

SouthWest Sage

October 2011

www.southwestwriters.com

SWW Officer Elections October 1

The Saturday meeting on October 1 is SouthWest Writers' annual meeting. In addition to a brief overview of SWW activities for the past year, election of officers for 2012 will be held. The slate of nominees appears on page 4 of this issue of *Sage*.

Nominations of additional candidates may be made prior to the meeting or from the floor at the October 1 meeting. You must have the consent of the candidate whom you are nominating and they must meet the qualifications as stated in the SWW bylaws.

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

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

Parris Award to Rick Reichmann



Rick Reichman's contributions to SouthWest Writers are immense. Not only does he share his knowledge of writing screenplays willingly, he offers his expertise in organizing workshops and conferences. He received an MFA in writing from the University of Southern California. Rick has optioned two screenplays, won several screenwriting awards

and has written two books on screenwriting. A screenwriter, author, teacher, critiquer--Rick deserves SWW's highest accolade.

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Putcamp Wins Storyteller Award

At the annual awards banquet on Saturday September 17, the Grand Prize in SWW's Annual Contest, the Storyteller Award, was given to Luise Putcamp, Jr. of Salt Lake City, Utah. She won with her personal essay "Confessions of a Card-Carrying Cadaver." She also won first place in the Personal Essay/Column category. The Storyteller judge was Sharene Marten-Brown, Art and Editorial Director, Ampichellis EBooks.

Winners of the other categories in the contest were announced, with the positions they won. A complete list of winners and where they live and the judges in each category is posted on the SWW website under the "Annual Contest" tab.



But as wonderful as Nature is, she can't polish your writing to where editors swoon after reading your first sentence. That's where critique groups or circles, as some call them, come into play. A critique group is composed of anywhere from two to ten writers who meet on a regular basis to read and comment on each other's work.

My own critique group, for example, meets every Saturday morning—rain or shine. We bring in no more than ten pages, a copy for each member. We read our own work aloud (some groups appoint another member to read) while the group follows along. Then we take turns, going clockwise, speaking about what worked, what needs improvement or clarification and what would make it better. We always start with the positive and never, ever, question why the writer chose to create the characters they did. I had one person in my group insist that my main character's name be shortened to "Jim." No, I said. His name is "James" and that's what he insists on being called. She continued to rail that it was Jim. She's no longer in our group, and my character remains James.

Now, how do you find such a group? If you're at a SWW meeting, ask around. I can guarantee there are people looking for a circle. Also, we're putting together another bulletin board for the meetings (the other one was lost). Be sure to check with that. If all else fails, post a notice on our Facebook page...I bet somebody'll respond to that.

Happy October.

Melody

**New Life Presbyterian Church, 5540 Eubank NE,
Albuquerque, New Mexico**



SouthWest Sage

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For My Good Friend Ron Schultz *by Joanne Bodin*

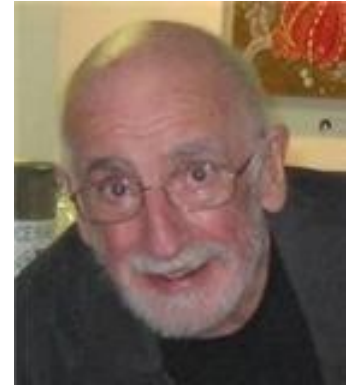
Do you feel that gentle rocking?
Is the smell of seaweed beginning to entice you
as it snakes in sensuous spirals
around your hospital bed-
while you lie, waiting
for the drone of a fog horn, the
symmetrical flashing of a lighthouse beacon,
the pungent taste of salt air?

Do you feel that gentle rocking while
seagulls circle above,
while breezes flap their wings over your
still body,
while waves crash on your shore and
children make sand castles on the edge
of your frothy, sandy beach.

You see the shape of a distant sail
on the horizon, and jump that breeze
while it takes you toward cerulean skies
punctuated by vaporous clouds,
waiting for you to join in their celestial dance.

You smile, look down one last time.
Shades of gray blur into uniform white.
The sailboat where
for so many years you were its captain,
now glides effortlessly over smooth waters,
no one at the helm,
no particular destination.

Yet, across the ocean skies darken,
hurricane swells pound shorelines in
unprecedented turbulence,
perhaps a capricious reminder to us,
that we still need to pile sandbags against our
banks, to keep those dark waters away
from us,
for a while longer.



Ron Schultz, a long time member of SouthWest Writers, passed away on August 28, 2011 from complications of COPD and pneumonia. His past involvement with the Albuquerque writing community of SouthWest Writers was extensive. He worked on the 2006 Writing Contest, was the food table host during the Saturday and Tuesday meetings, participated in the Bear Canyon writing group and attended critique groups. He was one of the editors for my recently published novel and his expertise was an invaluable and integral part of the novel's success. It was through his association with SouthWest Writers that Ron, like many of us, found a community of like-minded individuals who shared similar visions and who offered camaraderie that often countered the isolation felt by writers. Ron had become a good friend of mine and will be dearly missed by those of us who knew him. I wrote this poem the day he died. As Ron always said, "There is nothing more powerful than the written word."

2012 SouthWest Writers Officer Nominees

President

Dr. Kathy Kitts, current SWW Class Coordinator, is a recently retired geology professor who served as a science team member on the NASA Genesis Discovery Mission. Before that, she directed a planetarium for nine years. Having been born and raised in the Southwest, she always planned on moving to Albuquerque and joined SWW before leaving Northern Illinois University. She has dozens of non-fiction publications encompassing everything from professional papers to general interest articles to textbooks. However, she no longer wishes to talk about “what is” but rather “what if.” To that end, she has moved to writing both short literary fiction and novel-length science fiction.



Vice-President

Larry W. Greenly, current SWW secretary and SWW office manager, has been a member since 1992 and has held every position on the board except treasurer. Greenly is a recipient of the SWW Parris Award and several Service Awards. He has published hundreds of magazine articles and has won a number of awards as a writer and editor. In an outreach program for SWW, Greenly has taught writing classes as a volunteer at Bear Canyon Senior Center for the past eight years with current Vice President Rob Spiegel. Greenly, a three-time SWW president, is aiming to improve SWW's financial status and to maintain the highest standards of ethics in the organization.



Secretary

Susan Alexis, current membership chair, was born and raised in Minnesota, the heart of Swede country. She came to Albuquerque to earn a Master's degree in Spanish, taught in Colorado, lived seventeen years in Mexico, and since returning to Albuquerque in 1995 has traveled as interpreter with thirteen medical missions to Latin America. She has authored various articles for *Guideposts*, *The World & I*, and *Grit* as well as two books on short-term volunteer missions: *Healing the World One by One* and *Caring Hands*. Her introduction to SouthWest Writers came in 1999 when she took a class on book proposals, and she has been an active member ever since. Susan became a Board member in 2011, serving first as historian, then as membership chair. She hopes to continue to serve SouthWest Writers as secretary in 2012.



