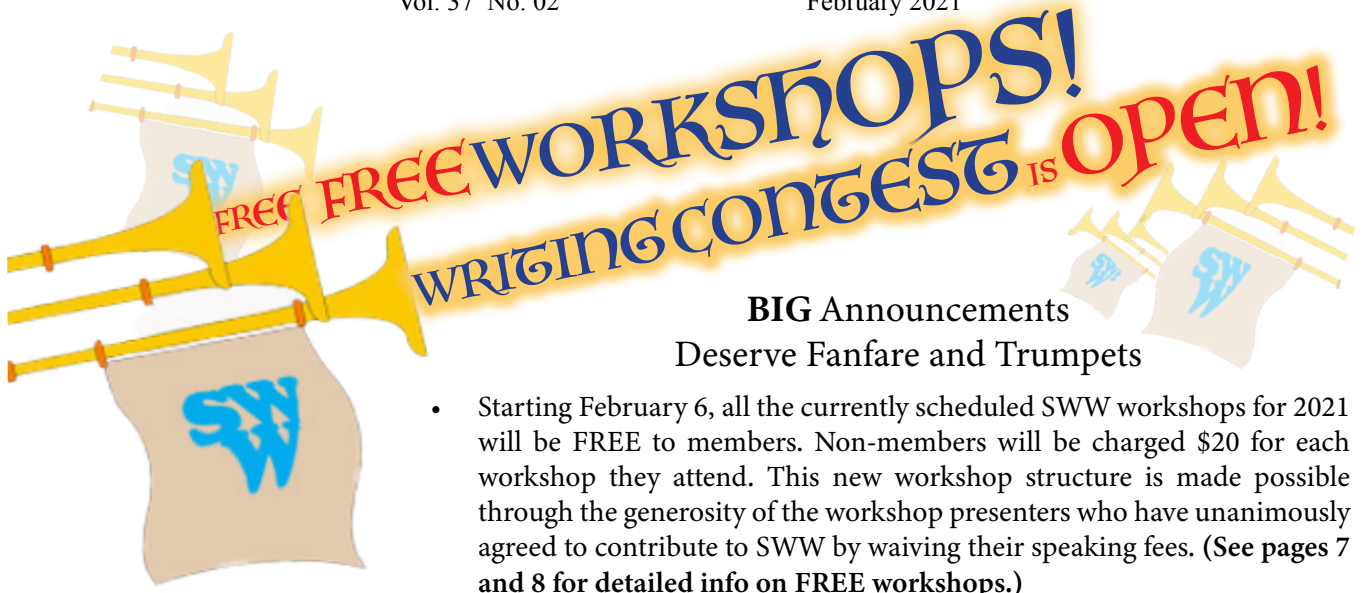


SouthWest Sage

The Voice of SouthWest Writers

Vol. 37 No. 02

February 2021



Hear Ye, Hear Ye!

BIG Announcements Deserve Fanfare and Trumpets

- Starting February 6, all the currently scheduled SWW workshops for 2021 will be FREE to members. Non-members will be charged \$20 for each workshop they attend. This new workshop structure is made possible through the generosity of the workshop presenters who have unanimously agreed to contribute to SWW by waiving their speaking fees. (See pages 7 and 8 for detailed info on FREE workshops.)
- The annual SWW Writing Contest opens for entries on February 1. Rules and guidelines appear below and continue on next page.

SouthWest Writer's 2021 Writing Contest is Open For Entries!

First-, second-, and third-place winners will be awarded in 12 categories of fiction and nonfiction prose and 8 categories of poetry. The entries must be original, unpublished (definition of "unpublished" appears on the online submission page), and in English. You do not have to be a member of SouthWest Writers to enter.

ENTRY WINDOW: February 1, 2021 - Midnight May 31, 2021 (Mountain Time)

FEES: \$10 per entry

SUBMISSION: Online only, via the SWW website: southwestwriters.com.

AWARDS:

- First-place winners receive \$50, second-place \$25, and third-place \$10. All winners will receive award certificates and have the option to be published in SWW's annual contest anthology.
- To preserve the competitiveness of the contest, there must be at least five entries per category to make three awards, four entries to make two, and at least three entries to award a single prize. If any particular category doesn't receive enough entries to make awards, entrants in that category will be given the option to have their entry transferred to a sister category or be given a refund.
- The top three award winners in each category will be announced — in no particular order — at the SWW Saturday meeting on July 3, 2021. Awards will be presented during SWW's annual business meeting on Saturday, October 2, 2021. Copies of the winner's anthology will be available for purchase at that time. If a winner cannot be present to receive the award, it will be sent by regular mail. Winners' names will be posted on the SWW website and in the SouthWest SAGE newsletter after October 2, 2021.

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES:

- Prose (up to 3,500 words) & Poetry (up to 250 lines). Please, no politically charged material!
- Submit only as a .doc or .docx file.

- Do not include your name anywhere in your submissions. Submissions which exceed word/line count or contain author's names will be automatically disqualified, with no refunds given.
- All entries must use Times New Roman 12 pt (title may be 14 pt). Prose must be double-spaced. Poetry may be single- or double-spaced.

CATEGORIES:

- PROSE (Fiction or Non-Fiction)
Animals; Biography; Crime/Mystery; Fantasy/Futuristic/Sci Fi; Historical; Humor; Horror/Suspense/Thriller; Memoir; Romance; Social Consciousness; Spiritual; Travel
- POETRY (Free Verse or Formed)
Animals; Holidays; Humor; Love; Loss; Nature; Social Consciousness; Spiritual

JUDGING CRITERIA:

- In order to maximize your chances of success, the full judging criteria have been published on the SWW website. Also, all entrants are invited to attend one of the free Judge Orientation Sessions being hosted via Zoom on Saturday, February 6 at 2:30 PM; Friday, February 12 at 6:00 PM; and Monday, February 15 at 8:30 AM. Additional dates will be offered if needed. Contact info@swwriters.com, if interested in attending.

We look forward to reading your works, and wish you the best of luck!

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SouthWest Sage

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President's Corner

It's February and we have lots of reasons to celebrate. Top of my list is gratitude that the City of Albuquerque's Cultural Services division has once again awarded SWW a \$5,000 grant—which will go a long way to helping us with our mission to bring all writers the education and information they need to succeed.

There are a lot of writing contests going on—including our own SWW contest which, unlike a lot of contests that just send out certificates or little plaques, actually pays money to the winners. Not to mention that we only charge \$10 per entry to help defray our costs where the other two big contests in New Mexico charge upwards of \$30 per entry.

Our Collegium committee has been really hard at work arranging the meeting speakers, the workshops, and classes



Story Titles—Long, Short or Unique?

by Rose Marie Kern

Have you ever tried to find a book by its title only to discover that there are over a hundred books with the exact same title? This happened to me again recently, and, luckily, I did know the author's name, but without that I'd never have been able to find what I wanted.

