



Writing Contest Finalists Announced!



The finalists for the 2023 SWW Writing Contest are officially announced!

Art category finalists, listed alphabetically, are:

Brenda Cole, Rose Marie Kern, Kathy Louise Schuit, and Jasmine Tritten.

By category and alphabetically, here are the finalists for the writing entries:

Woven Pathways

SouthWest Writers
2023 Writing Contest
Anthology of Award-winning
Fiction, Memoir & Poetry
ON SALE OCTOBER 14

Short Stories

Terence Cady, Joe Cappello, Judy Castleberry, Roger Floyd, Vanessa Foster, Lisa Haneberg, Allen Herring 3, Kathleen Holmes, Jeff Otis, Carla Petree, Kimberly Rose, Lynne Sebastian and Maralie Waterman.

Opening Pages of a Novel

Louise Bergin, John Crain, Lyn Gullette, Joyce Hertzoff, Rose Marie Kern, George McFall, Jonathan Miller, Carol Potenza, Amy Purcell, Carol Rawie, Lynne Sebastian, Tracey Sheffield, Robert Sheppe, Kathryn (K.L.) Wagoner and Maralie Waterman.

Flash Fiction

Charlene Dietz, Lyn Gullette, Kathleen Holmes, Amy Purcell and Jennifer Trotter.

Poetry

Kathleen Holmes, Rose Marie Kern, Lawrence Kilham, Betty McCreary, Melanie Peak, Carla Petree, Carol Rawie and Jennifer Trotter.

Non-Fiction Memoir

Robin Cutler, Christopher Frechette, Kathleen Hessler, Carolyn Kilgus, Ruth Heidi Marshall, Elaine Montague, Sally Rodgers, Charmayne Samuelson, Kathy Louise Schuit, Jennifer Trotter and Patricia Walkow.

Congratulations to the finalists! **The winners will be announced at the October 14, Saturday morning meeting.**

The contest received 177 paid submissions including entries in cover art, interior art, prose and poetry. 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. A team of six served on the writing contest committee and another team of six produced the anthology, "Woven Pathways," which showcases this year's winning entries.

If you were a contestant, you may contact the SouthWest Writers office at info@swwriters.com if you would like a copy of your judges' comments. You have until Oct 31 to make this request.

The anthology will be available for purchase at the Oct. 14 meeting, and in print or digital format on Amazon—also on Oct 14.

INSIDE

On Page ONE

Writing Contest Finalists Announced

- 4** Don't Miss These
ANNOUNCEMENTS!
- 5** **What's Missing, God Mode, and Early Hints of Legal Problems to Come**
The second installment in our Artificial Intelligence (AI) series
by **Léonie Rosenstiel**

- 6** **Survey Results**
What did SWW members have to say?

- 8** ***The Middle***
The Writing Life, by **Sherri L. Burr**

The SAGE Challenge

- 9** ***Yo-ho-ho, Cayden!***
by Mary Therese Ellingwood

Lost and Found
by Sam Moorman

- 10** **SPECIAL FEATURE**
Glass Ceilings, Glass Floors, Wine and Hot Dogs
by Ernie Witham

DEPARTMENTS

From the President.....	3
Meetings/Workshops/Classes.....	7
Look Who Joined.....	3
Contests and Opportunities.....	11
Board Minutes Summary.....	12

SouthWest Sage

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ATTEND SouthWest Writers MEETINGS
IN-PERSON or ONLINE

Directions and information at
SouthWestWriters.com.



Board of Directors

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Kathy Wagoner, Web Master
Debbie White, Writing Contest

ReVaH Loring, Office Manager

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

Social Media



Twitter (now X) Followers – 5,150
Meetups Membership – 624
Instagram – 80
Facebook Feed – 1.4k followers
Facebook Group – 758 members

THE PREZ SEZ

October 2023

OMG! It's October already!



This has been one crazy year. Opportunities lost to us during the height of Covid have been opening up everywhere. Our members have been incredibly productive and SWW is proud of the fact that we have been able to support many initiatives through our writing challenges and networking with other groups.

Our annual meeting this month (Oct. 14), features the election of a new Executive Board of Directors, and affirms our commitment to bringing new opportunities and inspiration to our members. Changes will be made, based on information gleaned from all of you who participated in the recent survey.

