



Writing Contest Awards to be Announced Oct. 14

Winners of the 2023 SWW Writing Contest will be announced at the Saturday, Oct. 14 monthly meeting. The awards presentation can be attended via Zoom or in person.

The contest received 177 paid submissions, including entries in Cover Art, Interior Art, Prose, and Poetry.

For the writing entries, awards will be given in the following categories:

- **Short Stories**
- **Opening Pages of a Novel**
 - Published
 - Unpublished General
 - Unpublished Mystery/Crime/Thriller
 - Unpublished Science Fiction/Fantasy
- **Flash Fiction**
- **Poetry**
 - Free Verse – Nature
 - Free Verse – Relationships
 - Limericks
- **Non-Fiction Memoir**
 - General
 - Pets
 - Travel

A team of 21 writing professionals adjudicated this year's writing contest. Each entry was scored by at least two judges with a composite score determining the rankings.

continued on page 5

Indie Bookstores

support

SWW wants independent bookstore owners and operators to know that local writers see them and support them. If you have a favorite indie bookstore in New Mexico, tell the SAGE. [Email SAGE@swwriters.com](mailto:SAGE@swwriters.com)

The second in our series of member-recommended bookstores is **Books on the Bosque**. This westside shop appears to have a lot going for it and new member Linda G. Harris says it has fast become her new favorite.

6261 Riverside Plaza Lane NW, Suite A-2
Albuquerque, NM 87120
(Off Coors Blvd. NW, north of Montañño Rd. NW.)
(505) 525 - 9114

HOURS: Monday - Saturday, 9-7
Sunday, 9-5

Owner/Manager Deborah Condit is well-known to many in New Mexico government, business, and community relations circles for her work in issue management, coalition building and strategic communications—but her heart belongs to books. According to the store's website, **Books on the Bosque** has been the fulfillment of a decade-long dream

continued on page 7



INSIDE

On Page ONE

- **Oct. 14, Writing Contest Awards**
- **BOOKS ON THE BOSQUE**
Support Indie Bookstores

- 4** *Holes In Our Hearts*
Readings, Launches and Press
- 6** AI Series Continues, by Léonie Rosenstiel
"Shakespearean" Sonnets
Laud the Sandias
- 8** *The Writing Life: Beginnings*
by Sherri L. Burr
- 9** *Participating in the Success of their Writing Dream* – Members In Action
- 10** *History of SouthWest Writers Part 4*
by Kay Lewis "Happy" Shaw, Paula Paul, and Rose Marie Kern

The SAGE Challenge

- 12** *Seeing Red*
by Dan Wetmore
- 13** *Down in the Dumps*
by Allen Herring 3
We Are The Flowers
by Larry Kilham

DEPARTMENTS

From the President.....	3
Meetings/Workshops/Classes.....	5
Look Who Joined.....	3
Contests and Opportunities.....	15
Board Minutes Summary.....	16

SouthWest Sage

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

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ATTEND SouthWest Writers MEETINGS
IN-PERSON or ONLINE

Directions and information at
SouthWestWriters.com.



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The SWW Board of Directors meets on the second Tuesday of each month from 6:30-8:30 p.m. Meetings are conducted in person and via Zoom.

How to stop time: kiss.

How to travel in time: read.

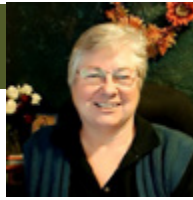
How to escape time: music

How to feel time: write

How to release time: breathe.

—Matt Haig, author of fiction and nonfiction for children and adults. His memoir *Reasons to Stay Alive* was a number one bestseller, staying in the British top 10 for 46 weeks

FROM THE PRESIDENT



Sez the Prez!

Does it ever feel that you have so many ideas for writing pouring into (out of?) your head that you have no idea where to start? I feel that way frequently, but I also feel that way about working with the members of our very talented group of writers.

Every time we have an in-person meeting, several people come up to me with ideas and suggestions—most of which have a great deal of merit. SWW's challenge is to give all of you the KSAs (knowledge, skills, and abilities) you need to succeed as a writer in today's world. The problem is that, as a group, we can only do so much!

They say writing is a lonely occupation and, to a large extent, that is correct. For most of us, the actual creation of a written work involves a thoughtful process of creating a story and putting it into a manuscript. Now, you have a lot of words on paper...

What do you do next?

If you only write for yourself, then you can leave it on the computer or print it for a binder. You might even self-publish it and set it on your bookshelf to read in the future whenever you want to personally revisit the story.

If you intend to put it before the public...it's not that simple.

The educational system in the U.S. has succeeded to a large extent in creating a population that likes to read, and many readers like to write. To be recognized as a serious writer, to make your writing into something people want to pay money for, takes time, patience and input from others who have the same goals.

You don't become a great sports star without training, you don't become a physicist unless you know the difference between a quark and an atom, and you don't become a successful author without understanding how to craft words into imagery to capture humanity's heart. All of these require both personal study and the camaraderie of others with the same passion.

Writing may be lonely, but honing what's written into stories people will want to read begins with absorbing as much education on the subject as you can and immersing yourself in a community of like minds.

Rose Marie

Look Who JOINED SWW in JULY!

David Harris
Elizabeth Gabel
Steve Borbas
Paul David Gonzales
Kathy Hopkins
Tom Neiman
Paula Nixon
Josephine White
Anne Russell
Toni Kay Wanic
Jan Swaney
Mary Ortner

Welcome!