Some titles sound really good. The one I was looking for was *The War Within*. I was searching for a spicy romance I'd heard about, but what I found was legion. Amazon showed me 24 books with that title covering psychology, Science-Fantasy, religion, spiritual guidance, memoirs from wars all the way back to Greco-Roman days, and several romances.

Short generic titles like this might ensure your book gets buried and makes it hard for fans to find you. On the other hand we have the really long, very specific titles like:

- [The Really Big Book of Hilarious Comedy Material for Ventriloquists: \(and Other People Who Like Books with Long Titles Containing the Word "Ventriloquists"...\)](#)
- [10% Happier Revised Edition: How I Tamed the Voice in My Head, Reduced Stress Without Losing My Edge, and Found Self-Help That Actually Works--A True Story](#)

Those make my head ache just looking at them. They remind me of those ridiculously long titles that scientists put on published research papers.

Short stories can suffer similarly painful title experiences.

cont'd. on page 5

for 2021 and just look at the line up! We have several national best-selling authors this year as well as marketing agents, publishers and experts in various aspects of genre writing. The month of March we are collaborating with the Land of Enchantment Romance Authors to bring four workshops focusing on elements of romance writing free of charge to our members!

If that one goes well, we may repeat this for other genres and collaborate with other writing groups. SWW is always looking around for better ways to serve our members, so if you have a suggestion send it to me at president@swwriters.com.

Rose

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

City cultural grant keeping arts alive during the pandemic

I'D LIKE TO do a shout-out to Mayor Tim Keller and the city of Albuquerque's Cultural Services Department for their dedication to helping us keep the arts and culture of this lovely city alive during a difficult period.

Nonprofit arts organizations have taken a big hit overall, as we cannot meet in person, we cannot perform before large crowds, and isolation is turning ... (many) to focusing on television as their primary entertainment.

The city has reached out to many of our locally-based groups and set up grants to help tide us through the pandemic. SouthWest Writers aims to help anyone who is wanting to be an author learn everything from writing basics to pitching to a publisher. We cannot meet

in public anymore, but the grant we received from the city helps us continue our mission through Zoom meetings and other electronic media.

The grant is covering presentations by nationally known authors such as David Morrell — "Rambo," "First Blood" — Natalie Goldberg, Susan Elizabeth Phillips, Darynda Jones, David Robbins and many more this year. These Zoom presentations are free to the public. Anyone wanting to know more can go to our website www.southwestwriters.com

Thank you, Mayor Keller and to Cultural Services employees Sherri Bruegemann and Isabelle Zamora for working hard to keep the arts alive and vital to the community.

ROSE MARIE KERN
President, SouthWest Writers
Albuquerque

amazon smile
Org Central

Smile!

Help SWW When You Shop Amazon!

Many people shop on Amazon for books, movies and so much more. Amazon donates a percentage of all its sales to non-profit organizations around the world. You can choose what organization receives the donation generated by your purchase, and SouthWest Writers could use your help.

To enroll in the program go to <https://smile.amazon.com/>. They will step you through the process, or to make it easier to select SWW as your charity, go to [AmazonSmile Setup](#) on the SWW website where you'll find instructions with screenshots.

1. Pick Your Charity: Type in **SouthWest Writers Workshop**. A list of organizations will pop up, click on the one based in Albuquerque.
2. Once you've confirmed your charity, you can browse and buy as usual.

Remember every time you go to purchase something, you must type smile.amazon.com into the URL. Once that is done you can shop as usual.

Saturday, Feb. 6 at 10 a.m. ZOOM MEETING

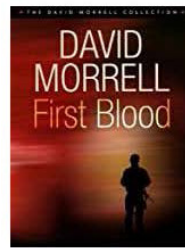
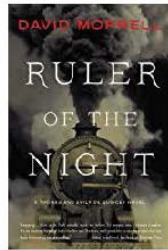
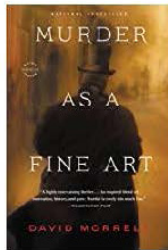
New York Times Bestselling Author David Morrell

David Morrell is the author of more than 30 books including his 1972 debut novel, *First Blood*, in which **Rambo** was created. Morrell is an Edgar, Anthony, Thriller, and Arthur Ellis finalist, a Nero and Macavity winner, and a three-time recipient of the Bram Stoker Award. He received the Thriller Master Award from The International Thriller Writers, and a Lifetime Achievement Award from Bouchercon, as well as an RT Book Reviews "Thriller Pioneer" award and Comic-Con's Inkpot award for "outstanding achievement in action/adventure." Visit his website DavidMorrell.net.

Zoom meeting information is available on the [SouthWest Writers'](#) meetings page.

The meeting is open to the public and starts at 10:00 am Mountain Time. Join us for:

A CONVERSATION with DAVID MORRELL: Thoughts and lessons from 48 years as a published novelist



Information needed to join this live, ZOOM meeting is available on the SWW website: southwestwriters.com
You may also contact the meetings coordinator info@swwriters.com
[Monday - Thursday 9 a.m. - noon.](#)



Saturday, Feb. 6 FREE ONLINE WORKSHOP

Jump Start Your Writing with Short Forms

Miriam Sagan

Writing in difficult times can be . . .difficult. When longer projects seem daunting or you need the equivalent of yoga for strength and flexibility, it is a good time to engage with:

- short poems, such as haiku
- flash memoir, and its connection to journaling and timed writing
- sudden fiction and its condensed conflict and classic curve

MIRIAM SAGAN is the author of over thirty books of poetry, fiction, and memoir. Her most recent includes *Bluebeard's Castle* (Red Mountain, 2019) and *A Hundred Cups of Coffee* (Tres Chicas, 2019). She is a two-time winner of the New Mexico/Arizona Book Awards as well as a recipient of the City of Santa Fe Mayor's Award for Excellence in the Arts and a New Mexico Literary Arts Gratitude Award. She has been a writer in residence in four national parks, Yaddo, MacDowell, Gullkistan in Iceland, Kura Studio in Japan, and a dozen more remote and interesting places. She works with text and sculptural installation as part of the creative team Maternal Mitochondria in venues ranging from RV Parks to galleries. She founded and directed the creative writing program at Santa Fe Community College until her retirement. Her poetry was set to music for the Santa Fe Women's Chorus, incised on stoneware for a haiku pathway, and projected as video inside an abandoned grain silo in rural Itoshima. Visit her blog [Miriam's Well](#).