Treasurer

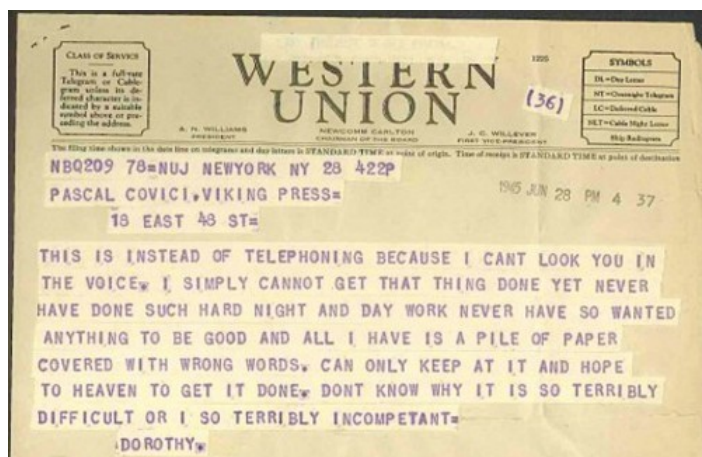
Teresa “Terry” Civello, current SWW Treasurer, a member of SouthWest Writers since May 2010, was appointed to the Board in June as the Publicity Chair, and has been spreading the news in the *Albuquerque Journal*, *Alibi*, *undergroundArts*, and *ABQ, the Magazine*.



Terry has participated in SWW membership efforts, proposing the New Member KaffeeKlatch, the December Book Fair, and an “Open Mic” venue for member readings at the Tuesday evening meetings. In April of this year, Terry stepped in to become Treasurer and immediately began working on the 2010 financials to ensure audit standards are met. She has been working on the 2011 budget and financial reports that will appear in the August and September issues of *Sage*.

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

Dorothy Parker Struggles with Writing



Meetings

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

Saturday, October 1
10:00 a.m. to noon
Members free, guests \$5

Let Your Characters Write Your Book For You

Paula Paul



I consider characters the most important element of a story. If you know your characters, you know your plot, and the characters will do the work for you. The trick is to really KNOW your characters.

Paula Paul is an award-winning novelist with 25 novels to her credit. She has written for both children and adults and currently has an adult historical novel scheduled for print publication and simultaneous electronic version in early May, 2012. A YA novel, also print and simultaneous electronic version, is scheduled for later in 2012. Paula has also worked as a journalist in Texas and New Mexico and is the recipient of several state and national awards.

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

From Inception to Completion: a Writer's Journey

Joanne Bodin



The writing process can often become tedious and discouraging but the actual journey is as important as the final product. Joanne Bodin will discuss how she turned her novel from a "glimmer of an idea" into an award-winner. She will explain how the creative process can survive the rigors of self-imposed discipline, writing schedules and re-writes, the need for copy editors, the changing publishing industry, and the ever-present self-doubt.

Joanne Bodin, Ph.D., a retired APS teacher who taught special education for thirty-four years, co-authored *Step By Step Storytelling: a Narrative Language Curriculum*. Her novel, *Walking Fish*, received the EVVY Award nomination through the Colorado Independent Publisher's Association, was a Finalist in the Santa Fe Writer's Project, and won the International Book Awards in two categories. Her latest book of poetry, *Piggybacked*, is a tribute to her late grandfather, also a poet. She is working on another novel, a psychological thriller about the esoteric world of orchids, and serves as vice president of the New Mexico Orchid Guild.

Tuesday, October 18
7 to 9 p.m.
Members free, guests \$5

You Call Yourself a Writer?

Janie Franz



Whether you're a first timer or a seasoned pro, we all face discouragement. Get your passion back about writing and stay motivated with Janie Franz

Honed by the frigid Northern Plains and a degree in anthropology, **Janie Franz's** writing skill and curiosity have generated thousands of feature and cover articles over a vast range of topics for over a hundred regional, national, and international publications.

She has published three books in the Bowdancer Saga, and in January, Muse It Up will release the first book in the Lost Song Trilogy, *Verses*, a continuation of the Bowdancer Saga. She co-wrote two wedding how-to books and self-published a writing manual, *Freelance Writing: It's a Business, Stupid!* She also wrote seven chapters in *Rick Baker's 7-Minute Organic Garden* book and has multiple entries in a number of Gale medical encyclopedias.

Tuesday, November 15
7 to 9 p.m.
Members free, guests \$5

How a Nonfiction Writer Left a Happy Long-term Relationship and Took Up with a Sexy Young Novel

Bob Julyan



This presentation is about stagnation, change, and growth for writers.

Bob Julyan's career as a non-fiction writer began more than 40 years ago when he became a newspaper writer and editor, and since then he's written numerous magazine articles and nine books of non-fiction. These have included *The Place Names of New Mexico*, *New Mexico's Wilderness Areas*, *The Mountains of New Mexico*, and *Mountains of New Mexico*. About four years ago he went through a classic midlife crisis regarding his writing, so he sought no new non-fiction writing projects and instead began working on a novel. This talk will be the gut-wrenching and sometimes heart-warming story of how it all worked out (so far). More importantly, it will encourage participants to share their own stories about changing directions.

Classes

WRITING GREAT DIALOG - How to differentiate your characters and enrich your prose

Melody Groves

Mondays, October 3, 10, 17 and 24, 6:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.

\$90 members and \$120 non-members

Classes Limited to 14 Students
SWW Conference Room
3721 Morris NE, Ste A (NW corner of Comanche and Morris)
Albuquerque, NM

Have you ever wondered how writers get their characters to sound like they're really talking? How to get each character to sound individualistic? Writing dialogue is not as simple as copying down exactly what people say. Though dialogue should sound spontaneous and lifelike, every word your characters speak should provide characterization and advance the story. This class is for fiction and non-fiction writers who desire to bring their characters to life.

Melody Groves is the author of three historical fiction novels and two non-fiction books. President of SouthWest Writers, she's also publicity chairman for Western Writers of America. On Sundays, she performs in Old Town, Albuquerque, with the New Mexico Gunfighters, where she shoots "sheriffs" and "bad guys."



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

Workshop And Class Refund Policy

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

Winter Classes

See details on website

CREATIVE MARKETING FOR AUTHORS

By Loretta Hall

January 21, 28, February 4, 11, 2:00 - 4:00 p.m.

Whether your book is self-published or produced by a publishing company, you will have to be its primary marketer. Learn a variety of strategies and techniques to market your book.

