

SouthWest Sage

May 2013 www.southwestwriters.com

About Character and Setting Development

By E.H. Hackney

Most books on writing advise us to construct complete, detailed descriptions of our major characters before we begin writing. This is worthwhile, but I believe it is easy to overdo. Yes, I put together character sketches in advance. The protagonist in my fantasy novel is a wizard and a dwarf, and I definitely needed to know that in advance. But my beginning character descriptions are not extensive. If I go into too much detail, they are often wrong and must be rewritten or, worse yet, they constrain my character and limit his behavior.

Consider a friend who wants to introduce you to someone, say a potential employee or even a blind date. They might start with a description of him—height, hair, eye color, build, where he is from. Do you know him? No. Well, suppose they expand on his resume—include his education, experience, what he does for a living. You still don't know him. Your friend might even add that he is a great dancer and makes all of his own clothes. You know something *about* him but you still don't *know* him.

It's not until you meet the person and see how she walks and moves and uses her hands that you begin to get a sense of her. Do her eyes meet yours or keep sliding off to the side or to the floor? Does she continue to look around the room to find someone more interesting—or to see who is looking at her? Can she tell a joke? Can she *get* a joke? How does she treat the server? *Now* you begin to know the person.

The same is true with your characters. You can go into an extensive description but you, and your reader, don't begin to know a character until you see him in action and relating to others and the setting. If you want to *really* see what your character is like, give him something to do. Better yet, give him some crap to deal with. Let us see the worn tips of his shoes kicking out from under the tattered hem of his wizard's robe with each short, quick stride as he rushes to a house call. Then your readers, and you, will begin to know your character.

The same holds for setting. It has been argued, after all, that settings are really characters. You can build a detailed description of a region, or town, or living room, but you don't really know it until you are there.

In a previous life I interviewed for a job in Seattle, Washington. I did some research beforehand, of course. I knew something of the economy, climate and geography. I had heard all of the stories about the "constant" rain. But it wasn't until I saw snow-capped Mt. Rainier reflected in Lake Washington that I knew I wanted to live there. And even after living there for years I was still discovering more of its temperament and personality.

So let your readers explore settings through your character's eyes. They will discover the nature and disposition of the wharf as your character strides there to meet a friend for an ale or to treat an injured prostitute. Through your character they will hear the creak of the hulls rubbing their fenders against the dock, see the skeleton of the ship's rigging through the fog, hear the call of gulls and the laughs and arguments coming from the taverns, taste the salt in the damp air and smell the tangy scent of tar and rotting fish.

Why is this so? Because I don't want to expound my story from a lectern. I want to be, at most, a guide as the reader and I explore the tale together. Because writing fiction is not a process of invention but a venture of discovery.

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Visit swwcontest.com for rules and entry form.

E. H. Hackney is a retired engineer, freelance writer and sometimes jazz guitarist. His essays and articles have appeared in Albuquerque The Magazine, East Mountain Living Magazine, The Independent, and the Mountain View Telegraph. He is currently writing a fantasy novel to be published in early 2013. He writes, hikes, bikes and plays at the edge of the forest on the east slope of the Sandias, where he lives with his wife and two opinionated cats. Visit his writing blog at EHHackney.com.



My husband came home the other day, recoiled and asked, "Geez, what happened to you? You get mugged?" Worse. My inner critic dragged me into the dark alley of despair and beat the snot out of me. A mugger would have taken only my wallet. My inner critic stole my self-esteem, my illusion of competence and my will to live.

Rolling his eyes, my husband wandered into the pantry and rooted around for snacks. "You writer types are so melodramatic."

"I'm a scientist!" I yelled, trying to cover my nakedness with the only shred of dignity I had left.

"Used to be. You retired. Remember?"

I gasped from the sucker punch. Narrowing my eyes, "Hey! Are you on my inner critic's payroll?"

He shoveled in tortilla chips. "Nope. Then your writing career would finally be bringing in some cash." He hugged me. "Just kidding. What you guys need is a bodyguard. Where's the salsa?"

After smacking him about the head and shoulders, I reflected on this. What would a writer's bodyguard be like? Does he have a thick Austrian accent and go by the name of Arnold, or does he look like Kevin Costner with a bad haircut?

A good writer's bodyguard would be tough, disciplined and not take any of the writer's crap. To defend against the desire to quit, the bodyguard would have to fan the flames of the writer's passion, to carry the writer's touchstone and to display it often. The bodyguard would say. "This is why you write and when your work comes from the heart, the world needs it."

The bodyguard would be an expert in martial arts to karate chop both the author's negative thoughts and the discouraging comments of all critics, internal and otherwise. He or she would help the writer achieve a healthy balance between practice and play and enforce good writing habits.

Best of all, the bodyguard would bounce all people from the author's circle who did not support and promote the author's work. Can you imagine what the bodyguard would do to those annoying relatives who ask you to run twenty errands for them because you aren't doing anything but writing?

If your inner critic is menacing you, I suggest you hire your own bodyguard. My bodyguard's name is Clyde. He's a lion with paws the size of pie plates who has acquired a taste for critic spleen. I love him.

Happy Writing!

Kathy

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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: \$70 (\$65 renewal if paid two months in advance)
Student w/proof of student status: 18 and over, \$40; under 18, \$25
Outside U.S.: \$75, Lifetime Membership: \$750

Download the *Sage* from www.southwestwriters.com

Join us every month:

first Saturday, 10 am-Noon and third Tuesday, 7-9 pm
New Life Presbyterian Church, 5540 Eubank NE,
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87111



SouthWest Sage

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Members Seeking Critique Groups

Fantasy/Sci-Fi

Linton Bowers, lbowers27@gmail.com
prefers: online/email group

Mainstream Fiction Only

Stephen Gregg, sgregg5@cableone.net
Albuq./Bernalillo/Rio Rancho
Flexible: day/time

Mainstream Fiction (and Other)

— and Genre
Mike Zimmerman, mikeyzman@gmail.com
Albuq./Rio Rancho
Mon-Thu evenings

— and Memoir

Kate Leistikow, Call 867-9586
kathleenleistikow@gmail.com
Albuq./Corrales/Placitas/Rio Rancho
No evenings, flexible time

Memoir

Terry Wright, Terry_w38@yahoo.com
anywhere near Montgomery Blvd
11:00 am, Mon-Fri

