environment. We also plan to bring in an editor from a top-paying magazine. We'll do a brief Q & A of the editors and agents to let you know what's selling in the publishing industry, and what they are buying. All of the instructors who give workshops are new to the conference. We're inviting three agents and four editors. All attendees will have a one-on-one meeting with an editor or agent. After registration, email Eileen Stanton with your selection or if you have any questions please email at estanton@cablone.net.

Please provide the course title and number when e-mailing or calling 505-277-0077 with questions.



SouthWest Sage Advertising Rates

Worldwide Internet Circulation

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.



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

SouthWest Sage

SouthWest Writers

3721 Morris NE

Albuquerque, NM 87111

www.southwestwriters.org

SWWriters@juno.com

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

Label shows your SWW Membership expiration date.

Renew promptly to retain your membership benefits.

Wanting to Start Groups/Looking for a Group

Memoirs, Santa Fe

Leona Stucky-Abbott

505-820-2433

Any Genre, Albuquerque

Meet every other Friday

NE Heights

Krys Douglas 505-830-3015

Any Genre, Las Cruces

Barbara Villemez

505-522-5734

Poetry

Billy Brown 505-401-8139,

welbert53@aol.com

Short Story, Poetry, Screenplay

Santa Fe

Robert Evans 505-690-6651

reevans1@mac.com

Children's Books Santa Fe

ldiemand@cybermesa.com

Screenwriting

G. Hathaway 249-7957

Nonfiction, Valencia County

Karen Keese 505-261-0040

skywriter@wildblue.net

Memoir, contemporary culture, non-fiction

Anna Redsand 872-3277

Groups Seeking Members

Any Genre

Estancia Valley Writers Group

Moriarty Community Library

2nd and 4th Wednesdays at 5:30 p.m.

Tina Ortega 505-832-2513

Any Genre

Albuquerque Press Club

201 Highland Park Cir. SE

First Tuesdays 7 pm

Samantha 401-1561 or

sclark.abq@earthlink.net

Critique Groups

Submit requests to

SWWriters@juno.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 second Saturdays at noon.

leranm.com

The Screaming Ninja

Screenwriters

Meets every other Thursday,

Flying Star on 7th and Silver.

Marc Calderwood

505-897-6474

skatingkokopelli@hotmail.com