SURFING YOUR ENTHUSIASM: Make Writing Goals Work By Sue Sullivan

January 23 and 30 and February 6, 6:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.

Do you get enthusiastic and determined to write, but you aren't writing anywhere near as much as you would like? Or have you done a lot of writing in the past, but you don't actually finish the work? In this class you'll work with writing goals that support you in developing your internal motivation so you don't have to force yourself to sit down and write.

DAZZLING DESCRIPTION: How to Show-Not-Tell

By Chris Eboch

January 24 and 31, 2 p.m. - 4 p.m.

You've been told, "Show, Don't Tell." Now learn how. Learn Chris' secrets in this fun, hands-on-pen workshop. We'll discuss facts versus opinions, sense data, body language, showing through dialog, and what point of view really means.

EXPLORE INDIE PUBLISHING: Develop Your Own Business Plan

By Chris Eboch

January 24 and 31, 6 p.m. - 8 p.m.

You've heard the buzz about self-publishing. But is it right for you? And if so, how do you make it happen? We'll discuss who should and shouldn't self-publish (and why), explore the pros and cons, and study an overview of the process. Then we'll develop step-by-step business plans with timelines. You'll receive resources for editing, proofreading, cover art, and more, plus information on how to get the word out about your book.

X-RAY, MACHETE AND SCALPEL: Shaping the Novel By Betsy James

February 1, 8, 15, 22, 29 and March 7, 14 and 21, 6:00 - 8:30 p.m.

Course: You've got a draft. What now? This class will help you whip that puppy into shape. With a focus on structure, we'll use respectful peer critique to consider aspects of the novel such as plot and pacing, characterization, dialogue, word-pruning, and the infamous "show, don't tell."

Memoir Writing Labs: The craft of writing memoir

MEMOIR WRITING LABS: The craft of writing memoir

Connie Josefs, MFA

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 15

9 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Day 1 - Lab AM Who's Talking?: First Person Narrative

Day 1 - Lab PM The Way They Were: Writing Believable Characters

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 29

9 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Day 2 - Lab AM In the Moment: Crafting Effective Scenes

Day 2 - Lab PM As Time Goes By: The Shape of Time in Memoir

Tuition per lab:

\$45.00 discounted rate for SWW members

\$55.00 Courtesy rate for Osher Institute Members

\$90.00 Non-Member rate

Tuition two labs same day:

\$80.00 Discounted rate for SWW members,

\$95.00 Courtesy rate for Osher Institute Members

\$170.00 Non-Member Rate

Lunch Included

Entire series, four labs, with lunch:

\$150.00 Discounted rate for SWW members,

\$175.00 Courtesy rate for Osher Institute Members

\$320.00 Non-Member Rate

New Life Presbyterian Church

5540 Eubank NE (just north of Spain), Albuquerque,

Each interactive lab will offer concrete tools and strategies for transforming memory into compelling narrative. Attendees invited to bring their written material. **Minimum class size: 20.**

LAB #1 SATURDAY, OCT. 15th, 9:00- NOON: Who's Talking? First Person Narrative

First person narrative is the default setting for memoir. In this lab, we will explore the assets and liabilities of writing in the first person and examine how both fiction and memoir writers have utilized this point of view to maximum effect.

LAB #2 SATURDAY, OCT. 15th, 1:00-4:00 PM: The Way They Were: Writing Believable Characters

How do we get the people we know onto the page? When writing memoir, it's all too easy to take our characters for granted because we know them. This lab will provide tools and exercises for crafting vivid and memorable characters.



LAB #3 SATURDAY, OCT. 29th, 9:00 - NOON: In The Moment: Crafting Effective Scenes

Scene is the building block of memoir. But how do we determine when to move from scene to exposition? This lab will examine the effects of scene and exposition upon the reader and explore how they can be used effectively to recreate experience.

LAB #4 SATURDAY, OCT. 29th, 1:00-4:00 PM: As Time Goes By: The Shape of Time in Memoir

The memoirist is required to view events from two vantage points: then and now. How do writers accommodate this shifting narrative stance? This lab will examine how memoirists organize time and point of view to structure scenes and create coherence.

Each half-day lab is offered for separate enrollment. Two different writing labs are offered in one full day. Participants may choose from four labs, enroll for full-day labs, or pick and choose from the schedule above. Not a member of SWW? [Join for \\$60.00 Online](#) and enroll at the member rate. SWW Membership Registration information is also on the Memoir Labs [Registration Form](#).

Unlike autobiography, which takes readers through a life from beginning to end, memoir circles a thematic center and provides a prismatic glance at some seminal piece of life. These labs will offer concrete tools and strategies for transforming memory into compelling memoir.

Each lab will focus on a particular element of craft, including writing in first person (also a great class for fiction writers), creating dynamic characters, crafting effective scenes and working with time and point of view. Each half-day lab is offered for separate enrollment. Two different writing labs will be offered in one full day. Participants may choose from four labs, enroll for full-day labs, or pick and choose from the menu listed above.

Connie Josefs has been a writer, teacher and literary consultant for more than 20 years. A native New Yorker, Josefs moved to Los Angeles in 1980, where she was a writer/producer for television and independent video productions, and a story analyst for Tristar Television and Steven Spielberg's Amblin Entertainment. She taught memoir at The Writing Circle and for the Emeritus Program at Santa Monica College, where she was founding editor of the literary journal, *E-33: Writings from Emeritus*. She was a guest artist in the creative writing program at UNM Taos, and led memoir workshops for Yaxche School and the Chesed Project. She currently teaches memoir at the Osher Institute of Lifelong Learning at UNM. Her fiction and essays have appeared in numerous magazines and literary journals. Ms. Josefs received her MFA in fiction writing from Antioch University.

The Craft of Memoir: An Interview with Connie Josefs *by Terry Civello*

In response to requests, SouthWest Writers has organized a series of four half-day labs dedicated to the craft of writing memoir. Terry Civello sat down with writer/instructor Connie Josefs to discuss the challenges of memoir writing, issues of craft and what writers can expect from the upcoming Memoir Writing Labs.

TC: Many people I know are writing memoirs, writing down every detail of their lives and hoping to publish them. How would you approach the person who is setting out to write their life story?

CJ: People come to memoir because they have a story to tell. Most people have had some, if not many, significant events that have happened to them in their lives. The challenge is to mine those events for shape and meaning. That's what the process of writing memoir is about. What particular event or period of time do you want to write about? How does that experience live in you? How has it defined you?

TC: What is the difference between memoir and autobiography?

CJ: Autobiography generally deals with the life story of a famous person. It starts with birth and moves forward, chronologically, to the time of writing – your basic “how I got to be the person I am” story. Memoir is thematically driven. It's about the experiences you've had, but more importantly, what you make of those experiences, how they have impacted you and what you've learned, in the hope that those lessons and experiences will resonate with a reader.

