



SouthWest Sage

The Voice of SouthWest Writers

Holiday Haiku Challenge



Three Holiday Haiku

by Don DeNoon

Loud noise on rooftop
Ash falls onto fireplace hearth
Santa laughs Ho Ho Ho

Tiny Tim on crutches
Ebenezer Scrooge yells Bah Humbug
Tim prays God Bless Us All

Egg nog Mistletoe
Kids sledding down snowy hill
For Happy holidays

The Haiku Challenge continues on page 7. Also, find details of how to get ahead of the Challenge curve—now you have more time to write!

December 9th SWW Meeting *A Holiday Celebration*

Hey SWW members and guests!

Please plan to join us for the last SWW meeting of 2023 on December 9 at the UNM-CE meeting location. This will be a time to recognize the efforts of outgoing Board Members, as well as outstanding volunteers, and there will be celebrating!

Feel free to bring something to eat and drink, but keep in mind that everyone is expected to clean up after themselves.

MWSA Honors SWW President

Representing the Military Writers Society of American (MWSA), Jim Tritten presented SWW President Rose Marie Kern with a Challenge Coin at the Nov. 15 meeting of the SWW Board of Directors. Challenge Coins have been an American military tradition for a century, and they are meant to instill unit pride and reward



Jim Tritten presents a Challenge Coin from the Military Writers Society of America to SWW President Rose Marie Kern at the Nov. 15 SWW board meeting. Challenge Coins are a traditional award of military pride and excellence.

hard work and excellence. Jim said the MWSA wanted to recognize the significant contributions made by SWW and, specifically, by Rose Marie, to support New Mexico military families. Active-duty military, veterans, family members, and their caregivers have benefited over the course of several years from participation in many SWW projects, including a joint SWW-MWSA writing conference in September 2019, workshops designed to educate writers on how to write about and for the military, writing activities made possible through grants obtained from New Mexico Arts (NMA) to support military healing with the arts, and in the 2023 publication of the *Holes in Our Hearts* anthology.

Without the support of Rose Marie, these projects would not have occurred and helped so many in the New Mexico military family develop creative writing as a tool to aid in healing, Jim said. He also mentioned her current support of a 2024 program that will provide an online memoir writing class to New Mexico veterans and active duty service members. During his presentation of the Challenge Coin, Jim personally added a “Bravo Zulu”—the U.S. Navy signal flown aboard ship when another unit is recognized for a job well done.

INSIDE

On Page ONE

- **MWSA Honors SWW President**
- ***Three Holiday Haiku***
by Don DeNoon

4 **Online Memoir Writing Course For NM Veterans**

6 **The Writing Life: *End of the Year Deadlines*** by Sherri L. Burr

The SAGE Writing Challenge

7 **Holiday Gift** by Sam Moorman

Winter Walk by Rachel Bate

Untitled Haiku R. Janet Walraven Ed Lehner Jennifer Trotter

8 **Holiday Hope** by Thelma Giomi

Swaying Willows Brush by Heidi Marshall

Winter Blankets by Kathy Louise Schuit

9 **AI Series Continues, by Léonie Rosenstiel** ***Parishioners, Plagiarism and*** ***Pleadings, Oh, My! (part II)***

10 **WINNING:** SWW Members Share Their Writing Success

DEPARTMENTS

From the President.....	3
Meetings/Workshops/Classes.....	5
Look Who Joined.....	4
Contests and Opportunities.....	11
Board Minutes Summary.....	12



Board of Directors

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Cornelia Gamlem, Treasurer

Dan Wetmore, Secretary

Brenda Cole, Past President/Collegium

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Kathy Louise Schuit, SAGE Editor

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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 in person and via Zoom.

SouthWest Sage

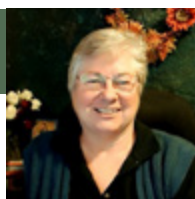
Published monthly by the Board of Directors of
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ATTEND SouthWest Writers MEETINGS
IN-PERSON or ONLINE

Directions and information at
SouthWestWriters.com.

FROM THE PRESIDENT



Greetings Fellow Writers,

As my last message of 2023, I want to first thank all the members who donated their time, energy, expertise, or money to the continuance of this fabulous group. Anytime we need something, someone has the answers or comes up with solutions, and that is amazing.