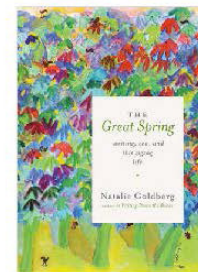
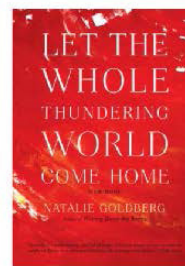
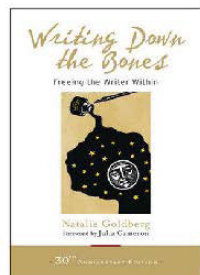
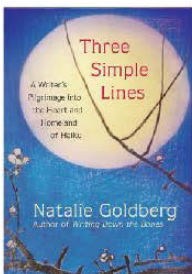
TO REGISTER

Call the SWW office (505-830-6034, Monday–Thursday, 9 a.m.–noon) or use one of these online forms: [Free-to-Members Registration](#) or \$20.00 [Non-Member Registration](#). (Our online payment portal utilizes PayPal, but you'll be given an option to pay by credit card without signing into PayPal. The Zoom invitation link and the password will be emailed to those who purchase this workshop. For SWW members, the link and password will be sent once membership is verified. Please contact the class/workshop coordinator at info@SWWriters.com for more information.

Tuesday, Feb. 16 at 6:30 p.m. ZOOM MEETING

Natalie Goldberg THE WAY of HAIKU

Natalie Goldberg is the author of fifteen books including *Writing Down the Bones*, which has sold over one million copies, has been translated into fourteen languages, and started a revolution in the way we practice writing in this country. Natalie's new release is *Three Simple Lines: A Writer's Pilgrimage into the Heart and Homeland of Haiku*. She recently co-edited a collection of talks by revered Zen teacher Katherine Thanas, *The Truth of This Life*. Her other books include *The Great Spring: Writing, Zen, and This Zig Zag Life*, and the beloved *Long Quiet Highway: Waking Up in America* (a memoir about her Zen teacher Katagiri Roshi). Natalie is also a prolific painter. Her book *Living Color: Painting, Writing, and the Bones of Seeing* describes painting as her second art form. Visit her website at NatalieGoldberg.com.



Information needed to join this live, ZOOM meeting is available on the SWW website: southwestwriters.com
You may also contact the meetings coordinator info@swwriters.com,
or call (505) 830-6034, Monday - Thursday 9 a.m. - noon.

STORY TITLES, from page 3

The long ones are a real pain to publishers and anyone trying to create an index. Really short ones are used over and over and over. In one writing contest I was judging there were three different stories entitled *The Visitor*. Authors seem to think that simple is good, but there is a good argument for just calling these titles unimaginative.


I've seen a lot of single color titles: Red, Black, Gray. How many stories are titled *Heroes*, or *Dreaming*?

Some authors seem to think if they use a phrase from a movie or other book as a title it might attract attention. But that may also give the impression the story has something to do with the original.

The best titles are uniquely descriptive but succinct, usually three

to five words. Look at the classics:

- *Taming of the Shrew*
- *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn*
- *Foundation and Empire*
- *Sense and Sensibility*

When you go to title your story, don't just slap a quick word on it, or write a whole new story in the title itself...make it unique and memorable. 

ATTEND SouthWest Writers MEETINGS ONLINE

YOUR SOUTHWEST WRITERS FRIENDS AND CONTACTS ARE STILL HERE!

SouthWest Writers members, "Writers Helping Writers," are still meeting the first Saturday (at 10 a.m.) and the third Tuesday (at 6:30 p.m.) of each month. Meetings are online via ZOOM and continue to include information, education and networking opportunities for writers. Visitors are welcome—invite your friends!

So much has CHANGED.
So much has STAYED THE SAME!



SouthWest Writers

Take a Class Via Zoom

Publishing with KDP Amazon

Class 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 uploading your print book and/or e-book if it's ready to go, or get you started if you are still working on them.

This class is sponsored by SouthWest Writers and held via Zoom over three Thursdays during February. Rose has set things up so that the same class is being held twice in one day, so those people who prefer days can attend the class at 1 p.m., and those who work can attend at 6 p.m. Each session is two hours long.

The class will cover:

- Setting up your Amazon Account,
- Getting ISBNs,
- Kindle tools for formatting and cover creation,
- How you upload a manuscript,
- Determining how much you should charge for your book,

- Keywords and categories for advertising on Amazon.

Rose will send you information you will need for the class ahead of time. To ask questions in advance, contact her at rose@swcp.com.



With over a thousand articles and ten books published, ROSE MARIE KERN thinks of herself primarily as a teacher. In addition to her own work, she has helped several SouthWest Writers members through the intricacies of self-publishing.

3-week Course

Thursdays: February 11, 18 and 25

1 – 3 pm OR 6 – 8 pm

Platform: Zoom

\$45 SWW members, \$50 Osher,

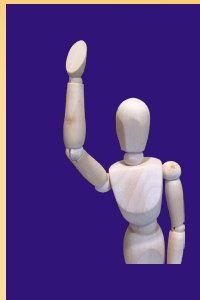
\$55 All Others

REGISTER: by calling the SWW office (505-830-6034, Monday-Thursday, 9 am – noon), or by using the online registration form on the SWW website: southwestwriters.com. (Our online payment portal utilizes PayPal, but you'll be given an option to pay by credit card without signing into PayPal.)

Look Who
JOINED SWW
in December!

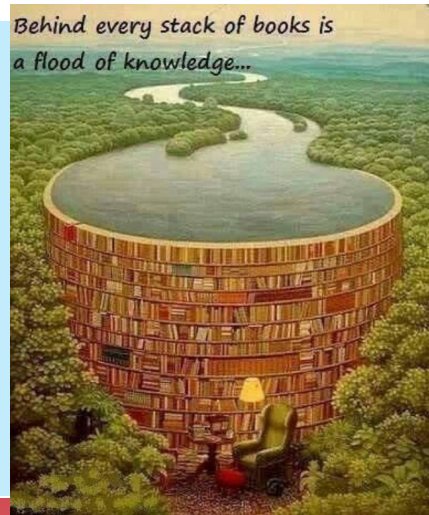
DAVID DICKERMAN

We want to meet you at the
next Zoom meeting.



WAVE!

Behind every stack of books is
a flood of knowledge...



Special Thanks

To all the dedicated and enthusiastic members who donated, volunteered, and helped spread the word about SouthWest Writers through the transitions and trying months of 2020.

Because of you SWW remains a strong organization of *Writers Helping Writers*.



MAKE A DONATION!

Donations are accepted at the SWW office, 3200 Carlisle Blvd. NE, Suite 114, Albuquerque, NM 87110, or online through the SouthWest Writers website, www.southwestwriters.com. Use the donation form on the [Help Support SWW](#) page.

SWW MEETINGS AND **FREE** (TO MEMBERS) WORKSHOPS

You won't want to miss a single presentation!
Meetings are 10 a.m. - Noon, Workshops start at 12:30 p.m.

