

SouthWest Sage

March 2012 www.southwestwriters.com

SWW Annual Writing Contest

by Cynthia Boyd, Contest Chair

It's time to pull out all that writing you've been letting age in files and folders of every kind and get it ready for the SouthWest Writers Annual Writing Contest. As you're putting it together, you might ask yourself, "Do I enter or not? Did I format correctly? Where do I send it? What is a category?" Except for the first one, all of these questions are answered in the rules (see pages 15-17 of this newsletter or click on the Annual Contest tab at www.southwestwriters.com). We still get asked questions by writers who want to enter our contest, but need some extra guidance. See if these tips help:

Q: What is a category?

A: One of the twelve classes of writing genres listed in our contest. Pick the category your manuscript best fits into, circle its number on the entry form, and write it on the outside of the envelope below the return address.

Q: Would a self-published short story count as a previously published item?

A: Yes. So would your previously published magazine articles, newspaper articles and anything that has been printed in any form and disseminated. That includes poems in your church bulletin. See the paragraph that defines unpublished work in the rules.

Q: How many pages do I send?

A: It depends on the category. For example, send the first 20 pages plus a two-page synopsis for novels or memoir books.

Q: Should I send my entry by certified mail or registered mail?

A: No! No one may be at the SWW office to sign for it, and no one is available to stand in line at the post office to retrieve it. Mail requiring a signature may be returned to you unopened. If you want confirmation that SWW received your entry, enclose a self-addressed, stamped postcard (SASP).

For entries with a critique, include a return envelope large enough for your entry and address it to yourself (also include your own return address). **Do not use metered postage on the return envelope;** the post office frowns on outdated metered postage. Include enough postage on the return envelope. A large return envelope with your manuscript and critique should cost about \$2 in stamps.

Q: Do I need to send a query with my poetry submission?

A: No.

Q: What is the deadline for entries?

A: Entries must be postmarked by May 1, 2012 for the SWW-member fee of \$10 for poetry/\$20 all others (non-member fee of \$20/\$35). Late deadline entries must be postmarked by May 15, 2012 for the SWW-member fee of \$15 for poetry/\$30 for all others (non-member fee of \$25/\$45). Additional fees are required for the optional critiques.

Q: What is Disqualification?

A: Disqualified entries are dropped from competition without a refund. Common disqualifiers include late-deadline entries without paying a late fee; having your name printed anywhere on the manuscript and related pages, except the entry form; not complying with the correct number of copies or pages entered; attempting to contact any judge; failure to enclose proper fees, such as claiming to be a member when you're not; submitting published material. (See the definition of **unpublished** in the rules.) If you have any questions contact SWW at (505) 265-9485 or send an email to swwriters@juno.com.

I hope I've cleared up some contest questions for you. So don't wait. Get your jewel of a manuscript out of your desk drawer and prepare it now for submission. Go to our website www.southwestwriters.com and click on "contest." Pull down the Annual Contest tab and print out both the entry form and rules.

And don't forget, prize money has increased this year: 1st Place \$200; 2nd Place \$150; 3rd Place \$100. All First Place Winners automatically compete for the \$1,500 Storyteller Award. You may also want to take advantage of SWW's critique service before the contest deadline to polish your manuscript in advance of entering it.

Enter now and you may be the Storyteller Award winner for 2012, which will no doubt further your writing career—something we've seen happen over and over.





In my February letter, I mentioned the new webpage on the SWW site and the new section in the *Sage* allowing you, our members, to reach out and recruit others into critique circles. (For more information or to email your requests, please contact either the *Sage* Editor, Kathy Wagoner, justwritesww@gmail.com or Bob Kidera, website guru, webmaster.sww@gmail.com.) Since that time, two members have come up to me and asked, "We're getting all this feedback now in our critique groups. It's great but how do we use it?"

To address this issue, we will be starting a new feature in the *Sage* called "*Bête Noire*." The column will be written by several SWW members and will include concrete examples and effective techniques on how to address the most common criticisms. If you have a particular *bête noire* that drives you to distraction, don't hesitate to send it to me. I'll try to find the appropriate editorial cudgel with which to beat it into submission. (Pun intended.)

For an example, please read this month's column dedicated to the dreaded "show, don't tell" criticism. If you have learned a specific technique that you have found particularly helpful, don't hesitate to pitch your idea to the *Sage* Editor. You too can contribute to this new feature.

And finally, see page 4 as I finish my introduction of the 2012 board: Terry Hicks (Fundraising), Dennis Kastendiek (Workshops), Bob Kidera (Social Media), Sandra Serrano (Public Relations) and Kathy Wagoner (*Sage* Editor).

Happy Writing!

Kathy

IN THIS ISSUE

- | | | |
|----|---|--------------------|
| 1 | SWW Annual Writing Contest | Cynthia Boyd |
| 3 | Members Seeking Critique Groups | |
| 3 | Winners of the 2011 Sixth Bi-Monthly Contest | |
| 4 | Meet the 2012 SWW Board of Directors | |
| 4 | Welcome New Members | |
| 5 | On Being Woefully Platformless | Bentley McGrath |
| 6 | An Interview with Myself | Jonathan Miller |
| 7 | SWW Meetings | |
| 8 | March/April Classes | |
| 9 | April/May Classes | |
| 10 | Critique Circle Basics (Setting Up A Group) | K. Kitts |
| 11 | The Writing Life: Time Management | Sherri Burr |
| 12 | I Remember Christmas on the Sonoran Desert | Catherine Ferguson |
| 12 | SWW Yearly Financial Statement 2011 | |
| 13 | Announcements/Member Successes | |
| 14 | <i>Bête Noire</i> : Show, Don't Tell | K. Kitts |
| 15 | Annual Writing Contest Entry Form | |
| 16 | Annual Writing Contest Rules/Call for Entries | |

*This is our life
and it's not going to last forever.
There isn't time to talk about some-
day writing that short story or
poem or novel. Slow down now,
touch what is around you, and out
of care and compassion for each
moment and detail, put pen to
paper and begin to write."
~ Natalie Goldberg*

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.

Annual Membership in SouthWest Writers

Individual: \$60 (\$55 if paid two months in advance)

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 and third Tuesday, 7-9 PM
New Life Presbyterian Church, 5540 Eubank NE,
Albuquerque, New Mexico



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 Kathy Kitts
kkitts@kkitts.net
Vice-President Larry Greenly
SWWriters@juno.com
Secretary/Historian Susan Alexis
sjalexis@msn.com
Treasurer Terry Civello
terryrose150@yahoo.com
Annual Contest Chair Cynthia Boyd
St.Boyd@comcast.net
Class Coordinator Dodici Azpadu
cairo2131@yahoo.com
Fundraising Terry Hicks
earthreflections@aol.com
Membership Grant Bresett
gnjinnm@hotmail.com
Public Relations Sandra Serrano
shrimpeight@yahoo.com
Social Media Bob Kidera
webmaster.sww@gmail.com
SWW Sage Editor Kathy Wagoner
JustWriteSWW@gmail.com
Workshop Coordinators
Dennis Kastendiek dwjkas@yahoo.com

E-lert Mistress Gail Rubin
Gail_Rubin@comcast.net
Volunteer Wranglers
Bob Gassaway Gassaway@unm.edu
Dennis Kastendiek dwjkas@yahoo.com