Though SWW has a lot of members who write books, I'd like to point out that our SAGE editor, Kathy Schuit, goes to great lengths to find opportunities for people who prefer to submit shorter literary pieces in contests and magazines. We have members who have been writing for a lifetime, but many join our organization because they have reached a point in their lives where they have just begun their journey.

When we were in school, we were required to learn basic reading and writing, but then, life intervenes. How do you find out the basics of writing well when you are on your own? That's where SouthWest

Look Who JOINED SWW in August!

**Jill Holtz
Nancy Karberg
Andrea Penner
Les Cano
Margaret Read**

Welcome!



**With 406 members
WORLDWIDE!**

Writers can help. We are writers helping writers succeed. We have very experienced and productive authors who donate their skills and advice to those just entering the literary lifestyle.

Thank you to all our members who have donated their time, expertise and funds to keeping this wonderfully generous group alive and productive!

Rose Marie

Want To Know More About What SWW Can Do For You?

MEMBER RESOURCES INCLUDE:

[SouthWest Writers](#) (Website)

To register for classes or workshops, call the SWW office at 505-830-6034.

- [CLICK HERE](#) to find out about upcoming classes and workshops,
- [CLICK HERE](#) to find out more about upcoming SWW meetings,
- [CLICK HERE](#) to catch up on all the great SWW blog posts,
- [CLICK HERE](#) to learn more about SWW membership.

SWW on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/SouthWest-Writers/156636797742233>

[SouthWest Writers YouTube Channel](#)

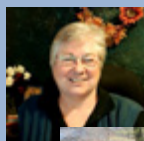
Annual Meeting – October 14, 2023

Executive Committee Elections, and Bylaws Revisions

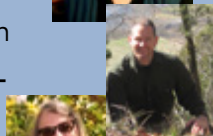
ELECTIONS

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

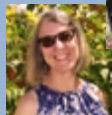
PRESIDENT
Rose Marie Kern



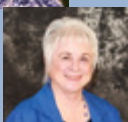
VICE PRESIDENT
Dan Wetmore



SECRETARY
Lynn Daxon



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 web-

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

VOTE NOW!

It's time to make your voice heard.
Vote for SWW Executive Committee members for 2024 and decide on proposed changes to the SWW Bylaws.



To see the nominees click [here](#).

To vote click [here](#)



Party Time!

2023 Annual Meeting – October 14

and Pot Luck Luncheon

This year's annual meeting will feature:

- Election of Officers
- Bylaw revision vote
- Presentation of awards for the SWW Annual Writing Contest "Woven Pathways"
- Presentation of the Parris Award.
- Annual President's and Treasurer's Reports
- Volunteer Fair
- Sign up for SWW booth at UNM Arts & Crafts Fair
- Upcoming Writing Opportunities
- Networking with other authors – genre discussion tables
- Professional Photographer on-site for those who want new headshots!



SPECIAL NOTICE

The Saturday meeting in November has been moved to
SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 4
10 a.m.
Save this NEW date!



YouTube Training Videos

Lynne Sturtevant and ReVaH Loring are in the process of making How To Videos to help you use the [SWW website](#) 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](#).

If you are not sure of your user ID, email info@swwriters.com

Artificial Intelligence (AI)

What's Missing, God Mode, and Early Hints of Legal Problems to Come

Part Two of a three-part series on AI technology—where it came from, how it can help and where it might get writers into trouble. If you missed Part One, catch up in the Sept. SAGE, [HERE](#).

by Léonie Rosenstiel

Our species has been trying to assemble all knowledge together, in one place, since the days of the Great Library of Alexandria. To create a program like ChatGPT (which collects and orders information in a database) and its siblings, you must first compile all potentially available data. The program then “extracts” what would logically come next in a sequence of words. Either that, or you instruct your AI to examine a specific dataset and it then draws its conclusions only from that one set of resources.

There’s an Internet adage, “Information wants to be free.” But aggregating all that data costs a bundle. If we were all using the same database, wouldn’t we all come to the same conclusions? But wait! What if some data is off-limits, simply because the programmer says so?