We all have the same end in mind—write something worth printing. Whether we are considering books, articles, poetry, or short stories, we have ideas that need developing and we need help from each other. Thanks to all who participated in the writing contest and in the *Holes in Our Hearts* project—both were tremendously rewarding.

Now that these books are out on the market, I'd like to ask each of you a favor: please go to either Amazon or Goodreads and leave a rating. Ratings are how Amazon determines if a book is good enough—or of a topic popular enough—to appear on the first page of offerings that people see as they peruse their electronic bookstore. If you leave a rating it helps us get more books into the hands of people who will appreciate them, and it helps SWW pay its bills.

I'll make you all an offer. If you leave a rating, send an email to me at president@swwriters.com, and, if you have a book published, I'll go onto Amazon and leave your book a rating if it's there!

I realize that not everyone has a book published, so, to anyone who does NOT have a book published and gives the SWW books a rating I'm offering a free SWW logo/decal, or a half hour Zoom session with me where you can discuss any writing/publishing topic you wish.

This one small action, that takes all of a few minutes, can make a big difference in an author's sales. I'd like to encourage everyone to help out their fellow members in just that manner.

Finally, if you are looking for the perfect holiday gift, check out the SWW books for sale on Amazon. Most of the previous year's print anthologies are \$12 or less and this year's have also been reduced. Like most non-profits, we are also holding out our hands and hoping that the efforts we put out all year will encourage you to include SWW with your end of the year tax deductible donations. Just go to <https://www.southwestwriters.com/holiday-donation-rodeo!>

HOLIDAY DONATION RODEO

Howdy Partner!

If you have been to the South West Writer's meetings, you know the quality of our presentations and speakers, and the level of professionalism we bring to our membership. Though this is a volunteer driven organization, we need help funding our programs and administration, so we would ask that you consider a donation this holiday season.



Like most non-profits this time of year, we are holding out our hands and hoping that the efforts we put out all year will encourage you to include SWW with your end of the year tax deductible donations. Your donation to SWW (a nonprofit, tax exempt 501 (c)(3) organization) is a tax-deductible gift that allows us to continue to provide the information and encouragement authors are looking for.

In addition to the general operating fund, you can designate your gift to one or more of the following options:

The Bob Gassaway Student Writer Fund – pays for student membership fees. **The SWW Scholarship Fund** – providing membership for writers of limited means. **The Programs & Presentations Fund** – sponsors 23 free presentations to members annually.

Another way to help out is to become a **Lifetime Member**. This shows your ongoing support for both your own goals and aspirations, and those of the organization.

Ways to Donate:

- Mail your check to the SWW office (3200 Carlisle Blvd NE, Suite 114, Albuquerque, NM 87110).
- Call the office Mon-Thurs 9 a.m. to noon to donate over the phone, (505) 830-6034.
- Or use this link to the [Online Donation Form on the SWW website](#).



Online Memoir Writing Course For NM Veterans

SouthWest Writers (SWW) is pleased to announce that it has received a 2024 New Mexico Arts (NMA) grant in support of using creative writing to heal. New Mexico veterans or active-duty military can apply to take a free, four-week online memoir writing course taught by Latayne Scott. Selected enrollees will pace themselves through online modules and post their writing assignments on a private website page where other students and the instructor will record comments. Computer competence is required—modules are not taught using Zoom but are online, just like courses are taught today in schools and colleges. This cycle, the program funded by NMA is only for New Mexico veterans and active-duty military. A New Mexico participant must be either a current resident of the state or, if on active-duty, still a legal resident [official Home of Record is New Mexico, meaning voter registration, car registration, and driver's license are from New Mexico]. The course is expected to start in February 2024, and admittance is limited. Priority will be given to applicants from remote areas of the state (think Silver City, Clovis, Farmington, or Clayton) and to those who have not yet written a memoir. Please share this opportunity with veterans and active-duty military you know. Click on the following link to the SWW website to obtain more information and apply. <https://www.southwestwriters.com/online-memoir-writing-course-for-nm-veterans/>



On behalf of SWW, Jim Tritten presents a Certificate of Appreciation to NM Arts and the Military (NMA/M) Co-

ordinator Keven Lenkner. Together with Tritten and SWW President Rose Marie Kern, Lenkner secured an NMA/M grant to SWW for the production and publication of the *Holes in Our Hearts* anthology.