SWW Office:

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

*Articles are copyright © 2012 by author.
Facts, views and opinions expressed
are those of the authors and do not
necessarily reflect the viewpoints
or opinions of SouthWest Writers.
SWW does not necessarily
endorse the advertisers.*

Members Seeking Critique Groups

Mystery/Suspense

Pete David, cp_david@msn.com
preference: NE Heights
flexible: day/frequency

Will Young, bosque-bill@comcast.net
preference: Albuquerque,
Rio Rancho, Bernalillo, North Valley

Nonfiction/Creative Nonfiction

John Egbert, egbertenator@gmail.com
flexible: day/time/place

Poetry

Donald DeNoon, abqpoet@gmail.com
preference: North Valley,
NW Albuquerque or other metro areas
late afternoon: Wed, Thurs or Fri

All Genres, Fiction/Nonfiction

Wally Gordon, wallygordon@q.com
preference: East Mountains
flexible: day/time/meeting place

J. Allen Whitt
allen.abq.personal@gmail.com
preference: Rio Rancho, Albuquerque
flexible: day/time

Congratulations to the Winners of the Sixth 2011 SWW Bi-Monthly Writing Competition

~ A Poem About the Southwest ~

1st prize

Catherine Ferguson • Galisteo, NM
"I Remember Christmas on the Sonoran Desert"

2nd Prize

Elizabeth Rose • Galisteo, NM
"Makima and Sandia are One"

3rd prize

Karin Bradberry • Albuquerque, NM
"Crazy Woman Creek"

Honorable Mention

Sara Bautista, Albuquerque, NM
"New Mexico Love Story"

Verona Winn, San Diego, CA
"First Snowfall"

Heidi Wells, Albuquerque, NM
"Southwest Winter—A Villanelle"

Amara Cudney, Albuquerque, NM
"Angels on Central"

Yvonne Nunn, Hermleigh, TX
"Acres Burn"

The First Place winning entry is printed on page 12.

Meet the 2012 SouthWest Writers Board of Directors



Fundraising: Terry Hicks

Terry has a great love of adventure and a longstanding passion for bringing people, places and concepts together. Her life as a Spiritual Ecologist began as a child in the Himalayan foothills and has expanded through her exploration and study of plant-soil-water relationships in remote western US ecosystems. She has moved from writing

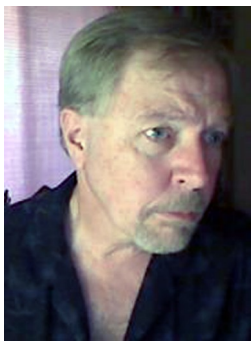
numerous technical and scientific papers to storytelling focused specifically on screenplays, essays and short fiction pieces, bridging her two loves of science and the Divine.



Workshops: Dennis Kastendiek

After earning a master's degree from the university of North Dakota in 1975, Dennis did some teaching and other part-time work related to education before settling, as he puts it, "somewhat dejectedly" into work as an office grunt for a Chicago area book distributor. He has been published in several literary magazines including *Free Passage*, *Pangolin*

Papers, *Potpourri* and *Mobius*.



Social Media: Bob Kidera

After earning his B.A. in History from Fordham University and then a Masters in Educational Technology, Bob began his writing career as a Unit Publicist for 20th Century-Fox in New York City. He left the film industry for a thirty-nine year career in education on the college and secondary level in Rochester, New York. During this time he wrote

textbooks and workbooks. Upon retiring in 2010, he realized a life-long dream to write full time. He currently produces a blog on cultural and political issues and is working on his first novel, *Red Gold*, an historical mystery set in New Mexico.



Public Relations: Sandra Serrano

Sandra Serrano is a caseworker with Child Protective Services. She's been working with the children and families of New Mexico for ten years and continues to do so. She holds a Masters in Social Work from Highlands University. Her current interest is fiction writing. Sandra considers herself a caseworker by day and a writer by night.



Sage Editor: Kathy Wagoner

Kathy claims to have written her first coherent story at ten years old—a piece about a spider, from the spider's point of view. Growing up, she never considered making a living as a writer. Instead, she wrote because it transported her to places and times not her own. After serving in the military for six years, she studied computer programming and accounting,

and raised four children. Now she's returned to writing with the goal of refining her craft and achieving publication. This spring, Casa de Snapdragon LLC will publish *This New Mountain*, a memoir she wrote for a friend.

Welcome New Southwest Writers Members

Janet Brennan

John Ramos

Jon Cooper

Kathryn Ravenwood

John Egbert

Michael Selz

Karen Johnson

Marilia Simon

Barbara Langner

Nancy Smart

Penelope Mainz

Louise Smith

Lawrence Miller

Margaret E. Troup

Rosanna Mouser

Steve Williams



Follow us on Twitter
@SW_Writers



Find SouthWest Writers
on Facebook

I first heard the term “writer’s platform” in 2009 at the annual From Start to Sales Writers Conference at UNM Continuing Education. As I am given to daydreaming, I imagined a cafe at a London train station populated with authors feverishly writing in poetically tattered Moleskines.

The term “writer’s platform” is now ubiquitous in writing publications and at writer’s conferences. In an effort to educate myself on the matter, I have recently read innumerable articles defining the writer’s platform and attempting to clarify its purpose.

The most concise definition I found comes from Christina Katz: “Your platform communicates your expertise to others.”

And the purpose of this platform? Well, to get you published, of course. Rumor has it that an effective writer’s platform can market you, your craft and your expertise even whilst you sleep. Almost better than that, it can create a built-in audience for your future publications—an audience that will buy your work without the publisher having to do anything more than typeset your words and print them on paper.

By my count, then, there are really only two elements to an effective writer’s platform: communication and expertise. And while I know that neither of these is a terribly complicated concept, when you throw technology and the information super-highway into the mix, I become bewildered, confused and, quite frankly, creatively constipated.

Communication

Now, communication I get: I can send e-mail and I can operate a cell phone (so long as it isn’t “smart”). Only, that’s not really what any of the articles mean by “communication.” They are, in fact, referring to this very small, entirely approachable and not the least bit intimidating list:

Websites	Published articles
Blogs	Media interviews
Guest posts	Social networking
Tweets	Facebook
YouTube-style videos	Free e-books
Newsletters	Spin-off products
Speaking engagements	Teaching classes

Look, that’s a lot of work. And, honestly, I am lucky to keep my full time job, cook an occasional meal and keep my pets fed while simultaneously publishing one article a month and penning a couple of really bad, really short stories. Of the items on this list, I have: 1) a website/blog that is very



Bentley McGrath isn't sure whether the phrase is "racking my brain" or "wracking my brain." You can assist her with the distinction at www.BentleyMcGrath.com

pretty and gets updated occasionally with incredibly inane content; 2) this column; 3) a Twitter account that I don’t use; and 4) a Facebook page that is frequented primarily by family members and high school friends. That’s about 28% of the communication I’m supposed to be putting out there in order to build my platform. That’s failure on anyone’s grade scale.

Expertise

And what exactly am I supposed to be communicating? My expertise, apparently. The thing that sets me apart from other writers. The thing that has landed me my (theoretical) built-in audience: my loyal blog subscribers, Facebook fans, Twitter followers and enlightened students.

