

SouthWest Sage

The Voice of SouthWest Writers

Vol. 37 No. 11

November 2021



Contest winners, a new anthology, the successful election of executive board members, a familiar and beloved speaker—SouthWest Writers' first HYBRID (in-person and Zoom) meeting ended **WAY TO SOON!**

If you missed the first hybrid meeting you don't have to miss the next! See you on November 6. Speaker and workshop details on **pages 9 and 10**. Directions and information on **page 11**.

CONTENTS

2021 Writing Contest Winners' Placings (In Alphabetical Order)

INTRODUCING Your 2022 Executive Committee

CHANGE IS AFOOT AT SWW

Everything you need to know about the new venue, new rules, new meeting days and a return to some old policies.

Remounting the Proverbial Horse by Sherri L. Burr



14 *The Haunted Mirror* by Alane Brown



16 *Angel Hawk and the Ancient Ancestors* by Rose Marie Kern

JIM HOFFSIS Loss of a Treasure

DEPARTMENTS

President's Corner/What's Inside.....	3, 4
Meetings/Workshops/Classes.....	9, 10
Look Who Joined	2
Contests and Opportunities.....	18
Board Meeting Minutes.....	19

SouthWest Sage

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

Articles and stories are copyrighted by the author. Sending them to the Sage implies that the Sage has permission to print. Facts, views and opinions expressed are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the viewpoints or opinions of the SouthWest Writers organization. SWW does not necessarily endorse the advertisers.

COLLEGIUM needs MEMBERS

Do you appreciate the high-quality speakers and instructors at SWW meetings and workshops? Do you like brainstorming and expressing your opinions about who you would like to hear at meetings? Have innovative ideas about speakers we haven't heard from or unexplored topics? Then we could use you on the Collegium committee!

We are a small group looking to expand our team by 4-5 members. We get together once a month via ZOOM and discuss speakers, instructors and teachers for SWW. We are also the group responsible for providing ZOOM hosts for events. This doesn't require a considerable time commitment, just willingness to contact speakers or help with ZOOM—training provided!

If you are interested, please email info@swwriters.com and we'll invite you to our next meeting.

Brenda Cole
Collegium Chair

Look Who JOINED SWW in September

Shiril Hombal
Debra Parkhurst
Sandra Lapham
Natalie Wright
Ruth McNeal
Nancy Douglas de Baca
Patricia Crumrine
Jeanne A. Collin-Smith
JD Eames
Ed Johnson



President's Corner

Greetings all!

I hope you've been tuning in and enjoying our month of Speculative Fiction information. As of this publication date we only have one more free seminar left on November 2—so join us and learn a bit about writing Science Fiction!

You may have noticed that as we discuss next year's meetings the dates are different than we've been accustomed to. There is a very good reason for this: We need to be able to continue ZOOM-ing as well as meeting in person at least once a month, and we've discovered that UNM's Continuing Education facility has the perfect set up.

Over the years, the traditional first Saturday meetings have stepped on holidays frequently. Since UNM locks their buildings over holiday weekends, trying to hold on to the first Saturdays would have meant making alternate arrangements five times next year! However,



that problem is solved by just moving our Saturday meetings, from the first Saturday to the second Saturday morning.

This move forces our second monthly meeting (Tuesday evening) into a move as well. We had thought to just move it to the fourth Tuesday of the month, but that steps on the monthly meeting date for the Sisters in Crime group, and we prefer to work with other writing groups rather than against them! So, our second meeting will now be held on the fourth Wednesday each month.

In case you are totally confused I will reiterate: As of JANUARY 2022 we will meet on the SECOND Saturday morning and the FOURTH WEDNESDAY evening of each month. Saturdays are HYBRID (in person or ZOOM attendance available) and Wednesdays will continue to be only ZOOM for now.

Now that you are up to speed, I look forward to always seeing you!

Rose Marie

UPDATE Your Calendar For 2022!

To make sure you're there for every minute of SWW's outstanding line-up of speakers on new meeting days in 2022 here's a sneak peak of days, speakers and topics.

- **Saturday**, January 8 - JOHN GILSTRAP, New York Times Best Selling author of more than 20 Thrillers.
- **Wednesday**, January 26 - STEPHANIE CHANDLER, *Build Your own Marketing Plan*
- **Saturday**, February 12, 2022 - JANE ANN KRENTZ, New York Times Best Selling Romance author
- **Wednesday**, February 23, 2022 - LAUREN WOLK, Writing for Young Readers
- **Saturday**, March 12, 2022 - JODI THOMAS, Historical Romance Hall of Fame author
- **Wednesday**, March 23, 2022 - NANCY RUBIN STUART, Fiction Techniques for Non-Fiction
- **Saturday**, April 9, 2022 - JONATHAN MILLER, *How to Turn your Career Into a Novel*
- **Wednesday**, April 22, 2022 - ELLEN MEEROPOL, *Writing Evil Characters!*

So, you're NOT a SOUTHWEST WRITERS MEMBER?

ONLY \$80 PER YEAR

Membership HAS Advantages.

MEMBERS MAY:

- Have a personal Author Page on the SWW Website.
- Find professional help in the SouthWest Writers Professionals Directory.
- Place icons of their recently published books on the front page of the website.
- Participate in the monthly SAGE challenge—an opportunity to become published.
- Be a member of a critique group.
- Sign up for writing classes, workshops, and/or conferences at reduced fees.
- Attend up to 23 annual meetings featuring known authors, publishers, bookstore owners and other literary professionals each year.

Already a member?

SWW membership makes a great gift!

What's Inside?

*I saw it
in the SAGE!*

Change comes whether we like it or not. Some people even go so far as to say that change is the only sure thing in life. Never having had the luxury of becoming a philosopher myself, and this forum having its basis in the news of SWW, I can confirm only that the pages of the SAGE document significant change since the end of 2019.