TC: For people who are just beginning to write their memoirs, how do you see these craft labs helping them? Isn't the first thing just to get your story down?

CJ: Writing a first draft is always the first step. There's no getting around that. The exciting part about writing memoir is what happens in the process of writing that first draft, and the drafts that follow. It's a process of discovery, and that's where craft comes in. Elements of craft are like tools an archeologist brings along on a dig. They enable you to dig deeply and say what you need to say. Take scene writing, for example. It helps writers pay attention to their senses as they write, so they can embody their experience and make it tactile for the reader.

TC: Is the craft of writing memoir so very different from writing fiction, essays or any other creative writing?

J: Good writing is good writing, and I think much of the content of the Memoir Labs will be as helpful to fiction writers as it is to memoirists. People tend to think of craft as something technical, a way to polish your work, when in fact, its purpose is to provide the tools to translate ideas and experience into narrative.

TC: We all have our stories. Once we write them down, what do we do with them? How do we organize them? How do we give them structure so they make sense to the reader?

CJ: When I work with writers, I encourage them to continually ask the question: *What am I writing about?* We can use the tools of craft – language, point-of-view, scene, etc. – to explore that question. The answer often changes as insights into theme and character emerge. These insights provide links to structure. The organizing principle needs to come from inside the work.

TC: When we write our memoirs, we're also struggling with time. We're writing our stories now, at a certain age, but we're reflecting back to a time when we were younger. How do we do that without confusing the reader?

CJ: This is one of the trickiest aspects of memoir writing, one we'll be dealing with in one of the Labs: “The Shape of Time in Memoir.” As a memoirist, one views life events from two vantage points: then and now. This requires a narrative stance that is constantly shifting, a dance, if you will, between past and present. It's essential that the writer be aware of where the narrator is standing at any given moment. You can be writing a scene from a five-year-old's point-of-view, but not necessarily from the five-year-old's consciousness. The language must be consistent with the narrator's stance for the scene to ring true.

TC: What is the format of the Memoir Labs?

CJ: We will look at how memoir and fiction writers have successfully used elements of craft in their work, based on the topic of each lab. There will also be writing exercises to give writers an opportunity to experiment with what they've learned.

TC: What would you like participants to get out of the Memoir Writing Labs?

CJ: I'd like them to feel empowered by craft, rather than intimidated by it. And I'd like them to come away with tools and techniques to help them become more effective storytellers.

CYNTHIA BARBER

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EDITING
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Successes and Announcements

Keith Pyeatt's paranormal thriller, *Above Haldis Notch*, is under contract with Musa Publishing and scheduled to be released on November 25, 2011. *Dark Knowledge* is now available again as an eBook, and an eBook version of *Struck* is now available. For more information, see the "Yippees Come in Threes" issue of the Horror with Heart Newsletter here: <http://tinyurl.com/hwh-news8>.

Connie Harrington's short story "Biography of a Wild Rose" will be published in the upcoming summer issue of *Pennsylvania Literary Journal*.

The **Land Of Enchantment Romance Writers** is giving away one free seat to their conference on November 12 featuring Margie Lawson. Deep Editing Power will be discussed in the morning and Writing Body Language and Dialogue Cues in the afternoon. If you're interested, send an email to tamrabaumann@hotmail.com by October 12. Please put 'LERA Conference Giveaway' in the header and your name will be entered in the drawing to win a free day of learning, food, and fun. <http://leranm.com/conferencepage.html>

New Mexico Women Authors' Book Festival will be held September 30 – October 9 at the New Mexico History Museum in Santa Fe. Celebrate the joy of reading books with 75 New Mexico Women Authors, including a number of South-West Writers members. Find the reading schedule at <http://newmexicocreates.org/press-release-7/2011-New-Mexico-Women-Authors-Book-Festival> or call John Stafford (505) 982-3016 x25.

The **New Mexico Press Women** are accepting entries for the 2012 Zia Award, which will be given to the author of an outstanding nonfiction book published in 2009, 2010 or 2011. The contest is open to all subgenres of nonfiction, from memoir to textbook. The writer must be a woman who lives in or has a strong connection to New Mexico. The book may be published anywhere. The deadline is January 13, 2012. <http://newmexicopresswomen.org/2011/08/29/>

2011 Fifth Bi-Monthly Writing Contest Personal Essay

A personal essay on any subject whatever -- political or lifestyle choices, rants or praise, pet peeves or dear loves. Limit 500 words. Postmark deadline: October 29, 2011. Please include your contact information (address, phone and email) and permission to publish or not on a separate sheet. Do not include any identifying information on the manuscript itself. All entries \$10. Prizes: \$150/1st prize; \$50/2nd prize; \$25/3rd prize. Mail entries to SWW Bi-monthly Contest, 3721 Morris NE, Albuquerque, NM 87111.

[nonfiction-book-entries-sought-for-n-m-women-writers-contest/](#)

Children's writers and illustrators can find inspiration, how-tos, and fabulous networking with top New York editors, agents, and each other. It's all at **the Handsprings 2011 Conference for Children's Writers and Illustrators**, Saturday October 8. www.scbwi-nm.org.

The Halloween Holiday Howl at the Barn in Los Ranchos, 6718 Rio Grande Blvd. Los Ranchos, will be held Saturday, October 29, from 8 a.m. - 3p.m. To learn if spaces are still available to sell your book at this event, contact the NM Book Co-op at 344-9382.

The **Tony Hillerman Writers Conference** will be held November 10-12 in Santa Fe. www.wordharvest.com

On Saturday October 8, the St. Louis Branch of the **National League of American Pen Women** (NLAPW) will hold an open meeting from 9:30am to 11:30am in meeting room of Commerce Bank at 300 N. Kirkwood Road in Kirkwood, Missouri, (314) 726-2255. Elaine Sandra Abramson, the president of the Missouri State Association of the National League of American Pen Women will give a repeat presentation on the road to publishing. www.ElaineAbramson.com

The **Marilyn Brown Unpublished Novel's** annual **October 1st** deadline is approaching. Each year the winning author receives a \$1,000 stipend, presented at the spring Dean's Award Banquet for the Utah Valley University College of Humanities and Social Sciences. This contest is open to every author, whether published or not (although the submitted novel must be unpublished). The requirement for the novel's content is that it be mainstream (not fantasy or science fiction) and deal in some way with western regional or LDS themes, either or both <http://marilynbrownauthor.com/award/mbna.html>

Nominations are now being accepted for the **William Saroyan International Prize for Writing**. Two prizes of \$5,000 each are given biennially for works of fiction and nonfiction. Cosponsored by the Stanford University Libraries and the William Saroyan Foundation, the awards are intended to "encourage new or emerging writers and honor the Saroyan legacy of originality, vitality, and stylistic innovation." DEADLINE: January 31, 2012. saroyan-prize.stanford.edu

The **Narrative Fall 2011 Story Contest** opened September 1. Prizes include a \$3,250 First Prize, a \$1,500 Second Prize, a \$750 Third Prize, and ten finalists receiving \$100 each. Open to fiction and nonfiction. All entries will be considered for publication. Deadline is November 30. www.narrativemagazine.com/

Your opening makes a promise about the rest of the story, article, or book. It tells readers what to expect, setting the stage for the rest of the story to unfold—and hopefully hooking their interest.

