

South West Sage

The Voice of South West Writers

Vol. 36 No.1

January 2020

Holiday Hootenanny and 30th Anniversary

A Fun-Filled Celebration of Volunteers, Achievement and Even a Birthday!



Gifts For All



Board members and volunteers assembled more than 150 gift bags for the event. It was barely enough! Everyone who attended received a gift bag and a ticket for the door prize raffle, which included a gift certificate for a massage, a crystal ball, and a huge hand-painted gourd.

80th Birthday

In addition to games, prizes, awards and music, **SUSAN COOPER**, a.k.a. The Mold Queen, celebrated her 80th birthday. Not only an auspicious occasion for her, it meant everyone got to eat more cake!



Volunteers: The Heart of SWW



In appreciation of their service to SWW in 2019, volunteers received certificates and gifts. **BACK:** Brenda Cole, Jacqueline Murray Loring, Roger Floyd and Donald DeNoon. **FRONT:** Su-Ellen Lierz, Dennis Kastendiek, Camille Singaraju, Barbara Warne, and Michelle Auron. Some honored volunteers did not attend or opted out of photographs, so not all are pictured.


2019 Board of Directors Recognized

SWW President Rose Marie Kern presented each member of her 2019 Board with a commemorative medallion. As turnabout is fair play, board members then similarly recognized the president.



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SouthWest Sage

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

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President's Corner Out with the Old, In with the New!

In a time when winter dictated a slower pace, it was a good opportunity to take stock of your work, your ambitions, and your dreams and to see what was working and what was not. As a teenager, I wanted to be a singer/actress on the Broadway stage, but life's interventions kinda shot that down. Thing is, 40 years later I can remember the fun I had then, but what I want to do now is very different.

Writing is the same way. My file cabinet and my computer files are full of ideas and partially begun projects that seemed good initially, but just don't inflame my imagination right now. That's okay. Who we are and what we want changes over time—that is the definition of LIFE.

Life cannot be stagnant. Life can jump from one form to another, from body to spirit, or spirit to body, but it always involves energy and transformation on some level. Your writing must evolve, must have life.

That is why some authors have a problem with completing a story. They are so wrapped up in the creation that they cannot let go. They write, then edit, then write again, then change their mind on how this or that should be worded. The work becomes stagnant unless it is completed and released, giving it life.

There has to be a moment when the author says, "It is done", and let go.

If there is more to say, well then, write another! Give this one a new perspective—its own life.

For me, 2020 is the time to stop writing articles of current relevance to the flying community. Will I abandon aviation entirely? No, I am going to start writing on aviation history, and want to try fiction (gasp), a mystery set in that world.

What direction will your writing take?

--Rose

Getting Personal by Elizabeth S. Layton

With new changes to Facebook and Twitter in 2020, it will be essential to stand out even more from the crowd.

According to Simple Grain, 80 percent of consumers stated they are more likely to do business with a company that offers a personalized experience through its social media posts. Generic posts are *out* and sharing authentically is *in*.

These personalized posts can be accomplished in a few simple steps:

Post business-specific photos you take and share with a customer-based question and answer.

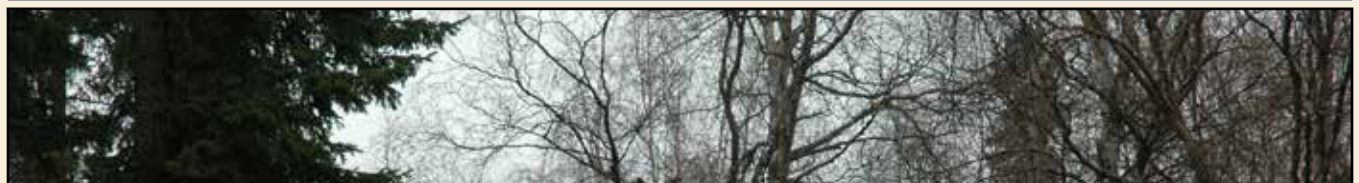
Share stories about how your company or services have helped or inspired and include an accompanying photo.

Authors - share a photo of how you see a character in your book.

Editors - take a before or after snapshot of an editing process and explain the steps you used to get from good to great.

Share events you are involved in and include an accompanying photo. This could include your next SWW meeting.

Yes, sharing photos is a trend. Photos are specifically unique to you and to your business. Of course, you get to decide how much you let your audience in with your photos but an original photo provides personalization and audience connection.



Shifting Mindsets and Environments

Each New Year brings writers opportunities to shift their identities and plan their writing projects accordingly. It is well known that half of New Year's resolutions are abandoned by the 15th and over 75 percent have flown out the window on the paper they were written by the last day of January. There might be a better way to make stick a writing resolution. What if you vowed to change your identifying mindset and then set up your surroundings to support the new shift?

After my latest book, *Complicated Lives: Free Blacks in Virginia, 1619-1865*, was published in August 2019, I embarked on several speaking engagements and attended numerous events to promote and sell books. I had also started a proposal for the next book and attracted an agent interested in selling it. But something was missing. I had not totally shifted my mindset and environment towards working on the next book. The files for *Complicated Lives* remained front and center in my file cabinets. My bookshelves overflowed with books that I had borrowed from the library.

It finally dawned that I needed to shift my mindset and create an environment to support the next book. While I could have done a superficial cleanout, I decided that because I had lived with *Complicated Lives* for six years between when I started researching it in 2013 and the time of its publication in 2019, I needed a more radical change. I swapped my guest bedroom and my home office. This necessitated removing not just the files that had supported *Complicated Lives* but every book from its resting place.

When nearly every book was on the floor, I finally understood why Marie Kondo recommends emptying your bookcases in *The Magic of Tidying Up*. Once items are on the floor, they cease to be treasured possessions but descend into a category closer to trash. From the

floor, books are easier to shed.

I returned three-quarters of the books I had borrowed from the library to support *Complicated Lives* because they lacked necessary information for the next book. Only a few remained relevant. During the move, I noticed that I had accumulated a huge collection of writing books that I had read and assimilated into my general knowledge. Some writing volumes were taking up space on my to-be read list. Unless I perceived an immediate use for an item (such as for *How to Blog a Book*), I placed the item in boxes to be either given away at the next Southwest Writers' meeting or donated to Savers. At the December SWW party, I announced that I was donating dozens of writing books and they were snapped up in minutes.

The books that I perceived as useful for my next project or for my life in general, I kept. After using carpet sliders to transport empty bookshelves into my new office (formerly guest bedroom), I found places for these books.