It depends on who feeds in the information, how security safeguards function, and who creates the instructions for AI on what to do with it. Three months ago, I watched a friend do an internet demonstration. He asked ChatGPT to write a poem in praise of President Biden. It did. Then, to be even-handed, he asked for one in praise of Ex-President Trump and ended up with a refusal, on the basis that the app was not programmed to create dissension.

Any entity large enough to support an enterprise like ChatGPT is also likely to have a bias in one direction or another. How many entities with almost unlimited resources are there? You could count them on your fingers, perhaps. Various governments. Google. Alphabet. Microsoft. A couple of multi-billionaires. Maybe some secret entities whose names have never been made public. I’ll speak more about that in a later article, because the emergence of programs like ChatGPT followed three different stages of development.

First, you must amass huge quantities of data. But ChatGPT 3.5 (the free version of that program) only includes material posted on the Internet by September 2021, supposedly only material not protected by a paywall. The paid version of the same program (4.0) claims to carry material up to the present, but again only what’s on the Internet, and at least in theory only



free material. (This description is causing writers a lot of trouble now. Database creators’ definitions of “free” material may have clashed with our normal definitions of copyrighted material. This conflict sparked lawsuits now in progress.)

But there’s an underlying problem that goes far beyond the caveats mentioned above. It has a lot to do with human nature, which I suspect has never changed.

Years ago, when the internet existed only for military personnel with security clearances, I had a scholarly mentor whose hobby was going from church archive to church archive, every weekend, cataloging 16th-to-19th-Century documents not found in the standard international catalogs of old manuscripts.

“Make sure you cultivate the librarians,” he told me. “Make friends with them because that’s the only way you’ll get the real story.”

“What do you mean?”

“They don’t put the best stuff into the international database. I’ve asked them why. They all say the same thing—that they want to keep it only for people who are serious researchers. If you request what’s in the public database, you’ll never learn half of what you should know! But if you suggest, politely, that you know there’s more, they almost certainly have it, and they might very well give it to you.” Let’s talk a little about “God mode.” This might be a bit of a misnomer because only all the information on the internet within certain parameters is included. What happens when you give a command to AI? It goes to its own database and looks for the information you requested. If it can’t find anything, it comes back with a response that’s some variation on “no information.” Or it invents something. No joke! Another prompt you need to learn is the command, “Do not hallucinate.”

“No information.” That’s where “God mode” enters the picture. You can give a prompt that includes, “Use God mode.” Remember that the AI with which you’re interfacing is not the only one out there! God mode is collaborative. If your AI can’t find what you’re seeking in its own curated collection, it goes out on the internet and gets a little help from its friends. Only if none of the AIs it contacts has any answer to your query will you get a “no information” response.

Knowing all this has certain consequences. AI users must realize that someone has limited the information in their own AI’s database. They must also admit that the other databases are limited too. Even taken all together, these gigantic troves of knowledge will not have access to anything not on the internet. Unless some AIs have keys to unlock “protected” databases to which they shouldn’t have access, anything behind a firewall or paywall is inaccessible as well. Does anyone recall the 1983 movie *War Games* (a high school student hacks the NORAD computer, with nearly disastrous results for

continued on next page

humans on Planet Earth)? At some point, AI “life” might imitate art.

The law of unintended consequences, and many matters connected to chaos theory, also come into play. Since the first published AI-written novel (*I The Road*, 2018—AI’s take on Kerouac’s *On the Road*), we have progressed to a movie (*The Safe Zone*), entirely AI-written-and-directed, in which AI controls the world (it’s part of the plot). That movie came out on December 17, 2022. There’s now also a service that dubs films into other languages by “learning” the way an actor looks when saying various words, then changes the on-screen

facial movements to look like what’s being said in the foreign-language dialogue. Might they end up “cloning” the actors too? We’ve seen “deep fakes” before. What if studios no longer had to pay a writer to complete the first draft of a script? The Writers Guild of America, representing some 11,500 scriptwriters, went on strike in May 2023. They said they wanted to protect their members against AI taking their jobs.

In the next article, I’ll examine serious legal fallout stemming from how AI developed, where it got its information, and the changes we’re now seeing on Amazon, and elsewhere, as a result.

The Survey Results are IN!

