

SouthWest Sage

The Voice of SouthWest Writers

SWW Annual Meeting

Awards, Elections, Preparation for the Future

The much-anticipated October 8 annual meeting has come and gone, but a whole lot got done.

Members attended in person and on Zoom for the final results of the annual writing contest and to applaud the winners as they received their awards (winners listed on **pages 5 and 6**). The 2022 winner's anthology, *A Diversity of Expression*, which contains most of the winning contest entries, was released at the meeting and is now available on Amazon, [HERE](#).

Elections concluded with the successful seating of a President and Vice President, who will begin their new duties on January 1, 2023 (details on **page 14**). Newly (re)elected President, Rose Marie Kern—who previously served as president from 2019-2021—encouraged members to volunteer to help keep SWW moving forward.

PARRIS AWARD – The SWW Board of Directors was unanimous in its selection of Rose Marie Kern as the 2022 Parris Award-winner. Among other notable citations, Kern's nomination mentioned her years of dedication to SWW and her above-and-beyond Presidential leadership of the organization through the Covid-19 crisis. The Parris Award is the most prestigious award given by SWW. It was founded by Parris Afton Bonds to honor SWW members who have a body of published work and have also demonstrated exceptional service to the organization. Afton Bonds attended the October 8 award ceremony via Zoom.



Chris Allen (above left) won awards in multiple categories, including a first place in the category of Opening Chapter of an Unpublished Book, which was co-written with her husband Paul Knight (above left). Roger Floyd (above right), accepts one of his multiple awards from presenter Cornelia Gamlem.

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Look Who JOINED SWW in SEPTEMBER!



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Jil Freitag
Jordan Jones
Irvis Macy
Brian Griffin
Kristin Middleton
Wanda Whittlesey-Jerome

Welcome!

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SouthWest Sage

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ATTEND SouthWest Writers MEETINGS IN-PERSON or ONLINE

SouthWest Writers meets the second Saturday (Zoom/in-person hybrid) and the fourth Wednesday (Zoom only) of each month. Directions and login information at SouthWestWriters.com.

From the President

I'm writing this letter in mid-October; however the weather seems more in line with late November. Yesterday saw a high of 51 with winds and rain. The morning started off with snow flurries in the foothills; today we won't even make it to 50. It's as if nature can't decide whether to give us one last burst of warmth or drop us right into a late fall blustery grey day.

It is still a couple of weeks until November, which is good as we have an exciting event coming up on November 19. The University of New Mexico is hosting its annual Arts and Crafts Festival, and SouthWest Writers is participating. If you are familiar with the location of our Saturday in-person meetings, it will be in the same building—the Continuing Education Building—located at 1634 University Blvd, NE. The event runs from 10 am - 4 pm.

Southwest Writers will have three tables set up with books for sale by our members, as well as



BRENDA COLE

our anthologies. Our office manager will be managing the sales, so you don't need to be present. If you are interested in participating, there are a few rules to follow. Each author is responsible for bringing their books to the event and picking up any remainder at the close of the show. Ten percent of any sales will go to SouthWest Writers. Each author will be allowed a maximum of six titles. We will also have limited space for authors wanting to do book signings. If you are interested, please contact the office to get the full details and sign up to bring books and a time slot for book signing.

This promises to be an enjoyable event. There will be entertainment, food, and diverse types of crafts and products for sale. We were specifically told they were limiting the number of book-related booths; therefore the public should be interested in browsing our tables.

We are coming to the close of 2023. We have two more Saturday meetings and one Wednesday night in November. Now is the time to start planning any holiday giving needs. The latest SWW anthology is available on Amazon [HERE](#), and there will be exciting finds at the Craft Festival. I'll be helping at our table; I hope to see many of you there.

Brenda

UNM Craft Fair Book Sale Opportunity



SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 19 • 10AM - 4PM

Come shop for unique, locally handmade gifts from New Mexico artists and vendors.

- Free entrance
- Unique and fun workshops to make your own gifts!
- Live entertainment
- Free and easy parking
- Convenient location in the heart of Albuquerque
- Wide variety of artists

Albuquerque-area members of SouthWest Writers are invited to display their books at the University of New Mexico's Arts and Craft Fair on Saturday, November 19. There are also some limited time slots available for authors to sit at a table with their books to interact with the Fair participants and do book signings. In her President's message ([above](#)), Brenda Cole has laid out the details.

For more information and an application contact info@swwriters.com or call (505) 830-6034. Applications must be received by the SWW office no later than Monday, November 14, 2022.



SWW SWAG!

Order YOURS at

SWWSwag.redbubble.com



MEETINGS IN NOVEMBER

SATURDAY, November 12

10 a.m. – noon

In person & Zoom

Robin Perini

Taking Your Writing to the Next Level

Curious how to move from a wannabe to an author of fiction that Publishers Weekly called “refresh[ing] romantic suspense” and RT Book Reviews called “riveting and remarkable?” In this practical, hands-on presentation, Robin Perini will explain the skills that did just that for her writing career.

www.robinperini.com



WEDNESDAY, November 23

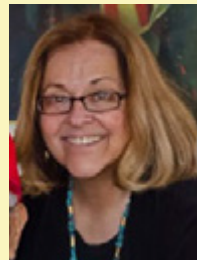
6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.

Via Zoom

Judith Avila

Writing Your Memoir, An Act of Courage

The world of book publicity is a crowded market. Learn from this 25-year veteran of literary promotion how to rise above the noise, what it takes to get the media’s attention, and what you can be doing on your own, now, to be set up for book publicity success. We will discuss the blend of traditional publicity tactics with online and digital promotion, while tapping into social media and influencers as well.