To be sure, it took board members gifted with that certain limber twistiness exhibited by movie superheroes dodging laser spray across lava fields to get us to this point. As another cliché goes, what didn't kill us made us stronger, and we're talking pandemic closures, ZOOM reticence, and dramatic membership losses. Though there are a few lasers left to dodge, we've made it through the lava and can feel the solid ground once again beneath our feet. We're emerging from the heat with a backpack full of new thoughts, ideas and resources, including some that are covered in this SAGE:

- New ways of conducting meetings that allow members to attend from anywhere in the world, whether they are sick or well, or simply unable to catch an Uber. Details of HYBRID meetings and your choices for how to attend them are on **page 11**.
- President Rose Marie Kern's overview of the reason we need to let go of a long-held SWW tradition in order to move forward appears on **page 3**.
- SWAG leads the list of innovative ways to put money in the treasury. Order some today using the link on **this page**. Though nothing can replace a robust membership for providing SWW with income, Kathy Kitts and the fundraising committee are

setting targets and hitting them.

- We constantly mention ways and reasons to make a donation to SWW, but there's a novel idea on **page 13**. It could save you some tax money too.

Through all the change, board members have held on to the ideal of *Writers Helping Writers*, and they continue to do so. This summer, writing contest entries poured in and it was successfully concluded thanks to the commitment of committee chair Dan Wetmore and his corps of dedicated judges; the winners, with their placings, appear on **pages 5-8**. Elections were held using a hybrid vote, and winners were announced at a hybrid meeting. The result, as it would be in any normal time, is a new group of Executive Officers, **page 8**, who will shoulder the next round of SWW change. I hope they've packed their lasers.

Kathy

Order SWW SWAG from Red Bubble today!

You
know
you
want it.

The SWW SWAG store at SWWSwag.redbubble.com
is now open!



CONGRATULATIONS

2021 WRITING CONTEST WINNERS

SouthWest Writers is pleased to announce—in alphabetical order—the 45 winners of 58 awards in our 2021 writing contest's 20 categories. A huge shout-out to all of our judges for giving of their time so freely to make possible our recognition of such writing excellence.

To read these award-winning works of literature, purchase *Ramblings and Reflections*, the 2021 Writing Contest Anthology, from [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com).



Writing Contest winners who attended the October 2 meeting to receive their awards in person posed for a photo.



Chris Allen

1st Place ~ Animals • 2nd Place ~ Humor **Life With Mags**

Lynn Andrepont

2nd Place ~ History **Crossed Paths**

Lynn Assimacopoulos

2nd Place Poetry ~ Humor **Someone Really Should**

Heather Bennett

2nd Place ~ Romance **Amsterdam**

Larry Baer

3rd Place ~ History **Origins**

Bailey Burck

3rd Place ~ FantasyScience Fiction **Gray Boy**

Alane Brown

1st Place ~ Humor **Eighteen-wheelers**
1st Place ~ History **The Escape**
1st Place ~ Animals Poetry **Nocturnal Awakening**
1st Place Poetry ~ Holidays **Peter's Pickled Peppers**
2nd Place ~ Fantasy/Science Fiction **Bone Listener**
3rd Place ~ Animals **Canine Therapy**
3rd Place ~ Animals Poetry **Catfish Reverie**
3rd Place ~ Romance **Sol and Terra: A Romance of Mythic Proportions**