Only... I’m not sure I have any expertise. No. Really. I have been racking my brain over this for several weeks. What am I an expert in? I have mastered filling a hot water bottle with boiling water without burning myself. I know a thing or two about baking really delightful popovers. And I can fold a fitted sheet like a pro. But are any of these the expertise that I can build a platform on? I think not. Perhaps I am meant for a platformless life.

For reassurance and guidance, I turn again to Christina Katz. “In my opinion, it’s a platform connected to a person’s inner reality rather than some clever juxtaposition of external ideas or a volcanic explosion of personality that [is] the most compelling and lasting....” Well, now, that’s something I can work with. I definitely have an inner reality. It is filled with frilly pillows, empire-waist dresses, china teacups and string quartets. And goodness knows I wouldn’t begin to know how to cleverly juxtapose external ideas and I would never want my personality to volcanically explode under any circumstances.

So, in short: I am failing to effectively communicate my indiscernible expertise. But I can be reticent and unfocused and still be successful, right?

One last return to Christina Katz for a much-needed pep talk:

“If you don’t have a mission or a purpose or a *raison d’être*, then guess what? No one is going to listen to you. And why should they? There is an awful lot of noise out there and people have personal lives and they can’t spend the entire day staring into their computers waiting for you to say something or inspire them to action or entertain them or whatever it is that your writing sets out to accomplish.”

Argh! I’m doomed! Doomed, I tell you!

An Interview with Myself by Jonathan Miller

Jonathan Miller had time to spare (and a pen in his hand) before the Super Bowl, so he asked himself a few questions, pondered the answers and submitted the following:

You're talking about writer's block at the SouthWest Writers meeting on March 3. How did you get started writing?

I took a job as a public defender in Roswell and I vowed to get a novel out of it. On the way down, I saw a sign that said "Watch for Rattlesnakes" and the idea for *Rattlesnake Lawyer* was born. At first, I kept an audio diary and then had the tapes transcribed. Eventually, I decided to turn it into a novel. I had an agent within a month, and was optioned by Hollywood before the book was even finished.

I understand that even though you made considerable option money, it still took ten years to get published. How did you keep the faith?

Rattlesnake Lawyer ALMOST became a TV series on several occasions. And it made it very far up the food chain with several big publishers. Usually they said it was not compelling. I moved out to LA to attend film school at the American Film Institute in order to find "compulsion." In film school, I learned how to organize the book better and I spent a lot of time cutting out the extraneous stuff.

Do you have a writing routine? How did you find the time to write your subsequent novels?

Generally, I come up with an idea in the fall, and a rough outline. I tend to write a 60,000 word first draft between Thanksgiving and New Years. I can only write in the mornings in darkness. Over the next few months, I then add to the books until they get over 100,000 words, and then I cut them down to 90,000 words...wash, rinse, repeat....

How did you come up with your new novel, *Lawyer Geisha Pink*? You are obviously not an Asian woman, why did you write from that POV?

I went through a traumatic experience with someone I thought was a good friend, and in order to deal with the stress, I started to write about it. Ironically, the only way I could write through the pain was by changing the POV of the main character—I could be more personal by being less personal. The character of Jen Song was originally based on an old girlfriend when I created her back in *Volcano Verdict*. I changed a lot of the details and then I was surprised to meet a real woman who was very much like the character.

What is your advice to have a successful book signing?

First, remember you are a guest of the store. It's better to lose a sale, than be a disruptive guest who is not invited back. Second, this is a job, treat it professionally. Third, have fun with it. You have written a book, which is a big accomplishment in this day and age. Even better, a book store is giving you the privilege of selling it in their place of business. Finally, don't take it personally if someone doesn't want to buy the book at that particular moment.

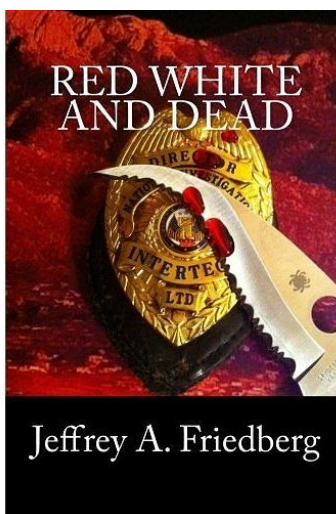
How has Southwest Writers helped your career?

I have been involved with SWW since I returned to New Mexico in 2001. One of my first signings was at an SWW event. My biggest thrill was winning the best nonfiction book idea a few years back. I have been coming for years and have learned so much. I've made some great literary friends like Melody Groves, Kirt Hickman and Sherri Burr through the meetings. My talk on March 3 is about overcoming writer's block. And one of the best ways to overcome writer's block is to join SouthWest Writers!

New Mexico private eye Jack Vane had no choice. The Mob decreed either he take the case and succeed in finding the lost treasure of Spanish Conquistador Francisco Coronado, worth billions – and probably only a legend – or Jack dies.

The situation becomes worse when Jack discovers a mysterious international cabal also seeks the treasure with the goal to finance a vast conspiracy to steal New Mexico's energy riches. This scheme will wreak environmental havoc and destroy Indian sacred lands.

Suddenly suffering strange blackouts, Jack is accused of brutal murders. He must find the treasure and the killer – even if it turns out to be himself. The clock is counting down as powerful forces gather in a relentless death-race to destroy him. What path should Jack take?



The Exciting New Prequel To Lost Relic Of The Gods

"An updated, TODAY kind of private eye thriller...Riveting verisimilitude reminiscent of Thomas Harris, Michael Connelly, and Elmore Leonard...plot twists and surprises galore kept me delighted and reading onward!" – CJ Cole, WVES AM, 99.3

**Available on Amazon
and Barnes & Noble**

Meetings

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

Saturday, March 3
10:00 a.m. to noon
Members free, guests \$5

***Beating Writers Block:
Get Started, Get Finished,
Get Published!***

Jonathan Miller

A discussion of how beginning writers can get started in their writing endeavors and how to keep plugging away when the going gets tough. He'll also touch on how to take your finished manuscript and get it published, and ultimately marketed, in this changing world.

Jonathan Miller has published seven books—including *Crater County*, *La Bajada Lawyer*, *Conflict Contract* and *Lawyer Geisha Pink*—and has completed three more. Several of his books have won statewide, regional and national awards.



Saturday, April 7
10:00 a.m. to noon
Members free, guests \$5

***The Top 10 Worst Mistakes a
Writer Can Make***

Shirley Raye Redmond

Using practical examples from the 1955 film classic *To Catch a Thief*, starring Cary Grant and Grace Kelly, Shirley Raye will reveal what successful writers *should* have in common with successful cat burglars—but too often don't.

An award-winning nonfiction writer and former columnist for *The Santa Fe New Mexican*, **Shirley Raye Redmond** has sold 27 books and over 450 articles to a variety of publications, including *Mountain Living*, *Woman's Day*, *Writer's Digest*, and *Cosmopolitan*. Two of her nonfiction book titles have sold more than 200,000 copies each. *Lewis and Clark: A Prairie Dog for the President* (Random House) was a Children's Book of the Month Club selection. *Pigeon Hero!* (Simon and Schuster) won an Oppenheim Toy Portfolio Gold Award. Her most recent title is *Fairies: A True Story* (Random House) about Arthur Conan Doyle and the Cottingley fairy photos. Visit her website at www.readshirleyraye.com.