Mystery/Suspense

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

Young Adult Fiction

Damita Butler
deneemarieb@yahoo.com
any day, after 4:00 pm

Critique Groups Seeking Members

Children's/MG/YA

See Albuq. Area Writing Groups, below

Fiction/Nonfiction

Chris Enke, 867-3131, enke@unm.edu
Erna Ferguson Library
Alternate Wednesdays, 4-6:00 pm

Genre, Novel Length

Lee, Lee@seki.com
Second Tuesday each month, 7:00 pm
Reviewing ready-to-query novels

Mainstream Fiction

Online Critique Group
Christie Keele, ckeele10@hotmail.com

Nonfiction

Wally Gordon, wallygordon@q.com
Albuq., every other Wed., 4-6 pm
281-1227

Sci-Fi

Send name/writing experience to:
Cosmic_Connections_SF_Critique_
Group@yahoo.com

Screenwriting

See Albuq. Area Writing Groups, below

Writer's Circle

Bring what you need to write.
1st & 3rd Sunday each month, 2-4 pm
Page One Bookstore, Juan Tabo Plaza
11018 Montgomery Blvd NE, Albuq.

Albuquerque Area Writing Groups

The Albuquerque Croak & Dagger
chapter of Sisters in Crime meets 4th
Tuesday of the month, 7 pm, police
briefing room at James Joseph Dwyer
Memorial Substation. www.croak-and-dagger.com/

Bear Canyon Writing Group: Don
Morgan and Dennis Kastendiek mod-
erate, all genres welcome. Mondays
2:00-4:00 pm at Page One on Juan
Tabo and Montgomery.

Children's/MG/YA Writers, 3rd Sat-
urday critique group, share and re-
ceive feedback. Meets monthly at Erna
Ferguson Library, San Mateo & Co-
manche, 10:30-12:30. Bring 5 copies of
5 pages max., double-spaced, to share.

Duke City Screenwriters, every other
Thursday, 6-8 pm at UPublic Station
on 3rd St: critique, education, and fun.
Contact Marc Calderwood at
skatingkokopelli@hotmail.com.

**SCBWI: Society of Children's Book
Writers and Illustrators,** 2nd Tues-
day each month, 7-8:30 pm, Alamosa
Books, 505-797-7101. Short work-
shops/discussions. Pre-schmooze din-
ner, Dion's on Wyoming & Paseo, 5:30-
6:45 pm. schmooze@scbwi-nm.org

Writers2Writers, 2nd Monday each
month, 6:30-7:30 pm, Hardback Café,
Hastings Books, Coors & Montaño.
Monthly speakers. All genres. Find
them on Facebook. faaiken@aol.com

***Congratulations to the
Winners of the
2013 First SWW Bimonthly
Writing Competition***

~ A Love/Revenge Poem ~

1st Place

Katherine B. Hauth • Rio Rancho, NM
"Letter to a Late Husband"

2nd Place

Stella Pevsner • Albuquerque, NM
"D is for Divorce"

3rd Place

Charles Powell • Albuquerque, NM
"The Choking Kind"

Honorable Mention

Yvonne Nunn, Hermleigh, TX
"February"

Linda J. Elliot, Mississauga, Ontario, Canada
"Not a Love Poem"

Martine Lopez-Bowers, Rio Rancho, NM
"Love on Vacation"

Karin Bradberry, Albuquerque, NM
"The Club"

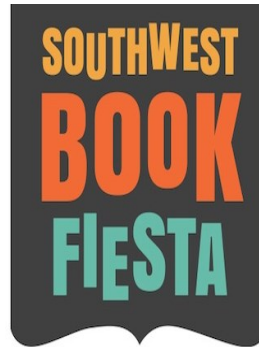
Read the winning entries on page 13.

**Welcome
New SouthWest Writers
Members**

David Mech

Alice Winston Carney

Paula Lumby



May 10-12, 2013

**Albuquerque
Convention Center
Southeast Hall**

The first Southwest Book Fiesta will be held on Mother's Day weekend, May 10-12, 2013.

In addition to the trade area of booths and tables, the floor will also have a stage that will feature talks by well-known authors and cooking demonstrations by cookbook authors. In the break-out rooms adjacent to the Southeast Hall, there will be three rooms devoted to presentations by authors and publishers: Author Readings, Publishing Seminars, and Writing Seminars. This will be a true family activity to celebrate books and reading. Plus free parking in the Convention Center Parking Deck, accessible from Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Ave.

Tables and booths are still available. To find out more and to see an interactive layout, go to <http://swbookfiesta.com/exhibitors.html>.

You can find a complete list of panels, workshops, and readings at <http://swbookfiesta.com/schedule.html>.

For more information including Fiesta hours, admission cost, driving directions, and the Mother's Day Brunch at the Andaluz Hotel, go to <http://swbookfiesta.com/about.html>.



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



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Writers on Facebook



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@SW_Writers

STUDENT SCHOLARSHIPS

SouthWest Writers is seeking deserving high school and college students for one-year scholarship memberships in our organization.

To be eligible, an applicant must be enrolled in high school or college.

If you know someone with the interest and desire to pursue a writing career or if you wish to apply yourself, please print the application form on page 14 of this newsletter and mail it to:

***SouthWest Writers
3200 Carlisle Blvd NE, Suite 114
Albuquerque, NM 87110***

This morning I came across an online video interview with a literary agent, and boy, have my writer-eyes been opened. I always assumed if I wrote well, if I told a good story, if I worked hard at the craft of writing, I'd eventually find an agent willing to shop my novel. Or maybe even a publisher willing to take a chance on it. That might historically have been the case, but in today's marketplace, to paraphrase Ira Gershwin, that ain't necessarily so. In order to successfully make the transition from writer to published author, The Agent says one must first establish something called a "platform."

I immediately flashed on political promises. You know, those utopian images of health, wealth, and happiness that, like the vapor trails from Air Force One, evaporate after every election.

But according to The Agent, a literary platform does not involve idle promises. Having a personal platform means making oneself seen and heard. It means connecting with other folks with whom you want to share your passion.

Okay. She had my attention.

Your personal platform is your built-in fan base of readers poised and ready to purchase your book. According to Ms. Agent, if you have at least five thousand readers in place, snaring an agent's eye will be no problem.