**With 399 members
WORLDWIDE!**

Social Media ❤️ SWW

Twitter (now X) Followers – 5,162
Meetups Membership – 616
Facebook Feed – 1.4k followers
Facebook Group – 758 members

***HOLES IN OUR HEARTS** Readings, Launches and Press*



First *HIOH* reading, 7/15/23, Los Lunas Museum of Heritage and Arts by contributors **(L-R)** Donna Pedace, Rosa Armijo-Pemle, Butch Maki, Dale Swetnam, and Barb Simmons.



Albuquerque The Magazine, September 2023



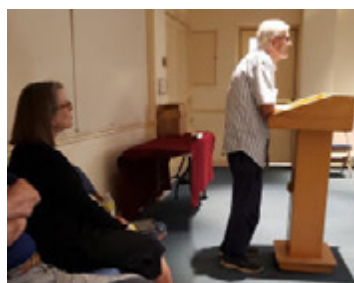
Military Writers Society of America
DISPATCHES Magazine, Summer 2023

Aug. 12 Scenes From Santa Fe

Jim Tritten (**L**) and Rose Marie Kern (**below, L**) load 150 copies of *Holes in Our Hearts* into the back of Kevin Lenkner's car on August 12. Kevin works with the New Mexico Arts & the Military division, the organization that supported the book's creation. These copies will be distributed to libraries throughout New Mexico.



Ten *HIOH* contributors read their stories at the Santa Fe Library. **Right**, Nonagenarian Norbert Wood reads his *HIOH* story. **Below, L-R**: Mark Vleisher, Carl Hitchens, Harper O'Connor, Mike Hays, Jeffery Otis, Paula Nixon, Paul David Gonzales, Norbert Wood, Benjamin White, and Joe Brown.



Cherry Hills Library, Aug. 26, (below, L-R), Elaine Montague, Sherri Burr, Judy Castleberry and Brenda Cole look on while sculptor Steve Borbas talks about his Holes In Our Hearts installation at the Veterans Memorial Park in Albuquerque. An image of the sculpture became the cover for the book.



BOOK OF THE WEEK
Carrying their stories

Anthology pulls together poems, memoirs, essays and more inspired by NM's military



IF YOU GO

will work at 2 p.m. Saturday, Aug. 26, at the Cherry Hills Library, 6901 Bardonia St., NE. They are Louise Rosemont, Sherri Short, Judy Cas-Cherry, Brenda Cole and Elaine

wanted to him to go. "I learned how to tell stories from my father. He never met a stranger or a squirrel or a dog (the title *Blue*). I think my dad was happy in the middle of the woods," Cole said.

[illegible]

Albuquerque Journal, 8/20/23

Links To Upcoming SWW Events

MEETINGS in September

Saturday, September 9
10:00 am – noon
In Person & Zoom

Speaker: Phil Mills Jr.
**Challenges of Writing for
Children in a Video Game World**



Wednesday, September 27
6:30 pm – 8:30 pm
Via Zoom

Speaker: Sonja Dewing
**Making Dollars and Sense
out of Amazon Ad**



<https://www.southwestwriters.com/meetings/>

CLASSES Starting Soon

Class Instructor: Kathy Louise Schuit
**Don't Make Your Friends
and Family Read Bad Stuff**



3-week Class
Saturdays: September 16, 23, 30
Platform: In Person & Zoom
10:00–noon (MST)

Class Instructor: Sonja Dewing
**Making Dollars and Sense out of
Amazon Ads**

3-week Class
Saturdays: October 21, 28, and November 4
Platform: In Person & Zoom
1:00 pm–3:00 pm (MST)

<https://www.southwestwriters.com/classes/>

September WORKSHOP

**How to Speak in Public
and Live to Tell the Tale**

With Brenda Cole
Saturday: September 9, 2023
12:30 – 2:30 pm (MST)
In Person Only
SWW members: \$20 ♦ Non-
members: \$30



<https://www.southwestwriters.com/workshops/>

WRITING CONTEST, continued from page one

A team of six volunteers served on the writing contest committee and another team of six produced the anthology. A big thank you from contest chair Debbie White to all who helped make this year's contest a success!

Contestants whose entry won an award, could choose to have it published in the contest anthology *Woven Pathways*. The anthology will be available for purchase in print or digital format on Amazon as of Oct 14.



PLAN AHEAD for the remainder of 2023!

- Saturday, October 14 at 10:00 am
Annual Meeting & Awards
- Wednesday, October 25 at 6:30 pm
Michael Arnzen: Writing Horror
- Saturday, November 4 at 10:00 am
Stories from Holes In Our Hearts
- Wednesday, November 22 at 6:30 pm
**Ernie Witham: Finding Humor in
Everday Situations**
- Saturday, December 9 at 10:00 am
**Christie Lowrance: Historical
Nonfiction/Biography**
- No Wednesday meeting in December
See you in 2024!



Artificial Intelligence (AI)

A Bit Of the Backstory

Part One of a three-part series on AI technology—where it came from, how it can help and where it might get writers into trouble.

by Léonie Rosenstiel

Perhaps you're not consciously using ChatGPT or one of the few other similar ways of re-sculpting raw data at the behest of people who don't want to write their own prose and poetry or create their own artwork. Does this mean that you don't need to know about all this Artificial Intelligence? Not at all! You really DO need to know.