The paper files were another matter. I gathered up the material for *Complicated Lives* that I deemed worthy of being placed in an archive where future researchers could track my process. While you might think that computer disks would be sufficient, they are over-written with each saved draft. Also, given the pace of technology the current methods of savings files will be obsolete in 40 years when someone might want to address the underlying subject of *Complicated Lives*. Paper drafts can last forever as I can attest from having spent time at the British Archives in 2017 where I was brought items that were several hundred years old.

I also sorted the files for the next book to organize the material already collected. Changing my office has supported my shift toward working on the next book. Think of ways to shift your mindset toward what you seek from your writing life, and alter your environment accordingly.

Happy New Year!



by Sherri Burr

Sherri Burr is the author of 27 books, including *Complicated Lives: Free Blacks in Virginia: 1619-1865* (Carolina Academic Press, 2019). A graduate of Mount Holyoke College, Princeton University, and the Yale Law School, Burr transitioned from being a full-time law professor at the University of New Mexico to become a full-time author in 2017. She has been a member of Southwest Writers for 30 years and currently serves as the President of New Mexico Press Women.

Sign Up For These Classes NOW!

Enroll in classes at:
southwestwriters.com
or (505) 830-6034

Revising Fiction: Making Sense of the Madness

Instructor: Kirt Hickman

Write your novel and revise it to sell. With all the books, talks, classes, and workshops available on writing and self-editing, a writer can quickly become overwhelmed by advice. "Revising Fiction: Making Sense of the Madness" cuts through

the clutter and offers an organized, practical approach to self-editing that covers everything from planning your novel, to first draft, through revision, to final submission-quality manuscript. Each class will include a lecture, discussion, prepared exercises, and (time permitting) class



KIRT HICKMAN, author of the award-winning science-fiction thrillers *Worlds Asunder* and *Venus Rain*, was a technical writer for 14 years before branching into fiction. His methodical approach to self-editing has helped many students make sense of the mass of advice available to the novice writer. He teaches self-editing classes through SouthWest Writers. He has been a mentor in the SWW mentoring program, has spoken at numerous conferences, and contributes a monthly column titled Revising Fiction to the SouthWest Sage. He has also written *Mercury Sun*, the fantasy novel *Fabler's Legend* and two children's books. His writer's guide, *Revising Fiction—Making Sense of the Madness* won a New Mexico Book award for Best How-To and was a finalist in the international Ben Franklin Awards.

8-week Course
Thursdays: Feb. 6, 13, 20, 27 and
Mar. 5, 12, 19, 26
6 – 8 p.m.
\$200 SWW members, \$205 Osher,
\$210 nonmembers
SWW Office: 3200 Carlisle Blvd NE,
Suite 114

time to work on students' own writing projects. This course is geared toward book-length fiction, but the vast majority of the topics are applicable to short stories and creative nonfiction as well. There are no prerequisites or required materials.

Bring Your Memoir to Life By Using Storytelling Techniques

Instructor: Rob Spiegel

Your memoir will become much more vivid and engaging if you bring storytelling skills to your story. This class will look at successful ways to carve out your story and tell it in a compelling way. We'll look at plotting (yes, your life has a plot), scenes, dialog, managing sensitive information, and the ins and outs of the memoir market and self-publishing. If willing, students can share two-page excerpts from their memoir.

5-week Course
Tuesdays: Feb. 18 - March 17
3 – 5 p.m.
\$130 SWW members, \$135 Osher,
\$140 nonmembers
SWW Office: 3200 Carlisle Blvd NE,
Suite 114
Minimum students: 4; no maximum

ROB SPIEGEL has been writing for 40 years, making his living as a journalist, serving as senior editor for Design News, an international trade magazine. He has published fiction, nonfiction, poetry, and drama. He has published six books with major publishers such as St. Martin's Press. Rob has taught writing at UNM, CNM, Osher, and at dozens of writing conferences across the country. For 10 years, he owned a magazine (Chile Pepper) and a book publishing company. His weekly writing output includes journalism, blogs, webinars, fiction, poetry, and creative nonfiction.



Self-Publish Your Book with KDP Amazon

Instructor: Rose Marie Kern



KDP Amazon is a popular and inexpensive method by which authors can self-publish their books. This is a hands on class where Rose will walk you through

setting up your Amazon account, and upload your print books and/or e-books if they are ready to go, or get you started if you are still working on them.

2-week Course
Saturdays: Feb. 22 and 29
1 – 3 p.m.
\$59 SWW members, \$65 Osher,
\$69 nonmembers
SWW Office: 3200 Carlisle Blvd NE,
Suite 114
Once you're registered, Rose will send advance information needed for the class.



SWW members through the intricacies of self-publishing.

Class will cover:

- Setting up your Amazon Account
- Using Kindle tools for formatting and cover creation
- Uploading a manuscript
- Determining how much you should charge
- Keywords and categories for advertising on Amazon

Bring your laptop and let's get published!

With more than 1,000 articles and four books published, ROSE MARIE KERN thinks of herself primarily as a teacher. In addition to her own work, she has helped several

Saturday, January 4

10 DIALOGUE TRICKS to MAKE YOUR CHARACTERS “TALK GOOD”

with Melody Groves

Despite writers’ efforts to describe the place, setting, actions, motivations, and characters, what matters most is the dialogue. However, what characters say to each other or themselves tells the story. As humans, readers relate to characters—and that’s what writers want. In this talk, Melody will explore ten dialogue tricks to help you, the writer, create characters that seem real. They are to the writer, they might as well be to the reader.



Meeting, 10 a.m. - noon
Albuquerque Center for Spiritual Living

New Mexico native Melody Groves lives the life of a full-time freelance writer. She travels the world, meets amazing people, and writes about it all. Winner of numerous writing awards, she is the author of the award-winning Colton Brothers Saga five-book series set in 1860s southern New Mexico/Arizona (with book six, *Trail to Tin Town*, in the pipeline). In addition to that series, she penned *She Was Sheriff*, set in 1872 northern California. Its sequel, *Lady of the Law*, is also in the pipeline. Nonfiction books include: New Mexico Book Award winner *Hoist a Cold One! Historic Bars of the Southwest*; *Ropes, Reins, and Rawhide: All About Rodeo*, and *Butterfield’s Byways: The First Stagecoach Line and Overland Mail Route Across America* (Zia Award and NM/AZ Book Award finalist). *When Outlaws Wore Badges* is due for release in September 2020. Melody writes for True West, Enchantment Magazine, New Mexico Magazine, and Wild West among others. In 2018, she won the prestigious National Press Women’s Award for her article in True West Magazine. When not writing, she plays rhythm guitar (and tambourine) with the Jammy Time Band. Visit Melody’s website at MelodyGroves.net.