FEBRUARY

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 6

Meeting: David Morrell

A Conversation With David Morrell: Thoughts and Lessons From 48 Years As a Published Novelist

Workshop: Mariam Sagan

Jump Start Your Writing With Short Forms

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 16

Meeting: Natalie Goldberg

The Way of Haiku

MARCH

SATURDAY, MARCH 6

Meeting: Susan Elizabeth Phillips

The Writing Life: Craft, Characters, Creativity, and Career

Workshop: Romance Workshop Series, one workshop every Saturday in March. (Details on page 8)

TUESDAY, MARCH 16

Meeting: Darynda Jones

Humor And Heat: How To Write Funny Without Sacrificing Sexual Tension

APRIL

SATURDAY, APRIL 3

Meeting: David L. Robbins

The Art and Craft of the Narrative

Workshop: Pamela Nowak

Finding the Story in History

SATURDAY, APRIL 17

SPECIAL MEETING: Irish Poets, "Zooming" in from Galway, Ireland for a LIVE panel with SWW.

TUESDAY, APRIL 20

MEETING: Raffi Andonian

Are Your City's Monuments Worthy?

MAY

SATURDAY, MAY 1

Meeting: Debra Englander

Do You Need a Book Coach?

Workshop: Rose Marie Kern

Finding Your Niche Market

TUESDAY, MAY 18

Meeting: Dean Wesley Smith

Writing Into the Dark: Writing Clean, One-draft Stories Without an Outline

JUNE

SATURDAY, JUNE 5

Meeting: Sheryl Brown

Screen Writing and Short Films

Workshop: TBD

TUESDAY, JUNE 15

Meeting: Jeffrey Candelaria

Artists, Writers and a Business Mentality

INVITE A FRIEND!

Meetings are always FREE so invite a friend to join us. Now that meetings are via Zoom, your friends can attend SWW meetings even if they live halfway 'round the world, and you can wave to them on Zoom!

FREE WORKSHOPS

Saturday workshops are FREE to MEMBERS for 2021. Non-members must pay \$20 per workshop. Save money and get all the workshops by joining SWW for just \$80 for 12 full months.

TO REGISTER FOR WORKSHOPS

Call the SWW office, 505-830-6034 (Monday–Thursday, 9 a.m.–noon), or use the Online Registration Forms at www.southwestwriters.com. The Zoom invitation link and the password will be emailed to those who register for or purchase this workshop. For more information, please contact the workshop coordinator at info@swwriters.com.

ZOOM

SWW meetings and workshops are currently held via Zoom. If you have not used Zoom before, we suggest giving yourself 10 minutes prior to the meeting to get signed in. Although using a computer is the best way to join a Zoom meeting, you can sign in to Zoom on your cellphone by calling this meeting phone number: 669-900-6833. When calling in you will only be able to listen to the meeting. You can also download the Zoom App on your cell phone for all of the Zoom tools (video and audio).

Consider the “Treasure Trove” of FREE Workshops

by Cornelia Gamlem

Marketing and Public Relations Chair

When I started my new-found career as an author, I set out to learn as much as I could about writing, the publishing industry, and marketing books. Being a self-described life-long learner, this decision came naturally. Arriving in Albuquerque three years ago and discovering SouthWest Writers and all it offers its members was like discovering a gem.

The treasure trove has just become richer. At this time, all of the presenters for the 2021 Saturday workshops have generously agreed to donate their time and expertise. As a result, the Board has voted to

make Saturday Workshops FREE to MEMBERS during 2021. Look at the workshops that have been scheduled so far:

2/6/2021	Writing with Short Forms	Mariam Sagan
Romance Every Saturday Series		
3/6/2021	Understanding Romance Genres & Sub-genres	
3/13/2021	Writing Love Scenes for Romance & Other Genres	
3/20/2021	Plotting a Romance	
3/27/2021	Finding Romance Publishers	
4/3/2021	Finding the Story in History	Pamela Nowak
5/1/2021	Finding Your Niche (Magazine and Book)	Rose Marie Kern
6/5/2021	TBD	
9/4/2021	Efficiency on Using the Internet	Loretta Hall
10/2/2021	NaNoWriMo	Kathy Kitts
11/6/2021	Point of View	Sarah Baker

As you can see, some months are yet to be scheduled, so stay tuned. We'll let you know who/what fills in this calendar.

SouthWest Writers Workshops

March is the SWW's month of Romance. You're invited to

Romance Every Saturday!

March 6th – *Romance Genres and Subgenres: Understanding Reader Expectations*

March 13th – *Writing Great Love Scenes: for Romance and Other Genres*

March 20th – *Plotting a Romance*

March 27th – *Finding Romance Publishers and Agents*

Workshops will be led by **published romance authors** including:

Jeffe Kennedy, award-winning author of fantasy romance, as well as poetry, non-fiction, and short fiction. She has won the prestigious RITA® Award, is on the board for the Science Fiction and Fantasy Writers of America, and is a member of the Land of Enchantment Romance Authors. jeffekennedy.com

Robin Perini, bestselling and award-winning author of romantic suspense, and member of Land of Enchantment Romance Authors. www.robinperini.com

Tamra Baumann, bestselling and award-winning author of light-hearted contemporary romance and cozy mystery, and president of Land of Enchantment Romance Authors. www.tamrabaumann.com

Sarah Storme/ Lydia Parks, award-winning author of romance, erotica, and mystery, and on the Board of SouthWest Writers. www.SarahHanberryBaker.com

Information is available on www.southwestwriters.com/workshops/.

Workshops are from 12:30 to 2:30 pm MT and are **FREE** for SWW and LERA members. (\$20 all others) Join us!



Greenlights

Greenlights is the title of Matthew McConaughey's best-selling memoir. The term greenlight in Hollywood refers to the approval given to launch a film project. McConaughey discusses events in his life that gave clear go-ahead to one acting approach or another. He also talks about yellow lights as pauses and red lights as nonstarters. Listening to the magnificent audio performance proved once again why McConaughey's switch from romantic comedies to dramas earned him the Academy Award for Best Actor.

His book made me consider the green, yellow, and red lights in the writing life. For us, red lights are rejections. At the age of sixteen, I received one from *Guideposts*. I submitted a story about running into my pastor while working as a cashier at a hardware store. It was my first job, and I had not seen Rev. Burdick in years when he wandered into my line that day. Since *Guideposts* was a religious publication, I thought it the perfect place for my first placement. *Guideposts* did not agree and I received my first publishing red light.

Sometimes rejections can be good for us, to steer us toward other avenues. Moving to New Mexico to take a job at the state university brought a series of unexpected green lights. A student in one of my first classes told me about SouthWest Writers. I attended meetings and was invited to write my first column, Ask Professor Burr on Copyright. For me, the column presented opportunities to convert my scholarly knowledge into helpful information for writers.

More opportunities to pen articles for writer publications followed. I wrote columns for a musical newsletter and the formerly vibrant *Albuquerque Tribune* newspaper and *Editor and Writer* magazine. I found greener fields in the writing world than with the religious publications.