Good grief, I thought. If that many people were panting after my novel, I'd be self-published quicker than you can say Smashwords. But being the lifelong learner I am, I put the resulting off-topic train of thought out of my head and returned to the interview.

Are you a prolific tweeter? Great. But The Agent says that's not nearly enough. Even 10,000 Twitter followers does not a platform make. Besides, most folks don't tweet that often. And most tweeters don't follow any specific tweeter's tweets. (Say that ten times really fast.)

If you are serious about wooing an agent, it seems you will first be required to grow your visibility. Websites, blogs, social networking sites, all help establish your name—your brand. They will build your platform.

Check out the following list of platforms mentioned by The Agent. If you can truthfully say "yes" to at least one, you're just what she's looking for.

- Got a personal newsletter? A long mailing list of people who consistently opt to read your information will have any agent drooling.
- Do you appear regularly on television? Agent nirvana. It seems all the talk show hosts and newscasters in the universe are pushing their latest books.
- Do you have a web series with at least 10,000 viewers for each episode? Good for you. You're an agent magnet.



*Olive Balla is a retired educator and professional musician who lives in Los Lunas, New Mexico with her husband Victor and their puppy HalfNote. Ms. Balla has authored one suspense novel entitled *An Arm And A Leg*, and is nearing completion on a second. The first chapter of *An Arm And A Leg* is posted on her website at www.omballa.com.*

- Are you a public speaker with a full calendar? Excellent. Sign here.
- Are you a columnist with a bevy of loyal readers aching to read more of your work? Super.
- Have you already self-published a number of books, and sold at least 5,000—that's FIVE THOUSAND—copies of each? You've made the A-list.
- Does your website attract thousands of unique visitors each day? Not *unique* as in special people, but *unique* as in first-time visitors.

And the list of preferred platforms goes on.

By the time I'd listened to the whole interview, I was ready to eat worms. Words like daunting, impossible, unattainable, _____ (insert your chosen synonym here), catapulted my usually sunny disposition into some very dark corners. Based on The Agent's comments, there's no hope for the writer who's not already semi-famous.

In search of a second opinion, I emailed a twice-published friend and asked if she had any of those things in place before finding an agent. Her response was that after a few hundred rejections, she sent a query to a small publisher who recognized the potential of her books and offered her a two-book deal. Not much money, but a springboard to launch her writing career. And a great chance to build her platform.

Incandescent waves of hope washed over my beleaguered spirit. (I realize that's not only melodramatic, but telling instead of showing, but I'm trying to make a point here.) There are, it seems, still agents and publishers willing to take a chance on an unknown. All we have to do is keep looking until they find us. Us and our tightly polished pitch, and at least two unique, scintillating, 65,000- to 100,000-word novels.

Grateful that tomorrow will be another day, I logged out of The Agent's video interview and started an online search for small publishers. I've polished my query letter, sharpened my pitch, and made a list of those publishers that caught my attention. We'll see where that takes us. What fun....

Meetings

Members are free, Guests \$10

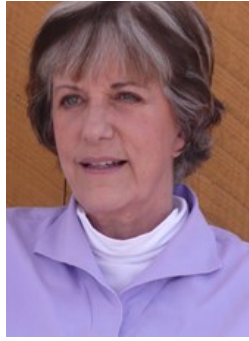
Saturday, May 4
10:00 am to noon

Writing Ordinary Stories in Extraordinary Ways

Jean Waszak

Jean Waszak will discuss how to write columns and essays using material gleaned from everyday life. She'll also give tips on injecting humor in your writing—a touch every editor loves.

Jean Blackmon Waszak has won national awards for fiction, nonfiction and essays. She won first prize for short fiction in the *Writer's Digest* annual writing contest and was nominated for a Grammy Award in the Spoken Word category for one of her essays that was recorded by Alfre Woodard. For 21 years she has written a newspaper humor column and she is a staff writer for *Corrales MainStreet News*. Her work has appeared in numerous magazines, newspapers, and anthologies. For many years she taught Focus on Fiction Workshops, UNM Honors Seminars, and fiction workshops at the Taos School of Writing. With her husband, John, she owns and operates a little grocery store in Corrales which provides rich and endless inspiration for her writing.



Saturday, June 1
10:00 am to noon

How to Avoid 90% of Your Rejections

Rob Spiegel

Rejections sting. They are discouraging. They are brutal. And most of them are not necessary. Learn how to find markets that fit your writing. Learn how to fit your writing to the markets. Spiegel will cover both commercial and literary publishers. He'll explain how to sell your writing to magazines and book publishers. You'll learn how to find the right publishing outlets for your writing and how to tailor your writing to ensure publication.

Rob Spiegel is senior editor at *Design News*, an international trade magazine where he writes articles and blogs. He also moderates webinars and edits the work of contributing writers. He was the launch publisher of *Chile Pepper*, a national food magazine he owned from 1987 through 1996. He sold the magazine to return to writing. He has published six books and placed hundreds of magazine articles with scores of magazines, including *Rolling Stone*, *New Mexico Magazine* and *True Confessions*.



Tuesday, May 21
7:00 pm to 9:00 pm

Everything You Wanted to Know About Critique Groups But Were Afraid to Ask

A Panel Discussion

A panel of four local writers who belong to critique groups will explain advantages of critique groups, how to join or start one, how to conduct a critique group and other useful insights. Published writers Bob Gassaway, Jeanne Shannon, Judith Avila and Sue Houser will form the panel. Bring your questions and share your own experiences. Tables will be set up after the panel's presentation to help facilitate starting or joining critique groups looking for new members.

Tuesday, June 18
7:00 pm to 9:00 pm

The Tumbleweeds of Change: How an Undersized, Student-led Coalition can Cultivate Literacy Initiatives Across Communities

Matthew Tougas

This talk will reflect on many of the projects—both successful and challenging—that UNM's Writing Across Communities (WAC) has undertaken, the work it's doing now, and some of the initiatives it has in mind for the future. The impetus for this talk hinges on WAC's recent efforts to foster community partnerships and awareness. What we have been learning, and as SouthWest Writers exemplifies, is that our local community is already active and supportive of artistic pursuits. What this talk hopes to address are strategies for cultivating more meaningful relationships between campus and community.