Workshop, 12:30 - 1:30 p.m.
(right after the meeting)

Free Help With NMPW Communications Contest Entries

Presented by New Mexico Press Women (NMPW)

This workshop is FREE for Members and Non-members and will be held at Albuquerque Center for Spiritual Living, Conference Rm

The NMPW organization is offering a Free workshop to offer guidance with the entry process for their Communications Contest. This workshop is Free of Charge to all SWW members and non-members.

The NMPW New Mexico Communications Contest is a very broad contest that includes all types of communications, and state winners can move on to the national competition.

For more information on the contest categories, deadlines, and submission requirements, see 2020 Communications Contest. All submissions, including books, must be done electronically via the contest entry website. During this workshop, NMPW board members will be available to guide you through the process.



Tuesday, January 21

INTERNATIONAL PUBLICATION OPPORTUNITIES for NEW MEXICO WRITERS: Or, My Magical Tour of Ireland

with Jacqueline Murray Loring

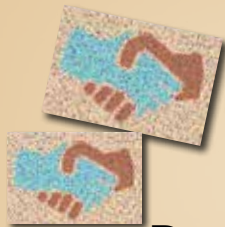


Winning an international publication contest gifted this writer with a magical Irish adventure and the publication of her first major book.

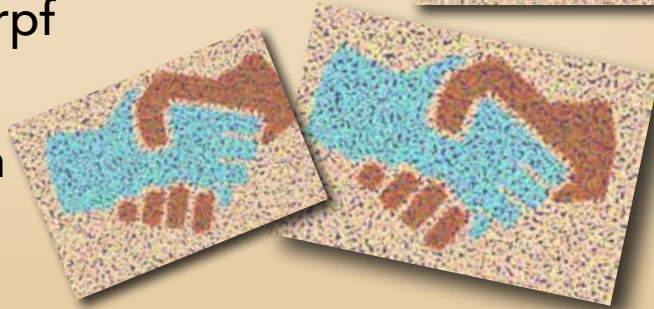
Jacqueline Murray Loring is an award-winning poet, a produced playwright, screenwriter, filmmaker, and educator who teaches classes in memoir, screenwriting, and publishing. Loring works as an editor and book consultant. Her two recent books, *KiMo Theatre Fact & Folklore* and *Vietnam Veterans Unbroken Conversations on Trauma and Resiliency*, were published in 2019. Visit her website at JacquelineMurrayLoring.com.

Look Who Joined SWW in November

Have you said 'Howdy' yet?



- Jacquelyn Clifton
- Ted Karpf
- Don Weston
- Wendy Cohan



ATTEND A SouthWest Writers MEETING

Saturday meetings start at 10 a.m.
Tuesday meetings start at 6:30 p.m.

SouthWest Writers members, “Writers Helping Writers,” meet the first Saturday and the third Tuesday of each month at the **Albuquerque Center for Spiritual Living, 2801 Louisiana Blvd. NE, Albuquerque, NM 87110** (just north of Menual, entrance is west of Louisiana). Meetings include information, education and networking opportunities for writers. Visitors are welcome.

TUESDAY NIGHT MEETINGS FEATURE MEMBER READINGS

Once a month, at the Tuesday night meeting, pre-selected member/authors read selections from their own work. Attend for the entertainment, the education and for great conversations.



Keep the Snack Table Stocked!

you leavened it
OR LABELED IT
OR LEVELED IT
or liquified it
You shared it.

Thank You

Twelve Ways to Show Character Emotions (Part III)

by Kirt Hickman

This month's column completes a three-part look at techniques that can help you show your characters' emotions effectively. So far, we've learned to:

1. Use emotional honesty.
2. Convey the source of the emotion.
3. Avoid clichés.
4. Use metaphor.
5. Use concrete details.
6. Use internal monologue.
7. Use dialog.
8. Show physical response.

Additional techniques include:¹

9. Have the character respond to the emotion in an unexpected way.

In this next example from my fantasy novel *Assassins' Prey*, Nick has grown up as a farmer. His motto is "Prudence, practicality, and hard work." That's his tag line. Throughout a book and a half, I've established Nick as a man who abhors killing. Though he's forced by his enemies to do so on many occasions, he always avoids violence when he can. He's also obsessively loyal to his friends.

In this passage, he and his friends have been attacked by a group of bandits called the Black Hand. They killed his mother some time ago and are working for the enemy.

Both groups are smarting from the encounter, and combat at this point can be easily avoided.

When the bandits turned and fled, Nick's friends slowed. All, that is, except Rancid who continued to charge the Black Hand. Nick hesitated for a moment as well. His farming days at home and three years with his uncle Harimon's caravan had taught him prudence—prudence, practicality and hard work.

Despite their losses on the road, the bandits still had them outnumbered eight to six. Several were wounded, but so were Nick and some of his

friends. Zen would barely be able to sit his horse if it hadn't been for the hasty prayer from Elles-sar. Nick had so many hurts he could no longer tell which were recent. The pain he felt most in the presence of the Black Hand, however, was the death of his mother.

That loss, and the taste of revenge so close at hand, drove him to follow Rancid in pursuit of the bandits. To the Abyss with prudence and practicality. To the Abyss with his friends if they chose to stay behind.

His decision in this passage is very out-of-character for him. That fact alone speaks more clearly than anything else about the depth of his pain.

10. Use external setting to mirror your character's emotions.

In the following example, Bill has just awoken from a coma. Dana has stepped away from his bedside to allow the nurse to assess his condition. Notice how I use the sunlight in the hospital room to reflect Dana's feelings.

The sun warmed the room through the durapane window, suddenly now bright and cheerful as if it had just risen. Dana returned to Bill's side and kissed him again, this time on the mouth. "I thought I'd lost you."

11. Use character action.

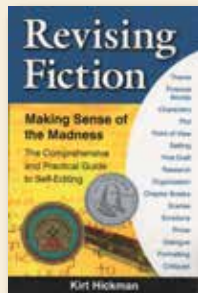
Gerri threw the contract onto the floor, snatched up her coat, and stormed from the room.

This example uses Gerri's actions to show her anger.

12. Express the emotion in a way that is specific to the character.

[President Powers] felt like she had when she was twelve, when she and her friends were playing in the surf off the South Carolina coast. She'd waded in too far and a large wave had washed over her, pulled her under.