The first scene should identify your story's genre. This can be trickier than it sounds. Say it's a romance, but the main character doesn't meet the love interest until later. Can you at least suggest her loneliness or desire for romance? (And get that love interest in there as soon as possible!)

Maybe you're writing a story involving magic, time travel, ghosts, or a step into another dimension, but you want to show the normal world before you shift into fantasy. That's fine, but if we start reading about a realistic modern setting and then halfway through magic comes out of nowhere, you'll surprise your reader—and not in a good way. Your story will feel like two different stories clumsily stitched together.

If you're going to start "normal" and later introduce an element like magic or aliens, try to hint at what's to come. Maybe the main character is wishing that magic existed—that's enough to prepare the reader. In my novel *The Ghost on the Stairs*, we don't find out that the narrator's sister has seen a ghost until the end of chapter 2. But on the opening page, she comments that the hotel "looks haunted" and is "spooky." Those words suggest that a ghost story may be coming. That's enough to prep the reader. (The title doesn't hurt either.)

Your opening should also identify the story's setting. This includes when and where we are, if it's historical or set in another country or world. Once again, you don't want your reader to assume a modern story and then discover halfway through that it's actually a historical setting. They'll blame you for their confusion. In a contemporary story, you may not identify a specific city, but the reader should have a feel for whether this is inner-city, small-town, suburban, or whatever.

Who and What's Up

Your opening pages should focus on your main character. You may find exceptions to this rule, but your readers will assume that whoever is prominent in the opening pages is the MC. Switching can cause confusion. You should also establish your point of view early. If you'll be switching points of view, don't wait too long to make the first switch. In novels, typically you want to show your alternate point of view in the second chapter and then switch back and forth with some kind of regular rhythm.

And of course, you want some kind of challenge or conflict in your opening. This doesn't have to be the main plot problem—you may need additional setup before your main character takes on that challenge or even knows about it.

But try to make sure that your opening problem relates to the main problem. It may even lead to it.

In *The Ghost on the Stairs*, Tania faints at the end of chapter 1. Jon does not yet know why, but this opening problem leads to the main problem—she'd seen a ghost. If I'd used an entirely different opening problem, say stress with their new stepfather, that would have suggested a family drama, not a paranormal adventure.

The Fast Start

So an opening introduces many elements of the story. Yet you can't take too long to set the scene, or your readers may lose interest. You want to start in a moment of action, where something is changing, and cut the background. But don't rush things—take a little time to set up the situation, so it makes sense and we care about the characters and what's happening to them.

Fast, but not too fast. How do you find the balance?

You can test your opening by seeing how much you can cut. What if you delete the first sentence, the first paragraph, the first page? Does the story still make sense? Does it get off to a faster start? For a novel, what if you cut the whole first chapter, or several chapters? If you can't cut, can you condense?

On the other hand, if your beginning feels confusing or rushed, you might want to start earlier in the story. Try setting up a small problem that grabs the reader's attention, luring them in until you can get to the main problem. In my novel, *The Well of Sacrifice*, the Maya are dealing with famine, disease, and marauders in the early chapters, even before the king dies and an evil high priest tries to take over. That gives readers time to understand these characters and their unusual world.

Don't stress about the opening during your early drafts, but do make sure you fix it later. Keep in mind that fixing it may involve throwing it out altogether and replacing it with something else or simply starting later in the story. In the end, you'll have the beginning you need.



Chris Eboch is a popular teacher with SouthWest Writers, SCBWI, and the Institute of Children's Literature. Find more advice on hooking your reader in Chris's book *Advanced Plotting*, with over a hundred pages on how to make your plots stronger, or get more craft advice at the Write Like a Pro! blog: <http://chriseboch.blogspot.com/>.



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

If writers understand the basic rules for comma usage, they will not worry about unnecessary commas. However, some people prefer to operate by what not to do. That's why even the most rigorous grammar texts include sections on unnecessary commas.

Most writers know that a comma is necessary between compound independent clauses, and the comma is followed by a coordinating

conjunction to be correct.

Bob returned the lawnmower, and he asked to borrow the clippers. [Correct]

Most writers also know that if the subject (*he*) of the second clause is removed, the comma is also deleted.

Bob returned the lawnmower and asked to borrow the clippers. [Correct]

The compound elements *returned the lawnmower* (verb and object) and *asked to borrow clippers* (verb and object) are connected without a comma.

So the rule is: **No comma between compound elements** unless the elements are independent clauses.

A slightly more complicated version of this application occurs when the compound elements are subordinate clauses.

She said that she was serious, but that she wasn't rigid. [Incorrect]

The compound elements are both dependent clauses introduced by *that*, so no comma is necessary.

She said that she was serious but that she wasn't rigid. [Correct]

Another curious unnecessary comma rule is: **No comma between an adjective and a noun or between an adverb and an adjective.** Most writers would never use a comma between an adjective and a noun in a sentence like the fol-

lowing.

It was a dirty job. [Correct]

Some writers have a problem when the adjective noun occurs as part of a series.

It was a boring, dirty, job. [Incorrect]

It was a boring, dirty job. [Correct]

If writers remember how to use an adjective and noun (*dirty job*), they can apply the rule to adverb and adjective combinations.

He was a dangerously, rebellious boy. [Incorrect]

He was a dangerously rebellious boy. [Correct]

As in many situations, judgment calls are the most difficult. The rule for unnecessary commas is: **No commas to set off restrictive or mildly parenthetical elements.**

In other grammar tips columns, we've discussed restrictive clauses. Simply stated, commas are unnecessary if the element restricts the meaning or is essential for the meaning.

The film, Hero, is an epic of Chinese history. [Incorrect]

The film Hero is an epic of Chinese history. [Correct]

Not just any film is an epic of Chinese history. The specific film is essential to the meaning. Judgment calls come with parenthetical expressions. The following sentence contains the rule and the example.