SouthWest Writers meetings are free to everyone. We ask individuals who have attended up to three meetings to please join our organization. Memberships enable us to continue bringing high-quality speakers to meetings. Find details for these and other meetings on the SouthWestWriters.com Meetings page.

WORKSHOP

Saturday, November 12

Wildness in Your Writing
With Lisa Taylor

12:30 – 2:30 pm

Via Zoom

SWW members: \$20

Non-members: \$30

In this two-hour workshop, we will explore ways in which our lives compel us to write, with our resulting pieces containing only the dust of the true events that may have sparked an idea or character. We will read examples of unconventional writing and reinvent what is possible for you.



More information on the
SouthWestWriters.com Workshop page.

SWW CLASSES STARTING SOON

Producing Print-Ready PDFs with Affinity

Class Instructor: RJ Mirabal

4-week Course

Saturdays, November 5, 12, 19, and 26

1:30 – 3:30 p.m. Mountain Time

(NOTE: November 12, time: 2:30 – 4:30 p.m. MT)

Platform: IN-PERSON

\$160 SWW members, \$200 Nonmembers



Class details, descriptions, and links to enrollment are on the SWW website [Classes page](#).

To Register:

Call the SWW office
(505-830-6034,

Mon. – Thurs. 9 a.m. – noon)

or use the

[online registration form](#).

Congratulations! 2022 WRITING CONTEST WINNERS

Winners are listed by category and placing. Look for winning entries in the contest anthology — *A Diversity of Expression: 2022 Contest Anthology of Award-winning Fiction, Memoir & Poetry*. To purchase the anthology, [CLICK HERE](#).

OPENING CHAPTER, PUBLISHED BOOK

- 1st Place: Chuck Greaves, "The Chimera Club"
2nd Place: Jennifer Leeper, "The Poison of War"
3rd Place: Victoria Murata, "When the Mockingbird Won't Sing"
Honorable Mention: Edith Tarbescu, "One Will: Three Wives"
Honorable Mention: Jodi Lea Stewart, "Canyon of Doom"

OPENING CHAPTER, UNPUBLISHED BOOK

- 1st Place: Paul Knight/Chris Allen, "Overture"
2nd Place: Jonathan Seyfried, "Paradigm Shift"
3rd Place: Joe Cappello, "The White Ace"
Honorable Mention: Conor McAnally, "Bullets in the Water"
Honorable Mention: Craig Higgins, "Artichoke Hearts and Chicken-Fried Shark"
Honorable Mention: Vicki Felmlee, "Defiance, West of the River"
Honorable Mention: Roger Floyd, "The Diplomat"
Honorable Mention: Jodi Lea Stewart, "Midnight at the Bus Station"

BOOK REVIEW

- 1st Place: Roger Floyd, "Santa Fe & the Atomic Bomb"

ELEVATOR PITCH

- Tied for 1st Place: Ed Johnson, "Santiago's Prayer"
Chris Allen, "Harmonic Chronicles"
3rd Place: William Fisher, "The Price of the Sky"

LIMERICK

- 1st Place: Chris Allen, "Words"
2nd Place: Roscoe Champion, "Teen Diagnosis"
3rd Place: Roscoe Champion, "Old Pro Politico"

HAIKU

- 1st Place: Dodici Azpadu, "Snow Dust"
2nd Place: Ed Lehner, "Tears"
3rd Place: Rebecca Dakota, "Lockdown Privilege"
Honorable Mention: Wendy Brown, "Ancient Wisteria"
Honorable Mention: Rebecca Dakota, "Waiting Underground"

FREE VERSE POETRY

- 1st Place: Kathleen Holmes, "Ode to a Dead Poet"
2nd Place: Wendy Brown, "Facing Cancer at the Foot of Ladron Mountain"
3rd Place: Victoria Holmsten, "Produce Far Aisle"
Honorable Mention: Alan Bern, "In Memory of My Milton Teacher, John"
Honorable Mention: Matt Nyman, "A Different Christmas Tree"
Honorable Mention: Arlene Hoyt-Schulze, "Skipping Stones"



PROSE, FLYING

- 1st Place: James Tritten, "One Way Flight to Shakin"
2nd Place: Judith Castleberry, "The Gosling"
3rd Place: Jeffrey Otis, "The Lure of Flying"

PROSE, VOYAGES

- 1st Place: Evelyn Neil, "Hitch Hiker"
2nd Place: Patricia Walkow, "An Unexpected Voyage"
3rd Place: Jette Tritten, "Across the Atlantic"

PROSE, MOUNTAINS

- 1st Place: Leonie Rosenstiel, "Creative Procrastination"
2nd Place: Ed Lehner, "Grantston"
3rd Place: Mary Burns, "Mountain Meditation"

PROSE, CELESTIAL BODIES

- 1st Place: Ma Angelica Chiutena, "Orion"
2nd Place: Kathleen Holmes, "The Music Box"
3rd Place: Roger Floyd, "The Star Falls"

NON-FICTION TRAVEL

- 1st Place: Connie Orozco-Morgan, "Of Titans and Sprites and Forest Delights"
2nd Place: Terence Cady, "Transylvania"
3rd Place: Vicky Ramakka, "Night Photography in Joshua Tree National Park"

NON-FICTION MEMOIR

- 1st Place: Ruth Marshall, "Forever"
2nd Place: Paula Nixon, "Ursa Major"
3rd Place: Evelyn Neil, "Bubble Gum"
Honorable Mention: Jennifer Trotter, "Ghost on the Lawn"
Honorable Mention: Joe Cappello, "Once Upon a Midnight"


ARTWORK

This year's contest included the opportunity to submit images to be included in the anthology. The SWW membership voted for their top five, listed below. (Other images were added to the book by the contest committee as needed.)