Finding additional niches that work for your writing style and interests can be challenging. When I tried personal interest travel writing, I received red lights. Then I switched to writing travel articles from the third-person perspective. In one, I advised folks how to travel Alaska off the cruise routes. I received publication

offers for articles written from this viewpoint.

Perseverance is important to the writer at every level. My first proposed casebook on Art Law was rejected by several law book publishers before finally receiving one offer. My co-authors insisted on going back to the rejecting publishers to see if they would reconsider. They rejected us again because they claimed the audience was too small. After the book had been out a while and sold well, however, a major law book publisher picked up the book.

As we begin the year 2021 preceded by one that screamed RED LIGHT at every turn, we can search for green lights. Among my author friends, many complained of COVID ennui when it came to their writing life. They found motivation difficult after lockdowns prohibited socializing with colleagues and friends. They took extensions, and thus prolonged the eventual launch of their works.

Eventually, I found solutions by establishing new routines that didn't include baking chocolate chip cookies and fabricating delicious chocolates. I added early morning exercise to my summer schedule.

After golfing nine holes around 6:30 a.m., I delightfully sat down in my writing chair by 8:00 a.m. During the summer and into the early fall, I updated two publications on International Law and completed a new edition of *A Short & Happy Guide to Financial Well-being*.

With the shorter winter days, I set a different schedule that switched exercise to the afternoon when the sun provided warmer climate. That led to writing in the mornings and into the late afternoons. Now I'm updating books related to Entertainment Law and writing another one about my family history.

Perhaps we migrate toward greenlights and avoid red lights by adjusting what works best for our lives at the time. Ceasing red lights and cautionary yellow lights scream: Change! In a car, we temper speed. In our writing life, we moderate what keeps fingers typing with rear ends firmly planted in favorite chairs.



The Writing Life

by Sherri L. Burr

Sherri L. Burr is the author of 27 books, including *Complicated Lives: Free Blacks in Virginia: 1619-1865* (Carolina Academic Press, 2019), which was nominated for the Pulitzer Prize in History. A graduate of Mount Holyoke College, Princeton University, and the Yale Law School, Burr has been a member of SouthWest Writers for over 30 years. She currently serves as the President of New Mexico Press Women and on the Board of Trustees of the Authors Guild.



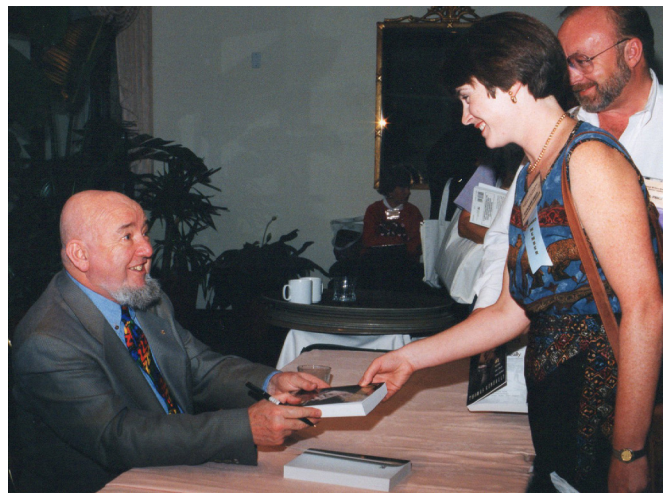
View of Winrock Mall and the Sandias from one of the Marriott Hotel's upper floors. Photo taken during the conference.

The SAGE series of photos and tidbits from SWW's past continues with memories of the 1994 Conference. This event headlined *Shindler's List* author Thomas Keneally as the featured speaker and was held at the Albuquerque Marriott Hotel. In these photos you'll find some familiar faces and some we can't identify. If you know who they are, contact ReVaH at the SWW office and let her know so records of the event can be updated.

ARCHIVE
UNEARTHED
 TREASURES



ABOVE: SHERRI BURR was there, but we don't know who she was talking to.



Conference attendees waited in line for author Thomas Keneally to sign copies of his best seller, *Shindler's List*.

RIGHT: LARRY GREENLY, a 1994 writing contest winner, enjoyed a refreshing diet Slice by the pool.



BELOW: Book tables. Soooo many books. How do you choose just one?

BELOW: A well-attended awards banquet.



Agent and editor's panel

The Sage Writing Challenge

MARCH

You are the intro act for a famous rock band. In 800 words or less, tell about one night on the job. Make sure you include details of your act and name the band.

SouthWest SAGE

The *SouthWest SAGE* newsletter is the professional publication of SouthWest Writers. Submissions focusing on all aspects of research, writing, and publishing in any genre are welcome. To familiarize yourself with the types of articles published in the *SouthWest SAGE*, read past issues at southwestwriters.com.

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.

Read, understand and follow the **guidelines** for submission, above right. **Submissions that do not comply with the guidelines will not be considered.**

The Scent of Rabbit

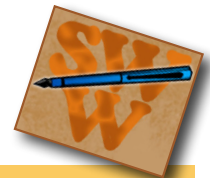
by Joanne S. Bodin

The pecan orchard seemed to go on forever. I'd wander in and out of tree-shadows while the gentle breeze filled the air with aromas I'd never experienced before. My Uncle Harry's house in Claremont, California was my new home after my family relocated from Chicago, my birthplace. My father had returned from Germany after working with the War Labor Board helping survivors of Dachau to relocate. But, at age five, all I cared about was my new freedom to explore a pecan orchard after living in a small apartment in Chicago with my mother and baby brother. My aunt and uncle had invited us to live with them until my father found a job in

SAGE 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 300-800 words; certain *Sage* Challenges may set more specific word count requirements (see the Challenge description box, left). Submissions may be edited for accuracy, readability and length. Submissions must be tasteful; free from profanity, explicit sex or violence, political commentary, 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. To ensure proper author credit, your name or pen name must appear within the document you submit. Submissions with no name will not be considered.
- Polish your work. Submissions should be professional in appearance and quality of writing, fully edited and ready for publication.
- Accompanying art/photographs are appreciated but proper attribution and permission is required.
- Inclusion in the SAGE is subject to the discretion of the editor.

Send questions or submissions to:
Kathy Schuit
SouthWest SAGE Editor
sage@swwriters.com



February's Challenge was to tell a story centered on an aroma, scent or smell.

California. I remember taking the train from Chicago with my mother and baby brother because my father had already left for California in search of jobs. The train had two bunk beds and I got to sleep on the top bunk while my mother and brother slept on the bottom. The constant sound of the metal wheels going over train tracks had a comforting rhythm that lulled me to sleep at night. In the morning we'd walk through the other passenger cars to the dining car where we'd have breakfast and, later in the day, dinner. We'd make rest stops along the way, and one of the stops was in Albuquerque, New Mexico. I remember being in awe of the vastness of the desert landscape and of the endless blue sky. We had time to visit with the Native vendors who sold handmade jewelry. My mother bought a silver ring with a turquoise setting that I have to this day. That

experience had such an impact on me that when I was nine I painted a picture of that memory. Little did I know I would one day leave California and move to New Mexico to make it my home.