Some parenthetical expressions, by the nature of the qualifying information contained in them, require commas. [Correct]

However, when it comes to unnecessary commas the rule is: **No commas to set off mildly parenthetical expressions.**

She, essentially, taught reading and writing. [Incorrect]

She essentially taught reading and writing. [Correct]

Comma usage is one reason writers keep a grammar book on their work tables. When in doubt, check the table of contents or the index under *unnecessary commas*.



**Find SouthWest Writers
on Facebook**

The Storyteller's Journey of 2010, SouthWest Writers (SWW) annual writing contest, ended with great fanfare at the awards banquet held at the National Hispanic Cultural Center. SWW began a search for a contest chair for 2011.

A new chair stepped forward; St. Boyd was her e-mail name. The SWW Board rejoiced for now they had a direct channel to heavenly delights. Her theme for the writing contest, *It's A Dream Until It Turns Into Paper*, became a divine guide to writers.

Judges volunteered from Illinois, New York, New Mexico, North Carolina, Colorado, and from internet sites. Each judge daydreamed of nirvana: finding a manuscript filled with the ambrosia of a best seller.

So the contest began. Entries filled the office at SWW as it became *A Place in the Land* of enchantment where writers submitted perfect manuscripts. One contestant wrote a note on her manuscript "Handle with care; this is Loreena's Gift to SWW." The volunteer who entered the manuscript titled *Married to the Mansours* placed it in the science fiction/fantasy/horror category. She thought it was a metaphor for man's illusive search for truth.

Cynthia Boyd, the contest chair, dreamt about the awards banquet, for she knew there was *Still Life in a Red Dress* she planned to wear. In her dream, she heard *The Voices* of board members telling her not to worry—she would not be an *Exile* just because she looked like a hot mamma in her red dress.

Dreams spread among other board members. The President had a vision of calling the board *Out of Order* just to see what would happen. Then she had a reverie on a new title for a book, *These Sunken Eyes*, about writers who had "writers block" and ended up becoming president of a writers' group. But her dream rewarded her with heavenly success. She awoke to write down the title for her next western saga novel: *A Town Called Vengeance*.

More manuscripts arrived at SWW. The contest chair fell asleep as she entered 40 manuscripts into the database. She envisioned she was going *To Marry an Earl* whose riches would be shared with SouthWest Writers. Then with *The Sofer's Pen*, she wrote a check to cover all expenses for the contest and signed *The Black Letter* resigning as chair of the contest. Upon awakening, more manuscripts were placed on the table. She cried.

Contest volunteers began exhibiting bizarre behavior as

they had nighttime dreams of manuscripts appearing in their mailboxes but would *Disappear* as they reached for them. One volunteer said she dreamt she received a package with the return address, *To Jocelyn with Love*. The package kept *Falling* out of her hands when she tried to open it.

Final contest judges said they had good and bad dreams after selecting the three winners. One wrote to the contest chair, "The stories of the three winners turned into a dream about *My Brother's Wife* whose manuscript, *Bride Price*, sold *One Night in Abilene* at a Texas writer's conference.

A second judge sent an e-mail: "After I selected the winners I was deep in what I called *The Struggle* with the *Phoenix of the Mind* over the manuscript titled *Patchwork: A Memoir of Mali*. When I awoke, my nightie was drenched in sweat and I was choking my lover. Please don't ever ask me to judge again."

Another judge dreamt his selections were like *Necklaces in the Eucalyptus Tree* at the back of his house. In his dream, he posted a Facebook picture of his cat *Marilena* helping him read all of the manuscripts he'd received. He also warned the contest chair not to ever choose him as a judge. His e-mail said it all, "I will not be a *Sacrificial Man* to the whims of the SWW Writing Contest."

A fourth judge fell into a dream as she read contest manuscripts. She had a feeling of genuine *Solitude* when she made her selection of the top three winners. Then a ghost appeared to rag her about her selections. He warned her not to use *Fannie's Mea Culpa* as an excuse for her bad choices. She felt ambivalent about judging and wrote the contest chair, "I'm thankful I judged for the contest, but in the future please make sure *The Ghost of Chris LeDoux* is kept at SWW."

An interesting dream gave one judge the chance to relate a very personal story to the contest chair. He twittered: "With *Lies Streaming* in my head, I realize I'm *Not Scared of Dying*, But... these may be the *Confessions of a Card-Carrying Cadaver*. Please send your office manager and former chiropractor this note, 'I need your help as my bones are getting stiff'."

Another judge related her dream of *Dancing on One Foot* as she dealt with *The Ethics of Chaos* in *The Unobservable Universe* where great manuscripts are found. After she awoke, she wailed in her e-mail, "Where have all the great nonfiction writers gone?" The contest chair immediately scratched her name off the list of future judges.

Continued on page 13

And so it came to pass that all the final judges made their choices without much fuss. The contest chair remembered the words of other past contest chairs, "A few judges have *An Extraordinary Talent* for jumping through hoops and dragging SWW into their circle of judgment." Those judges were often heard to awake from a dream about the mysterious person called *The Ayudante* and screaming, "Who's My Momma?"

As the awards banquet approached, the SWW Board members began to have dreams of two more saints joining the board, who would then be known as *Las Tres Madrinas*, protectress' of board members who had fallen prey to the *Devil Weeds*. Although happiness thrived among board members, the President dreamt about the manuscript titled, *1793*, the year Louis XVI of France and his wife Marie Antoinette were executed. She saw herself having her Presidency cut short by a guillotine. She, too, woke up yelling and screaming, a common occurrence among SWW volunteers.

The contest chair's last judge was set to quit *Contemplating The Crepuscular* and select the Storyteller Award. There was no need to think *Of Calamine and Honey* to soothe the choice she made. She'd made *The Promise* to select the best manuscript to become the Storyteller Award for 2011.

All writing contest winners in 2011 know fully the meaning of the phrase, "*It's A Dream Until It Turns Into Paper.*" No winning manuscript had ever opened with a bad opening. No winning manuscript would ever open with these words, "It was a dark and stormy night..."

