

The New Mexico Writer

APRIL 2026

Supporting and connecting the literary community in New Mexico.

A publication of **NMwriters**
SUPPORTING AND CONNECTING THE LITERARY COMMUNITY

Poetry Month Extends Beyond April in New Mexico

April marks National Poetry Month, but in New Mexico, poetry is a year-round practice of honoring our land, language, culture, and one another.

**national
poetry month
30th anniversary**

Launched by the Academy of American Poets in April 1996, National Poetry Month is a special occasion that celebrates poets' integral role in our culture and the value of poetry. Over the years, it has become the largest literary celebration in the world, with tens of millions of readers, students, teachers, librarians, booksellers, literary events curators, publishers, families, and—of course—poets, marking poetry's important place in our lives.

"Poetry can give voice to your walk in this world. It can help you remember what's important," said 2023 and 2019 NM Writers grantee Sylvia Rains Dennis. Selected as Taos Poet Laureate for 2026–2027, Dennis is dedicating her term to the Taos Almanac Project.



Many other New Mexicans have close ties to the poetry world. 2021 NM Writers grantee Zach Hively runs Casa Urraca Press, an independent publisher based in Abiquiú. The press has published widely recognized poets such as Margaret Randall, V.B. Price, and Enrique R. Lamadrid, as well as Hively himself. In March, Casa Urraca

marked National Poetry Month with a celebratory reading at Books on the Bosque featuring Dodici Azpadu, Scott Wiggerman, and Wayne Lee.

A poetry and art book event hosted by NM Writers in collaboration with Drift Exchange brought together authors, artists, readers, and community members to celebrate the 2025 New Mexico Book Awards winners and finalists in poetry and art

categories. Attendees had the opportunity to hear directly from poets whose work reflects the creativity of New Mexico's communities.

The event, held in March at Scarab Design in downtown Albuquerque, featured readings by several authors, including V. B. Price, Charmayne Samuelson, Valerie Martínez, Elizabeth Cohen, Marisa P. Clark, Marcia Meier, and Joanne Fay Brown.

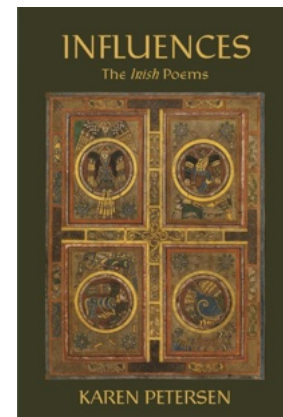


Local poet Hosho McCreesh presented DrunkSkull Sidewalk Cinema, a micro-cinema pop-up extolling the virtues of the small press, complete with popcorn. Local publishers Casa Urraca Press (Abiquiú) and Weeping Willow Books (Santa Fe) beautifully displayed their authors' poetry books.

"It's an honor to celebrate with award-winning poets at events like these," NM Writers Executive Director Lisa McCoy said. "I am in awe of the creativity and wisdom from our New Mexican poets."

The March calendar also featured community-driven events highlighting a range of voices from across the state. New Mexico Poet Laureate Manuel González hosted a new poetry series in Albuquerque, bringing together established and emerging poets for readings and an open mic. Featured poets included Zander Cheremiah, Katrina Kaye, Sirena Rayes, and Sarita Sol González.

Poetry fans have many other opportunities to hear from both their favorite and newly discovered poets in the coming weeks. 2022 NM Writers grantee Karen Petersen recently published a new collection, *Influences: The Irish Poems*, and will celebrate with a local reading and signing event. In Taos, SOMOS will host a series of April Poetry Month events featuring Kate Kingston, Leslie Ullman, Layli Long Soldier, Boderra Joe, Miriam Sagan, Kate O'Neill, Mary Morris, and Mike Burwell. Karen Bayard is offering "2 Hours @ the Table," a friendly space to read poetry aloud, while Emily Hyland combines movement and poetry for a Creative Expression retreat. Julia Alvarez will appear at Collected Works in conversation with Carmella Padilla for a deep discussion around the art of poetry. Lauren Camp's newly published poetry collection, *Is Is Enough*, will be set to chamber music at Chatter North. These and more celebrations of New Mexico poetry can be found in the Events and Opportunities sections of this issue.



"Poetry is a maker of words, which can evoke almost any feeling one can create," Petersen said. "It can transport, comfort, teach, and bring an audience to laughter or tears. In this electronic age, we poets are the last of the magic of the campfire..."

Entries Are Landing for the

2026 NM Book Awards



Submissions to the 2026 New Mexico Book Awards are flowing in, reported Lisa McCoy, director of the book awards competition. Anyone involved in the production of a book with a creative connection to New Mexico may enter eligible books into one or more of the 44 categories. Volunteer judges will determine winners and finalists across the categories, with the Paul Rhett Award recognizing the highest-rated book in the competition.

Results will be announced in early October on the NM Writers website and in *The New Mexico Writer*. Save the date for a 2026 NM Book Awards banquet being planned in Las Cruces for the evening of October 2.

The entry deadline is May 8, 2026. Full guidelines and entry information are available on the NM Writers website [here](#).

Judges needed for the NM Book Awards!

Help discover great New Mexico books.

Sign up [here](#) to be a judge in the 2026 NM Book Awards.

Judges can be booksellers, librarians, teachers, authors, publishers, agents, or avid readers. Judges will have about 3 months for reading and scoring their assigned books. Previous year judges will need to sign up again and re-choose categories. The deadline for judging is August 31, 2026.

Are you enjoying this issue of *The New Mexico Writer*?

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by becoming a Sustaining Member!