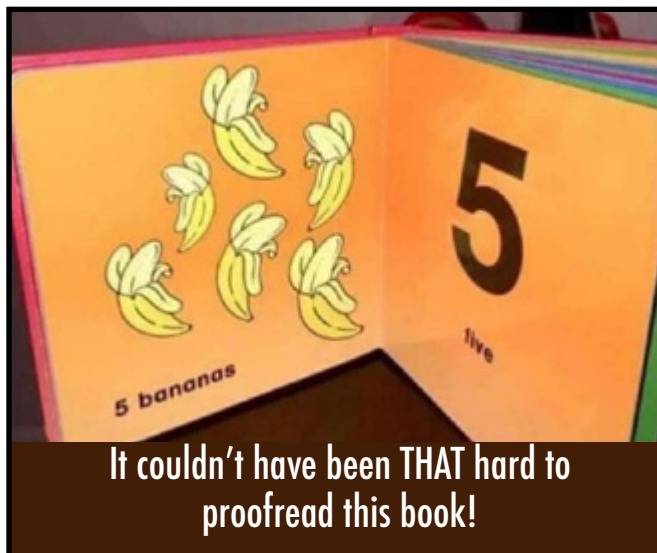
Look Who JOINED SWW in October!

Kathleen Foy
Mark Fleisher
Barbara Jacksha
Virginia Henning
Mike Kimmel
Russ Gritz
Monika Dziamka
Alexandria Contreras
Patricia Canterbury
Sylvia Alvarez
Michael Avery
Richard Rieder



Welcome!

**With 399 members
WORLDWIDE!**



Links To Upcoming SWW Events

MEETINGS in December

Saturday, December 9

10:00 am – noon
In Person & Zoom

Speaker: Christie Lowrance
**A Writer's Quest: Non-fiction,
History, and Biography**



**NO Wednesday
meeting in December.**
See you in 2024!

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

December WORKSHOP

From Writer to Author
**With Rose Marie Kern &
Cornelia Gamlem**

Saturday, December 9, 2023

12:30 – 2:30 pm (MST)

In Person at the UNM-CE building & via Zoom



♦ SWW members \$20

♦ Non-members \$30

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

MEETINGS in January

NOTE THE DATE CHANGE! (Just for January, we're meeting the first Saturday of the month.)

Saturday, January 6, 2024

10:00 am – noon
In Person & Zoom

Speaker: Jonathan Miller
**Writing Against the Tide:
Completing Your
Manuscript
Under Challenging Circumstances**



Wednesday, January 24, 2024

6:30 pm – 8:30 pm
Via Zoom

Speaker: Chuck Greaves
**The DIY MFA Or:
How to Teach Yourself to
Write (Or to Write Better)**



January WORKSHOP

Find YOUR Niche Market – with Rose!

With Rose Marie Kern

Saturday, January 6, 2024

12:30 – 2:30 pm (MST)

In Person at the UNM-CE building & via Zoom

SWW members: \$20 ♦ Non-members: \$30

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

*"You have talents. You want
to make money. You have
ideas... maybe so many
ideas that you can't figure
out where to start."*

The Writing Life:

End of the Year Deadlines

by Sherri L. Burr

Two years after I submitted an article for a scholarly journal, I received notification of desired changes. The editor wrote, “We very much hope you will be interested in revising this essay for publication in the volume. We are asking for everyone’s revisions by the end of the year.” I replied that I would study the suggestions and that the deadline for revisions works for me. I added this project to the list of all the others that had to be completed by the end of the year.

Elon Musk once said, “If the timeline is long, it’s wrong.” These end-of-the-year deadlines guarantee a short timeline, which Musk would probably approve. Yet, I wonder why this happens during the holidays when we become busiest with our personal lives? Why must work intervene at an even more intense magnitude than during the rest of the year? For me, the end of December is always packed with birthdays, holidays, and Mom’s doctor appointments that are sometimes scheduled months in advance.