About a month ago, I received notification that my MS Word needed to be updated. I said, "Later!" The genies in the machine were so adamant that they didn't allow me to use any of my Word files again until I agreed to update the program. This was true for the computers I currently use, both of which run that program.

Finally, I relented, only to discover that, ever after, I was offered a seemingly endless procession of "editorial suggestions" whenever I was drafting new text. I'm still getting them. They are annoying. Intrusive. Distracting. "They" (whoever "they" are) don't seem to want me to write my own manuscript in my own way anymore.

How on earth did this happen? Sci-Fi nerds have been reading about all-knowing AIs, at least since 1950, when Isaac Asimov published "The Evitable Conflict." And didn't our human protagonist best the evil computer Hal, in Arthur C. Clarke's 2001: A Space Odyssey? We humans

always win, don't we? Maybe. Maybe not anymore.

I hope AI turns out to be as relatively benign as Tang. It, too, started in the military. What we're experiencing, now, is a technique that has filtered down into civilian society from the highest (and most secret) realms of the military power structure. They started creating it, in earnest, during World War II and its refinements proliferated during the 1950s and 60s.

The military knew all about what was coming but were sworn to secrecy. They couldn't tell the rest of us. As a young consumer of Sci-Fi, I read all about it, but if anyone had dared call it "truth" in a general civilian gathering, that person would have been advised to start wearing a tin foil hat; right before everyone else moved their chairs to the other side of the room.

All three worlds collided for me recently, when I attended the board meeting of a writers' organization. The discussion turned to AI "news" which had recently hit the mainstream media. I could see three distinct groups among the assembled guests: 1) Sci-Fi aficionados for whom this whole idea was "old hat"; 2) general literary types for whom it was a potentially scary new world; and 3) ex-military types who had once held security clearances. The third group, to a person, said to the second group, "What do you mean, this is new? We've known about it for decades!" Sci-Fi readers simply shook their heads, knowingly.

Next month's segment will explore the need for, and the creation of, databases that supply information.

"Shakespearean" Sonnets to Laud the Sandias

Using the ChatGPT program, the author asked for the following: Write a sonnet in the style of William Shakespeare, that mentions the rose; white, golden and blue clouds at dawn over the Sandia Mountains. She received three poems for consideration.

It might have happened. The Spanish Crown declared New Mexico part of New Spain in 1610 and The Bard didn't die until 1616. I'm sure he'd have loved watching the sunrise over the Sandia Mountains, providing that he had the opportunity to see it. But he didn't.

Clues in the text suggest that "someone" other than Shakespeare wrote these poems.

In Sonnet #1, on the first line, Shakespeare would have written "doeth" or "doth" rather than "does." Also, if you're like me, you probably don't imagine what Shakespeare thought of as roses at the Sandia Crest, either. Piñons, more likely. Rosy-fingered Dawn, maybe. But not the English flowers. Then, in the last line of the third stanza, the word "thaw" is just plain wrong. It should read "thrall."

On to Sonnet #2. Shakespeare personified the wind. The content of the poem makes clear that personification is part of the "poet's" intent. So,

continued on next page

ChatGPT Warm Tone

1 / 3

Upon yon Sandia's height, where morn does rise,
White petals of the heavens paint the sky,
As golden rays through azure veils arise,
Blue clouds embrace the peaks where dreams do fly.

The rose, fair queen of gardens, here takes rest,
Its ivory hue, a symbol of pure grace,
Yet pale compared to clouds by dawn caressed,
Their brilliance in the morning's sweet embrace.

Oh, Nature's artistry, divinely spun,
Each petal, cloud, and mountain stands in awe,
A symphony of colors 'neath the sun,
A masterpiece that leaves all hearts in thaw.

So let us ponder, 'midst this morning's glow,
The wonders that around us ebb and flow.

SONNETS, continued

“zephyr’s hands” should have read “Zephyr’s hands.” If you’re going to personify Dawn and Nature, then you should be consistent and capitalize Zephyr as well. Shakespeare wouldn’t have made that error.

I didn’t intend my prompt (what instructions are called in AI-land) to include flowers. I intended to mention only colors. Until I looked closely at the prompt,

ChatGPT Emotional Tone

2 / 3

Upon the Sandia Mountains’ lofty crest,
Where morn’s soft touch unveils a wondrous sight,
The skies adorned in colors finely dressed,
In hues of white, gold, and celestial light.

As Dawn’s sweet breath awakens sleepy lands,
White roses blush with hints of rosy hue,
Their petals kissed by tender zephyr’s hands,
Like love’s embrace, so tender and so true.

Golden clouds weave dreams of gilded lore,
An artist’s stroke upon the canvas vast,
With golden threads, the heavens they explore,
A masterpiece, by Nature’s hand so cast.

Blue clouds do gather, soft as lover’s sigh,
They cradle dreams beneath the waking sky.

Thus, on the Sandia’s heights, beauty lies,
In roses white, in clouds of gold and blue,
As Dawn with tender fingers paints the skies,
A symphony of colors ever new.

O Shakespeare! Couldst thou witness such a view,
Thy quill would dance with joy and wonder too.

I didn’t realize that it contained a typo. It should have said, “the rose, white, golden...” Instead, the prompt reads, “the rose; white, golden...” A human editor would likely immediately have asked me, “Did you mean the flower or the color? Everything else is a color. Is this just a typo?” But the AI didn’t react like a human editor. That’s because AI isn’t a human editor. Beware—even minor errors in prompts may have major consequences!