As our time with my uncle extended for over a year before we were able to move into our own apartment in Venice, California, I became acclimated to my freedom to wander the pecan orchard alone. My imagination soared as I became aware of nature's smells, colors, textures, and vastness. One day, my uncle decided to breed rabbits. He wanted to sell them, just as he was able to sell his yearly pecan crop. He brought home four rabbits and soon one of the females had babies. Uncle Harry said I could have one as soon as it was old enough. I named her Snowflake since she was pure white and reminded me of snowy days in Chicago. Snowflake grew into a gorgeous rabbit. She was my first pet.

One evening as we sat down to dinner my uncle said we had a special treat. He'd decided to make rabbit stew from one of the many rabbits that had been born. At first I thought it was cruel to kill one of his rabbits, but I already had eaten



Painting by the author at age nine. Scene is of her first view of Albuquerque on a stopover visit while riding the train between Chicago and California.

chicken and beef for dinner at their house, so I figured it was okay. I tasted the stew and it tasted good. Then, something inside me froze. I looked up at my parents and said, "This isn't Snowflake, is it?" No one said a word. But, I could see in their eyes that they knew it was. I remember feeling a surge of nausea and got up from my chair to run for the bathroom but never made it. I vomited all over their floor, and I'm sure ruined their dinner. Looking back, I wonder if they thought I wouldn't know it was Snowflake since all of the rabbits were white like her. Ever since that day the smell of rabbit has made me nauseous. Once, in fourth grade, the school cafeteria, which was close to my classroom, was cooking rabbit stew. I instantly had a visceral reaction to the smell and threw up in class.

Perhaps, Snowflake was my first experience of what to expect in the "real world" where pecan orchards and white bunnies only exist in childhood memories, and where tree-shadows are a labyrinth for imaginary adventures.

Choucroute garnie

by Léonie Rosenstiel

As he approached the front door of the California-style ranch house, Anthony, the quintessential bolo-tied, six-foot-tall New Mexican, could have sworn he smelled something familiar. It reminded him of good times from the childhood he'd left behind thirty years ago. But what was that other blend of aromas that carried a hint of more good things to come?

Henriette was one of those elegant, willowy, divorced French émigrées of "a certain age" who always seem clothed in the essence of being French. Sophisticated and a bit stand-offish, you could almost see a French aura swirling just above her, like a cultural halo. She'd

heard about Anthony. Friends said no one could get behind that stoic façade.

Hungry and curious, Anthony waited for Henriette to answer the door. He'd never visited her home before. And this was Sunday dinner. Friends had praised her cooking, but Anthony promised himself he'd remain steadfastly agnostic until after he'd sampled the proof. Besides, she had the reputation of inviting people only once. Anthony assumed none of the locals would be up to her Continental standards.

As the bell's last vibrations faded away, Henriette opened the door. A cloud of sausage-and-something-else scent floated out to greet him. Anthony smiled involuntarily and handed his hostess the iris-dominated bouquet he'd brought.

She sniffed it. Three peonies provided the perfect, light counterbalance to the sedating iris. “How lovely! Thank you. Please come in, and I’ll go find a vase.”

Her Parisian-accented English sounded a bit exotic, but the ritual greeting seemed genuine. She let Anthony in but didn’t go immediately for the vase. Instead, she remained, standing in front of him, holding his flowers.

“Dinner smells wonderful! I’d know the sausages anywhere. My grandparents owned a hog farm. Used to make their own sausages. But what’s the rest of it?”

“My grandmother’s recipe. My Alsatian relatives call it choucroute garnie.”

“Sausages and what?”

“Sauerkraut with salted meats and spices. They used to make it on holidays and special occasions.”

“Could I have a taste now?”

“It needs another fifteen minutes, but you can open the cover and sample the aroma full-force, if you’d like.”

Still holding the bouquet absent-mindedly in her left hand, Henriette led Anthony to the slow cooker. “Open the lid only a little. At the corner here. See? Then close it quickly or you’ll have to wait even longer to eat!”

Properly warned, Anthony opened that edge of the lid just a crack, then obediently closed it again. He sniffed. Magic. That was when his inner eight-year-old took over.

“Smells like Christmas!”

“Must be the cloves and the Riesling.”

“I’m in heaven! Please, please, can I have some now?”

Henriette, properly disarmed by her guest’s spontaneity, beamed. Real enthusiasm. How rare! She felt herself blushing and hoped Anthony hadn’t seen it. What an un-Parisian thing to do!

“How adorable! But it will taste even better if it’s cooked. Only a few moments more. You’re officially invited to come for dinner anytime.”

“Maybe we could do this again next week? But I’d like to cook you some steaks in the meantime. I like ‘em just plain broiled, but for you I could dare to try a steak au poivre.”

“You promise not to burn down the house?” Henriette did a slight double take. “You speak French?”

“Un peu. Shall we say dinner on Thursday? Would you help me if I get stuck with the recipe?”

“But of course! Sounds great. It’ll just be another few minutes to choucroute time. How about some crudités, and a kir while you wait?”

Still in her hand, the irises brushed the front of the liquor cabinet as Henriette reached it. “Oh dear! I’ve forgotten your lovely flowers.” She turned and headed toward the china cabinet instead.

“Would you like to help me pick the vase?”

A Winter Fragrance, Long-Remembered

by Lynn Andrepont

When I feel that first rush of a cold north wind, I hear the music of wooden spoons on old iron pots, like accordion keys, fiddle strings, and triangle dings of an old-time Cajun two-step melody. I grab my gumbo pot and equal parts of cooking oil and flour (and, for timing purposes, a six-pack of my favorite ice-cold brew) and set to work making a little magic, just as my Louisiana ancestors did in times long past: a roux.

Sizzle the fat, sprinkle in flour, and stir, stir, stir. A sliver of aromatic smoke rises like a specter of some ancient soul from a Longfellow poem, and, in the time needed to down two beers, pale beige acquires a hint of copper color, peanut brown turns to pecan then to the shade of muddy bayou swamp water. Stir, stir, stir (be careful it doesn’t burn ‘cause you can’t go back). An earthy scent of my thickening roux fills the kitchen.

Gumbo, long exalted by both culinary and gris-gris experts throughout the South, cures all that ails the mind, body, or soul, from a tormenting hangover to a broken heart. I remember my grandma, who stood before her prized gumbo pot, as I toss into my simmering miasma the Holy Trinity: chopped onion, celery, and a bell pepper of green. Delectable odors now steam up unabated, filling the house and even seeping somehow silently out of doors to float toward the street. A passerby pauses on the sidewalk out front to sniff and ponder what whiffs swirl about him to make him feel so suddenly and utterly famished.