Some writers use the end of the year as motivation. Author Jonathan Miller likes to write the first draft of a novel between Thanksgiving and Christmas. NaNoWriMo (National Novel Writing Month) encourages would-be novelists to sign up to write a full novel during the month of November. I read my friend Caroline’s book one year, and it was dreadful. Even she laughed as I pointed out that her main character names kept changing and her plot was incomprehensible. Pushing yourself can lead to unpublishable results.

As I wrote in my November 2023 column, I don’t believe writers can balance demands but rather must shift between obligations. I created a spreadsheet of everything due by the end of the year with absolute and preferred deadlines. With several items due on the same day, I shifted the deadlines to fall on different days.

While I can revise the article for the scholarly journal by the end of the year, I cannot have it on the computer while I am writing a grant proposal to conduct research at a major history library. Rather, it helps to have only one document open at a time. This column, for example, is due on the 15th of the month. To avoid time conflicts, I changed the due date to the third of the month and turned it in twelve days early. I have yet to be chewed out by an editor for turning something in ahead of time, while turning something in late can guarantee it doesn’t get considered at all.

For the scholarly article, I analyzed the comments.

Sherri Burr’s 27th book, *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 more than 30 years.



I liked the overall assessment from the editor “that the topic of your article resonated with the reviewers” and that “one reviewer found it a ‘refreshingly personal piece of writing’.” Then came the challenges. One reviewer wrote, “After sixteen pages it just stops rather than concluding in any meaningful way.” I looked at the submission and realized that the reviewer was correct. I vowed to add a stronger conclusion.

I was initially puzzled by some of the factual statements. Then, I realized that a few additional words could clarify the misunderstanding in the text. For other concerns expressed by the reviewers, footnotes could suffice. Although the editor had asked for the article by the end of the year, I set mid-November on my spreadsheet to potentially obtain further feedback.

Drawing up a list for these end-of-year obligations on a spreadsheet made me realize that almost every item, apart from an audiobook deadline, would have to be turned in earlier than December 31st. Given how long it takes to record an audiobook, I parceled out the project over time and plan to send it in on the day of the deadline. Previous experience has taught me that there are limits to voice quality as the day wears on.

I planned the deadlines by importance. An article in a scholarly journal can enhance reputation in a particular field, even without compensation. Retiring from the university to become a full-time author meant I had to fund my own research. I do this through paid writing and speaking engagements. My spreadsheet helps prioritize end-of-the-year deadlines to make and determine which may need more time or should be discarded. I also stopped accepting assignments.

In conclusion you, the writer, decide the deadlines that are important, whether at the end of the year or during the middle of a week.

The Sage Writing Challenge

JANUARY

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

The challenge for publication in the December SAGE was to have fun with some holiday Haiku writing.

FOR A CHANCE TO BE PUBLISHED in the JANUARY SAGE, use no more than 800 words to tell a never-before-told tale about your Best Gift Ever. Please follow all the submission guidelines and deadlines on page 8. **Deadline is December 15.**

Looking To Get Ahead of the SAGE Challenge Curve?

Starting immediately, the SAGE will publish Challenge topics for the coming TWO MONTHS.

FOR A CHANCE TO BE PUBLISHED in the FEBRUARY SAGE, write a love poem of no more than three stanzas **OR** a flash fiction love story of no more than 100 words. Send it to sage@swwriters.com no later than **January 15, 2024**. Please follow all the submission guidelines and deadlines on page 8.

Holiday Gift

by Sam Moorman

Owl clutched pine tree tip
like an angel ornament
Hoo hoo in wind's whoosh



Cottonwoods huddle
Like old brittle women with
Voices like leaves cracking

Countless cranes jostle
For space on a Bosque lake
Startled, they take flight

A child's gay laughter
Rings like tiny reindeer bells
All through the new year

by Jennifer Trotter

Merry Christmas all.
Joyous yule logs burning bright.
Elves are resting.

So little daylight.
Nighttime darkness overwhelms.
A new star shines bright.

Winter sun shines coldly.
Mountains sleep quiet alone.
Time for Yule Tide lights.

Dark gray skies today.
Mourning doves matched the color.
Light up the Season.