Tuesday, March 20
7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.
Members free, guests \$5

Keeping Up With the Language

Bob Gassaway, Ph.D.

The change in the media is tumultuous. We are inventing new media and changing the ways we use older media faster today than ever in history. And the changes in the media create new challenges for writers to keep in tune with the times. Whether you're writing fiction or nonfiction, you need to stay aware of the modern language. Bob Gassaway, who writes fiction and nonfiction and is a sociologist, will discuss some of the changes—the good and the bad—and suggest ways writers can keep up-to-date in their use of the language.

Bob Gassaway became a television reporter at the age of 17 and worked more than 20 years as a writer and editor for newspapers, magazines and The Associated Press. After earning a Ph.D. in sociology, focusing on the symbolism of human communication, he began teaching journalism and conducting research as a sociologist. He is co-editor of a nonfiction book called *Dirty Work* published by the Baylor University Press, and now writes mystery novels. He has been to dozens of murder scenes and seen about three dozen autopsies.



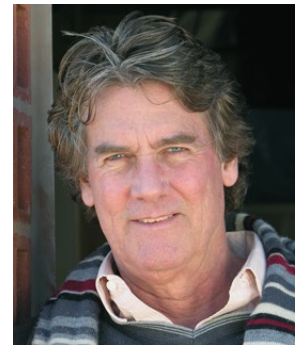
Tuesday, April 17
7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.
Members free, guests \$5

***Inspiration, Responsibility and
Troublemaking***

Stewart Warren

A discussion of the role of poetry, and of the poet, in society. Are poets guardians of truth and beauty, bell ringers of emerging consciousness, activists insisting on higher ideals, or children offering flowers to any passerby? Drawing upon the shared wisdom of the group we'll read, rant, and inquire about the role of poetry in 2012.

Stewart Warren, is author of ten poetry collections. 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. He is founder of the Albuquerque Poet Laureate Program. Visit his website: www.heartlink.com.



Watch for e-lert updates or check southwestwriters.com for more details on upcoming speakers/topics.

March/April Classes

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

By Melody Groves

February 27 & March 5, 12, 19

Mondays: 6 - 8:00 pm

\$160 members, \$200 non-members

Class limited to 14 students

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 writes for *New Mexico Magazine*, *True West*, *American Cowboy*, *Enchantment*, *Chronicles* (on line), *Albuquerque the Magazine*, *abqARTS* and *Desert Exposure*.



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

By Melody Groves

April 2, 9, 16, 23

Mondays: 6 - 8:00 pm

\$160 members, \$200 non-members

Class limited to 14 students

See previous column for description.

WRITING LYRIC POETRY

By Kelly Yenser

April 4, 11, 18, 25

Wednesdays: 6 - 8:00 pm

\$160 members, \$200 non-members

Class limited to 14 students

Classes are designed on a workshop model. Each session includes interactive instruction on voice, diction and other qualities of memorable lyrics.

We'll read short poems about objects, surroundings and thoughts of daily life, and write short poems in class. The focus is on the individual poet as a close observer, and the class will emphasize respectful comment and feedback from instructor and participants.

Kelly Yenser has published poems in numerous journals, including *Poetry Northwest*, *Massachusetts Review*, *Shenandoah*, *Natural Bridge*, *Night Bomb*, *Adobe Walls 2* and *Santa Fe Review* (forthcoming), and has two chapbooks awaiting publication. He's worked as a newspaper reporter and editor, a freelance journalist, a publication's relations director, and development officer at several universities.



WRITING SUCCESSFUL NON-FICTION

By Margaret Randall

March 8, 15, 22, 29

Thursdays, 2 - 4:00 pm

\$160 members, \$200 non-members

Class limited to 14 students

A collective and interactive workshop in writing personal narrative and non-fiction essay. Emphasis on honing your own voice, and learning to engage in constructive criticism that enriches your ideas about writing as well as the work being considered. Every piece deserves respectful feedback, every participant the opportunity to be part of a community that nurtures talent and discipline. Everyone will have a chance to be heard, critiqued, and receive useful tips for further growth.

Margaret Randall is the author of more than 120 books. She has written poetry, oral history, personal narrative and essay. Her most recent titles are: *First Laugh: Essays 2000-2009* (Univ. of Nebraska Press), *To Change the World: My Years in Cuba* (Rutgers Univ. Press), *As If the Empty Chair/Como si la silla vacía* (Wings Press), and *Ruins* (UNM Press). She has taught/teaches writing at Trinity College in Hartford, CT, the Univ. of New Mexico, Naropa Univ.'s Summer Writing Program and the Taos Writers Conference.



Classes are held in the
SouthWest Writers Conference Room
3721 Morris NE, Suite A, Albuquerque
(NW corner of Comanche and Morris)

*For more information
or to register for classes and workshops,
sign up at SWW meetings or register
online at www.southwestwriters.com
or call the SWW office at 265-9485*



Try our Google Calendar link and see what's coming up at a glance for each month. Use the link on the SWW website or click here: www.google.com/calendar/embed?src=swwcalendar%40gmail.com&ctz=America/Denver

April/May Classes

HISTORICAL FICTION RULES!

By Hana Samek Norton

April 7, 14, 21, 28

Saturdays: 2 - 4:00 pm

\$160 members, \$200 non-members

Class limited to 14 students

Historical fiction may be “hot” these days—but are you stymied, confused, intimidated or infuriated by all the rules and advice peculiar to this genre?

This interactive class is for those who have a historical novel project in the works or who are contemplating undertaking one. We'll explore on-going debates about the nature of the historical fiction genre through examples, questions, discussions, writing exercises, and tackle the conventional wisdom and standard advice on writing it (and why it is often wrong):

- Do you *really* have to research how your characters dress, what they eat, and how they spend their free time?
- Do authors of historical fiction owe it to their readers to get the story right?
- Do “facts” matter when you are out to “debunk” history?
- Must you avoid words that weren't around until 100 years later?

Bring your questions and a list of other provocative do's and don'ts.

Hana Samek Norton has a Ph.D. in history and has published historical fiction and nonfiction. She is a member of the Historical Novel Society, and works as historical consultant to the US Department of Justice on Native American natural resources issues. Her novel *The Sixth Surrender*, 2010 winner of the New Mexico Book Awards, was published by Plume/Penguin Group. She checks her email at sameknorton@live.com, website: www.thesixthsurrender.com and occasionally blogs at <http://hanasameknorton.wordpress.com>



SYNOPSSES AND QUERIES

By Melody Groves

April 19, 26 and May 3, 10

Thursdays: 6:30 - 8:30 pm

\$160 members, \$200 non-members

Class limited to 14 students

Synopsis. Query. Those two little words can strike terror in even the seasoned writer's heart. So, what can we, the not-so-seasoned, do without hiring somebody else to write it for us? All is not lost. You can do this. Melody Groves explains, with tips and techniques, how you, too, can write them.

The first two sessions will be devoted to Synopsis. It's much easier to write a query when you really, truly understand what your story is about. Sessions three and four will cover writing that query. We'll talk format, voice and who exactly to send these to.

Melody is the author of two published nonfiction books and three fiction books—and has written lots and lots of queries.