Matthew Tougas is current Co-Chair of UNM's graduate student-led coalition, Writing Across Communities, an organization that seeks to cultivate community partnerships while advocating for cross-institutional initiatives that encourage civic engagement and literacy. Since the start of the year, he has also served as director of the Albuquerque Community Writing Center. As a TA in the Rhetoric and Writing department of UNM, Matthew has worked alongside an active, and dedicated group of writers and educators who have helped introduce him to Albuquerque's vibrant art scene. His interests include songwriting, poetry, sports, and pub crawls.



Classes & Workshops

Classes and Workshops are held at the SWW Office, 3200 Carlisle Blvd NE, Suite 114, Albuquerque 87110, 505-830-6034

THE ART OF REVISION with Dodici Azpadu

4 Sessions:

June 5, 12, 19, 26

Wednesdays: 6:00 - 8:00 pm

\$160 members, \$200 non-members

You've completed the first draft of a novel, memoir or short story. Squeeze every bit of celebration out of that success because now the revision process begins. In this series of classes, participants will practice different revision strategies on their works in progress. Whether you've finished a first draft or you're stuck in revision, this class will help focus on problem areas in your manuscript, and it will suggest solutions that have worked for others. The goal of the course will be to move participants from global revisions (POV, narrative structure, character enrichment, etc.) to a later stage of revision: getting the sentence level of the manuscript to snap into place. Experience the joy of completing your manuscript jigsaw puzzle.

Writers in all stages in the writing process are welcome since participants will be revising their own manuscripts. Feedback/critique guidelines based on shared work will include (it should go without saying) respect for each other, as well as professional honesty.

Novelist and poet **Dodici Azpadu** received her MFA from the Writer's Workshop University of Iowa before the notion of "a safe place" for writers or for critical feedback was invented. She currently teaches Craft of Creative Writing and Joy of Poetry at UNM's Osher Institute and is adjunct faculty at CNM in the English Department. Her recent publications include *Living Room*, a 2010 NM Book Awards finalist and a Golden Crown Literary Awards finalist; *Saturday Night* (2011), a revision of a previously published novel; and *Wearing the Phantom Out* (2013), a collection of poems. Her website is <http://www.dodici-azpadu.com/>.



THE ADVENTURER'S TOOLKIT: WRITING NONFICTION BEYOND BORDERS

A Half-Day Workshop
with Karen Coates

June 8 • Saturday, 9:00 - Noon

See workshop pricing on this page.

The best nonfiction stories rely on writers leaving their comfort zones and exploring the unknown. This exploration can involve literal travel into foreign terrain, or it can take place within a writer's usual geography—visiting a new bar, hiking a new trail, or patronizing that little hole-in-the-wall restaurant you walk by every day. This workshop will encourage participants to use all their senses in their writing, hone their note-taking strategies, immerse themselves in unfamiliar situations, and take risks to spark creativity. It will offer practical tips like using photos and recordings to verify details in writing, and rounding out stories with research to add texture and take stories up a notch. Finally, the workshop will discuss the process of marketing and selling the work once it's ready.

As a journalist for 20 years, **Karen Coates** has contributed to numerous publications including *Archaeology*, *Gourmet*, *National Geographic Books*, and *Travel + Leisure Southeast Asia*. She teaches seminars, workshops, and university courses for journalists, writers, and editors in the US and developing countries. Visit www.karencoates.com, her food blog: <http://ramblingspoon.com/blog>, and the website for her new book *This Way More Better*: www.thiswaymorebetter.com.



HALF-DAY WORKSHOP PRICES:

\$40 SWW MEMBERS

\$50 OSHER MEMBERS W/CARD

\$70 NON-MEMBERS • \$75 AT THE DOOR

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.

2013 Scheduled Classes

Pat Caristo

Mystery 101
Saturdays, 1-3:00 pm
July 6, 13, 20, 27

Betsy James

Writing for Kids & Teens
Wednesdays, 6-8:00 pm
August 7, 14, 21, 28

Fred Aiken

The Business of Writing
Wednesdays, 6-8:00 pm
September 4, 11, 18

Melody Groves

Make Your Dialogue Sing
Mondays, 6-8:00 pm
October 7, 14, 21, 25

Betsy James

Writing Fantasy
& Science Fiction
Wednesdays, 6-8:00 pm
October 2-November 20

Melody Groves

Writing for Magazines
Mondays, 6-8:00 pm
November 4, 11, 18, 25

For creative types, there is often a tension between concentrating energy to become known for a particular type of work, and wandering off that path to create something new and different. This tension confronted Annie Leibovitz, who is famous for her unique portrait photography such as that of a naked Demi Moore sporting a sizable baby bump, a naked Whoopi Goldberg immersed in a bathtub of milk, and a naked John Lennon with his arms wrapped around his wife Yoko Ono, taken just hours before he was assassinated. Leibovitz owed Random House a fourth work under her four-book contract when she came up with the idea to photograph objects of dead creative types rather than the person themselves. The results can be observed live at the Georgia O'Keeffe Museum in Santa Fe until May 5, 2013, or can be purchased in the book *Pilgrimage*.

On a press walk through the O'Keeffe Museum in February 2013, Leibovitz discussed what drew her to photograph particular objects, such as Georgia O'Keeffe's bed, her pastels in a drawer, or the door in the adobe wall of her Abiqui home. Leibovitz considers O'Keeffe to be a great American artist. "We think we know who she is and we don't," she said. When she saw the pastels in the drawer, Leibovitz thought, "It's all the colors in her landscapes."

Leibovitz also photographed the bed of psychiatrist Sigmund Freud, the desk of author Virginia Woolf, the night-dress of poet Emily Dickinson, and the television of Elvis Presley. This TV is notable because it has a hole in it. Leibovitz explained that during her second trip to Graceland, she was given a tour of the basement containing items Elvis never threw away. The Graceland staff informed her that every time Robert Goulet came on the air, Elvis would pick up a gun and shoot the television. Because Leibovitz photographed this object, we learned something novel about one

of the most examined musicians of our times. About Graceland, she said, "The second time I went I felt it was just a house, when you ignore the red carpets and the velvet ropes."

There was another reason to explore another trail. "Forty years in the magazine world wears you down," Leibovitz said. "*Pilgrimage* presented an opportunity to do something different."

At Niagara Falls, Leibovitz observed her young children staring at a horizon, as if they were mesmerized. She walked to the location, stood behind them, and took the picture. "As a photographer, a lot of times I have to work to get the picture. This time my children saw the picture first."