Joe Cappello

2nd Place ~ Spirituality **The Secret of the Smiling Rock Man**

John Cornish

3rd Place ~ Holidays Poetry **Parade**

Rebecca Dakota

1st Place ~ Memoir **Stained-Glass Poppies**

Donald DeNoon

2nd Place ~ Love **Feeling So Grownup**

Vanessa Foster

1st Place ~ Crime/Mystery **The Game**

Matthew Geyer

1st Place ~ Love Poetry **Corner Table**

Jenny Hansen

1st Place ~ Spirituality **Brotherly Love**

PK Hill

2nd Place ~ Holidays Poetry **Night in Childhood**

Kathleen Holmes

3rd Place ~ Humor **A New Mexico Love Story**

Carlton Holte

2nd Place ~ Loss Poetry **In Memoriam**

Ed Lehner

2nd Place ~ Memoir **Katie**

Laina MacRae

1st Place ~ Travel **Will You Let My Name Die?**

Tony Major

2nd Place ~ Horror/Suspense/Thriller **All in Your Mind**

Rambles
& Reflections

Conor McAnally

2nd Place ~ Social Consciousness **The Psychiatrist's Window**

Marcia Meier

1st Place ~ Romance **Santa Anas**

Jennifer Mitchell

1st Place ~ Spirituality **Faith**

Elaine Montague

2nd Place ~ Travel **The Matter of the Platter**

Claire A. Murray

3rd Place ~ Crime/Mystery **After the Rush Fades**

Matt Nyman

1st Place Poetry ~ Social Consciousness **Not Doubting That Pendulums Swing**

Sue Ann Owens

3rd Place ~ Humor Poetry **Kiss the Cook**

Laurie Pals

3rd Place ~ Social Consciousness **Snow Angels in Hell**

Meg Scherch Peterson

3rd Place ~ Spirituality **El Estado del Alma**

3rd Place ~ Nature Poetry **Covid Stream**

Elise Phillips

1st Place ~ Horror/Suspense/Thriller **As Always**

Charles Powell

2nd Place Poetry ~ Social Consciousness **Crying Man**

Lucy M. Quinn

3rd Place ~ Loss Poetry **Dark Goodbye**

Dustin Ramsbacher

3rd Place ~ Social Consciousness Poetry **Party at My Hanging**

Carol Rawie

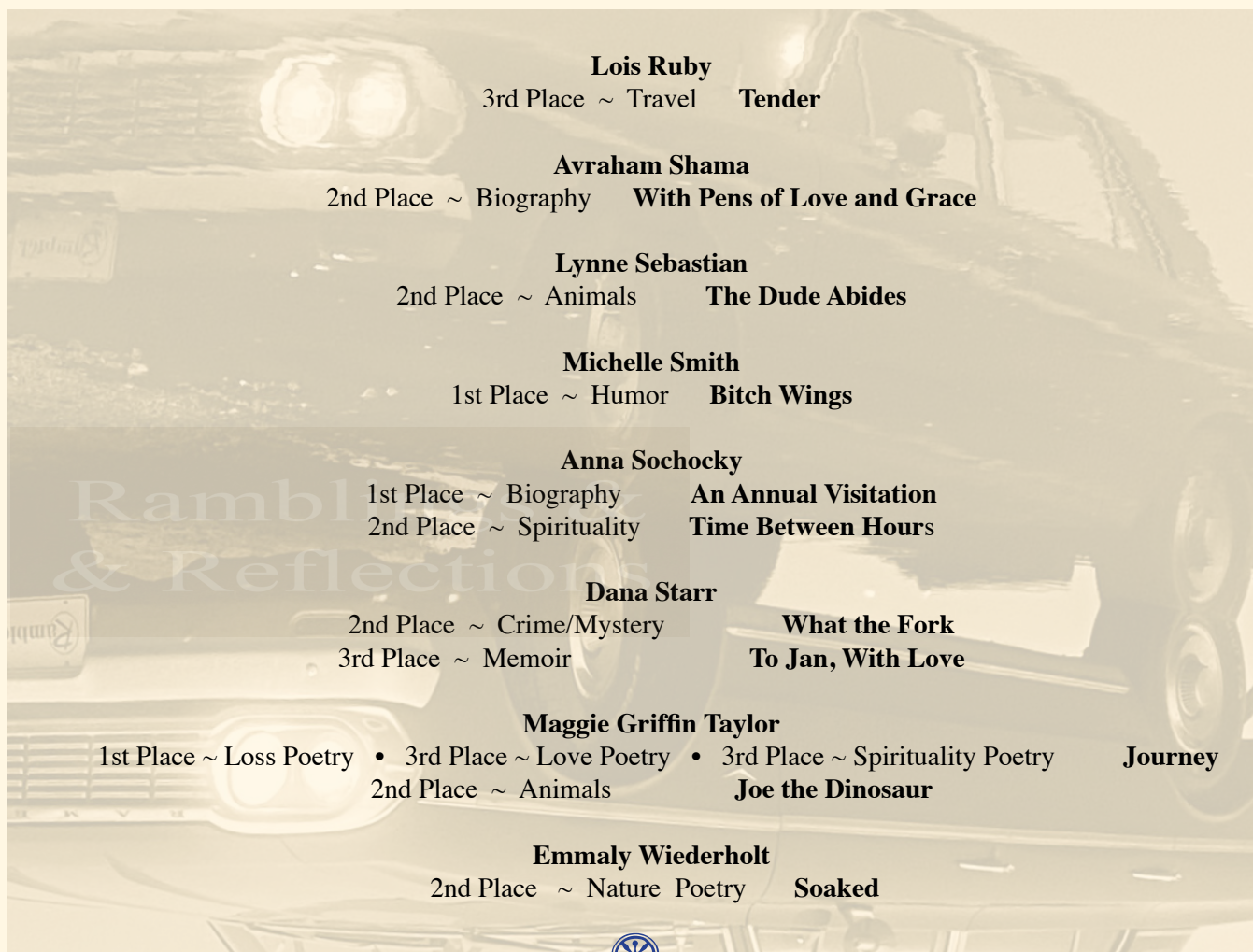
1st Place ~ Nature Poetry **Would You Build a House?**

Tisha Reichle-Aguilera

1st Place ~ Social Consciousness **Cultural Inspection**

Kimberly Rose

1st Place ~ Fantasy/Science Fiction **Birds of a Feather**



Lois Ruby
3rd Place ~ Travel **Tender**

Avraham Shama
2nd Place ~ Biography **With Pens of Love and Grace**

Lynne Sebastian
2nd Place ~ Animals **The Dude Abides**

Michelle Smith
1st Place ~ Humor **Bitch Wings**

Anna Sochocky
1st Place ~ Biography **An Annual Visitation**
2nd Place ~ Spirituality **Time Between Hours**

Dana Starr
2nd Place ~ Crime/Mystery **What the Fork**
3rd Place ~ Memoir **To Jan, With Love**

Maggie Griffin Taylor
1st Place ~ Loss Poetry • 3rd Place ~ Love Poetry • 3rd Place ~ Spirituality Poetry **Journey**
2nd Place ~ Animals **Joe the Dinosaur**

Emmaly Wiederholt
2nd Place ~ Nature Poetry **Soaked**



2022 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Votes cast online and in person at the October 2 annual meeting have resulted in the election of the 2022 Executive Committee:

President

Brenda Cole

Brenda's election to the office of SWW President follows her service to the organization as Vice President and organizer and chair of the highly-valued Collegium Committee.



Vice-president

Joe Brown

In 2021, Joe served SWW on every Board of Directors committee to which he was invited. His experience with the Collegium Committee, a VP-led committee, is considered especially valuable going forward.



Secretary

Dan Wetmore

Dan is a poet and essayist who chaired the 2021 SWW writing contest committee and edited *Rambles and Reflections: Winning Words of SouthWest Writers*, the 2021 writing contest anthology.



Treasurer

Rose Marie Kern

Rose has been a member of SouthWest Writers since January of 2006 and a board member since 2008. At the end of 2021, she will wrap up a three-year term as SWW President.



Saturday, Nov. 6, 10 a.m. (MT) HYBRID Meeting

Writing Like A Reader: Your Audience And Story

with Lynn Miller

Every successful work of fiction or creative non-fiction is a dance between the author's intentions and the reader's expectations of how the story will develop and deliver. We'll explore building a relationship with your audience, one that fuels the reader's satisfaction and investment in your story. A story is a transaction between writer and reader. We'll be looking at what Lynn calls the contract with the reader.



LYNN C. MILLER'S fourth novel, *The Unmasking*, came out in October 2020. Her third novel, *The Day After Death*, was named a 2017 Lambda Literary Award finalist. She's published stories in various journals and has been nominated for a Pushcart Prize. Co-publisher of Bosque Press, she lives in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

Join Us In-Person: Directions and information on page 11.

OR

Join the Zoom Meeting

Our Zoom log-in policy has changed due to disruptions to our free meetings. Non-members are now required to contact our office (505-830-6034 or info@SWWriters.com) or sign up for Elerts to receive links to upcoming meetings. SWW Members sign into the Members Only portion of the website. Once in the Members Portal, follow the Zoom log-in directions posted prior to the meeting.

Saturday, Nov. 6, 12:15 p.m. (MT) HYBRID Workshop

Finding the Story

with Loretta Hall & Patricia Walkow

Whether you're writing a feature article, a short story, a novel, or a nonfiction book, no one will be interested in reading it if it doesn't have a story. What is it really about? Two experienced writers of fiction and nonfiction will help you learn how to find the story—before you write, while you're writing, and even after you've written.