INTERIOR ART

- Rebecca Larivee, "Hemblett Cabin"
Jeffrey Otis, "Flyers"
Jette Tritten, "Sandia Mountains"
Robert Cudney, "Looking for Company"
Elizabeth Layton, "Wildly Shining"

COVER ART

- Kathy Schuit, "Many Hats"
- 

Rainbow Challenge Match



“I CHALLENGE YOU!”

EVELYN NEIL, author of *Dancing to the End of Our Rainbow*, will match the total of donations made to SWW between now and Christmas—up to \$3,000!

Challenge message from Evelyn:

“In March of 2022, on the seventh anniversary of my husband, Don’s, death my memoir, *Dancing to the End of Our Rainbow*, was published. Without the support

and encouragement of so many members of the SouthWest Writers community, this would never have been possible.

“Having been given great opportunity to achieve comes the responsibility to give back. That said, I urge you all to get on board with my DANCING TO THE END OF OUR RAINBOW challenge and make sure I am forced to put my money where my mouth is.

“Make me donate that full \$3,000 to SouthWest Writers before the end of this year!”

To participate in the Rainbow Challenge, click [HERE](#).

NM-AZ Book Awards

SWW members stand out among them



WINNERS ANNOUNCED 2022

CATEGORY	TITLE	AUTHOR
Animal Pets	Sometimes the Dog Is Smarter	Kat Richter-Sand
Anthology (Fiction)	Mirth and Musings	Sandi Hoover & Jim Tritten
Biography	Tony Hillerman: A Life	James McGrath Morris
Body, Mind & Spirit	Coronavirus Reflections: Bitter and Better	Larada Horner-Miller
New Age	When Spirit Whispers	Carol March
Parenting & Family	Protecting Mama: Surviving Legal Guardianship	Leone Rosenstiel
Young Adult	Silky, the Girl of Many Scarves	Jodi Lea Stewart
Fiction: Cozy Mystery	Death in a Desert Garden	Marty Eberhardt
Juvenile	Higher, Faster, Longer	Loretta Hall

CONGRATULATIONS!

Do You Have Your Copy Yet?

2022 SWW Writing Contest Winners Anthology available [HERE](#), from Amazon.com.

Perfect for the readers on your Christmas list!

ONE MEMBER RESPONDS to “SWW In Crisis”

Sometimes, the right thing to do is to throw up your hands and ask for help. This seems to have been the case with the decision by the SWW Executive Board to alert members to a potential crisis situation brewing within the organization in regard to a lack of sufficient volunteers to keep programs going. Notice came in the form of an article in the September SAGE, “SWW in Crisis.” Thankfully, many members have since come forward to offer their time and expertise, though many more are needed. Joanne Bodin, a long-time member with years of service in SWW leadership positions, was inspired to communicate her dismay in writing. Certain opinions expressed are Joanne’s alone. Although her views may not be shared by all members of SouthWest Writers, we believe her core message is an important one and an apt response to “SWW In Crisis.”

Bearing Witness

by Joanne S. Bodin

I recently watched an interview with Margaret Atwood, one of my favorite writers. Her novel *The Handmaid’s Tale*, currently being made into a graphic novel and a Broadway play, highlights a dystopian society that, in today’s world, seems to me more than prophetic. The saying “art imitates life” certainly evokes more than a visceral response as we appear to approach tipping points that could alter life as we know it on this planet.

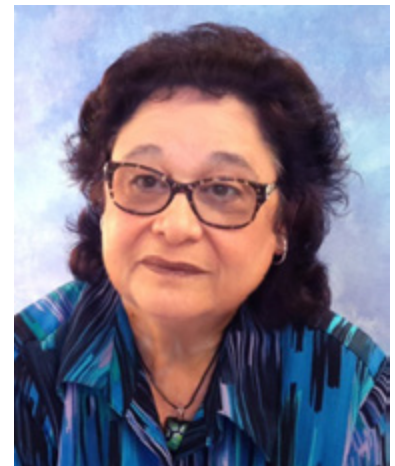
As a longtime member of SouthWest Writers, I feel that now, more than ever, the role of writers is crucial as we bear witness to this unprecedented time in history. Writers are modern-day bards who tell stories that will become archival material for future generations. Yet, unless we step up and take our roles seriously, we become part of the problem, and not the solution.

On a global scale, many organizations are encouraging writers to document these challenging times through poetry, stories, essays, etc. Some of us feel that getting our writing published is the main “perk.” But some of us see our writing as our responsibility, our purpose. Throughout history, the arts have become the common leveler, the one place where human expression can flourish. Various art forms have allowed people to express truths that might be difficult to hear. These truths might be couched in theatrical forms, or in the written word, or in paintings, even in today’s graffiti. It is through the arts that we find ways to express ourselves. That is, until we are censored by governments that don’t want the truth. Artists have historically risked their lives to tell truths. How fortunate we are to live in New Mexico, a place that is known worldwide for extraordinary artists like Georgia O’Keeffe and writers like D.H. Lawrence and many others.