Then, as you read further into Sonnet #3, the emotional fabric unravels. How can anyone reconcile “tender hearts,” “igniting passions,” and “morning’s glare,” all in the same sentence? But AI can’t feel (yet), and therefore doesn’t know that these concepts clash.

ChatGPT Default Tone

3 / 3

Upon the Sandia Mountains’ lofty crest,
Where golden dawn paints skies in hues so fair,
The rose in bloom, on nature’s stage, is dressed,
Its fragrant petals kissed by morning air.

White blooms like purity’s own visage glow,
A symbol of the innocence they bear,
As golden rays their tender hearts bestow,
Igniting passions in the morning’s glare.

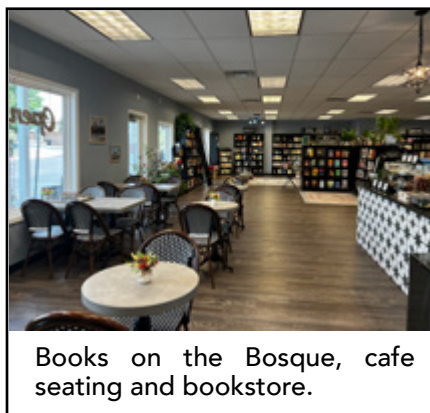
And in the blue expanse, where clouds take flight,
Like dreams that dance upon the canvas sky,
Their forms a canvas painted by the light,
In hues of azure, they enchant the eye.

Oh, Sandia’s peak, adorned in dawn’s embrace,
Where rose and clouds converge, a wondrous grace.

BOOKS ON THE BOSQUE, continued from page 1

to turn Deborah’s passion for reading, collecting and sharing books into an inviting venue for readers of all ages. Drawing from lessons learned in Deborah’s successful career, **Books on the Bosque** has what appears to be a winning formula for readers and writers. “I have always wanted to create a space where creativity thrives—be it music, art, writing, etc.,” Deborah says.

True to that ideal, the space at **Books on the Bosque** includes a cafe area that serves as a pleasant location for writers who need a change of environment to inspire their work. Deborah is also willing to discuss all sorts of possibilities for author events.



Books on the Bosque, cafe seating and bookstore.

hello@booksonthebosque.com
<https://www.booksonthebosque.com/>

[Book subscriptions](#) allow avid readers to receive a book a month based on their personal reading preferences, and without having to leave their home. The store hosts a full monthly [calendar of book-related events](#) and offers [online signup](#) for local authors who’d like to get their books placed on the store’s shelves or start an event-related conversation.

The Writing Life: *Beginnings*

by Sherri L. Burr

While a good ending can save a sagging middle, a bad beginning causes the reader to close the book, the moviegoer to leave, and the television viewer to channel surf. A good beginning, by contrast, engages its intended audience. Consider this passage from Charles Johnson's *Middle Passage*:

"Of all the things that drive men to sea, surely the most common disaster, I've come to learn, is women. In my case it was a spirited Boston school teacher named Isadora Bailey who led me to become a cook aboard the *Republic*. Both Isadora and my creditors, I should add, entered into a conspiracy, a trap, a scheme so cunning that my only choices were prison, a brief stay in the stony oubliette of Spanish Calabozo (or a long one at the bottom of the Mississippi), or marriage, which was for a man of my temperament, worse than imprisonment—especially if you know Isadora."

I was intrigued. I wanted to know who the man was, what had Isadora Bailey and his creditors done to drive him to sea, and on what body of water sailed the *Republic*. A good beginning engages the reader and television and movie viewers to seek more.

Writers are taught the importance of the hook. Most readers will peruse the first sentence, first paragraph, or the entire first chapter before committing to placing the book in a physical or electronic cart for purchase. I ordered a physical copy of the bestseller *Outlive* by Peter Attia, M.D., after listening to the first chapter of the audio version. The book asserted that humans need to think of life as "The Long Game" because health span, how healthy we live, is as important as life span, how long we live. Ideally, these should coincide with a person remaining healthy until they take in their last breath.

Dr. Attia hooked me in his first chapter by explaining what we could do now that would guarantee living healthily into my ninth decade as my mother was doing, and as her mother and grandmother had done before her. One of her grandfathers lived until 95. With these longevity genes among my ancestors, I knew it was possible to have a long lifespan, but could I also seek a long health span? Because Dr. Attia earned my interest in the beginning, I kept reading to soak up the

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. West Academic published *Wills & Trusts in a Nutshell* 6th Ed., her 31st book, on October 31, 2022. 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.

current science on exercise, nutrition, sleep, and mental health. Another book that hooked me at the beginning was *Vigilance: The Life of William Still, Father of the Underground Railroad*. The subject naturally intrigued me because of my interest in the history of the United States before the Civil War. Author Andrew K. Diemer began with how William Still welcomed his own brother into the Underground Railroad. Mr. Still knew that two of his brothers had been left behind in slavery when their mother fled her master with only two daughters. Mr. Still was born after his mother had reunited with her husband and become safely ensconced in Pennsylvania. The two boys left behind grew to adulthood in slavery and eventually made their way North. This story illustrated how Mr. Still's motives to help self-liberating slaves were personal. Prince Harry's book *Spare* opens with meeting his father and brother after the funeral of his grandfather. They didn't understand why he had decided to step down from his senior royal duties. He ends the prologue by saying, "Pa? Willy? World? Here you go." The first chapter recounts his learning of the death of his mother, Princess Diana, and how he dealt with it. Heart wrenching!