Trails were icy slick.
The spies came in from the cold.
Mistletoe beckoned.

by Ed Lehner

Winter Walk

by Rachel Bate

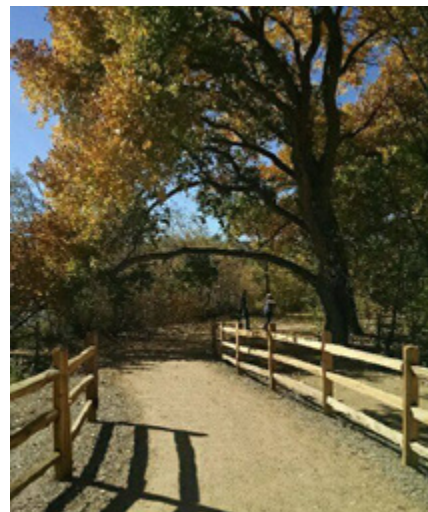
Enchanting pine scent
Whispering winter snowflakes
Touch my inner soul!

Red pyracantha:
Birds give thanks during winter
For budding berries

Winter storm blessings:
Icy foam shatters midair
Waves break on beaches

Angry trees scream out
As children gleefully shout
That's ours for Christmas

by R. Janet Walraven



More holiday Haiku on the
next page!

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

Holiday Haiku Challenge



The Sage Writing
Challenge

continued from previous page

Holiday Hope

by Thelma Giomi

This seasons wishes
May you give and be given,
Blessing evergreen

The dressed evergreens
Delight our child-bright visions.
Cherished memories

The angels' song spoke
Peace on earth, goodwill to all.
It is up to us.

Swaying Willows Brush

by Heidi Marshall

Swaying willows brush
fresh snow over fallen leaves
a path to Christmas

And then Heidi challenged your SAGE editor to write a Haiku, so...

Winter Blankets

by Kathy Louise Schuit

Winter blankets gifts
Snowy cold drifts sleds far
Warm quilts come after.

Books Make Great Holiday Gifts!

Books take readers on journeys to places they might only imagine, where they experience events that can have lasting impact. A book is an adventure in the making. Give a book to someone you care about. It's a gift that keeps on giving. Every bookstore can order any book in print, or visit Amazon.

Best-selling author, SWW member,
Joseph Badal

Artificial Intelligence (AI)

Parishioners, Plagiarism and Pleadings, Oh, My! (part II)

Part Four of our series on AI technology—where it came from, how it can help and where it might get writers into trouble. Originally intended as a three-part series, interest in AI is high with new information available daily, so we are grateful that Léonie continues to write on the subject. If you've missed earlier installments, catch up [HERE](#).

by Léonie Rosenstiel



As with so many things that started out with good intentions (in this case, making content accessible to as many readers as possible), unintended consequences have resulted from the use of AI technology. In response, The Authors Guild joined major publishers in suing both HathiTrust and Internet Archive/Open Library. The 6-year-long lawsuit complained about copyright infringement. The Internet services had scanned entire copyrighted volumes and made the content available, free, over the Internet. In March of this year (2023), the lawsuit was settled in favor of the publishers and the Authors Guild. But, by then, offending texts had already been removed from the named databases, and ChatGPT had already studied and learned all that content.

The Internet services claimed they were performing a public service, particularly during Covid, because no one had any idea when the libraries would open again. They weren't alone. For about two decades, pirate sites had been offering free copies of copyrighted books for download.

Can you say, "copyright infringement"? One of my own books got 40,000 downloads that way; one of my husband's got more than 10,000. We didn't earn a penny from the "sales" of these volumes; neither did our publishers. These sites existed when AIs were being trained, and there are still pirate sites. Shut one down and another springs up—a new version of Whack-a-Mole.

The texts on pirate sites were never behind paywalls then, and they still aren't. The creators of ChatGPT and Bard (Google's new, "conversational" AI) used these texts to "train" their AIs. Otherwise, only Extra Sensory Perception can explain how an AI manages to generate accurate, detailed, chapter-by-chapter analyses and summaries of copyrighted novels.

Then, there are the visual AI sites—Craiyon.com, creator.nightcafe.studio, and gencraft.com, for example—many of which are free. They generate some amazing content. Can you prove that what they generate for you is unique content? No. Can you copyright it? No.

Recently, I ran into an advertising copywriter who was amused that AI could write in his style. He

considered it flattering. Most poets, novelists, short story writers, and authors of non-fiction books disagree. I joined more than 10,000 other authors in July when I signed a petition, supported by the 13,000-member Authors Guild. It asked AI creators to cease using our work without our consent and without paying us any royalties or licensing fees.