CREATING PROFESSIONAL NEWSLETTERS

By Ruth Friesen

May 2, 9, 16, 23

Wednesdays: 6:30 - 8:30 pm

\$160 members, \$200 non-members

Class limited to 14 students

Use your newsletter to enhance the image of your organization or your business. Learn what makes an eye-catching publication that your audience will read. We'll discuss purpose, audience and content, move on to four basic principles of design, and learn how to use fonts for readability and contrast. We'll study various publications as examples, including your own newsletter. We'll talk about print versus electronic newsletters. Astonish yourself with the improvement in your newsletter after only four weeks.

Ruth Friesen began editing newsletters when cut and paste actually involved paper and scissors. For the past three years, she edited *SouthWest Sage*, the newsletter of South-West Writers, which won second place in the 2010 National Federation of Women Communications Contest. She is the editor of *Wagon Tracks*, the journal of the Santa Fe Trail Association, for which she did a complete redesign, and also edits *Spanish Traces*, the journal of the Old Spanish Trail Association.



New Workshop and Class Refund Policy

Full refund if cancellation is received more than 7 days before class. From one week out to 24 hours before class, participant is entitled to select another class. Inside of 24 hours, participant receives no refund or class. 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.

* Upcoming Class *
* Rob Spiegel: Freelancing on the Web *
* Mondays, 6:00 - 8:00 pm • 8 sessions *
* May 7, 14, 21, 28 and June 4, 11, 18, 25 *

Writers who have been working the craft for a while understand the advantages of participating in a critique circle, but if you are new at this, you might need some convincing. First off, having external motivation especially if you write fiction on spec (i.e. you are not yet under contract) is important. There are no agents or editors beating down your door demanding to see that last chapter. The fear of disappointing your group will encourage you to turn off the TV before you get sucked into another rerun of *Law & Order: Parking Division*.

Critique circles are important not only to have someone read your work to find the plot holes and typos, but also to allow you to see in manifest example what to do and, occasionally, what not to do. It is difficult to see our own weaknesses, but it is rather easy to see these opportunities for improvement in others. Critiquing others' work makes all of us better editors of our own writing.

Another important component of critique circles is old-fashioned camaraderie. Writing is a lonely business and it takes another writer to fully understand the emotional costs writing often exacts. Sometimes, you need a shoulder to cry on about that last rejection, or to whine about that unreasonable contract clause, or to receive moral support to get you back at the computer.

To develop a smooth running critique circle, there are several decisions that should be made up front before the recruiting process begins. Let's review some of the major ones.

When starting a group, it is important to have enough people to elicit sufficient opinions and to keep the momentum going through vacations, sick kids and due dates. However, the number of members should be evaluated against how much time the individuals have to dedicate to writing the reviews. If there are too many members, then the workload will interfere with your own writing and editing. Limiting the page count or alternating members can mitigate this difficulty, but do you really want to wait six months to get feedback on your limerick?

I suggest five or six and not more than seven or eight members. This allows for ten pages per person per meeting. Ten pages afford adequate advancement while protecting personal writing time.

Your next decision will be to determine whether the group will be genre-specific or general. Personally, I like mixed critique groups combining both fiction and nonfiction and expanding beyond my preferred genre. I find such reading more interesting. In addition, I learn tricks from genres I might not ordinarily read, and writers outside my area do not allow me to resort to shortcuts often tolerated within my fiction category. In other words, it makes my writing better. Do not fear critiquing a genre you do not generally read. Good writing is good writing. I do not need to be a thriller writer to identify problems in pacing or flat dialog.

Once you establish the make-up of your circle, you should also have an idea on manuscript length as you invite others to join you. Does the group prefer longer but fewer pieces at each meeting? Or fewer pages with each member giving and receiving critiques? Poems (unless epic), short stories, essays, magazine pieces are easy to schedule, but what of the novel? A three-hundred-page novel will take over a year at ten pages every two weeks. However, if a group of six agrees to cover one novel per month, everyone gets a review within those six months.

Group dynamics control this decision. I would simply warn you to be upfront with your expectations and to do the math. Also, be willing to revisit this issue regularly. It might not be prudent to wait five months for your turn and have the group dissolve as you send out your *opus magnum*.

As for how often a group should meet, this depends on the will of the members and how far along the writers are. If most of the group have been writing for years, they will have a backlog of things to be critiqued and can have something ready to pass out weekly. A group of new authors might be in the middle of their first piece, and between work, the in-laws and the house-painting, have only enough time to produce ten pages every other week or even monthly.

The goals of the group and the type of work most members produce must also be balanced. If the group is made up entirely of screenwriters, critiquing a script per month is not unreasonable. If your critique circle is made up of Michener, King and two Russians named Tolstoy and Dostoyevsky, one novel per month will be too much.

Some people prefer to meet in public places such as libraries or coffee shops. The advantages include not having to clean your house, and until you come to know the members in your group, not having strangers use your bathroom. The downsides include cost. You are expected to buy something at a restaurant and although libraries are free, many have eliminated their evening and weekend hours due to the economy. It may be impossible to schedule a convenient time for everyone. Again, poll your members. Allow the group to choose and revisit the decision from time to time.

Now that we have covered the basics of who, what, when, where and why, one question remains: How? This one is easy. Send your critique circle requests to our *Sage* Editor, Kathy Wagoner, justwritesww@gmail.com, and our website guru Tiffany Tackett, tackett.tiffany@gmail.com. We will post your notice.

Critique circles will assist you to stay on track by improving your craft, keeping you to deadlines and supporting you emotionally through that twenty-seventh rejection. As Ray Bradbury said in his collection of essays, *Zen in the Art of Writing*, "You must stay drunk on writing so reality cannot destroy you." Let us help you do that.

This year, I embarked on a journey to improve my time management skills and publish the results at <http://sherriburr.blogspot.com/>. I am tracking what happens in my life when I show up early, on time, or late to events. Writers face consequences associated with exceeding, meeting or missing deadlines. Managing a writing life can be an adventure.

Years ago during a teaching stint at the University of Hawaii, I interviewed Lois-Ann Yamana, the author of *Blu's Hanging*. She spoke of the challenges of juggling the writing of a new fiction book while promoting her latest hardcover book and supervising the paperback edition of the previous hardcover book. In the midst of a promotion campaign, she had to make time to write.

Nonfiction writers are often managing internal and external deadlines. The external ones are set by the publisher or editor. Last July, I was invited to participate in Inside Look, a tour that my publisher Thomson West sponsors to give its authors an overview of the law book publishing process. The plant manager told us that the minute they receive a signed contract with a due date from a writer, they set aside time to print the book. The jaws of the ten authors dropped as the magnitude of that contract deadline clause sunk in.

In February, one writer friend told me that the due date for her book was the previous December 31. "Have you contacted your publisher?" I asked. "No. I thought they'd contact me," she responded. I repeated what we had been told about the contract date, and she became alarmed. "I will make contacting my publisher my number-one priority," she said.

Writers need to track all their deadlines by either a physical or electronic calendar. They should place all external due dates, be they print or web deadlines, in their calendar. Otherwise, without a specific reminder, it's easy to forget. If you miss a newspaper deadline, your copy will not be printed. If you have something important to say, you have just missed



your opportunity. This only had to happen to me once as a columnist.