China armed in Earth orbit and the United States ignorant. She couldn't breathe. A cold pressure



squeezed in around her, holding her down while she was powerless to prevent it. She heard Norton slam the table through the muffled sound that filled her ears. They were arguing, Norton and O'Leary, but only Norton's voice penetrated the president's consciousness with the words incompetent and consequences.

Finally, like it had when she was twelve, the wave receded and she came up for air. She banged her cane on the hardwood floor to bring civility back to the meeting.

In this example, I use a specific event from President Powers' childhood to express her sense of being overwhelmed in a way that is specific to her.

The techniques in this three-part column are valuable tools to master. If you'd like to see a more in-depth treatment of this topic, I recommend *Creating Character Emotions*, by Ann Hood.¹

1. Ann Hood, *Creating Character Emotions*, Story Press Books, 1998.



Need help with Self-Publishing?

Rose Marie will format and upload your completed manuscript for print or ebook on Amazon or Ingram Spark. She will assist you in creating your own KDP Amazon or Ingram Spark account, explain copyrights, ISBNs and uploading the final product. If you wish to do it yourself in the future she will walk you through it in a way that gives you the skills to do it yourself.

Reasonable Prices & References Available.
Initial consultation free.

Rose Marie Kern

www.rmktopublications.com

505-417-6790 author@swcp.com



It's time for our Winter Fiesta Party!



Thursday, January 16, 2020
5:30 PM - 8:00 PM
at the Bourbon Grill



Announcement of Book in Hand Award and Harris Award Winners



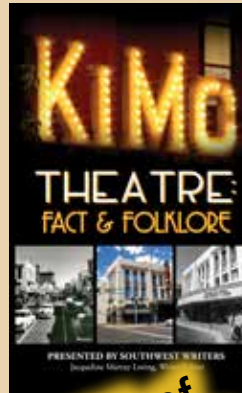
Special entertainment by The Harmonizers

Everyone is welcome!

Tickets \$30 per person. Can be purchased online or at the door.

nmbookassociation.org

KiMo Theater: Fact and Folklore



THE PERFECT GIFT

- Interesting
- Useful
- Can be shared with others
- Educational
- Fun!

Copies available at the meeting book table or at the SouthWest Writers office:
3200 Carlisle Blvd NE
Suite 114
Albuquerque, NM 87110

100% of sales benefit writers!

Retro 66 Looking For OTTO Airfield Stories

Retro 66 is a group dedicated to the preservation of Route 66, its icons, history and stories. Currently, members are searching for individuals who in any way participated in the U.S. Airway Mail Route from 1925 to 1962 and flew over, radioed or stopped at the Moriarty, N.M. OTTO Airfield (Flight Service Station or OTTO Emergency Airfield), Identifier KOEO, on the Amarillo to Los Angeles Route 34, located just off Route 66.



1933 - OTTO Flight Service Station



Present

Endeavoring to to restore the old OTTO building, Retro 66 hopes to obtain funding through grants and needs stories and anecdotes about the field and/or the women who worked at the field. These women recorded weather observations every 30 minutes and relayed them to



Arrows on the OTTO Airfield still point out the route from Amarillo to Los Angeles flown by mail pilots from 1925 to 1962.

pilots flying the route.

While the group knows that finding these stories is a longshot, the right story could make all the difference for grant applications. Contact Roger Holden: relivetheroute66@gmail.com

Judges Needed For National Veterans Writing Contest

The VA is looking for volunteer judges for its annual creative writing contest. Most entries are less than 850 words or less than 48 lines of poetry and will be judged at the end of February. Judges are sought for poetry, essays, or personal experiences. Each of these three major categories is divided into humorous, inspirational, patriotic, or other. There is a separate category for Short, Short Story - 1,000 words or less - and another category for Short Script Under 850 Words. Each judge will be sent electronic files with all entries as word documents without the authors' names. Judges read as many of the entries in whatever categories they feel comfortable judging. For example, if someone only wants to read poetry, they do not need to read prose or scripts. The number of entries judges choose to read is up to them. The average number of entries submitted at the Albuquerque VA hospital is 30.

Judges can expect to receive entries on Wednesday, January 29 and must return them no later than Monday, February 10. Local winners will be announced on Tuesday, February 11.

Judges will receive the files directly from Catherine Ivie, Recreational Therapist at the VA, and they may contact her at Catherine.Ivie@va.gov or at 366-2030.

If you are interested in volunteering your time, please contact Jim Tritten at jimtritten@comcast.net.

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*Genre fiction: mystery, suspense, thriller, fantasy, sci-fi, and romance



The Sage Writing Challenge

FEBRUARY

You are lovelorn columnist, Dear Arthur, and have received the following letter: *DA - I love _____ more than _____. What should I do?* Fill in the blanks and answer the letter in 500 words or less.

Email submissions to sage@swwriters.com

CHALLENGE AND ARTICLE SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

Payment is in bylines and clips. **Deadline is the 15th of the month prior to the next issue.** Standard article lengths are from 300-1,000 words; certain Sage Challenges may set more specific word count requirements (see the Challenge description box, above). Submissions may be edited for accuracy, readability and length. Submissions must be tasteful; free from profanity, explicit sex or violence, etc.

Send all submissions as either standard text in an email or in a Word document in 12 pt. size. Single spaced. Do not get fancy with formatting or fonts.

SouthWest SAGE

The SouthWest Sage newsletter welcomes submissions focusing on all aspects of research, writing, and publishing in any genre. See past issues of SouthWest Sage for the types of articles we publish.

Here are four ways you may be included:

- Write an article for the Sage related to the craft of writing, getting published, etc.
- Enter stories, poems, or articles inspired by the monthly writing challenge announced in each Sage.
- Send in a short story/poem/essay of your own—on any topic (inclusion in the Sage is subject to the discretion of the editor).
- Enter artwork/photographs related to writing in general or accompanying your stories.

Be sure to read, understand and follow the guidelines for submission. **Submissions that do not comply with the guidelines will not be considered.**

Send questions or submissions to:

Kathy Schuit
SouthWest Sage Editor
sage@swwriters.com



The January challenge was to write 500 words in any genre, to include the phrase: *The carpet wore a floral pattern.*

It's Coming Along Fine

by Neil Elliott

The carpet wore a floral pattern that must once have seemed cheerful, but now was worn from traffic, and clashed with the garish fabric on the seats. I wonder whether the same person had been responsible for purchasing both, out of lack of taste or, perhaps, a taste for cruelty?

A nurse calls my name; I wave. I'm a little unsteady getting to my feet, not clinically significant, just what people my age expect.

She's been on her feet a while: her perfunctory smile is tight-lipped, her stride stiff as she leads me down a nondescript corridor to a hard plastic chair under fluorescent lights in a cold, windowless room.