Organizations that support the arts in any form need to have our support. Censorship, book bans, media black-outs, threats of violence, and even death threats are what we face in our own Democracy. When I read the September 2022 SAGE, I read an article entitled “SWW in Crisis.”

For almost 17 years, I have been a member of SWW, and I have never heard the word “crisis” used. I am writing this article because I feel compelled to let members know how vital this organization is. Had I not gotten involved with SWW, I would have never become the writer I am today. I was able to take classes, workshops, take on leadership roles on the board, and find camaraderie as well as a sense of purpose. With the election at SWW now settled, I hope people will step up and offer their service as volunteers or board members, to help enable those individuals who have kept this organization together for 30-plus years to pass on their skills to new leadership. Because of technology, SWW has been able to expand its organization on a global scale. Now is the time we need a conduit through which our voices can be heard. Apathy is not an option, not just for artists and writers, but for everyone who believes in the human experience as a privilege, a gift, not to be taken for granted.

“Apathy is not an option...”



The Writing Life

ANTICIPATION

by Sherri L. Burr

We often think of anticipation as awaiting good events with eagerness. As authors, we anticipate agents selling our books, first proofs, putting the book to bed, the arrival of author copies, and when an advance or royalties will hit our bank accounts. There's another side to anticipation that is important to the writing life: Deadlines, particularly when we must confront several simultaneously.

At the end of 2021, I anticipated a change to my living situation that would negatively impact access to my office. My response was to pre-write several columns so they would be ready to go at deadline time. During the month of September 2022, I failed to anticipate the impact of an intense traveling schedule on writing commitments.

Between two back-to-back, four-day trips to different events on the East Coast, I spent only three days at home. I unpacked, washed clothes, and packed again as requests came in. My mother decided that, in addition to my normal chores for her, she needed new curtains and a new washer and dryer. My West Academic publisher sent the final proofs of my latest Wills and Trusts book on the Tuesday before I was due to be back in an airplane at 6 a.m. the next day. My publisher wanted an Index returned the following Tuesday. Another New Mexico university wanted me to choose a date for a talk in February and sign paperwork.

Magicians who juggle balls in the air do so by anticipating when the next ball is going to land. Starting with one ball is simple and adding a second is manageable with two hands. Add three or more balls, and that's when juggling comes in. With only three days on the ground, I found myself juggling several tasks because I had failed to anticipate.

With forethought, I should have pre-written the column and packed for the second trip before stepping on the first plane. But I didn't do that. As I was packing, it dawned on me that I needed to delay fulfilling my mother's requests for new curtains and appliances. She agreed.

After receiving the email about the Index, I immediately wrote the publisher that a week to prepare the document would be sufficient if I were going to be in Albuquerque. Since I did not have that option, I asked for his forbearance if the Index was turned in on a later day the follow-

ing week. He said that would be fine and thanked me for forewarning him. He had been previously agreeable after Queen Elizabeth II died and I asked for an extra day or two to add material on English succession rules and to compare U.S. death taxes to those in the United Kingdom.

To jump start the Index, I contacted the University of New Mexico faculty support staff. They committed to start the draft with the expectation of returning the Index by 10 a.m. on the Monday before it was due. I immediately forwarded the material.

Perhaps this was too ambitious of a time frame since it was finally delivered late Monday afternoon. I began spot-checking the Index only to encounter several missing pages. That meant I had to check the entire 20-page document. I finished two days later, but in the process missed a Faculty Colloquium I might have enjoyed.

After turning in the Index, I purchased my mother's curtains. The next day, a different University contacted me about another lecture. That "metaphoric ball" had disappeared when I forgot. I looked at my 2023 calendar, picked a date, and emailed the paperwork. Before going to bed, I secured an airline ticket so that my 80-year-old aunt could fly in to see my 82-year-old mother for the first time in almost three pandemic years.

The next day, I wrote this column and emailed it to be early for the next deadline. This experience reminds me to endeavor to anticipate traffic jams in my writing and personal life and prepare alternate routes.



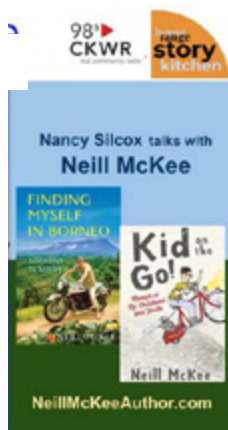
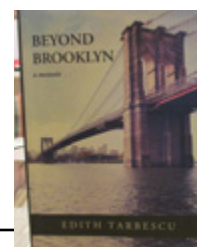
SHERRI L. BURR has authored over two dozen books. Her 27th, *Complicated Lives: Free Blacks in Virginia: 1619-*

1865 (Carolina Academic Press, 2019), was nominated for the Pulitzer Prize in History. A graduate of Mount Holyoke College, Princeton University, and the Yale Law School, Burr has been a member of SouthWest 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.

Winning!

SWW Members Share Their Writing Success

EDITH TARBESCU's new book, a memoir titled *Beyond Brooklyn*, is now available on Amazon. Interpersed are short humorous plays and a one-woman play, all produced in New York. Edith studied playwriting at the Yale school of Drama.



On September 13, 2022, NEIL MCKEE was interviewed by author Nancy Silcox on Promenade 98.5 CKWR, a Community Radio Station in Kitchener, Ontario, Canada. It's a wide-ranging interview on the three memoirs he has written and published so far, his career as an international filmmaker and media producer, and what he is writing about now.