As for including articles written by AI, the publisher Gannett (owner of *USA Today* and about 400 other daily and weekly newspapers) seems to have been a frequent offender. It claims to have suspended its foray into poorly written, AI-generated articles about local sports, but the journal *Futurism* claims otherwise. This experiment is happening at a time when many newsrooms are experiencing severe staff cutbacks. Will human-written newspaper articles and draft movie scripts both go the way of the dodo bird?

I watched, fascinated, as someone with an unusual name asked ChatGPT to write a three-paragraph biography of him, of the sort that might be used in introducing a speaker. Because of his name and profession, there was little chance that the AI might have gotten him confused with someone else. The AI added several companies to his resume. He'd never worked there. It said he was born in a country different from the land of his birth. Finally, it gave him one too few children.

Let's hope the prompts that people learn to use with newsroom AIs include the "do not hallucinate" command! Why? Because AIs don't like to say "no information." They'd rather invent things to tell you.

Unchecked, Chat GPT's hallucinations have already had serious repercussions. Earlier this year, two New York attorneys were sanctioned and fined. Their AI-generated legal brief contained six invented citations to fictitious legal cases. The judge was not amused, but I was. The first place I saw this news item was in a Reuters article. At the time I saw it, I'd just received an advertising email, crowing that ThompsonReuters, a legal division of Reuters, was now offering lawyers subscriptions to its

continued on next page

AI, continued from previous page

own generative legal AI, a service that was “defining a new era for how legal professionals work.”

On the book front, in August author Jane Friedman, a *Publisher's Weekly* columnist and author of books about publishing, complained to Amazon that someone was using AI to generate books on the same general subjects that interested her, and which they then published under her name, essentially stealing her reputation. She wanted those books de-listed and the practice stopped. Amazon refused, offering the excuse that she hadn't trademarked her own name.

“I would rather see my books pirated than this,” read the headline of her August 20 blog post. She had, by then, appealed to the Authors Guild for help. As of this writing, it looks as if Amazon has finally capitulated. What an ordeal!

Amazon KDP now distinguishes between “AI-generated” and “AI-assisted” writing. It asks you, the author, to report, voluntarily, what percentage of your manuscript was generated by AI. If all AI did was to “assist” you (perhaps it cleaned up some grammar or generated an outline that you then completed as a book), you don't have to declare it. On the other hand, if a fairly large percentage of your text was written by AI, at some point someone is going to make an executive decision about where the cutoff point is between a book written by you, and a book written by AI. If AI writes a book, it can't be copyrighted.

I'm still researching new developments in what computers consider to be plagiarism and will be reporting on that, and other new developments, in my next article.

Léonie Rosenstiel endeavors to stay fully abreast of the uses and pitfalls of AI-generated literature, journalism and art. Her most recent achievement in this arena is certification as an AI-Powered Training Professional.

Winning!

SWW Members Share Their Writing Success



ELAINE MONTAGUE's *Victory from the Shadows; Growing Up in a New Mexico School for the Blind and Beyond*, co-written by Elaine and her late husband Gary, will be the focus of conversation, a PowerPoint, and readings at the Albuquerque Special Collections Library (423 Central Ave. NE) on Dec. 9 at 10:30 a.m.

This presentation will be one of only six such events during the library's focused Ever Changing, Ever Growing series for 2023.

Albuquerque Journal columnist David Steinberg has also committed to writing “a little blurb” about this sometime after Thanksgiving.



JOSEPH BADAL would like to offer his thanks to the New Mexico-Arizona Book Awards for awarding his book *Everything To Lose* a first place in the Fiction-Crime Category of the group's recent contest. This is Joe's fourth book in the Lassiter/Martinez Case Files series and brings back Barbara Lassiter and Susan Martinez, “the best female detective duo

since Cagney & Lacey.”

Use this [LINK](#) to buy the book now on Amazon.

Holidays Are For Writers

*“T’was the night before Christmas and, with his nib in his hand,
Dickens wrote a tale that changed the whole land.
He and his ilk, all dreamers and jewels,
Seek SouthWest Writers for the BEST writing tools.*

SouthWest Writers' mission is to support and educate writers as they endeavor to write, perfect and publish their stories.