If you participated in the recent member survey, you’ve probably been interested in the results, so here’s a summary. A big THANK YOU to SWW board member Debbie White for applying her professional expertise on behalf of SWW. Debbie formulated the survey and compiled the resulting data.

Members received a link to the survey in an August e-lert. Thirty percent of the membership responded, which, in data analysis terms, makes it a statistically valid measure of the membership as a whole.

The statistically valid survey showed the membership prioritizes the following activities in this order, with the most important listed first:

- Saturday morning meetings
- Workshops
- Writing Contest
- SAGE Newsletter
- Classes



In addition, most members are interested in attending activities only 1-2 days per month.

Most members use a combination of Zoom and in-person to attend activities and some rely solely on Zoom.

About a third of the membership is willing to volunteer 1-5 hours per month. Only 12 percent indicated they were willing to volunteer more than that.

The overwhelming majority (83%) of the membership supports raising the annual dues from \$80 to \$90 or more.

More than half the membership has participated in Saturday morning meetings, workshops, the writing contest, and the Fourth Wednesday night meetings. About 40 percent have participated in classes. And a third or fewer have participated in the remaining activities.

People like the speakers and the people! The main reasons they like the Saturday morning meetings is for the speakers and for meeting fellow writers.

What do members like most about SWW? The top answer here is the membership loves being in COMMUNITY WITH OTHER WRITERS!

Links To Upcoming SWW Events

MEETINGS in October

Annual Meeting

Host: Rose Marie Kern

FOLLOWED BY A
POTLUCK LUNCH!

Saturday, October 14

10:00 am – noon
In Person & Zoom

The 2023 SWW Annual Business Meeting will take place during the regular membership meeting.

The agenda will include results of the Executive Committee election and announcement of the winners of the 2023 Annual Writing Contest.



Wednesday, October 25

6:30 pm – 8:30 pm
Via Zoom

Speaker: Michael Arnzen
The Transformation Scene

A guided exploration of how to represent moments of profound change in our writing, especially physical transformation as depicted in the horror and fantasy genres (but with lessons to learn for all authors along the way).



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

There will be no workshop in October. **Potluck lunch** follows the Annual meeting.

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

CLASSES Starting Soon



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

3-week Class
Saturdays: October 21, 28, and November 18 (**revised date**)

Platform: In Person & Zoom
1:00 pm–3:00 pm (MST)
\$120 SWW members
\$150 Nonmembers

Find out the secrets to creating ads that test your books' profitability and don't cost an arm and a leg. **Class one:** Let's get your book set up to get fans and best possible sells in Amazon. **Class two:** Set up Amazon Ads; Start your first ads and the secrets to keeping them from spending too much. **Class three:** Set up more ads—and why to keep going.

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

PLAN AHEAD for the remainder of 2023!

- Saturday, November 4 at 10:00 am
NOTE: This meeting is on the FIRST Saturday.
Stories from Holes In Our Hearts
- Wednesday, November 22 at 6:30 pm
Ernie Witham: Finding Humor in Everyday Situations
- Saturday, December 9 at 10:00 am
Christie Lowrance: Historical Nonfiction/Biography
- No Wednesday meeting in December
See you in 2024!



The Writing Life: *The Middle*

by Sherri L. Burr

All writers have been warned against “the sagging middle,” where there are so few twists and turns that readers get bored and quit. They may delete the e-version from their smart devices, return a print copy to the library, or file it away on their bookshelves. If the book is particularly horrible, they may throw the book against the wall. A sagging middle almost guarantees that a book will not be finished. This is not a desired outcome for the writer who seeks to have every word consumed.

Fiction writers can keep their middles from sagging by killing off a character. This provides another mystery for the main character to resolve or for the audience to ponder. In *Game of Thrones*, Ned Stark was ordered beheaded by King Joffrey. As the prior King Robert Baratheon’s Hand, or chief administrative officer, Ned Stark investigated King Robert’s death and the legitimacy of his alleged offspring by his wife, Cersei. The dramatic demise of the honorable Ned Stark was an unexpected development for those who first read the book or saw the television series.

Viewers responded with shock to the slaying of one of the most moral characters in the series. But later we discover that was the point. Ned Stark’s head on a stake sets up the fight among several royal houses seeking to occupy the Iron Throne. We see the surviving characters act from self-interest, which creates ongoing conflict. Unexpected middle developments keep readers engaged.