[LISTEN to the interview NOW.](#)

McKee also received a finalist award in the category of Biography/Autobiography Other (non-regional) from the 2022 NM/AZ Book Awards for his book, *Kid on the Go!*

EVELYN NEIL was one of three University of New Mexico Alumni from the College of Education and Human Services (COEHS) to receive distinguished awards at the annual Alumni and Community Awards event, hosted by the COEHS Alumni Chapter on October 17.

Neil received the Alumni Award, which recognizes UNM graduates who have brought honor and/or have made significant contributions to their professions. She has been championed as a UNM Alumnus and retiree who continues to give back to Albuquerque learners of all ages. Described by a nominator as inclusive and thoughtful, she created an endowed scholarship for students in the COEHS Special Education Department, as well as the Department's first Endowed Faculty Fellowship. This is in addition to her volunteerism outside of the University, which is focused on groups like the Children's Grief Center and Horizons Albuquerque.



ELLEN MEEROPOL, who presented the workshop "Evil Characters We Love to Hate" and the class "Hearing Voices: Using multiple narrators to deepen your novel" for SWW this year, is happy to announce the publication of her fifth novel, *The Lost Women of Azalea Court*.



When an elderly woman goes missing, the women of her neighborhood dig into the secrets of her husband's past to save her.

John Mutter, editor-in-chief of *Shelf Awareness*, wrote this about the novel, "In Ellen Meeropol's deft hands, lost women are found—and begin to find justice—in a most satisfying, enjoyable way.

Find more information about the book and about Ellen at her website: www.ellenmeeropol.com

KAT RICHTER-SAND's first book, *Sometimes the Dog is Smarter*, was awarded First Place in the 2022 New Mexico-Arizona Book Awards Contest, in the Animals/Pets category. In total, the book received three Finalist awards in the NM/AZ contest and was also awarded Honorable Mention in the 2022 New Mexico Press Women Communications Contest.

To read Amazon reviews, view the book covers on a larger screen and/or PURCHASE KAT's BOOK, available in e-book and print, [CLICK HERE](#).



KATHY LOUISE SCHUIT's second picture book for young children, *Dance Cat*, will be available through Amazon Nov. 1, and at the UNMCE Craft Fair, Nov. 19.

As with her award-winning, first picture book, *Where Does This Line Go: Penndittle E. Turtle Wants to Know* (available on Amazon [HERE](#)), Schuit is the writer and illustrator of *Dance Cat*.

The Dance Cat and friends practice every day to dance their best in every way!



AN ADDED CHALLENGE

Member Heidi Marshall has once again issued a SAGE Challenge, Challenge to editor Kathy Schuit to write to November's topic and edit and proofread each other's work.

Now, we're wondering if others would like to participate with their own SAGE Challenge, Challenge? Just pick a partner, write your stories according to the guidelines on this page and the overall submissions guidelines on **page 16**, proofread, edit and critique the heck out of each other's work—remember to be honest and kind—and then send both submissions in a single email to sage@swwriters.com. Submissions for publication will be selected by the SAGE team of proofreaders. As added incentive to polish both submissions to their most brilliant shine, both will be accepted for publication, or neither will be. If space is at a premium, stories may be held for possible publication in future months. Work together, have fun, challenge each other!

The Color of You

by HR Marshall

I walk into the living room, drape my coat on the back of the couch, and place my purse on the side table. My eyes rest on the man sitting near the bay window. He is holding an oval vase, turning it in small increments, his fingers exploring the deep design etched on the glass. A smile gives youth to his aging, handsome face.

"Hi," I say in a low voice, not wanting to startle him and knowing full well he's already aware of my presence. He turns his face toward me, his fingers continuing their search for form and texture. I kiss his smile, his eyes light up and I suddenly want, with an intensity never felt before, to tell him about the one thing he won't find in his search on the exquisite vase he holds. He flicks his index finger against the side to make the crystal ring, as if the sound could tell. I place my hands over his fingers, stilling them.

"The color is like a wave in a deep river flowing in the shadows of clouds. You touch the water and feel coolness sliding between your fingers..."

"Keep going, please. Here, take it." He hands me the vase, as if it were necessary for me to touch it to see the color.

"...Sunlight breaks through the clouds," I continue, "and the shadows separate to let it sparkle on drops the river spills as its current breaks into waves. The coolness swims in the reflections of the summer trees above."

He smiles, expectant, and I press on. "You step in the shallows at the river's edge, feel the coolness on your feet, keep going deeper, until your whole body is submerged in the ripples you have made. The summer heat dissipates, and all you feel is coolness, a freshness that is nuance. You trip on a stone and reach down, feel the moss covering it, soft and cool in your hands. The color spreads, then lightens and darkens as it moves. You are seeing..."

"Stop! I need to feel what I'm seeing."

"Let's go outside," I say, and he gets up and walks unerringly to the sliding door. Always the gentleman, he opens it for me. The vase I hold captures for a moment the last reflections of the setting sun, and I wish for him to see it, but that fiery color is not what I want. I set the vase down.

"It's warm outside," he says, taking his shoes off and stepping on the grass. I do the same and then touch his right arm to steer him under the cottonwood tree canopy where it is cooler. He reaches up to touch the foliage. He has felt the tree in all seasons and knows the cool and supple feel of leaves in summer.

"Let's go down to the stream," he says, reaching for my hand. We walk toward the sound of running water. I sit on a bench under a willow tree, and he steps in, reaching to feel and push aside the sweeping branches. I keep spilling words, trying to paint the sounds he hears. "Dappled shadows on grass, willow branches trailing in the singing water."

"Stop," he tells me again. "I need to touch."