PATRICIA WALKOW is an award-winning author of short stories, newspaper and magazine articles. She is the author of *The War Within, the Story of Josef*, a national and international award-winning biography. She belongs to several writers' organizations and is a founding member of the Corrales Writing Group. Her work appears regularly in print and online formats. She



is both editor and contributor to many anthologies, including the most current: *Kale is a Four-Letter Word* and *New Mexico Remembers 9/11*.

LORETTA HALL has written nonfiction articles and reference book chapters and nine books in a variety of genres. She's received awards from the National Federation of Press Women, Military Writers Society of America, Foreword's IndieFab Book Awards, New Mexico/Arizona Book Awards, and New Mexico Press Women. Her latest book, the as-told-to memoir *Higher, Faster, Longer: My Life in Aviation and My Quest for Spaceflight*, was a finalist in this year's National Indie Excellence Awards.



Loretta is a former Parris Award winner and was the National Federation of Press Women's 2016 Communicator of Achievement.

TO REGISTER

Call the SWW office (505-830-6034, Monday–Thursday, 9:00 am–noon) or use one of the online forms (Free-to-Members Registration or \$20 Non-Member Registration) on the website: southwestwriters.com, *Workshops* page. (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, Nov. 16, 6:30 p.m. (MT) ZOOM Meeting

Taking The Mystery Out Of Mystery Writing

with Robert Kidera

Every genre of writing—including mystery—has its own particularities and conventions. Robert Kidera will explore: 1) becoming familiar with the genre; 2) understanding the details of the crime and police procedures; 3) defining an unfolding conflict; 4) creating compelling characters; 5) playing fair with the reader; 6) integrating setting into your mystery; 7) plot twists, misdirection, dead ends, red herrings, turning convention on its head; and 8) comparing different mystery writing processes and finding one that works for you.



Bring your questions! Presentation notes will be available. Together we'll try to take some of the mystery out of mystery writing.

ROBERT D. KIDERA'S debut novel, *Red Gold*, won the Tony Hillerman Award in the 2015 NM/AZ Book Awards. Other award-winning books are *Get Lost*, *Cut.print.kill*, *Midnight Blues*, and *A Long Time To Die*. He is the owner of Black Range Publishing and the producer of The Black Range Pub, a podcast celebrating the history, people, and cultures of the American Southwest.

Join the Zoom Meeting

Our Zoom log-in policy has changed due to recent disruptions to our free meetings. Non-members are now required to contact our office (505-830-6034 or info@swwriters.com) or sign up for Elerts to receive a link to our upcoming meetings. SWW Members sign into the Members Only portion of the website. Once in the Members Portal, follow the Zoom log-in directions posted prior to the meeting.

Saturday, Dec. 4, 10 a.m. (MT) HYBRID Meeting

Writing For The Web

with Lynne Sturtevant



You've attracted a new visitor to your website.

Hooray! How do you get them to stay and read your material? I will share simple design tweaks that slow down busy, distracted readers. We'll take a plain text paragraph from blah to intriguing without changing a word. The three types of copy found on most writers' sites—page content, writing samples, and blog posts—benefit from different approaches. I'll break them down. Finally, I'll answer the age-old question: How much text do I really need on my site?

LYNNE STURTEVANT is the author of five nonfiction books, one novel and countless articles, short stories, and blog posts. Before moving to New Mexico, she owned a travel agency, an online business for local historians, and a tour company. She's also a website designer working with authors over 50.

In-Person Meeting: Location and information on [page 11](#).

Join the Zoom Meeting

Our Zoom log-in policy has changed due to recent disruptions to our free meetings. Non-members are now required to contact our office (505-830-6034 or info@swwriters.com) or sign up for Elerts to receive a link to our upcoming meetings. SWW Members sign into the Members Only portion of the website. Once in the Members Portal, follow the Zoom log-in directions posted prior to the meeting.

FINAL MEETING OF 2021!

SWW CHANGING with the TIMES

Starting with the annual meeting on October 2, 2021, SouthWest Writers returned to in-person gatherings in a new location: **UNM Continuing Education (UNM-CE)**. Going forward, Saturday meetings will still include a ZOOM component and evening meetings (6:30–8:30 p.m.) will be strictly online (ZOOM only).

Everything you need to know about the new venue, new rules, new meeting days and a return to some old policies.

- UNM-CE is located at **1634 University Blvd NE, Albuquerque, NM 87131**. This is a couple blocks north of Lomas on the east side of the street next to the old masonic lodge. There is easy access from all directions and parking is free on both sides of the building.
- We will be using **Room C in the North building**, which is on the north side of the building. It will be set up classroom style with a lot of space between seats, so everyone will have a surface to write on. Big TV screens and a drop-down projection screen in the room will display whoever is speaking at the time.
- **COVID REQUIREMENTS:** At this time, we do not know what the state will require month to month when it comes to masks, though we encourage all members to wear them and to be vaccinated to protect each other. As of this printing **masks are required at UNM**. If the governor shuts down N.M. again, we will send out alerts as soon as possible and go back to ZOOM only.
- **UPON ARRIVAL:** The SWW Business table will be staffed for those wanting to renew their membership or pay for upcoming workshops and classes. We will also have some examples of SWAG items available.
- **FOOD:** We will **NOT** have tables set out for community food, however everyone can bring their own covered drink and something to eat for themselves. There are a couple vending machines in the building.
- **Smoking and alcoholic beverages** are **NOT** allowed in the building.
- **WIFI:** Anyone attending events/classes may utilize UNM-CE wifi. Within the building the wifi is Lobo Guest. Lobo Guest requires no password, but needs the user to open a web browser when they connect. The browser should automatically redirect to the Terms of Service Page, where the user must consent to UNM's Use Policies.
- **PARKING FOR THOSE WITH DISABILITIES:** Please leave the parking spaces at the northern end, close to the building for those struggling with disabilities. This allows them to easily enter through the north door, which is closer to our room. All others should enter via the main entrance facing west.
- **BOOK SALES:** As we are feeling our way with these first hybrid meetings we do not plan to have a community book sales table, however, individuals wanting to bring their own books for sale may do so. We ask that you please set up either in the back row or at the end of a row so as not to impede movement.
- **SUCCESES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS** will still be allowed via either Zoom or in person. If you are at the meeting you can line up when we call for the announcements. If you are watching via Zoom place your name in the chat room as we have been doing.