"Please take a seat, the doctor will be right with you." Of course he will, eventually, I think. I sound in my own head like a grouch. Fifteen or 20 minutes, I reckon.

That's just time enough to work out the plot point that's been vexing me for days.

Ah, but I should have brought in my laptop. It's so much faster than pen and paper. I did bring my fountain pen: my thoughts flow so smoothly, not like scratching away with a ballpoint! —But I didn't bring paper, and looking around the exam room, I see only paper towels . . .

No matter. I can work out the plot question in my head, in these brief minutes alone, then transcribe the solution when I get back to the car.

Focus. Everything hinges on the transition from

chapter 3. But what if I move that transition to the end of chapter 3, as a sort of cliff-hanger? Build anticipation—

—Hi, Doctor!

. . .

The sunset is astonishing, sky and mountains competing in shades of cobalt blue . . . and now it's dark. Still comfortably cool, pleasantly still, and the patio table and chairs have dried after the afternoon rain. With a soft growl of protest, my dog has followed me out the back door; she'd rather be upstairs with my wife.

I pull my Stetson down over my brow and use a plastic butane lighter to light the mess of brown wrapping paper and kindling in the chiminera, then two decorative candles on the table. They cast a pool of flickering light, just

enough for making some notes in this quiet. I palm my fountain pens (because nothing lets my thoughts flow as smoothly) and open my leather-bound journal (expensive, but that's why I use it only for my important writing—like that transition from chapter 3).

Calm. Think. What was that solution—yes! Got it. Yes, that's sensible; no, it's profound. Has anyone else seen the matter this way? Doubtful. Quick, get it on paper, just so—

But now, the dog beckons with a scratch at the door, a soulful, ancient rebuke on her face. There, standing in warm light upon the stairs, is my wife, soft lavender in her brown eyes, deep cinnamon in her liquid voice: "Are you coming to bed soon?"

I'll find some quiet time to write tomorrow.



Light Illuminating

by Brenda Cole

Life was supposed to be simple. John staggered to his feet and crumpled into the nearest chair. His throat convulsed trying to keep his stomach contents from adding to the slowly growing stain on the floor. The carpet wore a floral pattern, the faint outline of it shone through the spreading pool of blood.

He closed his eyes against the reflection of the candlelight on the stain. The clock in the hall chimed the hour—four—five—six—dawn would be breaking any moment. God, he needed a drink, but he thought he'd heard the shattering of glass, so the brandy was probably a lost cause. He slowly opened his eyes, averting his head towards the thick bronze-colored curtains obscuring the windows of his study.

Feeling every bit of his forty years he rose and made his way to the windows. Rose gold light caressed his face as he threw open the drapes. If only it could warm his still freezing heart. John considered himself to be a practical sort of man. Tonight had shaken him so badly he still couldn't settle the trembling of his hands. Sighing, he leaned back against the slowly warming window glass and surveyed the ruin of what had been his pristine study.

The over-turned chair just needed to be righted and, though it would take a while, the tumbled mass of books could be reshelved. Then, yes, there

it was, the shattered glass of the decanter with its 12-year-old brandy, adding to the miasma that was the now-ruined, old carpet. He sternly told his stomach to behave and quickly pushed the carpet into a tight roll. The blood had only seeped through in two places. He rose and opened the side door then quickly tossed the carpet—blood, glass shards and all out into the yard.

The sun chose that moment to rise above the trees. As the golden light bathed the carpet, smoke began to rise from it. Within moments the stain had vanished as if the carpet had never been soaked with blood. He turned and rapidly opened every drape in the room. The rising notes of the morning doves hung in the air as the newborn sun removed the last traces of blood from the floor and, much to his amazement, his own hands.

He knew he needed to change out of his torn shirt, so he made his way up to his room. Even with the early morning light, shadows still lurked in the corners of his room. He reached to his left and grasped the old sword from the wall. Thrusting it before himself, he strode to the windows and ripped open the drapes. Dust motes swirled in the air currents, but he was the only living thing in the room.

He looked out across the sunlit fields to the dark scrap of forest. He blessed his partner Alec, again. If Alec hadn't convinced him that a monster, a real vampire roamed that forest. John would never have seen another sunrise.

The Carpet Wore a Floral Pattern

by Léonie Rosenstiel

They say that some people have an intuition about what to wear. The carpet wore a floral pattern, from back when they called Iran “Persia.” It was a family heirloom. Mara, the hostess, had on a red velvet pantsuit that matched both the carpet’s background and the sofa.

As the guests began to arrive for her New Year’s Eve party, Mara started feeling uneasy. Tom had one of those hideous red-and-green polka-dotted bow ties. A big one. Looked as if it might have a tiny squirt-bottle hidden inside. Mary came in a vertically-striped taffeta number with orange in it that clashed horribly with the décor. Harriet arrived wearing purple silk. Don’s brown velvet jacket looked just awful as he sat on the red sofa.

Mara’d broken her own rules that evening. She’d told Harriet that it was OK to bring an “extra man” who’d said he wanted to meet Mara. Mara herself didn’t mind hosting couples even when she didn’t have a date.

“This is Ted,” Harriet said, as the final guest entered. He was tall, sandy-haired and slender. “Glad to meet you, Ted.” Mara smiled as if she meant it.

Odd, but somehow, Ted seemed to belong. The color of his tie matched the background of the carpet. And the sofa. Mara began to relax as they made small talk for a while. He got her some wine and a plateful of food

from her own buffet. Looking at Ted gave her some relief from seeing all her guests clashing with the room, although Mara didn’t quite realize this consciously.

By the time he kissed her at midnight, it all seemed quite natural.

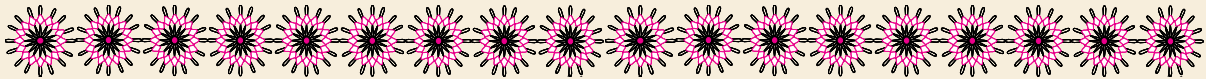
Not until their tenth wedding anniversary did Ted fess up. Mara knew, from the beginning, that he’d met Harriet before that fateful New Year’s Eve party. And that he’d heard about Mara and her stylish ways before that, from Harriet herself. It was a nice compliment. But Harriet wasn’t all that forthcoming about the earlier conversations she’d had with Ted. Mara’d always tried to dismiss her curiosity.