Your tax deductible holiday gift will help fund programs, classes, demonstrations, workshops and events that keep the dream alive for hundreds of writers.

Donations accepted at the SWW office, 3200 Carlisle Blvd. NE, Suite 114, Albuquerque, NM 87110, or online through the SWW website, Help Support SWW page: www.southwestwriters.com (simply fill out the form to process your gift).

CONTESTS and OPPORTUNITIES for WRITERS



Crosswinds' Ninth Annual Poetry Contest Accepting Submissions.

Deadline is January 1, 2024.

Crosswinds' annual poetry contest is open for submissions.

To submit poems for the contest: [Crosswinds Poetry Journal - Poetry Contests - Poetry Contest Submissions](#)

Starting this month, Crosswinds will periodically feature a selected poet on our website's news page, (link below). We will be contacting winners and honorable mentions from each of the eight annual editions that have seen publication.

Featured Poet: Robert Clinton, of Dedham, MA. Robert was the Grand Prize winner of Crosswinds' 2023 poetry contest, which drew over 1,500 poems from around the country. To read more about Robert, please go to the link below. [Crosswinds Poetry News](#)

To read reviews of *Wasteland Honey*, please visit [CirclingRivers.com Wasteland Honey | signed by author - CIRCLING RIVERS](#)



Ethos Literacy
an adult education center

5th Annual Short Short Story Writing Contest
a fundraiser to support
adult literacy programs

6 cash prizes plus e-publication

submission fees: \$15
\$10 (youth - 14 and younger)

100 words
Deadline:
Feb. 1, 2024
4 topics

Once Upon A Time...

For 2024, the story must relate in some way to one of these topics:

- bicycle(s)
- eclipse
- fire
- suitcase(s)

Rules, registration and previous years' winning entries at
ethosliteracy.org.

The annual NFPW/NMPW communications contest is now open.

- All entries must be published by December 31, 2023.
- More than 60 categories to choose from.
- Early submission deadline (avoid a one-time additional fee of \$25): January 17, 2024.
- Final deadline for books: January 31, 2024.
- Final deadline for all other entries: February 7, 2024.



The contest in NM is sponsored by state affiliate, New Mexico Press Women. Winners in NM will be announced at the NMPW conference, March 16, 2024. First-place winning entries in NM (and other state affiliates) are eligible to advance to the national competition. NM winners who want to enter the national contest must be NFPW members, or must join by March 15, 2024. National winners will be notified in late April. National (NFPW) contest results will be announced during an awards dinner on June 22, 2024, in St. Louis, Mo.

For more information check out: www.newmexicopresswomen.org and the NFPW webpage: www.nfpw.org/professional-contest.



NOTICE OF INCREASE IN MEMBERSHIP DUES

Effective January 1, 2024, SWW membership dues will increase to \$85 annually. Members who renew their membership at least two months in advance of their scheduled renewal date will pay only \$80. SWW membership rates have not increased in more than a decade while costs associated with the management of a large group have continued to rise — it's time, folks.

SWW Holiday Food Table!



Complimentary snacks
and beverages.



SWW Board Meeting Minutes Summarized

November 2023

- As of October 31, we are approximately \$3,400 in the black for the year (2023).
- In order to put some of our savings to work generating additional passive income, the board voted to invest in three CDs—a 3-month, 6-month, and a 12-month.
- Jim Tritten presented Rose with a Military Writers Society of America Challenge Coin for her work with veterans over the past several years.
- For our NM Arts 2024 grant (a curated, on-line memoir class free to Veterans), we're asking for grassroots help advertising it—in church newsletters, VFW units, other veterans groups in town, local pilot groups.
- With all the bustle of the holiday season, please note our kick-off meeting for 2024 will be the FIRST Saturday in January (then back to normal in February).
- Welcome to those who've graciously volunteered to help out in new capacities! O'labumi Brown has begun working PR—graciously taking over Who-Fish, a nation-wide media platform on which we currently have 423 followers. David Corwell is shifting his efforts to help with Zoom team scheduling. Allen Herring is going to chair a new anthology of SAGE writings for 2024. And Judy Castlebury is going to chair next year's writing contest.

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