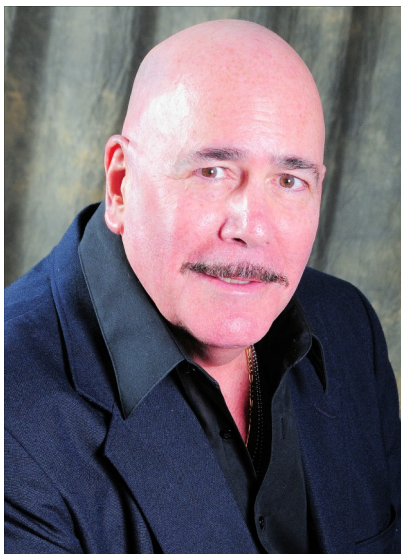
Welcome New Members

Robyn Ruff-Wagner
Beth Gallegos
Megan Stirler
Aaron Huffman
Michael Woodruff
Frank Phelan
Wendy Weber
Melissa Grandon
Amara Cudney
Allen Harrison
Sara Bautista

A Member Benefit: Free Meetings

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

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



A Short-Cut Pamphlet On Writing

By the Amazon E-books

Best Selling Author

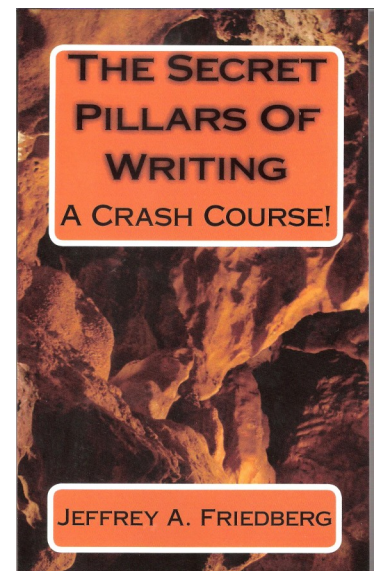
Jeffrey A. Friedberg

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**



Just to dispel any misunderstanding up front, I never actually met Louis L'Amour. He never reached out his hand to pluck my struggling body from a rain swollen river. He never yanked me out of the path of a careering city bus. But what he did do was just as vital to my survival – he wrote fiction.

When I was twenty-one, married with three children and trying to survive a spiritual, emotional, mental, and financial train wreck, I discovered Louis L'Amour's *Sitka*. That phenomenal piece of literature bore me on a magic carpet of woven words, away from the turmoil that was my life, and into flights of escape. The harsh expanse of Alaska, the tough men and often tougher women, the struggle to not only survive, but thrive against overwhelming odds, those all spoke to my depressed, lonely, fearful spirit.

After that, I haunted the local public library in search of more L'Amour titles. I grew to crave the sensation of being ferried into the past while watching from the safe distance of the present. I thrilled in the knowledge that everything would turn out okay for the men and women with whom I found myself identifying. I read everything Louis L'Amour wrote, and his words comforted me. They gave me hope.

Over the next few years I branched out into other areas of

fiction. I reveled in the excitement of spy novels written by Helen MacInnes, feasted on the haunted offerings of Stephen King, and devoured the cerebral musings of Isaac Asimov.

My world changed and expanded. Eventually, the idea that I myself could change took root. At the age of twenty-nine I went to college, where I learned how to teach others to read and write.

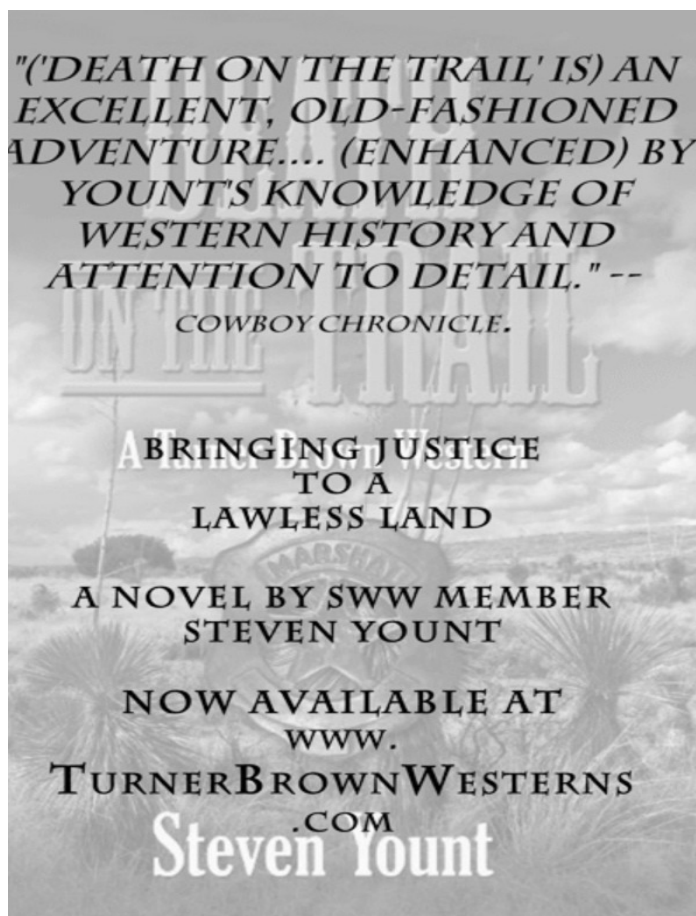
Thirty years later, I still look forward to those quiet times when I can burrow into my pile of pillows, a cup of hot tea at my elbow and a compelling story in my hands. I still thrill at being escorted into other realms, other dimensions, other realities.

Some people believe that every person has a unique niche in this world, a slot molded in her image and into which she alone will fit. I don't know if that's so. But I do know that writers hold a special place in the human experience, some even to the point of sparking world change.

So, thanks to those of you who answer the call to write in whatever genre beckons. Thanks for meeting deadlines, for struggling with agents, for doing hours of research, for re-writing innumerable times and not giving up. Thanks for following the tuggings of your muse. And thank you Louis L'Amour, for saving my life.



A retired educator, Olive Balla is a professional musician who lives in Los Lunas 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.



Found on the Web: Structuring Your Story

The Open Notebook is developing new craft-focused tools and resources (like a [database](#) of successful pitches to be launched soon). They've also begun a series of topical features on subjects relating to science journalism as craft. The first in the series features award-winning journalist [Christie Aschwanden](#) exploring the question that dogs every feature writer: How do you find the right structure for narrative stories? www.theopennotebook.com/2011/09/14/art-of-narrative-structure/

Every November, in addition to working my day job, shopping for the holidays and baking pies, cookies and other autumn goodies, I write a novel.

A fool's errand? Perhaps, but I am only one fool amongst many. In November 2010, over 200,000 writers around the globe participated in National Novel Writing Month—NaNoWriMo to initiate. Over 30,000 participants successfully completed a 50,000 word novel in 30 days. Now in its 13th year, NaNoWriMo offers writers of all genres of fiction the opportunity—and excuse—to write their contribution to the canon of great world literature. Or, at least, to write what Anne Lamott affectionately calls the “sh*tty first draft.”

For a successful NaNoWriMo experience, I have found the following to be indispensable:

Internet access

Fifty thousand words in 30 days is a daunting task, so it is important to find a community of writers who are facing the same victories and set-backs. The NaNoWriMo community is an incomparable support system. NaNoWriMo.org is a gateway to boundless encouragement, to connecting with NaNo Buddies and to exploring forums with topics ranging from “Backing up your work: How do you do it?” to “Are elephants capable of taking over the world?” Internet access can also be useful for wasting valuable writing time researching specific elements and the varied nuances of elephant *coups d'état*.