"Walden Pond was about an idea, not a place," Leibovitz informs us as we stand by her picture of Henry David Thoreau's bed. "He walked to town every day. It's about being out in nature." Thoreau first published *Walden; or Life in the Woods* in 1854 to explore experiences gained from the two years, two months, and two days he spent living on the shores of Walden Pond. Of her depiction of Thoreau's bed, Leibovitz says, "It's not a photograph, it's a document."

She paid homage to Ansel Adams by travelling to Yosemite to recreate one of his famous photographs. "To get the picture," she said, "I had to push back about forty people." Additionally, she visited Adams' darkroom that had been turned into a wine cellar. She removed all the wine bottles before capturing the darkroom as it once existed.

The exhibition features framed photographs shot using digital equipment. "I think digital is closer to how we see color," she said. "We all see color differently. You're still doing the work that Ansel did in the darkroom when you're sitting in front of a computer." She adds, "One of the reasons I'm interested in landscapes is because they present true color. What's interesting about digital is that it has more detail."

Leibovitz's exhibition and book, moreover, contain photographs of the hat and gloves Lincoln wore the night he was assassinated. Being in the presence of these objects was "very powerful," she said. After departing the O'Keeffe Museum, the exhibition has two more stops before concluding its tour at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Museum and Library in Springfield, Illinois, in 2014.

"When you do something new, you don't know how it's going to be. I wanted to know if I could find my own way. You have to feed your heart and your soul," said Leibovitz. The exhibition and the book *Pilgrimage* are an inspiration to all of us who feel it's time to innovate.



Sherri Burr is a Yale Law School-educated law professor at the University of New Mexico. She has received several awards for her interviews, most recently earning First Place in the NM Press Women Contest for Television Talk Show for an ARTS TALK interview she did with Actor John Corbett ("Sex in the City" and "Northern Exposure"). These interviews are available through her website www.sherriburr.com and on www.youtube.com.

Somehow, I inherently realized that not everything I wrote would be a success. I understood rejection was part of the process. I was also stubborn—I mean persistent. It's still difficult to receive a standard, *"This does not meet our editorial needs."* I've learned to celebrate my victories and make them shine brighter than multiple rejections. In this post I am referring to shorter pieces, but many of the thoughts may apply to books as well.



[A new scientific study even suggests rejection breeds creativity.](#) Who knew? Rejection makes us get out of our comfort zone and try new things, making us stronger and more determined. Did you know Max Lucado's first book *On the Anvil* was rejected 15 times? Stephen King's first novel *Carrie* was rejected 30 times. John Grisham's first book *A Time to Kill*, more than 20 times.

So, keep working. Keep studying your craft. And keep submitting!

Here are some ABC's (and DEF & G, too) to remember when receiving rejection.

A. You're not being rejected. Your arrangement of words is being rejected. It is difficult to separate your writing from who you are, but this is an important skill to master

B. The words are not dead. There was no final cigarette, blindfold, or shots from a firing squad. An editor is simply saying no. The same piece could find life the next time you send it out.

C. Your talent isn't on trial. Don't assume your writing is only fit to wrap fish like last week's news. Often a submission simply doesn't meet the current need. It might mean, "we purchased something like this already," "we sold another ad on page 13," or "we found what we need for the next couple months."

D. You did the work. If only for yourself, it proves you did the work and you sent your work out. That is so much more than many who say they will do something someday.

E. You have something to send out again. You can research another market and send the article or inquiry out again. You may have to rework your words for the new market, but you won't need to start from scratch.

F. Your chances improve. With each effort you get better, and you learn more about marketing your work. Odds are in your favor that, with persistence, you'll find yourself accepting a check instead of receiving a rejection

G. You can submit to the same place again. Here's a secret—unless your words were astonishingly bad, an editor who sees thousands of manuscripts a day is unlikely to recognize seeing the same one again. Wait six to eight months and send it again. A whole new line-up of ideas and needs will be on the table. What didn't fit before might fit now. (There might even be a new editor at the desk.)

Peter D. Mallett developed a talent for telling stories at an early age. He began freelance writing several years ago and has been published in Kid's Ark Magazine and most recently in Secret Place (Judson Press). Peter's devotions in Secret Place have appeared three times in past issues, and three more devotions will appear in upcoming issues this spring and summer. Peter also self-published a short story booklet titled He Wore a Shell. He lives with his wife in Virginia, not far from the ocean. He enjoys cooking, drawing, and occasionally peanut butter and bananas on toast. Visit <http://peterdmallett.wordpress.com> —Writing in Color—because life is more than black and white. (This article was originally published on Writing in Color, January 26, 2013.)

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Member Successes

Neuma Books is pleased to announce the publication of *Wearing the Phantom Out* by **Dodici Azpadu**. This is a collection of narrative and dramatic poems based on the multi-media history and lore of the gifted, but tyrannical phantom and the artists of every stripe whom the phantom possesses in one way or another.

Joanne Bodin's poem *She Paints in Moonlight*, as well as her interview with the New Mexico Book Co-op founders, has been published in *Voices of New Mexico, Too*. Her poem *From Distant Shores*, along with her artwork, will be in the upcoming New Mexico State Poetry Society *Albuquerque Chapter Anthology*. She also did a poetry reading with the musical group Consort Uncaged, at the Lomas/Tramway Library and at the New Mexico Cancer Center's annual art show. In April, she participated in A Bouquet of Spring Poems Poetry Reading at the Juan Tabo Library. At the Southwest Book Fiesta, Sunday, May 12th at 1 pm, she'll be the moderator of a poets laureate panel consisting of four New Mexico past and present poets laureate, sponsored by the New Mexico State Poetry Society. She will also be on a panel showcasing diversity at the National Federation of State Poetry Societies Annual Convention hosted by the New Mexico State Poetry Society June 14-16th.

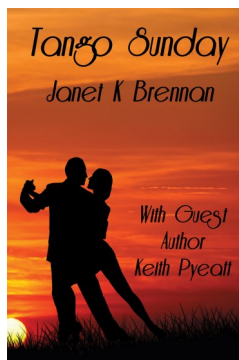
Elizabeth Ann Galligan will participate in several readings, talks and events at the Southwest Book Fiesta as contributor to *Voices of New Mexico, Too*.