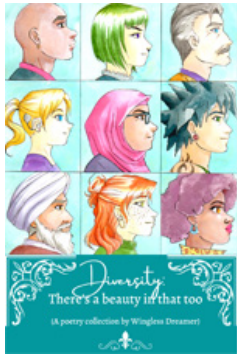
Salt and pepper (both black and cayenne) along with generous pinches of paprika, oregano, thyme, and garlic and this primeval folk concoction, combining chemistry and loving care, is nearly complete. Chicken or duck, smoked sausage (Andouille if available), perhaps boiled eggs, crawfish, shrimp and okra, bathed in broth, are all welcome additions to any bubbling gumbo pot. A few more brewskies (for timing purposes) as, rhythmically, my pot softly rumbles. Dinner is served over long-grain rice with a dash of parsley, green onions or chives, and the

dried crushed leaf of the sassafras plant (aka filé). Don't forget a squirt of that world-famous elixir from my home-lands, Tabasco, and, my personal favorite, a splash of simple hot-pepper vinegar.

Since moving to New Mexico nearly thirty years ago, I've learned to cook and greatly appreciate a brimming bowl of savory green chile stew or pork posole on snowy days, but the cherished smell of Louisiana gumbo remains a constant at my family hearth-fire on a dark winter's night.

Gumbo Recipe

1. Make a roux (cook and stir together for quite some time a cup of flour and a cup of cooking oil).
2. Add an onion, a couple of stalks of celery, and (optional) a green bell pepper—all well chopped.
 3. Add seasoning to taste (see above).
4. Add poultry, seafood, boiled and shelled eggs, and/or okra coins as desired.
 5. Cover with water or broth.
6. Simmer and serve over rice with additional condiments to taste (see above).



SAM MOORMAN's poem "Sylvia Plath" was published on January 5 in a poetry collection titled *Diversity: There's a beauty in that too*. The book information, and the poem, can be found on his [SWW author page](#).



SANDI HOOVER and JIM TRITTEN have just published a novel, *Love and Lies: Call Me Eve*. It's available on [Amazon](#).



The advertisement features a large image of Earth from space. Overlaid on this is a red rectangular box containing a smaller image of Earth. Text in the red box reads "Seeing the World in 20/20" and "A SOUTHWEST WRITERS ANTHOLOGY OF AWARD WINNING STORIES". Above the red box, text says "Get Your Copy Now" and "YOU'LL BUY MORE THAN A BOOK:" followed by a list of benefits: "A good read", "A great gift", and "A boon to SouthWest Writers".

✦ set your **MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL** for any date you choose ✦

Have you ever thought that a certain date, like January 1, for example, would work better as your membership renewal date than the one you have now? If your answer is YES, here's what you do:

- 1) call the SWW office and tell ReVaH you want to change your renewal date,
- 2) pay whatever portion of the total fee makes up the difference – in the case of January 1, if the current renewal is June, then pay \$40, for the second half of the year (June-Dec.) to set your next renewal for January.
- 3) Start renewing every year on January 1!

Creating Character Voice

by Kirt Hickman

Style of Speech

Each character should have a unique combination of dialect and vocabulary, based upon his personality, level of education, and upbringing, though these styles need not be widely disparate. Consider this example from the opening scene of my fantasy novel, *Fabler's Legend*:

Nicklan Mirrin frowned at the old woman. It was late in the day and her wagon was still laden with wares. "Three." He held the copper coins in his open palm. Seeing them would make her want them all the more. A half-pound jug of raw honey sat on a barrel between them.

"Four." She thrust out her chin and her eyes hardened in her wrinkled face.

"You sold me the same size jug for three last month."

"Long winter. You pay four."

"I can't afford four. I still have things to buy."

"I tell you what," the old woman said after a moment's hesitation. "You buy full pound. I give you for six."

Nick guffawed. "I don't have four. What makes you think I can pay six?"

But the old woman stood firm. She might have been a statue carved from a tree stump. Nick knew the type, and he'd been on the opposite end of the sale often enough to know she wasn't as needy as she claimed to be.

He glanced again at her brimming wagon. "Ah, forget it. Like you said, it's been a long winter. Honey's a luxury we can't afford." After pocketing his coins, he walked across the packed-earth aisle of the Cedar Falls weekend market and examined the cooking utensils in the tent there, utensils he had no intention of buying.

When he emerged a few minutes later, the old woman held up the honey and waved Nick back to her. "You buy something every week. I tell you what. Today I give you half pound for three."

"Free?" Nick said, playing the game.

"Three! Three!" She poked three bony digits into the air. "You pay three."

Nick scrubbed his chin. He'd already told her he didn't need the honey. He could probably talk her down to two, but that wouldn't leave her much coin

to live on. "All right." He surrendered the copper and stuffed the jug into his bulging pack.

"Next time four," she shouted as he walked away.

Did you notice that these two character's have different speech rhythms? Which is more articulate?

The woman can't put together a complete sentence:

"I tell you what. You buy full pound. I give you for six."

Nick speaks in complete, casual sentences:

"I don't have four. What makes you think I can pay six?"

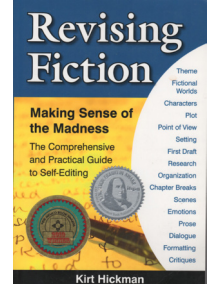
If I assigned this line of Nick's dialogue to the old woman, you'd recognize that it was out of place for the character. Strive to achieve this with your characters' speech. Make their speech rhythms different enough that if a line of dialogue written for one character were attributed to another, that line would seem out of place.

Dialect

Dialect is one way to do this. People from different age groups, regions, countries, cultures, socioeconomic backgrounds, levels of education, time periods, and even genders speak differently. Beginning writers often use phonetic spelling to indicate the pronunciation of the accent or dialect they're trying to emulate. They create butchered words, like "Ohm'gosh," that look more like a vanity license plate than like a bit of dialogue. These are difficult for your reader to decipher. Instead, tell the reader your character speaks with an accent. If you remind him occasionally, he'll hear it as he reads the character's words.

If you decide to use phonetic spelling to show dialect or as an identifying line for one of your characters, use it sparingly. A little of this will go a long way.

Even simple devices, such as *c'mon*, *'bout*, *'em*, and *runnin'* are unnecessary. They look more colloquial than *come on*, *about*, *them*, and *running*, but to the reader, they're identical, so use the latter.



Gonna and *wanna* are clichés. Avoid them at all costs.

Study the language of the regional population you need to emulate. If possible, go where the people are and listen to them talk. Interview somebody from the group of interest. At a minimum, study their diction on the Internet.