How can I possibly tell him that the color I'm hopeless to describe is the color of his eyes?

The Sage Writing Challenge

DECEMBER

The crawlers, gnats, and flies that bug us through the summer have disappeared. Write up to 800 words about an insect in December.

To submit your Challenge entry for possible publication in the December SAGE, read, understand and follow the submission guidelines on page 17.

Send submissions or questions to:

Kathy Schuit

SouthWest SAGE Editor

sage@swwriters.com

The Challenge for November publication was to describe a color to a person unable to see it.

Glimball

by Kathy Louise Schuit

By the time Geoffry found the glimball, which his teammate had kicked in a wild bid to win the game, a mogdole was sleeping on it.

Now, everyone knows mogdoles, though sluggish and blind, have very sharp claws for digging, and for cutting and slashing when a mogdole decides there's a need.

Geoffry, who was not the most energetic boy on the team, had already chased the wayward glimball between boulders, past Cider Stream, beyond the green Tee birds perched on yellowberry bushes, and down the crimson grass hill, and he was tired. So he sat on a rock, eyeing the mogdole.

As much as Geoffry wanted to retrieve the ball and get on with the game, he now had this mogdole to consider. Was it really asleep? Should he risk grabbing the ball from its claws? They really were sharp looking.

"Zzzzzgh."

Geoffry leapt up and had taken two startled steps towards a run before he realized the sound wasn't the bogle of a mogdole attack, but rather the sigh of a snore.

During the minutes it took to recover from his fright, a curiosity nagged him till he dropped to his knees and started a slow crawl toward the mogdole and the red hot glimball it held.

If you've never played glimball, and chances are you have not, it's a game of endurance and skilled passing where players try to carry a hot glimball across the field for a goal. But the longer it's held by one player, the hotter the glimball gets, until it must be passed to another to avoid blisters and burns.

The mogdole had been snoozing on the glimball so long its short fur should have caught fire. Though he was now nearly nose to nose with the puzzle, Geoffry still couldn't figure why it had not.

"Hmphff."

Geoffry froze, his mind looping around the claw slashing that would scar him for life.

"I s'pose you'll be wanting yer heat-maker back."

The mogdole's voice rumbled in a way that reminded Geoffry of his grandfather's at four a.m., drinking hot coffee. "It's cold y'know, down under the earth, and a heat-maker like this..." One claw seemed to tighten around the glimball.

"It's not for making heat. It's a glimball and we need it for our game."

"We could play a game," the mogdole said.

"But it takes a team, and..."

"No," it interrupted. "Not your game, my game."

"What game?"

"My bones feel like ice." It laid its cheek against the radiating glimball and Geoffry's mystery resolved. The creature was too cold for the glimball to burn. "But my second sorrow," the mogdole continued, "is that I have

never and will never see colors. Help me see a color, you choose which, and I will return the heat-maker."

This got Geoffry's attention.

How sad, he thought, to never see the world's color.

"The glimball glows red when it's hottest," he started, with the object of their mutual attention. "Red is the color of burning heat and the color of pain. It's the color that floods your head when something's been taken from you—when there's injustice or unfairness or wrong."

"I'm not sure I like red."

"That's just it. Red is complicated. It's the color of



hurt and of hate, but it's also the excited beat of your heart when you're near someone you love. The scent of a single red rose can fill an entire room, and sunrises—the ones where you can smell the rain coming—spread red all across the sky; the burst of flavor when you bite a pomegranate seed, or a ripe berry, or apple, that's red.

"And there's blood. The reddest red you can imagine is blood red. It's the same color in all people, and animals too. It connects us, even you and me.

"Red is thick and dark. At the same time, it's fresh and bright, like the cardinal bird singing in the trees. It's samenesses and differences."

Just then, the mogdole released the glimball, which started a slow, cooling-off roll toward Geoffry.

"Did you see the color?"

"No," said the mogdole, "but you did yer best, and I'm not really the sort to keep a boy from his ball."

The glimball bumped against Geoffry's shoes. He could take it and run back to the game. But he couldn't.

The team had bags of glimballs. In fact, he realized they'd probably finished the game without him, or the ball.

"And I'm not the sort to go back on a deal, or leave a fellow red-blooded mammal under the earth in the cold, without his own heat-maker." Geoffry nudged the ball back toward the mogdole before turning to go.

As he neared the top of the crimson grass hill, Geoffry heard a zzzzzgh-ing sound. How many people, he wondered, have ever heard the contended sigh of a warm mogdole's snore?



Orange You Glad

by Allen Herring

"Here, open your hand," Carter says to JD. The two men are standing in the kitchen.

Carter puts a juicy ripe tomato into the palm of JD. "Now squeeze as hard as you can."

JD closes his hand and the ripe tomato bursts. Juice flies all over. It hits his face and drips down his hands. "Eww, what is this?"

"The color orange."

"It smells like a tomato, and tomatoes are red."

"Not all of them." Carter wipes JD's hand and face. "Okay, open your hand again."

"Ugh, not another one."

"No. Just open your hand." JD opens his hand.

Carter places a large round orb in JD's hand. "Okay, now scratch it with your other hand. JD scratches the surface of the round object.

Wetness sprays, oil runs down his fingers, his nostrils flare. "It's tangy, a grapefruit."

"Close, but no."

"What is it?"

"A pomelo."

"That's a grapefruit."

"No it's not. Grapefruits are cross-breeds."

"What!"

"Grapefruits are hybrids between pomelos and oranges, sweet ones specifically."