ANNOUNCEMENTS!

AS OF JANUARY 2022:

1. SWW meeting days will change to the **SECOND** Saturday of each month and to the **FOURTH** Wednesday of each month. See the President's Message on **page 3** for all the details regarding this important decision.

2. SWW will return to its previous policies concerning meeting and workshop attendance and pricing:

- Non members may attend three meetings for free. After that, they will be required to become a member or pay \$10 per meeting.

- Free workshops will end and workshop prices will be reinstated at \$20 for members and \$30 for non-members.

2022 Call for Presentations

SWW is in the process of developing the 2022 Schedule of Events

We are looking for topics and qualified persons to give:

- Presentations for SWW Meetings
- Teach workshops
- Develop and Present Classes

For more information, request a copy of the 2022 Call for Presentations [HERE](#).

R Remounting the Proverbial Horse

Imagine the scene. A group takes horseback riding lessons in an arena covered in a mixture of soft dirt, sand, and hay. One student shakes. He is so afraid his horse is going to throw him that he won't squeeze his thighs to encourage the animal to walk. Our instructor walks over and pushes the student off of his horse. My eyes widen and my mouth gapes open.

The student gets up as the instructor says, "See, you survived your worst fear. You fell off and you haven't broken a single bone. Now mount up. It's time to ride this horse."

I recalled the incident with laughter, thinking of our shocked faces as the instructor pushed the student off the horse. He also brought the rest of us in line. After that, not only did the frightened student sit his horse, so did the rest of us. By the end of the session, we were all walking, trotting and loping our horses with confidence.

The writing life can bring fear, primarily the fear of rejection. With some folks, they become so terrified that another person will find their work wanting, they don't even begin, let alone finish. I still have a rejection letter sent to me from Guidepost Magazine when I was sixteen.

I empathized with the horse-riding student and with writers who dread rejection. Before I started taking horse riding lessons in New Mexico, I had gone out to an Arizona stable with a cousin. We mounted our horses with minimal instruction. On the trek into the wilderness, something spooked my horse and he took off. I lost control of the reins. I grabbed the saddle horn and held on as the horse galloped away as if he were running the Kentucky Derby. He seemed determined in his direction. I had no idea where we were going until we reached the stable and he abruptly stopped.

A wrangler emerged and I dismounted, grateful to be alive. I vowed that I would learn to control a horse so that would never happen again. With the help of several fearless instructors, I became comfortable riding atop Western saddles and English saddles. I guided the horse with reins in both hands (English) or in one hand (Western). One particularly adept instructor taught me how to ride bareback with no reins. I learned to bond with these equine athletes so I could control them with my thighs and body movements.

My writing life bespeaks a similar learning curve. It took several years of sending out material to publications

before gaining acceptance. In my early and mid twenties, I wrote law review articles. Then I moved to New Mexico, and one of my students introduced me to SouthWest Writers. The organizers asked me to write a column, "Ask Professor Burr on Copyright." One article about publishing contracts was reprinted in a book and I received payment, my first.

I took journalism classes and joined a critique group. One of my journalism instructors, Gregg Levoy, re-told a story from one of his parents who said, "If you are not failing regularly, you are not trying hard enough." Even Greg acknowledged that was a tough standard to live up to.

In horseback riding, such an approach would require us to take harder and harder paths and fall off occasionally. The goal with horseback riding is to build confidence so that you can take more difficult paths and remain on top of your horse. I think the same can be said of writing. One can graduate from writing articles and completing books, while receiving rejection, yet still remaining confident in one's abilities to tell stories others will want to hear and learn from.

Rejection can feel like being involuntarily tossed from a horse. The goal should be to recommit and send something else out. During this month of Thanksgiving, we can be grateful that our minds create and our fingers type.

The Writing Life

by
Sherri L.
Burr



Sherri L. Burr is the author of over two dozen books. Her 27th book, *Complicated Lives: Free Blacks in Virginia: 1619-1865* (Carolina Academic Press, 2019), was nominated for the Pulitzer Prize in History. A graduate of Mount Holyoke College, Princeton University, and Yale Law School, Burr has been a member of South-West Writers for over 30 years. She currently serves as President of New Mexico Press Women and on the Board of Directors of the Authors Guild Foundation. In 2021, she was named the National Federation of Press Women Communicator of Achievement and received the Alumnae Association of Mount Holyoke College Achievement Award.

Winning!

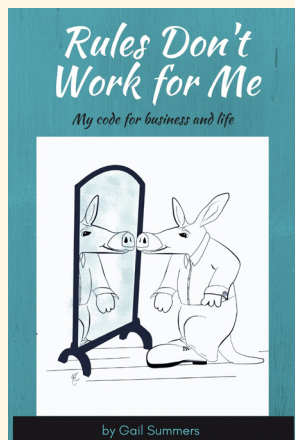
SWW Members Share Their Successes



Co-writers, **SANDI HOOVER** and **JIM TRITTEN**, have done it again! This time, they've won a Gold Medal in the romance category in the 2021 Military Writers Society of America (MWSA) awards season.

For their novella *Love and Lies: Call Me Eve*. Buy it [HERE](#), from Amazon e-books.

From **GAIL SUMMERS**, here is the personal code for success for an outlier. If success means happiness at home or in the workplace, and you are an outlier, this is the code for you. If not, then create your own code and enjoy coloring the cartoons. The cartoons are by our very own **KATHY SCHUIT** and editing is by fellow New Mexican **JEFF BRAUCHER**.



The official release date is 7 Dec. Available for preorder now at [Amazon](#) or from the [publisher](#).



LÉONIE ROSENSTIEL has announced that her book *Protecting Mama: Surviving the Legal Guardianship Swamp* will be released November 1 by Wisdom Editions, an imprint of Calumet Editions. This is the first of two related books scheduled for publication and is the product of a lifetime of experience coping with the dementia

of loved ones. "I'm grateful to have survived, and also to have found a publisher who also understands the enormous social problem dementia has become." Contact Léonie for more information: leonie.rosenstiel1@gmail.com

NEILL MCKEE's *Guns and Gods in My Genes* has won a Bronze medal in the Reader's Favorite 2021 International Book Awards, Non-fiction Genealogy category. This contest is open to independent authors and large and small publishers. 2021 was their "largest contest ever, with thousands of contestants from all over the world and nearly all categories having hundreds of entrants."