Achieve dialect through word choice and sentence structure, rather than through word-butchered. Consider the following lines. As you read each line, visualize the speaking character. What age group, geographic region, country, culture, socioeconomic background, level of education, time period, and gender does the character belong to?

“I aim to kill the varmint.”
“He don’t like me none.”
“Is he not wonderful?”

“Have you tea?”
“You’re such a dork.”

None of these lines is over six words long. Yet in each, word choice shows much about the character without resorting to phonetic spelling to illustrate his or her accent or pronunciation.

Some regional populations use a different lexicon from others. A character from England, for example, might say *sweets* for *candy*, *nappy* for *diaper*, *chemist’s* for *drug store*, *jersey* for *sweater*, and *waistcoat* for *vest*.

You get the idea.

Finally, make sure you’ve applied your characters’ speech styles consistently throughout your manuscript.



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- Entries must be received by February 12, 2021.

[ENTER HERE](#)

New Mexico/Arizona Book Awards

The New Mexico Book Co-op is pleased to announce the 15th annual New Mexico-Arizona Book Awards.

JUDGING: Entries will be judged by booksellers, librarians, teachers, and book marketing experts.

ENTRY WINDOW: January 29 - April 30, 2021.

58 CATEGORIES

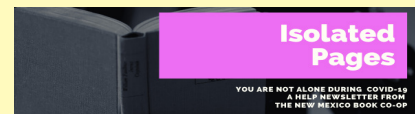
Open to authors and publishers anywhere; books must have a direct connection to Arizona or New Mexico, either as subject, author, or publisher. Books with a publication date or copyright date since January 1, 2019 are eligible.

All entries must include the Entry Form, payment of entry fees and three copies of the book being considered (add one copy for each additional category entered for the same book).

Entry information can be found [HERE](#)

All entries must be received by April 30, 2021.

For more information: 505-344-9382 or email info@nmbookcoop.com.



Geminga: \$500 for Tiny Fiction, Nonfiction, Poetry, or Art

No restrictions on theme or category. Word limit is 100 for fiction and non-fiction. Micropoetry is limited to 140 characters. Visual art entries should be paintings, drawings, or sketches no larger than 25 inches square. Sculptural forms should be no larger than 25 inches in any dimension (length, height, or width).

OPEN: January 1, 2021 CLOSE: March 31, 2021

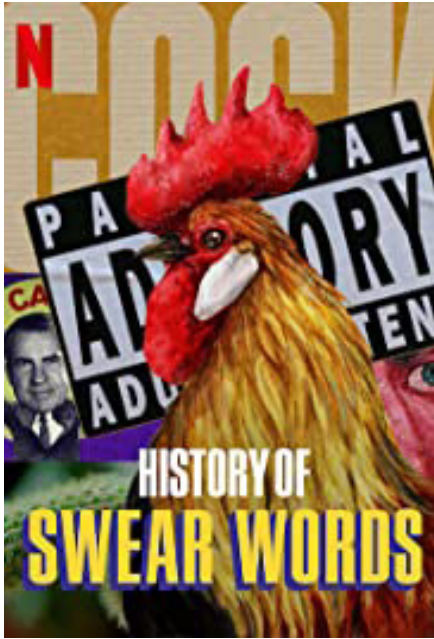
ENTRY FEE: \$6

PRIZE: \$500 cash, publication for the winner, publication offered to runners-up and finalists.

Submit entries to: <https://sunspotlit.submittable.com/submit>

Sunspot
Literary
Journal





Q Questing for a new way to pass a couple hours of Covid isolation? A lot of people have discovered the Netflix series *History of Swear Words*.

Dubbed “an education in expletives” by online reviewers, the entire six-episode series takes barely more than two hours to watch. Nicholas Cage lifts the lid on his classic potty mouth to narrate this humorous look at the origins of some of the most taboo words in the English language, why we use them, and how they became naughty.

Before tuning in, take care of those people in your household with tender sensibilities or tender years. It IS X-rated, obviously loaded with curse words, and there are graphics to match. But, if you and your friends looked up curse words in the dictionary when you were 12, or you’ve wondered if it’s true what they say about where we got the ‘f’ word, the *History of Swear Words* might give you a giggle.

It’s kind of fun, kind of freeing, and kind of **CENSORED** up.

2020 SWW End-of-Year Financial Report



by Jennifer Black
SWW Treasurer

INCOME

Membership dues	\$21,878.34
Conferences	\$2,800.00
Writing Contest	\$2,450.00
Class Tuition	\$6,228.00
Workshop Tuition	\$2,834.00
Newsletter Ads	\$140.90
Pro Directory Ads	\$233.60
Donations	\$1,720.00
Grants	\$4,900.00
Book Sales	\$672.23

TOTAL INCOME \$43,857.07

Total Assets	\$37,611.18
Total Liabilities	\$378.83
<hr/>	
Total Equity	\$37,232.35

EXPENSES

Meetings	\$2,869.64
Conferences	\$1,093.34
Classes	\$4,148.10
Workshops	\$1,265.87
Contests	\$1,621.61
Office Rental	\$7,583.33
Insurance	\$1,784.00
Postage/Shipping	\$298.85
Office Supplies	\$3,559.58
Licenses and Fees	\$11.95
Printing	\$211.36
Internet Subscriptions	\$1,672.61
Contractor Expenses	\$14,934.59
Bank/CC Fees	\$1,114.51
Board Expenses	\$192.05
Awards Expense	\$662.87
Book Expenses	\$693.44

TOTAL EXPENDITURES \$43,717.70

NET OPERATING

REVENUE	\$139.37
Interest Income	\$98.69
NET REVENUE	\$238.06

SWW Board Meeting Summarized January 2020

- A committee has been formed to expand members-only functions for the website.
- The Critique Group committee is developing a program for members.
- Collegium is geared to offer exciting programs.
- Judges for the 2021 writing contest will be receiving training.
- The Board now meets on the 2nd Tuesday of the month, at 5:30 p.m. (This is a change from the first Tuesday of the month)
- Podcasts are being examined as another way for people to share their work and learn about writing.



Photo by Kathy Louise Schuit



Board of Directors

Rose Marie Kern, President
Brenda Cole, Vice President
Jennifer Black, Treasurer
Patricia Walkow, Secretary

Sarah Baker, Zoom Coordinator
Roger Floyd, Bylaws/Signage
Cornelia Gamlem, Marketing/PR
Robert Kidera, Member At Large
Dr. Kathy Kitts, Fundraising
Jacqueline Murray Loring, Membership
Sam Moorman, Facilities Manager
Léonie Rosenstiel, Print Media
Kathy Schuit, Sage Editor
Kathy Wagoner, Website
Dan Wetmore, Writing Contest

Office Manager, ReVaH Loring

The SWW Board of Directors meets on the second Tuesday of each month from 5:30 - 7:30 p.m. Meetings are conducted via Zoom.

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website: www.southwestwriters.com