What Ted admitted, the night of their tenth wedding anniversary, was that, before he’d met Harriet, whom he’d first seen walking down the street with Mara, he’d been taking some of those “how to manipulate women” courses on the internet. One of the techniques was to get to the target through a friend. But Ted had created a further nuance. He’d decided that, by enlisting the help of Mara’s friends, he could make himself the only person in the room whom Mara wanted to look at, all night, simply by making it hard for her to look at anyone else, thereby allowing him hours to use all the other tricks in his arsenal.

“Can you forgive me?”

“Absolutely!” Mara laughed.

Perhaps some people really do have an intuition about what to wear. Others cheat.



The Photographer

by G.I. Pendit

Under the congealing blood pool the carpet wore a floral pattern that I knew was going to mess up my photos. It’s garrish, red-splotched impressionist roses made it too hard to define the difference between the end of the blood and the start of tight wool loops.

I focused my lens in closer to try and capture some defining line, but that only pushed the body out of frame. *Damn it.* Clear documentation of the scene, the whole scene, is crucial.

For months, the police and the newspapers had been running extra shifts to find the serial murderer of middle-aged housewives—just like the one lying at my feet. Recently, they dubbed him the “Kodak Killer” because, within days of each murder, the husbands received photos in the mail.

A ridiculous name, in my opinion. Kodak’s a bankrupt company that once sold cheap cameras and film. This killer obviously has more going for him than that. Why not “Nikon Killer”? Top of the line cameras, like mine. My work deserves the best.

I shifted positions, to the other side of the body. *Yes, there it is.* A thin line of light barely glinted off the edge of the crimson flow, but it was enough to separate blood from the hideous carpet’s design. *Perfect.*

I snapped 10 shots and then 10 more for good measure.

“You about ready to wrap it up, Bob? The coroner’s here for the body.”

“Yep. I got what I need.”

Sergeant Murphy held the door as I exited the crime scene and the coroner’s gurney entered. The sergeant was a good guy, a family man.

I wondered what his wife did while he was at work.

Introducing the SWW Board of Directors for 2020



EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

PRESIDENT

ROSE MARIE KERN

With more than 1,000 articles and four books published, Rose Marie Kern thinks of herself primarily as a teacher.

Though most of her work has been connected with aviation, she also writes about gardening, solar energy and sustainable living practices. In addition to her own work, she has helped dozens of SWW members through the intricacies of self-publishing and is the editor of numerous SWW publications.



SECRETARY

PATRICIA WALKOW

Patricia Walkow is an award-winning author. Her work was honored in the 2016 William Faulkner Literary Competition. A full-length biography, *The War Within, the Story of Josef*, won first place awards in national and international competitions. She writes short stories and essays and has contributed to both online and in-print anthologies, newspapers, and magazines. Ms. Walkow was a former systems manager in a Fortune 200 company and is a member of the Corrales Writing Group. She lives in Corrales with her husband, cats, and one very spoiled dog.



VICE PRESIDENT ELIZABETH LAYTON

Within her 20-plus years as a freelance writer, Elizabeth Layton has been a journalist, science writer, creative writer, screenwriter, copywriter, and online content writer. She has written for the U.S. Forest Service, the Durango Herald newspaper, and a wide variety of online websites. Elizabeth has a Bachelor's degree in Communications and a Master's in Creative Writing for Film, Television, and Gaming.



paper, and a wide variety of online websites. Elizabeth has a Bachelor's degree in Communications and a Master's in Creative Writing for Film, Television, and Gaming.

TREASURER

JENNIFER BLACK

Jennifer Black joined Southwest Writers in 2017. Answering a 2018 call to volunteer, she offered to help



out at the business table, which led to an invitation to join the board in 2019. She says her list of writing accomplishments is short: an article published in the Sage Anthology and First Place in the David Morrell Prize for Fiction through the Albuquerque Museum's 2018 Author Festival. She has been self-employed for 12 years and lives west of Rio Rancho with her husband.

BOARD MEMBERS AT LARGE

MICHELLE AURON, Powerpoint and Computers

Michelle Auron is originally from the Chicagoland area, has lived in Albuquerque since 2011, and loves it here. She's is/has been an RN, a music teacher, a massage therapist, IT (Information technology) administrator, and application analyst (but now she knows what she wants to be when she grows up – a writer!)

Michelle has written a series of newspaper articles back in Chicagoland, and is looking forward to incorporating the knowledge and skills received from the wonderful SWW workshops she has attended.



BRENDA COLE, Writing Contest Chair

A few decades ago, along the banks of the Mississippi River, Brenda Cole learned the art of storytelling from her father and grandfather. Most days the fish weren't biting, but the stories flew thick and heavy.

Brenda discovered she enjoyed writing down these stories and inventing her own. She won her first writing contest at age 13 for an original science fiction short story.

She continued writing through high school, undergraduate and two graduate degrees. The majority of her writing has been in nonfiction: Biology, Ecology, Archaeology, Genealogy and memoir. She has been an educator for all ages from preschool through high school. She has also taught biology at the college level and was an Assistant Professor of Western Medicine.

Currently she shares her time between being an educator, artist, author and devout amateur genealogist.





ROGER FLOYD, Signage and Set Up

Roger Floyd received his BA degree in Biology from Trinity University in 1963, and his PhD degree in Virology from Baylor College of Medicine in 1971. He has performed virology research at Baylor College of Medicine and Methodist Hospital in Houston, at Duke University, at The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and has worked in clinical virology and clinical immunology at The University of Cincinnati. Most recently he performed bio-terrorism research for Clean Earth Technologies in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. In addition to numerous scientific papers, he has written three science fiction novels and several short stories and a couple of novellettes. He has lived in Albuquerque since retiring from scientific research in 2010, and continues to

work on science fiction novels and stories.

MELODY GROVES, Conference/Class Coordinator

New Mexico native Melody Groves lives the life of a full-time freelance writer. She travels the world, meets amazing people, and writes about it all. Winner of numerous writing awards, she is the author of the award-winning Colton Brothers Saga five-book series set in 1860s southern New Mexico/Arizona (with book six, *Trail to Tin Town*, in the pipeline). In addition to that series, she penned *She Was Sheriff*, set in 1872 northern California. Its sequel, *Lady of the Law*, is also in the pipeline. Nonfiction books include: New Mexico Book Award winner *Hoist a Cold One! Historic Bars of the Southwest; Ropes, Reins, and Rawhide: All About Rodeo*, and *Butterfield's Byways: The First Stagecoach Line and Overland Mail Route Across America* (Zia Award and NM/AZ Book Award finalist). *When Outlaws Wore Badges* is due for release in September 2020. Melody writes for True West, Enchantment Magazine, New Mexico Magazine, and Wild West among others. In 2018, she won the prestigious National Press Women's Award for her article in True West Magazine. When not writing, she plays rhythm guitar (and tambourine) with the Jammy Time Band. Visit Melody's website at MelodyGroves.net.