Internal deadlines are those we set for ourselves. Backtrack from the external deadline a day or two to set up the internal deadline. Also if you are working on a big project, like a book, consider setting the deadline chapter by chapter. Books are rarely produced in one sitting, although once I attended a workshop by a facilitator who specialized in having people produce a book in a weekend. He urged us to give in to our creative forces as we endeavored to write a chapter in a two-

hour sitting.

This works so long as you believe that writing is re-writing. Rarely will genius come from one sitting. While Mozart is depicted in the film *Amadeus* as being able to produce master works with no changes, most of us do not possess his unique capacity to envision a final piece and merely record our mental picture on paper. Writers can set aside a block period of time to write a draft, and then another block to revise initial thoughts.

By setting aside time to draft, re-write, and revise to meet a final deadline, it all becomes manageable. Of course the best-laid plans can be pre-empted by a catastrophe. In that case, it's best to let the editor or publisher know as soon as possible that you cannot meet your deadline.

I had one book project's deadline twice un-done by unexpected events. Within five weeks of the deadline, my brother collapsed when his heart stopped and he went into a coma. I was staying in his Intensive Care Unit of the hospital when I opened an email from my publisher seeking confirmation that I was going to turn my book in on time. I explained what was going on and asked if the deadline could be extended slightly. She volunteered to extend it six months. As the second deadline approached, a woman plowed into my car when she backed up without looking behind her. With numerous doctor visits needed to heal from the car accident, I again had to seek a deadline reprieve. Ultimately, the published book benefitted from being turned in later because I was able to capture new changes in laws which made the book much timelier.

In conclusion, write down deadlines so that you can be as timely as possible. If you think you are going to miss a deadline, let your editor know as soon as possible. Happy writing!

You Can Write for the *Sage*

Submissions focusing on all aspects of researching, writing and publishing any genre are welcome. See past issues of *SouthWest Sage* for the type of article we publish. Payment made in bylines and clips. All rights remain with the author. Submissions may be edited for accuracy, readability and length. Deadline is the 15th of the month prior to the next issue. Article lengths from 200-1000 words. Send submissions/questions to Kathy Wagoner at justwritesww@gmail.com.

UNM Law Professor Sherri Burr is the author of 15 books, including the 2011 Entertainment Law: Cases and Materials in Established and Emerging Media. Her memoir-in-progress is *Living with Nephew: How I Got Voted the Meanest Parent in the World*. Visit her website at www.sherriburr.com.

I Remember Christmas on the Sonoran Desert

by Catherine Ferguson

I wait by Grandma's front door
tinsel taste in my mouth
new book scent
tissue paper and chocolate

pin boughs
the sink drips
Grandma in new apron
new perfume
the dogs wear bows
I am fine
in my red dress

December desert heat
Aunt Judy greasy with tanning lotion
sumbathes by the pool
Mother waters the date tree

I walk out on the desert
flat lots with For Sale signs
barrel cactus turning its pink
fish hook spines to the sun
an old woman mourns for her mother
in front of her driveway

I walk past the house
stop to play with a lizard
ground is wet beside
an old palo verde
cactus wren pokes its beak
in the bubbling fissures of sand
I poke
my finger

hear buzzing
when I put my ear to the ground
there is a flat sound
like earth driving
itself into me

pink puzzle pieces
inlay cracks in my cheeks
a sprawl of purple mat flower
drizzles like a spider
over the sand

from where I lie now on my back
I see the sky a vault
of blue
the round horizon a bell jar
covering me
melts

my legs pour
into the gopher tunnels
below the earth

somewhere in time
Grandma unpacks her manger
there are things that humans do
besides
lie on the desert

my dress covered with a soft grey dust
I stand
spin
dizzy with time

SouthWest Writers Yearly Financial Statement 2011

Statement of Financial Condition (Balance Sheet) December 31, 2011

ASSETS

Current Assets:

Cash in Bank--Checking	4,586
Cash in Bank--Savings	\$43,194
Petty Cash	<u>280</u>
Total Current Assets	\$53,060

Property and Equipment:

Furniture and Fixtures	\$ 9,673
Computers	4,544
Accumulated Depreciation	<u>(14,217)</u>
Total Fixed Assets	0

Total Assets **\$53,060**

LIABILITIES AND CAPITAL

Liabilities:

Payroll tax liabilities	\$ 323
-------------------------	--------

Capital:

R/E, Restrict, Scholarships	185
Unrestricted Retained Earnings	50,813
Current Year Net Income	<u>1,739</u>
Total Capital	<u>\$53,060</u>

Total Liabilities and Capital **\$53,060**

Looking for a Critique Group?

If you're a current member of SWW and are searching for a critique group, or are looking for another member to join your already existing circle, email your request to Kathy Wagoner, *Sage* Editor, justwritesww@gmail.com or Bob Kidera, website guru, webmaster.sww@gmail.com and we'll get it posted. Please include in your email:

1. Your name
2. Email address and/or phone number (this will be posted publicly in both the *Sage* and on our website)
3. Whether you prefer fiction/nonfiction or a mix of both
4. Which genres you are looking for
5. Geographic location (Belen, NW Heights, near UNM, etc.)
6. Anticipated frequency and date of meetings if known (i.e. second and fourth Tuesday, evenings)

Announcements/Member Successes

Calling all aspiring writers ages 10-17! Come to the 4th UNM Young Writers Conference on **Saturday, March 17, 2012**, 9:00 am - 4:00 pm. Learn the ins and outs of writing and getting published from professional writers. The conference theme is Painting With Words: The Visual Element in Writing. Genres include graphic novels, fiction, journalism and more. In addition, participants will learn various avenues to getting published. Young authors are invited to share their work. Limited to the first 60 participants. The \$55 fee includes a box lunch. For more information, go to <http://dce.unm.edu/conferences.htm>.

Ploughshares **Emerging Writer's Contest** has expanded to include fiction, nonfiction and poetry. The winner in each genre will be awarded \$1,000. Literary work first published in *Ploughshares* has been cited in the Pushcart Prize volumes more often than any other literary journal. \$20 entry fee includes a 1-year subscription to *Ploughshares*. Login at [submission manager here](#) from **February 1 - April 2** to submit.

Dave Robison is one of the hosts for a new writer's podcast called **"The Roundtable Podcast"** (RTP). Each episode is a brainstorming session between an aspiring writer and a professional author, publisher or editor. They need writers to appear on the show with a focus on genre fiction (fantasy, scifi, thrillers, etc.) but all stories are considered. More information at: <http://www.roundtablepodcast.com>

James Gunn's *Ad Astra* announces call for submissions. Telling stories, and understanding what is being shared are what defines us as human. We want to invite the speculative fiction community to examine the topic of the premiere issue—Communication and Information—either in fiction, poetry or scholarly articles. Go to <http://adastra.ku.edu/submissions>.

Elizabeth Ann Galligan's crime novel *Secrets of the Plumed Saint* has been accepted into the Bernalillo County Library System for processing and will be available in April 2012. Elizabeth will give a talk and sign her book on Wednesday, March 15 from 1:30-2:30 for the Read Around New Mexico, Juan Tabo Library, 3407 Juan Tabo NE, located on the west side of Juan Tabo Blvd between Comanche and Candelaria. The event is open to the public.