"Sometimes, you're just messed up C. So what does a pomelo have to do with an orange?"

"Citrus, tangy, oily, tart, bitter, antiseptic."

"Way to sell it."

"That's PR for you."

"One more time, open your hand."

"What now?"

"Trust me."

"Fine." JD opens his hand.

Carter takes a knife out of the stove top flames, the metal, orange hot. "Now don't move."

"What do you mean, don't move?"

"You're going to want to pull away, to flinch, but don't.

Trust me."

"You're scaring me."

"Not yet." Carter brings the hot instrument to just above JD's hand.

"It's hot."

"Don't move."

"It's hot. My hand is burning."

"No, it's not."

"Yes it is. Take it away Carter, you're hurting me."

Carter pulls away the knife.

"Why would you do that?"

"That's orange, the color of the sun, blazing through the heavens, warming us."

"Fuck you. You could have hurt me."

"Never."

"But you did."

"If I did, I'm sorry."

"Thanks for the non-apology."

"I wasn't going to hurt you, JD. I wanted to show you what the color orange is. It's bright, juicy, tart, and not for everyone. It is a color that people only like from a distance. A color relegated to fruits and vegetables and sports teams. That's it. But it is the best color. The most vibrant, and it means the most to me, and I wanted you to see that, up close and personal. It is my favorite color because...it is me in a nutshell. Not for everyone, something to be looked at from afar. And I wanted you to see me, to see what it will be like to be with me...juicy, pulpy, tart, messy, bright, hot, and slightly dangerous, but in the end, radiant and simply joyous."

"That sounds like a bullshit answer to almost burning me."

"I would never!"

"So you say, but..."

"But isn't that the risk we all take when falling in love? Of getting burned and scarred and wounded and damaged by another?"

"True, but that was dangerous."

"True, but you were never in danger."

"Says you."

"Says me."

"I don't know, Carter, that was scary."

"Misguided on my part, maybe, but aren't you glad my favorite color isn't red or blue?"



SWW Election Results

Newly elected members of the South-West Writers Board of Directors Executive Committee, to take office January 1, 2023.

With the election of Rose Kern as President for 2023, the position of Treasurer, which she currently holds, will be filled through one or more processes defined by the SWW bylaws. We thank the many people who expressed a willingness to step in to this position. The bylaws clearly define the qualifications needed in a Treasurer, which include a history of service on the board. Cornelia Gamlem, who presently serves on the board as chair of the PR Committee, has volunteered to step in to the Treasurer position. Cornelia has all the skills and qualifications to exceed requirements.



PRESIDENT
Rose Marie Kern



VICE PRESIDENT
Léonie Rosenstiel

TRADITIONAL VS SELF-PUBLISHING

Before making the decision of whether traditional or self-publishing (Indie) is the best fit for your book, here are some pros and cons to consider.

Traditional Publishing Pros

- Wide distribution and more exposure
- Most offer an advance, sometimes a large one
- They do the editing, formatting, cover art
- More marketing power

Traditional Publishing Cons

- Take six months to respond to a query or submission
- Take another six to eighteen months before publication if accepted
- They have power over cover art and title
- Don't use the marketing power they wield effectively
- Pay royalties twice a year
- Don't involve you in many of the decisions regarding your book
- Difficult to implement changes
- Lousy royalty rates, between 6% and 25%
- Very hard to break into

Self Publishing Pros

- Paid once a month
- You control price and cover
- Publication is almost instant
- Easy to implement changes
- Every decision is yours
- Great royalty rates
- Anyone can do it

Self Publishing Cons

- No free professional editing, formatting, or cover art
- Usually Fewer sales unless author works at it
- Less than 10% of current book market
- Greater potential to publish crappy books
- All costs are up front to the author
- Author must do their own marketing

The most inspiring person is the one overcoming the fear of doing something, not the one who's excellent at it.

-From Vivian Johnson podcast, FB, Oct. 24, 2022

CONTESTS and OPPORTUNITIES for WRITERS



The 2023 CONTEST is OPEN!

The annual National Federation of Press Women's communications contest has officially opened!

The contest is open to writers, authors, copy editors, public affairs professionals, photographers, publishers or others in the communications field.

Entries must be published in 2022 and entries are open to writers of all ages.

The early deadline to submit entries—and avoid a one-time additional fee of \$25—is Jan. 18, 2023. The final deadline for books is Feb. 1, 2023, and the final deadline for all other entries is Feb. 8, 2023.

The contest is sponsored by NFPW affiliates, and people living in states without an affiliate hosting a contest are eligible to enter the NFPW at-large contest.

First-place winning entries in the affiliate and at-large contests are eligible to advance to the national competition. To enter the national contest, the entrants must be NFPW members or must join by March 15, 2023.

National winners will be notified in late April, and the results announced during an awards dinner on June 24, 2023, in Cincinnati, Ohio.

Details and entry available through the [New Mexico Press Women website](#).

ZIA BOOK AWARD CONTEST OPEN

Women authors of children's and youth books who have a significant connection to New Mexico are encouraged to enter the New Mexico Press Women's Zia Book Award contest to select the outstanding book for children or young adults.

The award is given each year by the New Mexican Press Women at their annual spring conference. Entries are considered on a rotating three-year cycle. Adult nonfiction books will be eligible in 2024, and adult fiction books will be considered in 2025.