The book also won the Non-Regional Biography Category in the New Mexico/Arizona Book Awards and was a finalist in two other categories: Travel and Cover Design. Author's website: www.neillmckeeauthor.com/

Donate To SWW, Save Taxes On Your IRA Distribution

If you're over age 70 ½ and have an IRA, you have to take out your REQUIRED MINIMUM DISTRIBUTION (RMD) by Dec. 31. Some people say it's our government's method of making certain you're "broke before you croak," but it also adds to your taxable income. You might not be opposed to that, but what if you could direct some of those funds to go to a good cause of your choosing, like SWW?

You can.

Simply have your IRA provider (i.e. Charles Schwab, T.D. Ameritrade, etc.) make out a check directly to SWW. If you don't touch it, it's not added to your income.

There is a form you request from your provider. Fill it out, write in SouthWest Writers on the line that says "Make Payable to a Third Party," sign it and decide if you want them to mail it directly to SWW or to you to personally deliver, but the money never goes into your name. You can do as many of these as you want, until your RMD is satisfied.

The Sage Writing Challenge

DECEMBER

One week before Christmas 2021 you are a fly on the wall in Santa's reindeer barn. In 500 words or less of dialogue, show us what is happening. Keep it PG 13 please.

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.

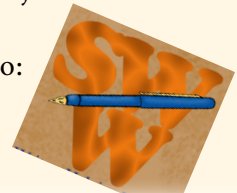
Read, understand and follow the guidelines for submission, above right. Submissions that do not comply with the guidelines will not be considered.

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



The challenge for November was to write a short story (no more than 1,000 words) containing at least one supernatural being.

The Haunted Mirror

by Alane Brown

The old woman finished her prayer; "...and if I die before I wake, I pray the Lord my soul to take."

"Actually," she added, "I don't give a damn who takes my soul. Just let me die in my sleep. Is that so much to ask?"

Evelyn shut her eyes firmly, hoping to never open them again. Then, as always over her 96 years of life, she fell asleep immediately.

She awoke later, the dim light making her sigh at yet another unwanted dawn. Evelyn glanced at the windows and frowned. They were still dark with night.

Curiosity made her sit upright. Her head swam with dizziness. How many days had it been since she had left

her bed, this bed that had been the deathbed of generations of Prentices, this bed that she had taken to with the hope of an efficient demise?

Her vision cleared, and she realized that the light emanated from the mirror of the antique bureau opposite her bed.

"About time you showed up," she snapped at the mirror. "Finally, the traditional deathbed apparition owed to all Prentices."

Realizing it was up to her to make the next move, Evelyn hauled herself up out of bed, her feet finding the slippers that her daughter Janet had placed there. She grasped the post of the canopy bed and swayed slightly, her legs accustoming themselves to standing.

One hobbling step at a time, Evelyn tottered to the

Continued on next page

mirror. Gripping the edge of the bureau, she gazed at her reflection. Her image began to waver. Evelyn tapped her foot with impatience. "Come along now, don't waste my time." As if in response, the image snapped into focus.

There, gazing back at her, was Elias Prentice. She recognized him from his portrait over the drawing room fireplace, which had glared down at generations of Prentices since 1726.

"Greetings," he said. "Your time has come to shuffle off this mortal coil and join us, your ancestors. We have work to do."

"Don't be ridiculous," Evelyn snapped. "I've worked eight long decades. I'm laying down my burdens and sinking into the empty sleep of death."

"No, Evelyn," came Elias's spectral voice. "Until my spouse's sapphire brooch is pinned once more to the bosom of one of my descendants, we, the Prentice departed, cannot melt into oblivion. We must remain here, waiting." His gaze shifted over Evelyn's shoulder to the wall behind her. She turned to look at the familiar portrait of Lydia Prentice, his wife. Though the canvas was darkened by age, the sapphire brooch gleamed on her dress.

"Now, daughter of the family of Prentice, die, and join us in our vigil."

Evelyn felt a pressure in her chest. "Stop that!" she snarled. "I had enough of the family while I lived. It was a relief to watch each of them go. Good riddance, is what I said. I'll be damned if I'll put up with them again."

She snatched up a pill bottle and shook out a nitroglycerine pill.

"Evelyn, stop. That is not the plan set forth for you!"

Ignoring Elias, Evelyn dropped the pill onto her tongue and swallowed. The pain subsided within a minute's time. Defiantly, she glared into the mirror. Elias looked back at her in disgust. "For three centuries, the Prentices have accepted the terms of our curse and died cooperatively at their appointed time."

"I am not spending even one iota of eternity with your lot," Evelyn spat back.

Searching through the clutter on the bureau, she found her embroidery scissors. Grasping them tightly, she stumbled to the portrait of Lydia. She had no idea where the lost brooch might be, but here was its representation. Perhaps it would suffice.

Holding the ornate picture frame in her hand to steady it, she readied the scissors. But the jostling pulled the painting from its mooring. It crashed to the floor.

As she stood there, struggling to catch her breath, she heard the sound of hurried feet in the corridor. Janet burst into the room.

"Mother, I heard the most awful noise!" Janet saw the picture on the floor. "What are you doing with that?"

"I am cutting the sapphire brooch right out of the painting to break some nonsense of a curse. Since you're

here, you can help me. Hold it steady."

Janet gasped. "You can't be serious. No way am I letting you deface a valuable painting!" She snatched the painting from the floor and held its awkward bulk in her arms.

Evelyn lunged for the painting and struggled to pull it away from Janet. In her frail state, she was no match for the younger woman. Pain built in her chest again. She began to collapse, falling against the painting and knocking them all to the floor—Janet, herself, and the image of Lydia. The picture frame cracked. Something hard struck the floorboards.

Panting, Evelyn searched the floor with her fingers. They closed on a hard object. "Look, Janet," she said. "It's the brooch in the portrait. It must have been hidden in the picture frame."

Janet set the painting safely aside, then examined the brooch in her mother's hand. In the soft light still emanating from the mirror, it sparkled like the sea on a fair day.