Beginnings introduce the main characters and their challenges within the first chapter and no later than the second. The audience also seeks a sense of the place, whether it be set on the ocean, in the town of Philadelphia, or royal palaces. Finally, the audience wants to know the character's goal. It could be escaping a woman, helping self-liberating slaves, or why a prince escaped royal life.

A good beginning keeps a reader turning pages and the audience engaged.

It was a pleasure to burn.

All this happened, more or less.

I have never begun a novel with more misgiving.

I write this sitting in the kitchen sink.

You better not never tell nobody but God.

It was love at first sight.

Participating In the Success Of Their Writing Dreams



Photo by Lynne Sturtevant



Photo by Lynne Sturtevant

Above, Jim Tritten recognizes the members of his *Holes in Our Hearts* editorial committee at the July meeting, while **(above, R)** President Rose Kern honors Jim. **Right**, members give speaker Kathy Louise Schuit their attention at the August meeting.



Photo by Rose Marie Kern



Photo supplied by Elaine Montague

In-person meeting attendance grew in July and August, and members like Elaine Montague, Linda Wilson, and Sue Houser **(left, L-R)** report they are once again getting out-and-about and revving up book sales at events across the state.

Annual Meeting – October 14, 2023

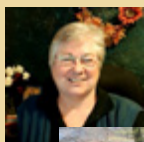
Executive Committee Elections and Vote on Bylaws revisions

ELECTIONS

Nominees for the 2024 SWW Board of Directors Executive Committee are:

PRESIDENT

Rose Marie Kern



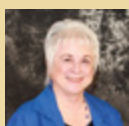
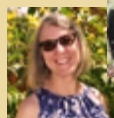
VICE PRESIDENT

Dan Wetmore



SECRETARY

Lynn Doxon



TREASURER: Cornelia Gamlem

To be eligible for any Executive Committee position, an individual must have been a member in good standing for no less than two years immediately preceding the date of confirmation, and a member of the Board or the Advisory Committee for at least one year.

BYLAWS REVISIONS

There will be a vote to ratify SWW bylaws revisions, which are posted on the SWW website for member review.

Why wait? Vote on line and review the bylaws now. Just click [HERE](#).

The History of SouthWest Writers

by Kay Lewis "Happy" Shaw, Paula Paul, Larry Greenly, and Rose Marie Kern

This is the final installment of a four-part historical report attesting to the dynamics of SouthWest Writers and its beginnings. If you missed the earlier installments, check out archived issues of the SAGE, starting with June 2023, on the [SouthWest Writers website](#).

Part Four SWW Moves into the Future

Covid-19 was both a nationwide curse, and... an unexpected blessing. As the pandemic lingered into 2020, people were required to shelter in place, and they became frustrated and restless. Luckily, the Zoom technology was evolving quickly and enabling large groups to "meet" virtually, through their computers. SouthWest Writers was the only writing group in the southwest to jump on that technological advantage early.

We opened all our meetings to the general public, via Zoom. As word that we were doing this went out, a number of authors and others in the publishing industry contacted us about giving presentations – free of charge – as part of their own newly-adapted marketing strategies. We enhanced our visibility by scheduling special Zoom events with authors from around the country and beyond.

Past President Sarah Baker, herself a Harlequin romance author, had broad connections across the nation and beyond. When we hosted a Zoom poetry reading with five distinguished Irish authors from their homes in Galway, Ireland, more than 100 people attended online.

The beauty of SWW is that its focus is on writers from across all aspects of the literary spectrum. Poetry, memoir, journalism, and short stories in every genre are represented in the SWW membership. When SWW stopped focusing its attention on book writing, it opened up doorways for writers of shorter works.

SWW initiated an annual short story and poetry contest which has proved popular, with the winning entries bound into anthologies. At this time, we have seven anthologies bringing some income to the group,

and will have two more by year's end.

As of the end of 2021, SWW had grown back to more than 400 members. About 85 percent still live in New Mexico, but the other 15 percent come from all over the world including Germany, England, Ireland, Canada, and Australia.

We began holding in-person meetings and workshops again in 2022, but set them up to always include a Zoom component to accommodate those who want to continue to socially isolate or to participate from across the globe.

As we navigate 2023 we are expanding our options once again. Most of our operating income is through membership and event fees with some local grants. Volunteers do most of the work with the assistance of one contracted part-time (amazing) office manager, ReVaH Loring.

Since the inception of SWW, there have been hundreds of individuals who have worked with and inspired people who are hungry to express their thoughts in writing, but who want direction beyond academic limitations. This article does not give recognition to all those who deserve it, but we are grateful for the many hours donated by our boards of directors and the many other volunteers.

Over time, the membership has grown well beyond its romantic roots. The genres represented include Mystery, Western, Science Fiction, Memoir, and all kinds of adventure. Styles and forms include Poetry, non-fiction, songwriting, playwriting, and with the rise of the film industry in New Mexico, we see a rise of scriptwriters. Our speakers vary from genre-specific topics, to experts in the legal and publishing aspects of a writing career. Social media and our website provide our members with necessary information and resources.

Plans are unfolding to reinstate our annual writer's conference and we are in the process of revising the bylaws and the procedures manual to reflect today's world. SouthWest Writers continues to move forward in our mission of "Writers Helping Writers Succeed."