Nancy Pogue LaTurner and **Elizabeth Ann Galligan** invite you to their combined book signing on Saturday, March 24, 2012 from 12:00 to 2:00 at Title Wave Books located at 1408 Eubank Blvd NE, just north of Constitution in the Princess Jeanne Shopping Center. Elizabeth's debut novel *Secrets of the Plumed Saint* spins an intriguing tale of mystery set in northern New Mexico. Nancy's memoir *Voluntary Nomads* recalls family adventures during twenty years with the Foreign Service. Stop by and help Elizabeth and Nancy launch their new books.

After many unsuccessful attempts to get a couple of novels published many years ago, **RJ Mirabal's** contemporary fantasy *The Tower of Il Serrohe* will be his first published book (Black Rose Writing, an "indie" publisher in Texas). RJ worked on the manuscript for the last three and half years after a fifteen year hiatus. The release date will be the end of March 2012, if all goes as planned.

A number of people have contacted **Sue Sullivan** to say how much they're getting out of reading her blog <http://surfingyoureenthusiasm.com/blog/>. She finds blogging to be a great way to get positive reinforcement on little pieces to help motivate her on the bigger ones.

2012 Second Bi-Monthly Writing Contest

Story-Telling Hook

The first 500 words of a novel of any genre or the first 500 words of a short story of any genre. Postmark deadline: **April 30, 2012**.

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 Bi-monthly Contest, 3721 Morris NE, Suite A, Albuquerque, NM 87111.

If you're a SouthWest Writers member with a success or announcement you'd like to include in the Sage, send it to Kathy Wagoner, SWW Sage Editor, www.justwritesww@gmail.com.

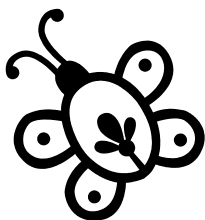
First Call for Nominations

For the 2013 Offices of President, Vice-president, Treasurer, and Secretary of SouthWest Writers

Please be thinking about names you would like to submit to the nominating committee to fill the 2013 executive board. In the next issue of *Sage*, and at the March and April members' meetings, nomination forms will be available for your convenience. Persons nominated for the offices of President and Vice-president must be current members of the SWW Board, and they must have served in that capacity for at least one year within the past five years.

Bête noire is a French expression that refers to a repeated mistake or weakness that becomes the bane of one's existence. In this case, *bête noire* would be that annoying criticism that keeps reappearing in comments from our first readers or critique circle members. You know it's a problem; you can recognize it in your own writing and in that of others, but you are having trouble finding the exact type of bug spray to clean up that particular infestation. This new feature will help you by providing concrete examples and effective techniques to help you address these common literary bugaboos.

In our inaugural column, we're tackling the dreaded "show, don't tell" criticism. If you are lucky, your reader or circle mate will have highlighted the sentences that are "tells." But if not, one way to spot the insidious little cockroaches is to do a search for emotion verbs such as "loved," "hated," or "felt." In *The Revision Toolbox* (2002), Georgia Heard gives an example, "My grandfather loved classical music." This sentence is efficient but too many of this type become boring to read. So what can you do?



Georgia suggests drawing a line down the middle of a piece of paper, identifying two or three of these "tells" in your own work, and writing them down on the left side. Leave plenty of space between them on your sheet of paper. On the right side of the sheet, use concrete sensory details to describe a demonstration of that emotion verb. Turn the verb into a "tell."

Taking Georgia's example of "My grandfather loved classical music," we may write, "I remember my grandfather sitting for hours on the screened porch in the late summer heat, listening to Mozart or Beethoven." This "show" remains one sentence in length. We retained its efficiency and brevity. Showing does not necessarily require writing an entire scene. This example might not be Shakespeare but it's still a big improvement.

If you have a *bête noire* that is pestering you, email us your request. If you have a particularly good technique you would like to share, be sure to pitch it in an email to the Editor. Let's stomp some bugs!

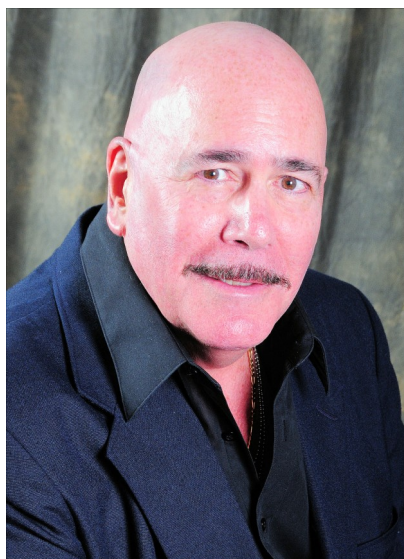
New Mexico Resident Authors

Sell your books (limit three titles) at the Belen Public Library during Belen's "Hub City Rail Heritage Day," May 12, 10 am - 3 pm (set-up begins at 9:30 am), 333 Becker Avenue, Belen, NM. Authors are responsible for their own sales. Sign up by emailing Annmarie Pearson altbalance@q.com or leave a message at 865-5605 with author's name, title and book genre. Information needed ASAP to advertise authors/titles in the News Bulletin.

2012 Northern Colorado Writer's Conference Take the Road Less Traveled

March 30-31, 2012 • Hilton Fort Collins

The conference caters to writers of all levels and genres by offering over 25 workshop choices, agent/editor pitch sessions, a bookstore and networking opportunities. Conference fee includes all meals, workshops, pitch sessions, and a preconference workshop on March 10. Go to <http://www.northerncoloradowriters.com>.



A Short-Cut Pamphlet On Writing

By the Amazon E-books

Best Selling Author

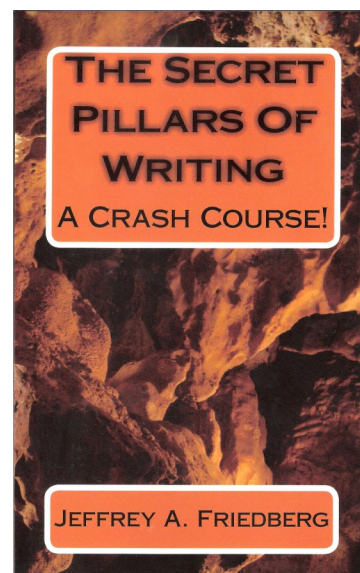
Jeffrey A. Friedberg

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



2012 SOUTHWEST WRITERS WRITING CONTEST 5-STEP ENTRY FORM

Step 1

Name: _____ Phone: () _____
 Address: _____
 City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
 Country: _____ Email: _____
 Entry Title: _____

Step 2

Circle Category Number: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

**SWW
Members
Step 3**

SOUTHWEST WRITERS MEMBERS: Circle Fee Enclosed

Postmarked no later than May 1, 2012

Contest Only	\$20	Contest & Critique	\$45
Poetry Only	\$10	Poetry & Critique	\$30

Postmarked no later than May 15, 2012

Contest Only	\$30	Contest & Critique	\$55
Poetry Only	\$15	Poetry & Critique	\$35

**Non-
Members
Step 3**

NON-MEMBERS: Circle Fee Enclosed:

Postmarked no later than May 1, 2012

Contest Only	\$35	Contest & Critique	\$60
Poetry Only	\$20	Poetry & Critique	\$40

Postmarked no later than May 15, 2012

Contest Only	\$45	Contest & Critique	\$70
Poetry Only	\$25	Poetry & Critique	\$45

Step 4

Method of Payment:

☐ Check or Money Order (no cash) US\$ payable to SouthWest Writers
☐ Charge my
☐ Visa ☐ MasterCard # _____
 Exp. Date: _____ Security Code # _____
 Signature _____

Step 5

How did you hear about the contest? _____
Mail completed entry form, entry and fee to:
 SouthWest Writers Annual Contest 2012
 3721 Morris NE Ste A
 Albuquerque, NM 87111-3611

southwestwriters.com • swwriters@juno.com • (505) 265-9485

The SouthWest Writers International Writing Contest 2012 Call for Entries

First- through third-place winners will be awarded in twelve categories. All first-place winners will automatically compete for the grand prize, the Storyteller Award. The entries must be original, unpublished (see definition below) and in English. You do not have to be a member of SouthWest Writers (SWW) to enter.