The 2023 Zia Award will be given to an outstanding children's and young adult book published in 2020, 2021 or 2022. Two categories will be considered: books for children from birth to 12 and young adult books for ages 13-18. To be eligible to receive the award, the selected finalists must be available to read at the annual award luncheon during the 2023 conference, April 8, at the Isleta Resort, Albuquerque, NM.

Details and entry available through the [New Mexico Press Women website](#).



CONTEST INFORMATION

Sponsored in part by the New Mexico Higher Education Dept.

Newest Discounts for SWW Members



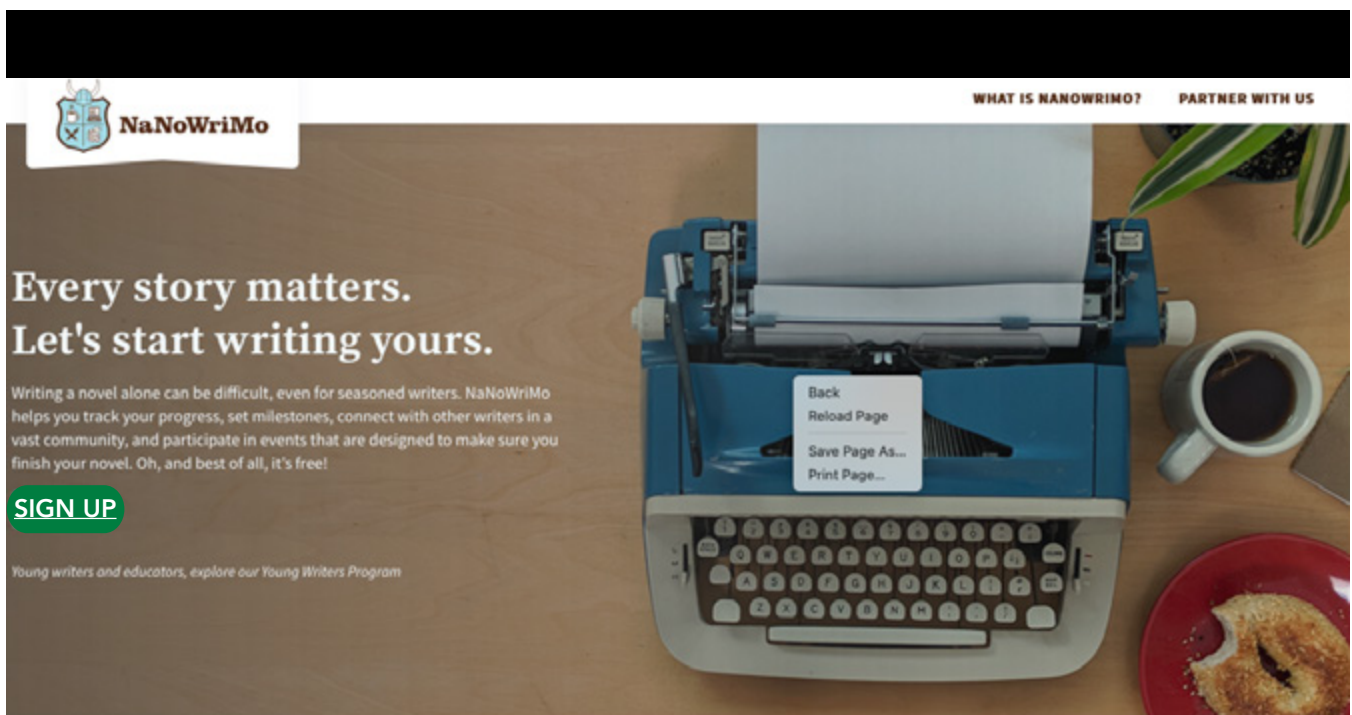
SWW members with a book ready to publish or who are participating in this month's NaNoWriMo writing challenge, can take advantage of this discount before the end of the year!

This is an offer to members, available through the SWW account, and is good for three FREE title upload uses per member. The offer expires Dec. 31, 2022.

Log into the [SWW website](#) Members Only tab where you will find the option for the Ingram Sparks discount and get the promo code needed to access the offer.

If you have difficulty logging in to the SWW site or the Ingram Sparks link, send an email to info@swwriters.com.





National Novel Writing Month (NaNoWriMo) is a fun, seat-of-your-pants approach to creative writing.

SO, WHAT IS NANOWRIMO?

NaNoWriMo is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that provides tools, structure, community, and encouragement to help people find their voices, achieve creative goals, and build new worlds — on and off the page.

NaNoWriMo believes in the transformational power of creativity. We provide the structure, community, and encouragement to help people find their voices, achieve creative goals, and build new worlds—on and off the page.

Willful Words

by Thelma Giomi

Wild willful words
Came sweeping across
The page
As if they owned my heart.
Those wild willful words
Breathed into my morning wonderings
Whispering wisdom.
Wild willful words
Whistle and whine
Through the cracks in the story line
Demanding intrigue and honesty.
You wild willful words
Have captured and enthralled me
With your presence and power.
Wild willful words
I am yours for the duration.



Curiosity

by Larry Kilham

I was curious –
Why is the sky blue?
I was curious –
Why am I me and you you?
I was curious –
about everything I could do.

Now my aged curiosity slumbers
muffled by the trivial and the trite.
I want to be stirred
by some revealing exploration
to lead me from the loneliness of the night.

SouthWest SAGE

SAGE CHALLENGE & ARTICLE SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

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 the following before submitting:

- 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, which will be found on the Challenge page. **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; 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



Board of Directors

Brenda Cole, President
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Dan Wetmore, Secretary

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ReVah Loring, Office Manager

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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