"Come, child," Evelyn ordered. "Help me up and let us look into the mirror together." They made their way back to the bureau. "What do you see?"

"I see a mother and daughter who should be asleep in their beds."

Evelyn glanced at Elias, whose face still shimmered in the mirror. Ignoring the wave of pain rising again in her chest, ignoring the pills on the bureau, she turned to her daughter and carefully pinned the brooch to her daughter's nightdress.

"Keep this safe, Janet," she said.

With a triumphant smile, she told Elias, "And I won't be seeing you."

And with those parting words, she surrendered to the pain, moving through it and beyond it to embrace the welcome solitude of death.



art by Kathy Louise Schuit

Angel Hawk and the Ancient Ancestors

by Rose Marie Kern

Stars twinkled as Angel Hawk walked pathways where lava rocks bore carvings of animals, the sun and the hand prints of a people who had disappeared six hundred years earlier. Yachune, the gibbous moon, hung low in the western sky illuminating the petroglyphs.

As her course turned, Angel found an old woman bent over her cane by a stone, staring sadly at the sun symbol on its surface. The Native American woman wore a full blue skirt and blouse, a fringed shawl softly protected her from the night's chill. At her waist a silver and turquoise conch belt glittered softly and she wore a necklace strung with small spirit animals carved of native stone.

As Angel stepped into view, the diminutive woman with eyes that had seen changes great and small for over a hundred years lifted her head. Despite her white hair, slight frame and wrinkles that rivaled a sharpei puppy's, the fragile form displayed no fear of the stranger.

She did not look directly at Angel, that is not the way of her people, but Angel knew that her peripheral vision was sharp.

"It is dark, and the desert winds are cold this night, Makyi."

Makyi froze as she realized the Anglo woman spoke to her in a language long thought dead.

"How do you speak the words of the people?" Makyi whispered in the Ancestral Puebloan tongue.

Angel's eyes shone with triumph, for here, indeed, was the daughter of the child left behind. Angel began the tale whispered to Makyi by her mother since the day of her birth.

"In the days that the world turned evil, the Chiefs and Priests of the Ancestral People sang to the gods and asked them to find a world where they could live in safety. They called upon the Eagle, and the Hawk, but finally they called upon the Shrike, Si-katsi, who flew high into the heavens and found a hole above the clouds that was the pathway to the world above.

Wise mockingbird gave them songs to summon Kuna, the chipmunk, who could cause a great tree to grow. Kuna tried to work his magic with a spruce, but it could not reach the hole in the sky. In vain he tried the fir-pine and the long-needled pine. Finally, he called upon Corn Mother. She gave him a special seed of Maize. Kuna filled a piñon shell full of water, buried and sprinkled the Maize seed. The Chiefs and Priests smoked their pipes and sang the songs of beginnings. Sacred corn meal was thrown up toward the sky, and the great stalk of Maize broke the

ground and quickly grew higher than the trees. After the songs were ended, the little chipmunk ran up the Maize. When he came down he told the people that the Great Maize had gone through the opening in the sky.

The joyous Ancestors sang as they climbed the Great Maize, but there was one who did not sing. Yataka, in the final stage of pregnancy, could not climb with her people. She urged her mate to help their children climb to the new world above, and watched from the top of the mesa until the clouds hid her family from view.

Tears coursed across Makyi's heart as Hawk Angel told the story she had learned at her mother's knee. She knew what had happened next.

It was not the pangs of childbirth that caused the eyes of Yataka of the Ancients to water as the desert winds tore the leaves of the Great Maize and broke its stalk into a thousand pieces. Thus were the people protected from any evil ones who would follow, and thus was Yataka left alone in the world below with her newborn daughter, who she named Yachune, moon-child.

Yataka taught Yachune all she could of her heritage and the language of the Ancestors. They traveled and when Yachune became a woman she mated a good man of the Tewa people. She bore a daughter.

Makyi was the last of her line. Softly, she spoke. "I have looked for the hole to re-appear, as did my mother. Sometimes the clouds swirled but there was no Great Maize to climb and the sky remains closed."

Hawk Angel placed her hand on Makyi's shoulder. "This much of the story you know, and you have lived, but there is more." Angel inscribed a circle in the air before her where Makyi beheld a man of her people, a man with her mother's eyes.

"This is Lacik, son of Yakati. In the world above he missed his mother greatly. He petitioned the gods to allow her to join them in this new world."

"The Gods set three tasks for Lacik to perform." Angel continued sadly. "Time passes faster here below. By the time he was finished with his tasks, his mother and sister were gone, but the Gods offered to allow the child of they who were left behind her choice of worlds."

Makyi's eyes shone with the hope of her foremothers. Intensely she whispered, "How does a bright haired woman of the anglos know the words of the Ancient Puebloan Gods?"

Angel Hawk smiled. "All Gods are one God."

Continued on next page

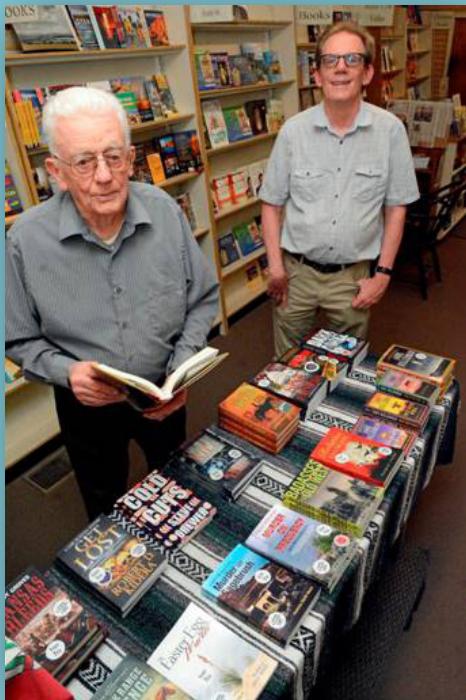
Angel Hawk turned to the east where the sun was beginning to rise over the Sandia Mountains. Whispers of wind swirled the sands around them. The dust devils grew higher and higher until they punched a hole in the high overcast clouds.

Makyi looked about and her eyes saddened. “I see no Maize, and I am old, I could not climb so high.”