J. L. Greger will sign copies of her new medical mystery/suspense novel *Murder: A New Way to Lose Weight* and its prequel *Coming Flu* at Under Charlie's Covers (120 E Hwy 550, Bernalillo, NM, next to Walgreen's), Saturday, May 18 from 11-2. For more information, go to www.jlgreger.com.

Albuquerque The Magazine will feature **RJ Mirabal** and his debut novel *The Tower of Il Serrohe* in an article for their books section in the May 2013 issue. He will read, discuss, and sign his book for a private clients' event for Davis Advisory Group, May 2. RJ also has a table at the Southwest Book Fiesta and will present a reading and short discussion Saturday, May 11, at 11 am. At noon on June 8, he'll read, discuss, and sign books at the UNM Student Bookstore on the main campus.

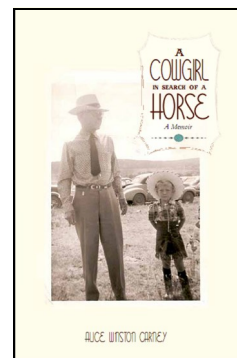
Catherine Holder Spude's book *That Fiend in Hell: The Legend of Soapy Smith* has been awarded a Finalist Spur Award in the category of Best Nonfiction Biography by the Western Writers of America. Please see <http://westernwriters.org/spur-awards/>.

Member Books



Tango Sunday is a collection of fictional short stories about life on the edge. Janet Brennan's seventh book never fails to seduce the reader into realizing that life is not always as it seems to be. Brennan titillates the reader with good doses of revenge, ghosties, life in the spiritual world, and death, and demonstrates in these dark, twilight zone tales that "life simply is." Special Guest Author, award winning Keith Pyeatt. Available world-wide.

1950s Las Vegas, New Mexico, with its rich Hispanic and cowboy cultures, comes alive in these stories of growing up in this mysterious and historical milieu of artists and barroom storytellers. "Her language is gently poetic and fits each age she is remembering, and never looks down from an adult height. . ." *J. Carpenter*. Find it at: Tome on the Range, Las Vegas, NM; Amazon; www.greenriverwritersworkshops.com/press.html



2013 Third Bimonthly Writing Contest

Flash Fiction or Short is Good

Write a short story that contains the classic story elements of a protagonist, conflict and resolution. Double-spaced, 750 words maximum. Any genre. Please note if you grant publication permission.

All entries \$10. Prizes: \$150/1st prize; \$50/2nd prize; \$25/3rd prize. Postmark deadline is Monday, July 1, 2013.

Please include your address, phone, and email plus permission to publish or not on a separate sheet. Do not include identifying information on the manuscript itself. Mail entries to SWW Bimonthly Contest, 3200 Carlisle Blvd NE, Suite 114, Albuquerque, NM 87110.

If you are a SouthWest Writers member with a success or announcement you want to share, send it to Kathy Wagoner, SouthWest Sage Editor, JustWriteSWW@gmail.com.

Announcements

Sports Fiction & Essay Contest seeks today's best short fiction and essays on sports-related themes (no poetry). Entries up to 6,000 words. \$15 entry fee. Deadline **May 31**. http://winningwriters.com/contests/sports/sp_guidelines.php

Tony Hillerman Prize honors the best first mystery novel. Wordharvest and co-sponsor St. Martin's Press are seeking entries for the Tony Hillerman Prize. The winner receives a contract with St. Martin's Press for publication of the novel and a \$10,000 advance. The competition is open to any writer who has never published a mystery novel. Murder or another serious crime/crimes must be at the heart of the story, emphasis on the solution rather than the crime. Deadline **June 1**. <http://www.wordharvest.com/contest.php>



National Federation of State Poetry Societies (NFSPS) Annual Convention • June 13-18
Hotel Albuquerque

This year's convention—La Conferencia del Encanto—is located in Albuquerque. For more information and to register, visit [http://](http://nmpoetry.org/convention-nfspd.shtml)

nmpoetry.org/convention-nfspd.shtml

Sixth Annual Green River Writers Workshop

"Turning Memory into Story"

Gerry and Lorry Hausman
and Alice Winston Carney

July 18-21, 2013

Historic Las Vegas, New Mexico
greenriverwritersworkshops.com

916-947-0983

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For experienced and beginning writers



Registration is now open for three jam-packed days of the very best in children's literature. You'll hear from top agents and editors on the state of the market, get inspired by award-winning authors and illustrators, attend small, targeted breakout workshops, and have a chance to connect with old friends and meet new ones. Whether you are an author or illustrator, published or unpublished, create picture books or Young Adult novels, you won't want to miss the SCBWI Summer Conference. Early registration before June 15. www.scbwi.org/Conference.aspx?Con=12



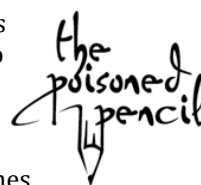
WEST TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY • JUNE 10-14

Renowned, professional writers, including New York Times bestselling authors Jodi Thomas and Alexandra Sokoloff, combine their skills and knowledge to create a dynamic academy focused on making students published authors. West Texas A&M University and the Office of Continuing Education are pleased to host the annual West Texas Writers' Academy featuring award-winning, Writer in Residence, Jodi Thomas. Daily classes, afternoon critiques and seminars, special events including a movie night with Jodi Thomas and the outdoor musical drama TEXAS in the Palo Duro Canyon. Find the schedule and registration information at <http://wtamu.edu/academics/continuing-education-writing-academy.aspx>.



The Talkin' Broadway website www.talkinbroadway.com is seeking to expand its team of critics who review live theatrical performances in and around Albuquerque. You would need to write at least one review per month. There is no pay, but complimentary tickets are provided. You should see the show on its opening weekend and submit your review to the website's editor within 48 hours. If you're interested, please send writing sample and resume to info@abqtheatre.org with the Subject Line: Talkin' Broadway. Or call Linda at 247-1909 for more information.