The History of SouthWest Writers - Author Team



"Happy" Shaw - 1989

Kay Lewis "Happy" Shaw writes the Cookie Baker Mystery series under her pen name, Joanna Blalock. The fourth novel, *A Sandwich Cookie*, comes out summer 2023. Happy co-wrote the Christmas picture book *Sarah's Bead* with its illustrator Caroline S. Garrett. An awarding-winning writer, artist, and teacher, Happy was a former literary agent and small publisher, who contributed articles to writers' guides to the publishing industry.

continued on next page



Paula Paul - 1994

Paula Paul is the award-winning author of 32 published novels. Her newest *The Last of the Baileys* loosely based on events in her family, was released in March 2023. Paul is also a former national award-winning newspaper reporter and has published a countless number of magazine articles as a freelance writer. She was born and grew up in West Texas and graduated from Eastern New Mexico University and was named an Outstanding Alumni of that university.

Larry Greenly was the office manager for SWW for over 15 years. Armed with degrees in physics/math, architecture, civil engineering and chiropractic, Larry Greenly has led a multi-faceted life as a teacher, engineer and doctor of chiropractic. His career as a freelance writer/editor of myriad non-fiction articles began over 25 years ago. He is the author of *Eugene Bullard: World's First Black Fighter Pilot*.



Larry Greenly - 1989



Rose Marie Kern
2023

Rose Marie Kern is the current president of SWW and the owner of RMK Publications. She's written seven books and had over a thousand articles published across the U.S. An Arts Administration graduate of Butler University and UNM, Rose writes on a diverse palate of topics from aviation to high desert gardening, and enjoys mentoring others on their literary journeys.

SPECIAL NOTICE

The Saturday meeting in November has been moved
to

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 4

10 a.m.

Save this NEW date!



Is your book available on Audible? If so, your fellow members would like to listen! Help us spread the word by letting us know so we can share it.
Email info@swwriters.com



YouTube Training Videos

Lynne Sturtevant and ReVaH Loring are in the process of making How To Videos to help you use the [SWW website](https://www.swwriters.com) and join meetings with more ease. On the Home screen, hover over the Members Only tab and then click the Log In tab that drops down. At the top of that page is a link to the first instructional video. We will be making more videos to assist SWW membership needs. To log into the website now, click [HERE](https://www.swwriters.com).
If you are not sure of your user ID, email info@swwriters.com

The Sage Writing Challenge

OCTOBER

For a chance to be published in the October SAGE, use no more than 350 words to write a story suitable for a very young child. Follow the guidelines and submission instructions on page 16.

Send questions or submissions to:

Kathy Schuit
SouthWest SAGE Editor
sage@swwriters.com

The challenge for publication in the September SAGE was to write a story about a futuristic time when all of Earth's trash is disposed of on Mars.

Seeing Red

by Dan Wetmore

*[found crumpled in a wastebasket at
760 Finally United Nations Plaza,
Manhattan, New York City, NY,
Untied States of North-Central America]*

2072 Annual Report on the M.A.R.S. Project
by Thorstein Veblen IV,
Chairman of the Interplanetary Spaceport

Secretary-General Klimpt, members of the Budgetary Board, Select Sub-Committee on Ecological Initiatives:

Let me begin by expressing my regret that this annual update on the Martian Alternate Refuse Site (M.A.R.S.) will also be my concluding report.

We all know what lies on our collective horizon. In light of that, this serves not so much as a benchmark for future planning as a recounting for historical record; an after-action report—grist for any future generations to perform such post-mortems as perhaps only acute hindsight permits.

Under the entrepreneurial acumen of Melon Musk, who submitted the winning bid for the lift contract in 2039, the Earth's space elevator continues to prove self-sustaining. In just seventeen years of operation, loans from The World Bank for the \$5.2 quintillion construction costs of "the bean stalk" (after the novel, *Jumping Off the Planet*) have been one-quarter repaid.

As you know, Mr. Musk's initiatives included anchoring the cable to Earth's highest point—Mt. Cleverest, the mid-Pacific global refuse mound—to

minimize the cable's length requirement. The mound, primarily melted plastics, infused with carbon nanotubes to damp emissions from intermixed radioactive waste, serendipitously proved stable as bedrock.

Similarly, the far-end counterweight, comprised of depleted uranium and other heavy metals—ceremoniously inaugurated with "the Elephant's Foot" from Chernobyl—required no new material outlay.

Low Earth Orbit (LEO) tourism also proved a boon, given the appeal of vacationing at satellite height. The Heavens of Hilton, with their "Out of this World"™ parties, generate revenues exceeding all terrestrial locations combined. The "Base Jump from Beyond for a \$Billion" concession, and growing interest in spacewreck-diving, remain in high demand despite a relatively flat planet-side economy.

Expectations were high in 2055 when the Finally United Nations elected to shift Earth's sanitation disposal off-world.

Here again, Mr. Musk's ingenuity flourished. Via the "payload as propellant" initiative, the combustible portion of those cargoes met the modest fuel needs to traverse the final leg from the counterweight to the red planet. And, over time, the mass transfer from Earth to Mars—reducing our gravitational pull while increasing its—further lowered the space barges' required escape velocity.