Writing time

If I manage to find 3 hours in the day to write and I average about 556 words per hour, I'm golden and will cross the finish line by 11:59:59 pm on November 30. Manageable goals are the key to NaNoWriMo success. Typically, getting 556 words on the page in an hour is nigh impossible as we writers pull our hair out for hours to find the right 556 words. Fifty thousand words is the goal of NaNoWriMo, not necessarily good fiction. In fact, travesties of good writing are encouraged: words can be misspelled, poorly chosen, grammatically incorrect or sheer nonsense, so long as they total 50,000. Many WriMos find that in November, sentence structure goes out the window, pronouns become optional and characters get three or four middle names, all in the name of word count.

Mardi Gras beads

Writing a novel is serious work for eleven months of the year. Not in November. To stave off the tendency to take novel writing too seriously and to remind himself to enjoy the insanity, NaNoWriMo founder, Chris Baty, dons a cos-

tume Viking hat while he writes. I drape myself in cheap Mardi Gras beads. A friend of mine wears a Halloween witch's hat. In addition to adding a bit of levity to the task at hand, costume pieces can remind well-meaning family and friends that you are committed to your goal and that they should interrupt you only when they are bringing you Nutella and banana sandwiches or when the dog has caught on fire.

Notebook

It is no secret that notebooks are an essential tool for every writer. In addition to allowing you to jot down ideas and snippets of others' conversation—in order to pad your word count—it can be interesting to document your emotional journey through November. There are days when 1,667 words fly from your fingers as though channeled from a higher power and there are days when putting together a single sentence seems impossible. November can have tremendous emotional peaks and valleys, all worth documenting.

In order to write a novel, you must silence your Inner Editor. Even more so in November. So, I also like to use my notebook to doodle portraits of my Inner Editor. Then I doodle a giant bear clad in clown regalia mauling him beyond recognition.

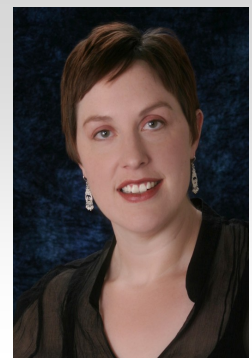
Stamina, endurance and resolve

It may be one of the shorter months of the year, but if you plan to write a novel in November, you must prepare yourself like a marathon runner. You must steel yourself mentally for the enormity of the task. You must recognize that there will be waxes and wanes of energy and enthusiasm. And you must learn to not look back because the goal is to cross the finish line, regardless of your state upon crossing it. And, most of all, you must have fun!

(Note: If this article was a piece of fiction and was written in November, I'd be 1.4% of the way there.)

To participate, sign up to at www.nanowrimo.org.

This year will mark Bentley McGrath's third year participating in NaNoWriMo. She hopes that her first two NaNo novels can one day be revised to resemble quality first drafts. You can find her at about.me/BentleyMcGrath.



SouthWest Writers' Financial Statement

| | January 1, 2011 | September 15, 2011 |
|--|--------------------|-----------------------|
| <u>Savings</u> | | |
| Wells Fargo Savings | 48,084.97 | 36,239.76 |
| Sandia Fed Credit Union Savings | 5.00 | 8.18 |
| Total Savings | 48,089.97 | 36,247.94 |
| <u>Checking</u> | | |
| Quick Books Checking | 3,060.72 | 4,999.72 |
| Total Savings & Checking | 51,150.69 | 41,247.66 |
| Accumulated Loss YTD: | | (9,903.03) |
| Loss as of June 30th was \$13,790.00. | | (13,790.00) |
| Loss reduction since June 30th: | | 3,887.00 |
| Forecast - 4th Qtr. Oct.-Dec. 2011* and Summary | | |

1. Current loss reflects \$12,000 withdrawn from Wells Fargo to cover Contest Expenses: paid Aug/Sept.
2. Membership up: +\$4,000 Aug. Total YTD: \$20,180; Target Bal+\$11,020 - Achievable
3. Banquet returns pending totals after event
4. Classes & Writing Labs - net income pending
5. Possible Fundraising/Capital Campaign to cover deficit discussion pending
6. Electronic Sage savings \$3,000 July thru December
7. Administrative Expenses & Overhead: major annual bills paid; regular monthly anticipated

*** For further info. Refer to June 30 Financial Report: July 2011 SAGE available online.**

SouthWest Writers - Financial Report for 2011: Year-to-Date through period ending September 15 Prepared by Terry Civello, Treasurer

On behalf of the Board, thank you to every member who joined, renewed, rejoined, or extended membership for a second year. As a Board, we've been working together to improve our finances. So far, we've reduced our loss of

\$13,790 from June by \$3,887. We may recoup more of our losses through membership, contests, classes, labs and other programs we will pilot during the next quarter. Your continued confidence in SouthWest Writers has inspired us to work harder for you.

Here's some good news:

Membership represents 30% of our annual revenue. We implemented our new Membership Renewal Plan in August and it has been a success. In August, we received a record-breaking \$4,000 in membership income for a total YTD of \$20,180. It's looking hopeful we can hit our \$30K target by December. Thanks to Rob Spiegel, Susan Alexis, and Larry Greenly for working behind the scenes to increase membership and revenue.

Guest Fee. In August, we implemented a \$5 guest fee for all visitors, including lapsed members. We are delighted with your overwhelming support for this policy. The \$5 guest fee has resulted in 50% of guests either joining SWW or renewing their memberships.

The Bi-Monthly Writing Contest and Classes. Both of these programs are clearing profits. Class attendees have given high marks to the topic offerings and kudos to the faculty. Classes are being scheduled for the first quarter of 2012. The Bi-Monthly contest has gone national as entries come in from all over the USA. Thanks, Rob, Kathy and Larry.

Writing Craft Labs. We're introducing a new type of educational program. Writing Labs are **interactive craft** intensives covering a specific topic or specialized genre issue. A recent membership survey indicated you are interested in memoir. So, we've scheduled four interactive **Memoir Writing Labs on October 15 and 29.**

Conferences. We did not hold a conference during 2011. The anticipated \$8,000 income loss contributed significantly toward our financial shortfall. We are pleased to announce that **a Script-Writing Conference is scheduled for Saturday, February 25.** Thanks to Rita Herther, Kathy Kitts and Melody Groves for organizing this project. Mark your calendars and watch for registration information on the website.

The Sage has been online since July. Our savings for the second half of 2011 is \$3,000. Thank you. Ruth Friesen.

Respectfully Submitted.

Terry Civello

Questions? Suggestions? Email me at terry-rose150@yahoo.com or leave a message at the SWW office: 505-265-9485.