JACQUELINE MURRAY LORING, Membership

Jacqueline Murray Loring is an award-winning poet and short filmmaker, a produced playwright, screenwriter and educator. In 2012, she won the Doire Press Irish International Poetry Prize for her collection *The History of Bearing Children*, published in Galway. Loring works as an editor and book and script consultant. In 2019, *KiMo Theatre: Fact & Folklore* was presented and published by SouthWest Writers and in June 2019, *Vietnam Veterans Unbroken: Conversations on Trauma and Resiliency* was published by McFarland & Co, Publishers.

SAM MOORMAN, Facilities Manager

Sam Moorman has published poems and stories in various anthologies. He prints an annual newsletter called *Hollyday Times*, and is working on a short story collection called *Beginnings*. He has a Creative Writing M.A. from San Francisco State.



LÉONIE ROSENSTIEL, Media and PR

Léonie Rosenstiel has been a freelance writer, for decades, working in many different genres, from record liner notes, to translations from French and Spanish, to a college-level textbook for Schirmer Books, a division of Macmillan. She was Special Projects Editor for Current Musicology, then received grants from the American Council of Learned Societies as well as the Rockefeller Foundation to do research for her 1982 biography, *Nadia Boulanger: A Life in Music* (W.W. Norton; still in print). She and her late husband ran a small publishing house that produced the reference book,

Literary Agents of North America. Recently, she has been trying her hand at fiction; several of her short stories have been published in the SWW Sage newsletter. Léonie has also written articles for newsletters and edited them. She can't recall a time during the past 30 years when she wasn't serving on one nonprofit board or another.

KATHY LOUISE SCHUIT, Sage Newsletter Editor

Kathy finds bliss in the creative combining of words and pictures in various art and practical forms. She is the writer/illustrator of the award-winning children's picture book, *Where Does This Line Go?*. In 2019, she decided to give teaching a try with classes and presentations for SWW and other groups. Her overlapping past careers include award-winning journalism, magazine editing, restaurant ownership, and innkeeping. She also serves as Recording Secretary for the local, Yucca Branch, of the National League of American Pen Women. Visit her website and blog: openwithdesign.com





CAMILLE SINGARAJU, Historian

Camille Singaraju’s 30-plus years of managing healthcare data provides the background for developing systems with which to manage SWW reports. The goal is to be able to access all historical reports quickly. She joined SWW to learn to write legal and logical arguments for the moral right of everyone to have access to clean air and water, and healthcare.

KATHY WAGONER, Website Master

Kathy Wagoner has been a member of SouthWest Writers since 2006. She is a previous webmaster and Sage editor and currently posts monthly interviews of SWW members on the organization’s website. Science fiction and fantasy are the genres she enjoys writing the most, but in 2012 Casa de Snapdragon Publishing released her first book, *This New Mountain*, the memoir of a private investigator and grandmother.



DAN WETMORE, Awards/Procedures Manual



Dan Wetmore is a North Carolina transplant who landed in New Mexico after 20 years’ peripatations with the U.S. military, during which he performed tours of duty in a nuclear missile silo as an ICBM launch officer, as an Instructor of Ethics and Logic at the US Air Force Academy, launching satellites aboard decommissioned ICBMs, and overseeing a communications post in southern Turkey. His enduring and endearing wife, two mischievous sons, one semi-comatose cat and a taciturn, slightly menacing turtle keep Dan grounded, challenged and grateful. He is the author of *My Mother’s Gentle Unbecoming: The Absenting of Alzheimer’s—Lines from the Sidelines*, his first published book of poetry.

SWW Board Meeting Summarized December, 2019

1. Budget for 2020 started the December board meeting discussion. Current and incoming board members participated in the discussion.
2. Contest winners will have an opportunity to read some of their work at an upcoming Tuesday night meeting.
3. Bookworks will host a reading and book signing in March for winners of the 2019 SWW Writers Contest. Other venues are being researched.
4. Financials: SWW currently has a net profit of \$4,339.79 for 2019.
5. Current Membership: 377 as of December 1, 2019.
6. A “Business of Writing” conference for 2020 is in the planning stages.
7. A student summer writing program is in the planning stages.

NEW BUSINESS:

4. Next board meeting it Tuesday, January 7 at Chez Axel Restaurant.

Railyard Fictions Writing Competition



Submissions open Feb 1 through March 15, 2020

The Railyard Fictions writing competition is looking for poems, short stories (flash fiction), and other fictions that take place in, and significantly feature, the Fire Station, other railyard buildings and the grounds of the Albuquerque railyards. The goal is to imaginatively re-inhabit the Fire Station and other places in the Albuquerque Railyards in ways that encourage the establishment of a vibrant community on these grounds.

There will be three categories of award – poems, short stories, and other written fictions.

Winners grant the Alibi first North American serial publication rights. Winners will read their work (or allow the work to be read) at a public event and grant the right for that event to be filmed and otherwise recorded and grant the right for the film and/or recordings to be published and presented to the public. Authors retrain all other rights.

Details, rules and submission at:

<https://saap.unm.edu/railyard-fictions/index.html>

Please submit .docx files.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR WRITERS

Be an Artist-in-Residence

Artists have created art in national parks since the late 19th century when famed Hudson River School painters captured the majestic views of our nation's western parks. Today, the sights and sounds in national parks continue to inspire artists in more than 50 residency programs across the country.

Whether staying in a remote wilderness cabin at Denali National Park and Preserve in Alaska or contemplating history at Herbert Hoover National Historic Site in Iowa or working in a contemporary studio overlooking the stone-lined fields at Weir Farm National Historic Site in Connecticut, these programs provide artists with unique opportunities to create works of art in varied natural and cultural settings.

WRITEAWAYS

New Mexico

Rancho los Milagros and Viento del Rio
Abiquiú, NM

August 1-8, 2020

The Writeaway in New Mexico is located on a 22-acre ranch at a bend in the Chama River in Abiquiu, New Mexico. The ranch is approximately 50 miles north of Santa Fe, 65 miles west of Taos, about 115 miles from the Albuquerque airport.

www.writeaways.com/write-away-in-new-mexico



There are programs for visual artists, writers, musicians, and other creative media. Programs vary, but residencies are typically 2 to 4 weeks in length and most include lodging. Often artists are invited to participate in park programs by sharing their art with the public.

Each park has its own application process and timeline, so please visit a given park's website for specifics.