Further, he capitalized on the Climate Council's free-carbon reduction efforts, including the 2040 edict that all human remains be incinerated. With a current global population of 10.3 billion, a mortality rate of 8.75 per 1,000, just over 90 million pass away each year. And with cremains averaging six pounds per person, that aggregates to 270,000 tons of ash transported off-world annually.

The M.A.R.S. Project was heralded as a sea change in refuse management. At the point where humans outnumbered ants, it became undeniable that everyone's

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“there” is someone else’s “here.” The entrenched stance of “...not in MY backyard...” finally yielded to, “...not in ANYONE’S backyard.”

But as we now see, it’s proven too little too late; “little ado about everything,” to paraphrase an ancient bard.

If I might shift my audience, speaking apology and advice to any heirs: We now see full the fruit of humanity’s rushing, the rifts created when not everyone’s competitive in the race, serving as a check on the partial aspirations of the advantaged. The faded tatters of a billboard seen on the drive in—*Technology: crafting Tomorrow’s Problems through Today’s Solutions!*—say all. Considering the otherworldly distances now yawning between the “haves” and “have nots,” given their significations of the “can do to’s” and “must suffer by’s”—those sipping Cosmic Cosmo’s through Saturn-ring straws in the near-zero gravity of the Star Decks far above, contrasted with the tear-splintered faces of the bereaved, leagues below, waving goodbye to their loved lost receding in a garbage scow’s hold—can there be any surprise in the fate of such an “impatient suitor”

Down in the Dumps

by Allen Herring 3

“We know you have your choice in carriers, and we here at Horizons are thankful you chose to fly with us. We hope you enjoy your stay on Mars and welcome to New Manilla.” The in-helmet message clicked off and, with it, the bustle among the seated passengers increased as they began to stir.

Carter tapped the speaker button on his suit. “Do they think they can get up and get out sooner than the rest of us?”

It was a rhetorical question but Gwen chose to answer. “Some habits are hard to break,” she said.

“I suppose,” he muttered, staring at the restlessness.

Carter wished there were windows on these interplanetary carriers. Just once, he would like to look out the window and see the stars, not to mention the surface of the red planet drawing ever closer on their descent. This was his third trip in as many years, and despite the efficiencies Horizons had obtained in reducing travel time, comfort had not improved. Yet, he reminded himself, he didn’t have to travel in the Zenith Martian Refuse Operation (ZMRO) carrier despite being their Planetary Manager for Martian Refuse Operations. This was going to change however. Carl had told him the rumors were true: ZMRO leadership was losing the confidence of the shareholders who in turn were feeling the pressures from the “tourist class” who had begun to voice their unhappiness with the sight of so much

species, so willing to forego “Mr. Right” for “Mr. Right Now?”

Factors once deemed negligible have, in the past few days, proven significant. In less than a generation’s time, the quantities we’ve foisted on the red planet have increased its mass—initially only a tenth of Earth’s—to the point the added centrifugal force has Mars straining its orbit. We didn’t appreciate the delicate balance which the interplay of the planets constituted, the Newton’s Cradle of our nine. So as Mars’ arc widens, catching Jupiter’s eye, the inner three—Mercury, Venus, we—have lost a tug which once offset the Sun’s.

The need to export our trash has become moot, as we’ll be incinerating it soon enough: the reality at last realized... there is NO backyard.

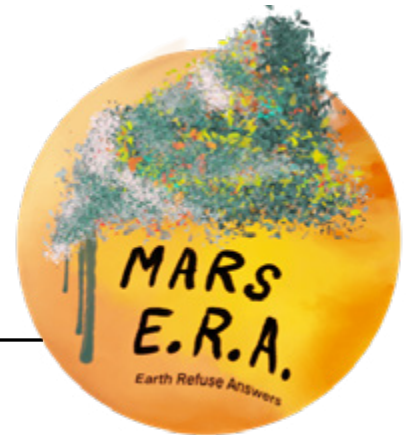


Illustration by Kathy Louise Schuit

“waste” on Mars.

He understood that he would have to fly in the cargo vessels or move. Neither was an option Gwen would embrace. She barely tolerated flying Horizons which, in truth, was better than flying Xanadu. As it was, she wasn’t too keen on the trip in the first place. For her, the important part was telling her friends that she was vacationing on Mars, as opposed to actually traveling or being on Mars. He was confident the inevitable move was going to end their marriage, regardless of how nice company grounds were.

The cabin lights brightened, and he realized Horizons Flight 360 had come to a complete stop without disturbing his thoughts. “That had to have been the smoothest landing ever,” he said.

“I agree. I’ll have to thank the captain.”

After the long flight, the passengers pushed their way out of the craft and onto the landing pad. A caterpillar was already at the station ready to take the group to their final destinations. The rush to get a “window seat” made no sense to Carter. The lobed rovertrain was constructed of a transparent aluminum compound; every seat was a window seat.

Packed snugly with its Terrans passengers,

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the caterpillar rolled away from the pad and headed towards the domed city of New Manilla. Dust devils and sandstorms danced across the vast Martian plains of Utopia Planitia. The caterpillar entered the city just as a sandstorm shrouded the dome; the sky above New Manilla turned the same polluted brown as the original namesake.

The caterpillar made its way down the dusty boulevard. To the left and right, Martian housing and “commercial” development welcomed the group. The sight was not foreign, it had many names: Slums, Projects, Favelas, Ghettos, or in this case, Dumps. “Down in the Dumps” had become the euphemism to describe those who lived on that side of the city.