The Poisoned Pen is open for submissions of Young Adult mystery novels of 45,000 to 90,000 words, with a protagonist between the ages of 12 and 18. They look for both traditional and cross-genre young adult mysteries and encourage off-beat approaches and narrative choices that reflect the complexity and ambiguity of today's world. Submissions from teens are welcome. <https://thepoisonedpencil.submittable.com/submit>



DAW Books is open to science fiction and fantasy novel submissions. Prospective authors should mail the complete manuscript with a cover letter. DAW Books is one of the few imprints of Penguin to not require a literary agent submission. www.us.penguin.com/static/pages/daw/submissions.html

In his brilliant book *The Art of the Poetic Line* (Graywolf Press 2008), James Longenbach writes: "Poetry is the sound of language organized in lines." The book is one of the most accessible treatments of poetic lineation I have read, and I am in its debt for this column.

Many of us write the first draft of poems by hand. Eventually, we key drafts into computers to see what the possibilities for stanza breaks and lineation are. Eschewing the term *line breaks*, Longenbach describes three ways of ending lines: **End-stopping** lines, **parsing** lines and **annotating** lines.

End-stopped lines

Beginning with the notion that lines are an arbitrary series of stressed and unstressed syllables, Longenbach asks readers to consider what the relationship is among those stresses and sentence syntax. Lines do not necessarily end where sentences end. Sentences in poems can end short of the line end, proceed to the next line or lines, or use end punctuation that stops the line (periods, question marks or exclamation points). How the stresses and syntax work together or against each other contributes to how a reader sees and engages a poem.

Consider how the lineation in the following examples suggests different readings of the same words.

1.
Costumes go between
the body
and the seer's whorl.
The ingénue could once pass
through
her looking
glass in dressing stall.

2.
Costumes go between the body
and the seer's whorl.
The ingénue could once pass through
her looking glass in dressing stall.

In example 1, seven lines, two sentences, the play of stresses moves against lineation. The lines are ended against units of syntax in what is called **enjambment**, the most obvious alternative to end-stopped lines. Only in lines 3 and 7 are the lines end-stopped. In example 2, the same two sentences in four lines, the syntax of the first two lines in each faux-couplet is not contained in one line; it covers two lines, and



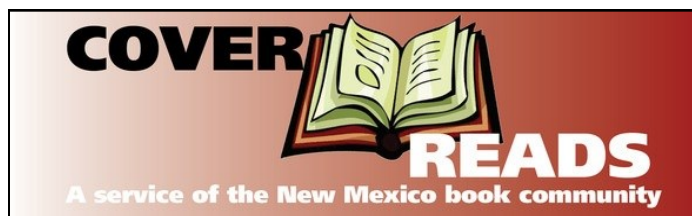
Dodici Azpadu is the author of three published novels, numerous short stories, and many poems. Her third novel, *Living Room*, was a finalist for the 2010 NM Book Awards in Fiction. Her novella *Saturday Night* was published in August 2011. Visit her website at www.dodici-azpadu.com.

the second lines of each couple (lines 2 and 4) are **end-stopped**. The off rhyme of *whorl* and *stall* gives further emphasis. The lineation possibilities are not exhausted by these examples. Choosing where to end the line depends on the poet's prerogative. This example is taken from one of my own poems.

I would like to urge fellow poets to look at five or ten lines of one of their poems. Even if the syntax of the lines is truncated or implied, the poet/reader can discover the syntax by asking how he or she got from the first word to the last? Do the line endings coincide with end-stopped punctuation? Some lines may, but it is unlikely that all lines of the poem will end with closing punctuation. If readers try this exercise, they will now want to know why they have ended lines at particular places.

At every revision point, poets are subject to entrancing labyrinths of choice (stresses, sounds, imagery and so forth). Where lines end, the most noticeable element of poems on a page, can modulate all the other elements.

In the next issue, I'll discuss parsing and annotating lines.



SUBMIT YOUR BOOK EVENTS

The New Mexico Book Co-op has launched a comprehensive book events calendar for book-related events in the Southwest to help readers find information about local book events throughout the region. Go to <http://nmbookcoop.com/Cover-Reads/Cover-Reads.html> to list your upcoming book events.

WINNING ENTRIES IN THE 2013 First Bimonthly Writing Contest: *A Love/Revenge Poem*

FIRST PLACE **Letter to a Late Husband** *by Katherine B. Hauth*

When my legs were limber and the snow was flying fast
and I was flying down the mountain, we met. You and I,
Fall and Spring, together, forged a summer all our own.

When I first moved in, I kept my silver separate
and said you shouldn't buy such big cans of coffee.

We were wed at our yellow cottage on the lake.
We skied on water. You made blackberry wine.
I baked braided bread.
You taught me to know flowers from weeds
and to work with the earth.
I took you climbing mountains.

Children were not ours to have, but life was full.
I had been a tethered horse: you unbridled me.
We raised a raven to fly free.
During drought, you transported dying polliwogs
to water holes. After rain,
you beckoned me to hear the music water made
cascading down the mesa.

When my spirit was drawn to write,
you were my first editor.
One day you told me I no longer clogged my good ideas
with chaff.
You said, "I can't help you any more."

Soon you were not here.

I still write. But I no longer wear jeans with boots
and your old shirts.
I often dress for plays and symphonies. Sometimes I still
dream of you.
In the limbo between sleep and wake, I know your arms
around me.
Then day fully dawns. If you were able to return,
I would no longer know quite what to do with you.

Still, you're with me when the honey mesquite blooms,
when the sandhill cranes fly overhead,
every time I see a falling star.

SECOND PLACE **D is for Divorce** *by Stella Pevsner*

It's easy to get married
Not so easy to divorce
Will I go for number seven?
Of course, of course, of course.

My first wife was a moron
The second was a slob
The third had close connections
With a member of a mob.

The fourth wife left me drowning
In an ocean full of debt
The fifth one screwed me over
With some schmuck she couldn't forget.

I thought I'd found perfection
With my darling number six.
Who'd have guessed her recreation
Dealt with leather, cuffs and whips?

These misfits all have let me down
But still, I dream of heaven
My true love's waiting in the wings
I'm so hot for number seven!

THIRD PLACE **The Choking Kind** *by Charles R. Powell*

Her love is the choking kind

I gave her my money
But she exacted my pride

I granted her my time
She wanted my dreams

I allowed her my body
She coveted my thoughts

I gave her my sweat
She claimed my spirit

I bestowed on her my name
She wanted my being

I gave her my tears
But she craved my blood

I afforded her my protection
She wanted my breath

I have her my heart
She desired my mind

I expressed my devotion
She wanted my life

I surrendered all my love
But she demanded my very soul

Her love is the choking kind

SOUTHWEST WRITERS MONTHLY MEETINGS

are held at

New Life Presbyterian Church
5540 Eubank NE
Albuquerque, NM 87111

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



2013 Student Scholarship Application

SouthWest Writers is seeking deserving high school and college students for one-year scholarship memberships in our organization. To be eligible, an applicant must be enrolled in high school or college. If you know a student with the interest and desire to pursue a writing career or if you wish to apply yourself, please complete this application and mail to the address at the bottom of the form.