Residency Programs Across the National Park System

ADULT EVENT

Writing for Theatre and Film

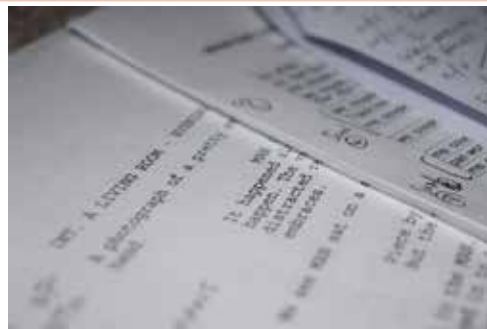


Photo credit: screenplay-2651055_1280

With Albuquerque's strong theatre community, where writers have many local opportunities to develop new projects, and with new opportunities in film on the horizon, now is the time to refine your skills as a script writer. Bring a script you are already working on to these weekly sessions. The workshop will include a one-on-one dramaturgy session with the instructor, Nancy Griffiths, to review your script. Nancy has an MFA in Dramaturgy and over 14 years of experience in the national professional regional theatre field and entertainment industry.

For writers who already have some experience in the theatre and/or film fields—workshop limited to 8 participants. Registration required—please call the number below.

Saturdays, February 8 — April 11 • 11:00 a.m. — 12:30 p.m.

South Broadway Library

1025 Broadway SE 87102 505.764.1742

For more information call 311 TTY users call Relay NM or 711

www.abqlibrary.org



the PUBLIC LIBRARY
ALBUQUERQUE and BERNALILLO COUNTY



Writing Contests You Can Enter NOW

CALL FOR ENTRIES Deadline: February 14, 2020 2020 Next Generation Indie Book Awards

Calling all indie book authors and publishers—including small presses, mid-size independent publishers, university presses, e-book publishers, and self-published authors who have a book written in English released in 2018, 2019 or 2020 or with a 2018, 2019 or 2020 copyright date to enter the most rewarding book awards program.

It offers over 70 Categories—more than 70 awards—with over 70 monetary prizes totaling more than \$10,000 in cash, including \$1,500 cash prizes plus trophies for best fiction book and best non-fiction book, \$750 cash prizes plus trophies for second best fiction book and non-fiction book and \$500 cash prizes plus trophies for third best fiction book and non-fiction book.

If you would like to receive greater recognition, monetary prizes, awards and exposure for your books, here is an opportunity not to miss. Enter the 2020 Book Awards

at indie-bookawards.com



New Mexico Press Women

- **2020 Communications Contest**

This contest is open to everyone and has many categories.

The 2020 Communications Contest is now open. Full information is on the [NFPW website](#), but here are some shortcuts:

To see the list of categories and their descriptions, [click here](#). The category descriptions include information about what the judges will look for in each category. With 61 categories, most of which have subcategories, there are opportunities for virtually any form of communication entry, including reporting, writing, photography, radio and television, web and social media, public relations, and more.



- **2020 Zia Book Award**

This contest is open to women with published children's books.

An outstanding female New Mexico writer will be honored for her work in children's literature next spring when her book receives the prestigious Zia Book Award.

New Mexican women writers are invited to submit their books by February 1, 2020 for consideration for the award given each year by New Mexico Press Women at the annual spring conference. To be eligible to receive the award, selected winners must read at the award luncheon during the 2020 conference on March 21 at the Canyon Club in Albuquerque.

The 2020 Zia Award will be given to the author of an outstanding children's book published in 2017, 2018, or 2019.



New Mexico Press Women

2020 Conference Early Registration is now open

When: March 20-21 **Where:** Canyon Club, site of the 2019 conference

How Much: Register between now and December 31 for the DISCOUNTED RATE of \$150 and your 2020 DUES will be included at no additional cost.

The 2020 Conference theme is "Finding the Story: From Investigative Journalism to Mystery Writing."

Register at <http://newmexicopresswomen.org>

Left Coast Crime



Left Coast Crime #31

Southwest Sleuths

Albuquerque, New Mexico
April 8-11, 2021

INFORMATION AND REGISTRATION:

www.leftcoastcrime.org/2021/AboutLCC.html

Each Left Coast Crime Convention raises money to support a local literacy organization with funds collected through silent and live auctions, and the annual Quilt Raffle.

Left Coast Crime is an annual mystery convention sponsored by mystery fans—readers and authors. Conventions have been held from Anchorage to El Paso, from Boulder to Hawaii, and various locations in between. In 2021 it'll be in Albuquerque!

SOUTHWEST
WRITERS
WELCOMES
HOPEFUL AND
PUBLISHED
WRITERS



ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP INCLUDES:

- Twenty three (23) meetings annually with opportunities for large-scale networking as well as presentations by acclaimed writers, editors, or publishers.
- Your personal author page on the SWW website.
- A link on the SWW website to your personal homepage.
- The SouthWest Sage Newsletter – in addition to providing organizational news to members, members are offered writing challenges and opportunities to have their work published.
- Discounted prices for writing-related conferences, classes and workshops sponsored by SWW.
- Opportunities on both the website and in meetings to make announcements about your successes or personal, upcoming writing events.
- Discounts at selected local businesses.

Annual SouthWest Writers Membership:

Individual: \$80
Student: \$25 (requires proof of student status)
Outside U.S.: \$75
Lifetime Membership: \$750

GIVE TO OTHER WRITERS:

- Invite a guest to a meeting.
- Encourage guests to become members so they too can enjoy the many benefits SWW offers.
- Give annual SWW memberships as gifts to the writers you know.
- Donate an annual SWW membership or partial membership to the SWW scholarship fund.



Board of Directors

Rose Marie Kern, President
Elizabeth Layton, Vice President
Jennifer Black, Treasurer
Patricia Walkow, Secretary

Michelle Auron, Meeting Media and Video
Brenda Cole, Writing Contest
Roger Floyd, Signage/Setup
Melody Groves, Classes/Conferences
Jacqueline Loring, Membership
Sam Moorman, Facilities Manager
Leonie Rosenstiel, Media/Public Relations
Kathy Schuit, Sage Editor
Camille Singaraju, Historian
Kathy Wagoner, Website
Dan Wetmore, Procedures/Awards

The SWW Board of Directors meets on the first Tuesday of each month from 6 - 8 p.m. at Chez Axel restaurant located on the northeast corner of Montgomery and San Pedro. Members are encouraged to attend.

SWW Office:

3200 Carlisle Blvd NE, Suite 114
Albuquerque, NM 87110
phone (505) 830-6034
email: info@swwriters.com
website: www.southwestwriters.com