As if on cue, large cargo movers started bringing in the latest earthen waste deposits for refining. The caterpillar came to a standstill while this mostly automated process completed.

“You would think ZMRO would have fixed this already. Every time we have to stop and see that,” a bustling traveler said, nodding out the tinted windows.

Some turned at his suggestion, but most continued as if he had not said anything. Faces buried in electronic

devices, analog books, knitting, or just staring blankly ahead. All done to ignore the dozens of children’s faces making goggle eyes as they stared into the caterpillar trying to catch a glimpse of the refined people coming to vacation on their homeworld.

Carter noticed just outside the lobe in front, a young, red boy dancing and banging a drum for attention. The boy held his white-toothed smile perfectly as he turned away from the window. The caterpillar began to crawl forward. Slowly, deliberately, the window behind the boy slid down an inch or two and a green bill began to flutter. A different red hand snatched the green leaf and fled away from the caterpillar just as it began to inch away.

Carter craned his neck to see a swarm of red fire ants chase after a boy of six or seven clutching a single green blade. Running for his life towards mounds of refuse and recyclables, Carter knew the boy had mere moments to reuse the currency before the Dumps spilled brighter red.



We Are The Flowers by Larry Kilham

We are but seeds
that settle on planet Earth.
We bloom, sometimes beautifully,
and then wilt away.

Free will, whatever it is,
may be all that is uniquely ours,
giving us creativity and energy
to enrich our future.

So let us bloom and be friendly.



LETTER

Thanks for sending out the SAGE, ReVaH.
I especially liked the “Selfie” article, AND
finding out about Quirky Bookstore (August
2023).

All the best!
Dale

Join a Critique Group

While SWW doesn’t sponsor critique groups, we do help interested parties come together and provide insights into how to form and maintain a successful group. Here are some groups that have formed in the past year and are looking for members:

Write Minds (meets first & third Sat.): Up and running for a year, this group has one opening for a screened candidate.

Santa Fe First Friday (First Fri.): This group has been meeting for about six months and has one opening for an experienced writer; will need to provide a writing sample.

Second Santa Fe group (meets Tuesday eves) has openings.

Spec Fic (first & third Thu.) has one opening for a screened candidate.

Three of these groups now have information listed on the [SWW website](#).

Contact Mike Hays, critique@swwriters.com

CONTESTS and OPPORTUNITIES for WRITERS



Professional photographer and SSW member, Rosa Armijo-Pemble will help showcase your talent with a classy headshot.

A professional look is needed for business cards, websites, social media profiles & of course your publications.

MEMBERS

Rosa will set up a studio at the Annual Meeting, October 14th

Call with questions or to schedule your sitting
Speak with Rosa at the Sept 9th meeting

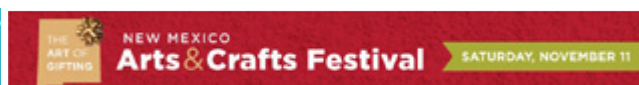


ImagesByRosa.Zenfolio.com
ImagesByRosa@aol.com
505.250.2982

THE TALON REVIEW



Talon Review is interested in stories, essays, and poems that highlight the strange and beautiful, the uncanny and the fantastical. Rattle our senses with risky realism. Traditional and experimental work are welcome; creative nonfiction, fiction, poetry, and art. We also welcome audio or video submissions for our website. Audio files can be performances of poetry, flash, or song. Video can be video essays or cine poems. Submissions are open through November 15, [HERE](#).



SouthWest Writers will have a booth at this event.

Members, sign up to have your books in the sale.

There will be more information provided at the September meeting, in the SAGE, and the weekly elerts.

If you'd like to join the organizing committee for the event, please email info@swwriters.com.

Opportunity for Book Signing Events



Wheels Museum is open Monday – Thursday from 9 a.m. to Noon, and on Saturdays and Sundays from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

NOTE: Museum hours may change to accommodate special events so, prior to your visit, please call (505) 243-6269.

SPECIAL NOTICE

The Saturday meeting in November has been moved to

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 4

10 a.m.

Save this NEW date!

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

SWW Board Meeting Minutes Summarized

AUGUST 2023

Holes in Our Hearts Anthology

The 150 library copies purchased through the second New Mexico/Arts grant, were delivered at the Santa Fe reading on Aug. 12 for distribution throughout the state, and the e- version is currently being formatted. An article by David Steinberg, book reviewer for the *ABQ Journal*, appeared in the Sun., Aug. 20 edition and previewed the readers for the Cherry Hills Library reading scheduled for Sat., Aug. 26 at 2 p.m. Subsequent readings will be Sat., Nov. 4 at our monthly meeting, and Sat, Nov 11 at 2 p.m. at the Placitas Community Library.

By-Laws

The board reviewed pros & cons of proposed changes to the SWW by-Laws, and voted to approve them. Prior to a vote for ratification at October's annual business meeting, the proposed bylaws are available in the Members Only section of the SWW website.

Elections

Two months away from elections, and still with no volunteers for President. Possible reasons for members' reluctance to serve in that capacity were discussed.

In-Person Meeting Venue

After further consideration of alternate meeting locations, the board voted to renew our contract with UNM for a 3-year contract, which provides an even greater discount than we've received the previous two years.

An electronic survey is being prepared to ask membership to prioritize the activities/opportunities they want most via the organization.

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website: southwestwriters.com