Name: _____

Address: _____

E-Mail: _____ **Phone:** _____

Current School: _____

Current Level: _____

Area(s) of Interest: _____

(In 250 words or less tell us why you would like to be a student member of Southwest Writers):

[illegible]

Recommended by: _____

Contact (phone/e-mail):

Send this application to SouthWest Writers, 3200 Carlisle Blvd NE, Suite 114, Albuquerque, NM 87110

SOUTHWEST WRITERS ANNUAL WRITING COMPETITION: CONTEST RULES

The 31st Annual SouthWest Writers contest has 12 categories for novels, memoir, nonfiction, essay, short stories, children's picture books, screenplays and poetry.

A total of \$6,400 is awarded in cash prizes. Three winners in each category are selected by agents or editors unaffiliated with SouthWest Writers. The entry judged best among all categories wins the \$1,500 Storyteller Award.

Entries are open from March 1 to May 1 and may be submitted after May 1 until May 15 with payment of a late fee.

RULES OF THE CONTEST

The contest is open to all original, unpublished* work by English-language writers. First Place winning entries in prior SWW contests may not be resubmitted for judging in 2013. A First, Second, and Third Place winner will be judged in each of the 12 categories. Prizes: \$200 First Place; \$150 Second Place; \$100 Third Place. \$1,500 for the Storyteller Award—the entry judged the best of all entries in all categories.

Entries will be accepted **only** on-line (<http://swwcontest.com>) from March 1 to May 15, 2013. There is no limit on: (1) the number of categories you enter, and (2) the number of entries you submit in each category.

All prose submissions must follow standard manuscript format: 12-point Times Roman (or Times New Roman) font, double-spaced with paragraph indent and one-inch margins. Submissions not in this format will be disqualified. Screenplay submissions must use standard industry format.

All entries are judged anonymously. Your name or other identifying marks **MUST NOT** appear anywhere on the manuscript.

CATEGORIES

NOVELS: For each of the following categories, upload <.doc> or <.rtf> files containing the first 20 pages of the manuscript + a single-spaced synopsis of no more than two pages.

1. Mainstream/Literary Novel
2. Mystery/Suspense/Thriller/Adventure Novel
3. Juvenile/Young Adult
4. Historical/Western

SHORT STORY: For each of the following categories upload a <.doc> or <.rtf> file containing the double-spaced manuscript, maximum 6,000 words. No minimum length.

5. Science Fiction/Fantasy/Horror
6. Mainstream/Literary

NONFICTION: (Rules vary by category)

7. Book Proposal—Upload <.doc> or <.rtf> files containing the first three chapters (maximum 50 pages) + a chapter outline of no more than three pages + a single-spaced one-page query letter.
8. Memoir—Upload <.doc> or <.rtf> files containing the first 20 pages of the manuscript into the online form + a single-spaced (two-page maximum) synopsis.
9. Essay—Upload a <.doc> or <.rtf> file containing the double-spaced manuscript (2,500-word maximum).

CHILDREN'S PICTURE BOOK:

10. FICTION or NONFICTION: Upload a <.doc> or <.rtf> file containing the entire manuscript (500-word maximum) without illustrations.

SCREENPLAY:

11. Upload a <.pdf> file containing the complete script for a short film (maximum 15 pages) in standard industry format.

POETRY:

12. Upload a <.doc> or <.rtf> file(s) containing one poem 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). For screenplays, the script must be unoptioned; short films must be unproduced.

CRITIQUE SERVICE

All entrants may request a critique by a professional writer, agent, or editor who is unaffiliated with the contest judging. The fee for this critique service is contained in the table on the following page.

ENTRY FEES

ENTRY FEE FOR ALL ENTRIES EXCEPT POETRY				
Entered	Members of SouthWest Writers		All Other Entrants	
No later than	Contest Only	Contest & Critique	Contest Only	Contest & Critique
May 1	\$20	\$45	\$30	\$55
May 15	\$25	\$50	\$35	\$60
ENTRY FEE FOR POETRY				
May 1	\$10	\$30	\$20	\$40
May 15	\$15	\$35	\$25	\$45

PRIZES AND NOTIFICATIONS

A First, Second, and Third Place winner will be judged in each category.

First Place: \$200

Second Place: \$150

Third Place: \$100

Storyteller Award (best of all entries): \$1,500

Winners will be notified in August, 2013 by email. Winners' names will be posted on the SWW website at or about the same time.

JUDGING

Contest judging takes place in two rounds. All contest entries are first judged by a qualified panel of writers and editors. The top 20 in each category are then sent to the appropriate editors or literary agents for each category who will determine the top three (3) places.

Contacting any judge during the contest period about an entry is an automatic disqualification.

Writers entering the contest retain all rights to their entries. By entering this contest, you agree to abide by the rules, agree that decisions by the judges are final, and agree that no refunds will be awarded.

SouthWest Writers commissions professional editors, agents, and publishers as judges. The judges' opinions do not necessarily reflect the opinions of SWW.

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.

You Can Write for *SouthWest Sage*

Want to add a byline to your portfolio? We welcome submissions focusing on all aspects of researching, writing, and publishing any genre. See past issues of *SouthWest Sage* for the type of article we publish. Payment is in bylines and clips. Deadline is the 15th of the month prior to the next issue. Article lengths from 300 to 1000 words. Submissions may be edited for accuracy, readability and length. Send questions/submissions to Kathy Wagoner, *Sage* Editor, JustWriteSWW@gmail.com.

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amazon.com.

Help Support SouthWest Writers

Planning on shopping on Amazon? Go to the SWW website at www.SouthWestWriters.com, click on the Amazon link, and SWW will receive a commission on your book purchase.

Or cut and paste the following link into your web browser: http://www.amazon.com/?ie=UTF8&*Version*=1&*entries*=0&link_code=hom&tag=southwestwriters