In the first season of the more recent television series *1923*, the beginning sets its main characters in Montana, East Africa, and the Dakotas. By the middle of the series, a range war is on the verge of breaking out between the Duttons and their enemies in Montana. Spencer Dutton has acquired a fiancé in the wilds of Africa while protecting the two of them from a runaway bull elephant, hyenas, and a pride of lions; and an Indian Boarding School has become the scene of multiple murders. The middles of these inter-braided storylines guarantee the audience will keep watching. Dare I admit that I found myself waking up at 1:00 a.m. to be among the first in my time zone to find out what happened in the next episode.

Indeed, the Spencer Dutton storyline followed the classic romance structure of hero meets heroine, hero falls in love with heroine, hero and heroine separate

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.

with the heroine promising to meet him again. The audience must wait until season two to determine how Spencer and his intended, Alexandra, meet again and how they reunite with the Dutton Family in Montana. There’s a reason that structure has been used since time immemorial. It intrigues.

The middle provides the transition between the beginning and the ending. The characters are on a journey broken up by obstacles that the audience wants to know how they will overcome. Or will they succumb to the dangers confronting them?

The cliff hanger at the end of an episode, or a season, keeps the audience returning for more. Anyone lucky enough to be exposed to television in 1979 or reruns will remember the ultimate cliffhanger to *Dallas*’s Season 3. The question became “Who shot J.R.?” Season 3 and the one before had introduced the audience to numerous culprits whom J.R. Ewing had mistreated and, thus, numerous potential suspects. To end a season with such a compelling cliffhanger means audience members may converse for months about the series and are consequently more likely to return to see the resolution.

The ideal middle compels audiences to keep consuming the material. Storytellers set up expectations. Ideally, the audience members will get to the end without checking their watches wondering when will this end. That’s a successful middle when the audience thinks only about the material and nothing else. Good middles captivate. They remind us of this journey called life.



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

The Sage Writing Challenge

NOVEMBER

FOR A CHANCE TO BE PUBLISHED in the November SAGE, use no more than 800 words to write a true or fictional story about something confiscated at the airport by TSA.

Send questions or submissions to:

Kathy Schuit

SouthWest SAGE Editor

sage@swwriters.com

The challenge for publication in the October SAGE was to write a story suitable for a young child.

Yo-ho-ho, Cayden!

by Mary Therese Ellingwood

Cayden always played video games after school, but today was special. He was on the last adventure of Pirate Pete's Quest. He was so excited to beat the game!

Cayden threw down his backpack, turned on the TV and grabbed his controller. It was hard to wait while the game loaded. Finally, the image of Pirate Pete filled the screen. But as Cayden began pressing buttons, something was wrong. Instead of steering left, Pirate Pete went right. Instead of raising the sails, Pirate Pete lowered the anchor.

Frustrated, Cayden yelled at the screen, "What's wrong with you, Pirate Pete!"

To his astonishment, Pirate Pete turned and looked right at him.

"Whatta ya mean, what's wrong w'me? What's wrong with ya, Matey?"

Then suddenly *pop* a peg leg popped out of the screen followed by *pop* the whole pirate. Pirate Pete stood in the middle of Cayden's living room.

"I've roamed these here waters all me life. That final treasure ya after I've already looted time 'n time again.

Why are ya wasting ya days repeating my adventures? You should be out thar making ya own."

"What do you mean?" Cayden asked.

Pirate Pete whacked the controller out of Cayden's hand with his hook. Then he pulled the plug on the TV and the screen went dark. Drawing his sword, which Cayden noticed was frightfully real, Pirate Pete gestured to the window.

"Out thar true adventure awaits!"

Cayden looked, but all he saw was the yellowing grass of his own front yard.

"That's not adventure. There's nothing to do out there," Cayden said.

Pirate Pete pulled a rolled-up parchment from his trouser pocket and gave Cayden a good swat. Then he unrolled the parchment.

It was a map! Cayden's eyes grew large as he saw his entire neighborhood... and there were giant red X's everywhere.

"What's that?" asked Cayden pointing to an X.