Angel Hawk smiled. “Raise your cane above you and hold with all your strength.” She swept her hands up and behind her, shimmering into the form of a large red-tailed hawk.

The bleary-eyed hot air balloonists who launched into the Albuquerque dawn did not notice the ancient woman, or the avatar who carried her through the hole in the clouds to the world above.

Photo by Jerry Liguori, [HawkWatch International.org](http://HawkWatchInternational.org). “For millennia, countless cultures have revered birds of prey as representatives of strength, freedom, and the power of nature.”



JIM HOFFSIS

Writers and Readers Lose a *Treasure*

If you walked into Old Town’s Treasure House Books & Gifts on a day in the past two decades and lingered for a time with a volume, chances are Jim Hoffsis would soon be at your elbow to tell you anything you wanted to know about it—except how it ended. Hoffsis, an Old Town fixture since 1974, died on Oct. 8. He was 93.

Hoffsis moved to Albuquerque with his family in 1974. “Dad had always enjoyed Albuquerque,” his son, John, said. “He wanted to have a business of his own. One day in 1974, he was walking around Old Town and he saw a for sale sign for Treasure House, a souvenir and jewelry store.” He bought the business and ran it until he retired in 1999. His son has continued his practice of supporting local authors and many SouthWest Writers have been featured in book signings there.

In a special edition of his [Black Range Pub](#) podcast on Oct. 22, SWW board member, Robert Kidera remembered Hoffsis. “He honored us... We all came to realize down deep that the store must have been named after him.

“When someone departs, the survivors seek consolation. Right now, I can imagine Jim Hoffsis standing around a heavenly bookstore, chatting up Louis L’Amour or Willa Cather or Rudolfo Anaya or Max Evans or Tony Hillerman or any number of other great writers who either lived in or wrote about our beloved Southwest and its people. Now that would be a just reward for Jim Hoffsis.”

Services will be at 10 a.m., Nov. 10 at French Mortuary, 1111 University NE. Read the full obituary, send flowers or post a memory of Jim Hoffsis [HERE](#).



Open for Entries

Entries for the The National Federation of Press Women's 2022 Professional Communications Contest must be published or broadcast in some format between January 1, 2021 and December 31, 2021.

The NFPW professional contest is a two-tiered contest. Entrants first enter a state level contest in the state they live in or are a member of. In New Mexico, the state-level contest is entered through New Mexico Press Women (details and information below).

First-place winners in the state-level contest and the at-large contests are eligible to move to the national level of judging. To be eligible to compete in the national level, the entrant must be a member in good standing with the National Federation of Press Women. Unless the affiliate contest requires membership to participate, the entrants can join NFPW once they learn of their winning status. The deadline to join to compete in the national contest is March 15, 2022.

Information, deadlines, entry fees and online registration at: <https://www.nfpw.org/professional-contest>.



NMPW New Mexico Communications Contest

The 2022 New Mexico Press Women Communications Contest is open for entries. The state contest is the first tier in the National Federation of Press Women's contest (**see above**). Entries are submitted through the NFPW Communications Contest portal.

The NMPW Communications Contest is judged at the state level. First place winners in the state level contest are eligible to move to the national level of judging.

Information, deadlines, entry fees and directions to the NFPW registration portal at: newmexicopresswomen.org.



Call for Entries: 2022 Next Generation Indie Book Awards.

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 2022 Next Generation Indie Book Awards.

Offering 80+ Categories - **More than 80 Awards** – with over 80 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!

indiebookawards.com

OPPORTUNITIES FOR WRITERS

The 2021 North Carolina Writing Workshop *How to Get Published*

November 12-13, 2021, online

Two days full of classes and advice designed to give you the best instruction concerning how to get your writing & books published. We'll discuss your publishing opportunities today, how to write queries & pitches, how to market yourself and your books, what makes an agent/editor stop reading your manuscript, and more. Fiction or nonfiction writers from everywhere are welcome to attend virtually.

All questions about the event regarding schedule, details and registration are answered [HERE](#).



Left Coast Crime #32

Southwest Sleuths

Albuquerque, New Mexico
April 7-10, 2022

Information and registration: [CLICK HERE](#)

Registration for Left Coast Crime includes a Welcome Reception, two special Breakfasts (seating limited), the "Lefty" Awards Banquet, and admission to all panels and interviews.

Discounts apply on tickets purchased before January 1, 2022.

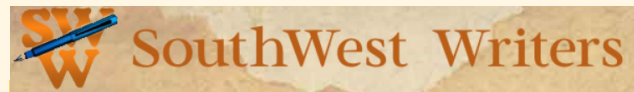
SWW Annual Meeting Summarized

1. Annual Meeting was conducted on October 2. Membership voted for new officers, and the following people will be SouthWest Writers officers for 2022:
 - President – Brenda Cole
 - Vice President – Joe Brown
 - Treasurer – Rose Kern
 - Secretary – Dan Wetmore
2. The following by-laws change was approved:

The office of Vice-President will be a one-year commitment. To be eligible for the office of Vice President a person shall have been a member in good standing for no less than one (1) year immediately preceding the date of nomination, and shall have either served on the Board, or have actively participated as a volunteer in a committee or advisory capacity within the past five years.

SWW Board Meeting Summarized OCTOBER

1. Meeting dates are changing beginning January 1, 2022. Information about the change will be highlighted in upcoming issues of the SAGE and will be mentioned at the remainder of 2021's meetings.
2. A chairperson for the 2022 Writing Contest is needed.
3. SWW's office manager has signed a contract to continue her employment through 2022.
4. A post-mortem of the first combined in-person/ZOOM meeting conducted on 10/2/2021 was done, and some recommendations are under consideration.
5. Board member Sam Moorman has retired from the board. We thank him for his work in managing activities relating to facilities.
6. SouthWest Writers-branded items (SWAG) are available through Redbubble.



Board of Directors

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

Joe Brown, Member At Large
Roger Floyd, Bylaws/Signage
Cornelia Gamlem, Marketing/PR
Robert Kidera, Member At Large
Dr. Kathy Kitts, Fundraising
Jacqueline Murray Loring, Membership
Léonie Rosenstiel, Print Media
Kathy Schuit, Sage Editor
Kathy Wagoner, Website
Dan Wetmore, Writing Contest

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.

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