Deadline: Postmarked **May 1, 2012** • Postmarked **May 2-15, 2012**, late fee applies.

Categories:

FICTION

1. **Mainstream/Literary Novel:** Submit the first 20 double-spaced pages of the manuscript and a single-spaced (two-page maximum) synopsis.
2. **Mystery/Suspense/Thriller/Adventure Novel:** Submit the first 20 double-spaced pages of the manuscript and a single-spaced (two-page maximum) synopsis.
3. **Juvenile or Young Adult Novel:** Submit the first 20 double-spaced pages of the manuscript and a single-spaced (two-page maximum) synopsis.
4. **Historical/Western Novel:** Submit the first 20 double-spaced pages of the manuscript and a single-spaced (two-page maximum) synopsis.
5. **Science Fiction/Fantasy/Horror Short Story:** Submit a double-spaced manuscript of 4000-6000 words with the word count in the upper right corner of the first page.
6. **Mainstream/Literary Short Story:** Submit a double-spaced manuscript of 4000-6000 words with the word count in the upper right corner of the first page.

NONFICTION

7. **Nonfiction Book Proposal:** Submit the first three chapters or the first 50 pages, whichever is less, a chapter outline of no more than three pages and a query letter of no more than two pages.
8. **Memoir:** Submit the first 20 double-spaced pages of the manuscript and a single-spaced (two-page maximum) synopsis.
9. **Nonfiction Essay:** Submit a double-spaced manuscript of no more than 2500 words with the word count in the upper right corner of the first page.

CHILDREN'S PICTURE BOOK (FICTION OR NONFICTION)

10. **Children's Fiction or Nonfiction Picture Book:** Submit the entire double-spaced manuscript (maximum of 500 words) without illustrations.

SCREENPLAY

11. **Screenplay:** Submit the first 20 pages in industry-standard format plus a one-page, single-spaced synopsis. The screenplay must be unoptioned at the time of submission.

POETRY

12. **Poetry:** Submit one poem of up to three pages **or** three Haiku on one page.

Definition of Unpublished: The submitted work must **not** be available to the public for sale. This includes, but is not limited to, the following venues: eBooks (Nook, Kindle, iBooks), Traditional Publishing (HarperCollins, etc.), or Print-on-Demand (Amazon or other distributors with an ISBN assigned).

Entry Fees:

SOUTHWEST WRITERS MEMBERS

Postmarked no later than May 1, 2012

Contest Only	\$20	Contest and Critique	\$45
Poetry Only	\$10	Poetry and Critique	\$30

Postmarked May 2-15, 2012

Contest Only	\$30	Contest and Critique	\$55
Poetry Only	\$15	Poetry and Critique	\$35

NON-MEMBERS

Postmarked no later than May 1, 2012

Contest Only	\$35	Contest and Critique	\$60
Poetry Only	\$20	Poetry and Critique	\$40

Postmarked May 2-15, 2012

Contest Only	\$45	Contest and Critique	\$70
Poetry Only	\$25	Poetry and Critique	\$45

(Continued on page 17)

The SouthWest Writers International Writing Contest 2012 Call for Entries *(continued)*

Submission Requirements:

1. Each entry must be in a separate envelope accompanied by a **completed Entry Form** and **Entry Fee**. No certified mail. Enclose a self-addressed, stamped postcard if you want notification of receipt. Contestants must provide an email address.
2. The **Category Number** must appear on the outside of the envelope below the return address.
3. The **Category Name and Number** must be circled on the entry form.
4. First place manuscripts from previous SWW Contests are ineligible.
5. The manuscript must be printed on one side of 8-1/2 x 11 or A4 white paper in 12-point Courier or Times New Roman font. All manuscripts must be double-spaced. Screenplays should follow industry-specific standards. Brads should **not** be included.
6. Do **NOT** type your name anywhere on the manuscript or synopsis.
7. Submit one copy of the manuscript and synopsis (if required). Manuscripts will **not** be returned.
8. If you request a **written critique**: Submit **TWO (2)** copies of your manuscript plus a 9 x 12 self-addressed envelope with enough postage affixed for return mail (i.e. a large SASE). **NO METERED POSTAGE AND NO SIGNATURE-REQUIRED DELIVERY**. The critiqued manuscript will be returned by August 31, 2012. Poetry critiques may use a smaller number 9 or 10 return envelope.

Prizes and Notifications:

Winners will be notified in August 2012 by email. Winners' names will be posted on the SWW website (<http://www.southwestwriters.com/>) at or about the same time.

Prizes are as follows: 1st Place \$200; 2nd Place \$150; 3rd Place \$100. All First Place Winners automatically compete for the \$1,500 Storyteller Award.

Judging:

Contest judging takes place in two rounds. A committee of writers and editors selects the top twenty entries and sends them to the round two judges who are genre-specific. From these top twenty, the three winning entries are identified.

The top three winners in each category receive a critique from the commissioned judge.

Contacting any judge about an entry during the contest period will result in automatic disqualification.

The professional editors, agents and/or publishers who serve as judges are not employees of SouthWest Writers (SWW). Their opinions do not necessarily reflect the opinions of SouthWest Writers.

SouthWest Writers reserves the right to disqualify any entry if contest rules are not followed, in which case the entry fee will **not** be refunded. Common mistakes include:

- a. Writer's name appears on the manuscript.
- b. Incorrect fee is enclosed.
- c. Incorrect number of manuscripts is submitted for critique.
- d. No return address appears on the SASE.
- e. Failure to fill out the Entry Form correctly (i.e. omitted or illegible address, email address or phone number).

By entering the contest, you agree that matters relating to the contest, which are not specifically covered by these rules, will be decided solely at the discretion of contest officials. You will accept as final and be bound by all judges' decisions. You understand and agree that your manuscript will be evaluated subjectively, and SWW cannot accept liability for consequences arising from any opinion expressed. You agree to hold harmless and indemnify SWW, its agents, employees, and volunteers for any and all losses, costs, or expenses incurred from any dispute arising from your participation in the contest.

Critique Service:

All entrants may request a critique by a professional writer, agent or editor by enclosing the appropriate fee with the Entry Form. Please submit two copies of your manuscript instead of one, and enclose a 9 x12 SASE with the correct return postage (not metered mail). Poetry critiques may use a smaller number 10 or 9 envelope.

See critique service pricing under Entry Fees.