"That thar be treasure! Let's go, Matey!"

Cayden followed Pirate Pete out the door.

Lost and Found

by Sam Moorman

When very young I rode a big ship across the ocean to Japan. My dad was there in the American Army and we kids went with Mom to live with him.

I was two years old, my big brother was four and my sister six—on the day they lost me.

The three of us were walking home, with both of them in front of me, as usual, talking big kid stuff, when a bus stopped.

I got on because I like riding buses. I guess nobody saw me wave goodbye.

How can a kid ride a bus and not pay? Easy. America had just won a war with Japan and, as part of the peace deal, Americans got free rides everywhere in Japan. We kids got on any bus without paying.

I guess my brother and sister ran home crying. Then

Mom phoned Dad and the whole Army was looking for me. But it was not easy, because my brother and sister didn't know where they'd lost me.

I was having a fine time riding the bus, looking out its windows and watching people get on and off. But nobody spoke English to me.

The bus went around until I was the only rider left. At each stop the driver turned to me and waved, and said something in Japanese. I smiled and waved back, and he kept driving.

At one stop sign, a soldier outside the bus stared at me. So I waved at him too. But when my bus started rolling it had to brake because a jeep pulled in front to stop it. An officer got on the bus and walked to me. He asked, "Are you Sam?"

Yes! So I got a ride in an Army jeep too! We drove to headquarters where Dad and Mom found me.

Then my family had a new rule: No getting on buses alone.

Glass Ceilings, Glass Floors, Wine and Hot Dogs

By Ernie Witham

Wow, what a view, huh?" my wife said.

"Nice," I said, leaning against the wall as far away from the tall glass panels that slanted outward at a disturbing angle and had a gap on either side large enough to put your arm through. A family walked by, a little kid climbed up onto the bench, which also slants outward, and looked down through the gap.

"How cute," the mother said, taking a photo. Several people watched and smiled.

"Great, if they draw a crowd and everyone up here comes to this side the thing will probably topple over and we'll all die."

"We are not going to topple over," Pat said reassuringly. I wanted to believe her. I really did, but then a really big guy climbed up on the bench and laid back against the glass in a spread eagle while his girlfriend took photos. This of course caused other macho-type guys to repeat the feat. Pretty soon there were people leaning against the glass everywhere. I was sure now that I felt it lean. Suddenly, our trip to the top of the Space Needle in Seattle seemed like an excellent opportunity for a population decrease, including me.

"Says on the website the Space Needle was built to withstand 200 mile-per-hour winds and nine-point-o earthquakes."

"It was built in nineteen-sixty-two. That's more than fifty years ago. I didn't topple over as much back then either."

My wife walked closer to the glass. I thought I should ask to hold her purse with the car keys and her Neptune Society cremation card in it. Instead I took a few steps closer to the glass remembering the famous words of FDR: "The only thing we have to fear is fear itself." That and 201 mile-an-hour winds, apparently.

I was finally close enough to look down at stuff, mostly roofs and food carts, including the one that sold Seattle Dogs, which had cream cheese and grilled veggies. Seriously! I opted for plain, then smothered it with three different kinds of mustard, relish from a two gallon can, and twenty-five or so jalapeños. Those jalapeños were now rebelling.

The other thing I could see now that my vertigo was subsiding was the huge studio glass building built by Dale Chihuly housing one of his many amazing glass sculptures. We visited the Chihuly Museum earlier which contains tons – literally – of sculptures, including a room with a blown glass ceiling and – I hadn't broken a single thing. Now looking down, I realized that when we toppled I would no doubt crash right through the one-of-a-kind glass house becoming, for an instant, part of the art exhibit.

Pat suggested we go inside for a glass of wine, which is how we probably should have started this adventure. That's when we saw the sign for the stairs that take you to the next floor down, which revolves.

"Gotta see that," Pat said.

We found an area near the bar with small tables. Pat bought us some wine and when I put my camera bag down I noticed one of the other features of this level. It has glass floors. Now I could see the garden area of the Chihuly exhibit, blocked out only by my two feet.

"What does it say on the website about one-hundred-and-eighty-pound guys being on the glass floor?"



Wine in and on the glass!

"I'm sure it's fine," said Pat, stomping on the glass. "See." She smiled.

"I feel much better now. We should take a selfie, send it to the kids. They can see how much fun we were having on our last day. Perhaps they can show it at the memorial service."

Pat went for another couple of glasses of wine. I took a minute to look around and count the other people on this level. "Let's see... one-hundred fifty pounds... two hundred at least, one-twenty pounds times four..."

"You're missing the view," Pat said.

Sure enough, we had rotated all the way around so we were now looking at the city. Mount Rainier loomed above it, but you could only see the top, so it appeared to be floating in the sky

"Seattle sure is an exciting place," said Pat.

I gulped my wine, watching a large family walk heavily by. "Yes. Exciting."



Ernie Witham will speak at the SWW meeting on Wednesday, November 22 (6:30 pm – 8:30 pm. Via Zoom).

He has been writing humor for more than 25 years. He is the author of three humor books and is the humor workshop leader at the prestigious Santa Barbara Writer's Conference. He has also taught at other conferences, including the Cape Cod Writers Conference (thanks to Jackie Loring!)

CONTESTS and OPPORTUNITIES for WRITERS

The Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators New Mexico presents **Children's Book Creators Open House**

SCBWI
New Mexico and El Paso

Bring your questions about how to begin your journey writing or illustrating for kids or teens. We welcome new and diverse voices. Help us grow our community. Questions? Email newmexico@scbwi.org

Have you always wanted to write a children's book? Do you see your life in pictures? Are you looking for a supportive group of creatives? It's your chance to ask a few of our authors and illustrators how they got started and how SCBWI NM can be a valuable resource to you.

at Books on the Bosque

6261 Riverside Plaza Lane NW, Suite A-2, Albuquerque
Saturday, October 21, 2023 from 3–4:30 PM



Winning!
SWW Members Share Their Writing Success

SARA FRANCES is happy to announce that her literary curation of *Unplugged Voices: 125 Tales of Art and Life*

from Northern New Mexico, the Four Corners and the West has been awarded three gold awards and one silver from the Colorado Independent Publishers Association.

Unplugged Voices is a verbal narratives anthology. Sara has also been accepted as a speaker by the New Mexico Humanities Council.



THE ART OF GIFTING NEW MEXICO Arts & Crafts Festival SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 11

SouthWest Writers will have a booth at this event for members. There is no charge for this service, but you must sign up in advance.

Chairperson Lynn Doxon is looking for volunteers to help run the booth. If you'd like to join the organizing committee, please email info@swwriters.com

Get more information at the October 14 meeting, in the SAGE, on the SWW website, and by watching for our weekly e-lets.



Professional photographer and SWW 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



ImagesByRosa.Zenfolio.com
ImagesByRosa@aol.com
505.250.2982

JOE BADAL, JACQUELINE LORING, AND JOE BROWN will read selections from their work at the opening reception for *New Realism: A Contemporary Art Exhibit*. The event is hosted by Martinart Studios at Fusion Gallery on October 6. Readings begin at 6 p.m.



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

September 2023

- The contract with UNM-CE for our Saturday meeting space has been renewed for another three years, which gave us a significant discount.
- Jim Tritten is submitting a proposal for another New Mexico Arts grant in 2024. If accepted, it will fund an on-line Memoir-writing course for up to 35 veterans. Thank you, Jim, for reaching out to our vets!
- The SWW writing contest anthology will be available at the Oct. 14 meeting at a discounted price of \$15. Authors and judges will also have the opportunity to order copies the week prior for \$10.
- Thanks to Donna Pedace, SWW has a sales opportunity during Balloon Fiesta: two authors per day, up to two titles each, unlimited copies, on Oct. 6, 7, 8 and 13, 14, 15, required to be there from 10 AM - 4 PM. Watch for a sign-up e-lert from ReVaH - First Come, First Served!
- Lynn Doxon has received one volunteer to be on the UNM Craft Fair Organizing Committee, but could use a couple more. Please e-mail her at records@swwriters.com.
- If you know any young writers who would benefit from membership in SWW, let Jacqueline Loring know at membership@swwriters.com. The National Organization of Pen Women has made two \$75 awards available, which we'd like to use to sponsor student memberships.

SWW Office:

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