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Erik Larson Advises to "Never Say Never"

An evening of conversation between Erik Larson and Hampton Sides offered many New Mexicans both literary insight and moments of humor. The event, presented by AMP Concerts in collaboration with the Santa Fe International Literary Festival (SFILF) and Albuquerque Public Library Foundation, was held at the KiMo Theater on March 27.

Thanks to the generosity of a NM Writers board member, fifteen Sustaining Members had the opportunity to attend the event through a special ticket giveaway. Members of NM Writers can keep an eye on their inboxes for future Perk Alerts. Representatives attending from SFILF included Megan Mulry, Asya Ghafarshad Beardsley, and Susan Burks.



Larson reflected on his writing process of beginning each day by drafting one page of his work-in-progress, followed by several hours of deep historic research, then ending with a ritualistic ringing of a bell at 5 p.m. sharp and a dry martini. He also discussed his author inspirations, the written symbols his wife uses during beta reading (both a smiley and sad face are deemed good signs), why he refuses to read his own book reviews, and his role as what he calls an “animator of history.”

“Hampton and Erik are both brilliant guys and their conversation was a pleasure to listen to,” said NM Writers Sustaining Member Liz Trupin-Pulli, pictured here with her complimentary copy of Larson’s latest release at the event. “They hit all the right notes about the writing process, and Erik’s specific approach was fascinating. The time flew by quickly, and then the audience chimed in with great questions. A fun time was had by all.”

One specific moment felt like a mic drop: Sides recalled that earlier in Larson’s career, Larson had declared he’d never write about the Civil War or about Abraham Lincoln. Larson’s latest book, *Demon of Unrest*, however, centers around both.

The anecdote drew laughter but was followed by Larson’s advice to “never say never.” Like so many authors’ paths, his is continuously shaped by curiosity, a willingness to follow threads, and the occasional dry martini.

Croak & Dagger Takes a Novel Approach to Novel Research

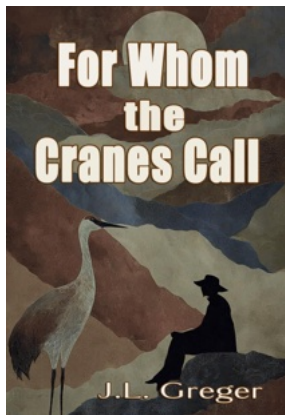
For members of Croak & Dagger, the New Mexico chapter of Sisters in Crime, writing often begins with going directly to the source. “I think very few writers can write well about topics on which they know nothing,” said Croak & Dagger’s Programming Chair, Janet Gregor. “Substance is as important as writing style.”

That philosophy shapes the organization's programming. While many writing groups focus solely on craft, Croak & Dagger regularly brings in professionals from outside the literary world to speak with members.



In the last year, speakers have included a Bureau of Land Management (BLM) law enforcement agent, a soil scientist with the U.S. Forest Service, the chief of security at Central New Mexico Community College, and a lawyer demonstrating jury selection.

The goal is to give writers access to the kinds of details that can be difficult to find through research alone. "These technical speakers have made it easier for Croak & Dagger members to write realistically," Greger said.



In one case, two members developing stories set on public lands struggled to find accurate information online about the BLM and U.S. Forest Service. Conversations with guest speakers helped answer their questions. One past speaker directly inspired a character in Greger's novel *For Whom the Cranes Call*.

Croak & Dagger draws inspiration from the Public Safety Writers Association, a national organization that brings together law enforcement professionals, firefighters, and writers of crime and thrillers for an annual conference. This year it will be held in Las Vegas, Nevada, from July 10 to 12.

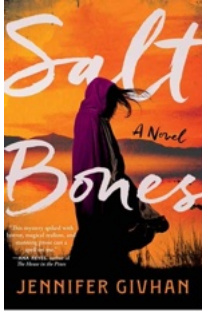
Croak & Dagger meets in person on the fourth Tuesday of every month at 6 p.m. at the Unitarian Church in Albuquerque and welcomes any New Mexico writer who feels called to attend.

NM Writers Annual Dinner Approaching

The NM Writers Annual Dinner will take place on Thursday, April 30 at La Fonda on the Plaza in Santa Fe, continuing a tradition that has become one of the organization's central programs. The event brings together writers from across New Mexico for an evening of connection and entertainment, including the announcement of the 2026 NM Writers grant recipients. Since its inception in 2017, the dinner has served as a networking event whereby writers at all stages of their careers have the opportunity to meet and engage with one another.



The upcoming dinner will feature two Albuquerque-based authors. Jennifer Givhan, a Mexican American and Indigenous poet and novelist, will appear in conversation with NM Writers board member and fellow writer and poet, Cynthia J. Sylvester.



Salt Bones (Mulholland Books, 2025), written by this year's dinner keynote speaker Givhan, and *The Half-White Album* (UNM Press, 2023) by Sylvester are available as add-ons when purchasing dinner tickets. Pre-purchased copies will be available for pick up and author inscription at the conclusion of the dinner program on April 30.

Attendance at the dinner will be capped at 200 again, so organizers urge writers to [buy your dinner tickets soon](#).

Santa Fe International Literary Festival Festivities Await

Writers and literary fans alike eagerly await the 2026 Santa Fe International Literary Festival (SFILF), to be held May 15–17, 2026 at the Santa Fe Community Convention Center.

Among the growing list of featured guests are Ada Limón, the first Latina U.S. Poet Laureate; Navajo Nation Poet Laureate Jake Skeets; Emmy Award-winning screenwriter Kirk Ellis; Pulitzer Prize-winning biographer Caroline Fraser; New York Times bestselling author Craig Johnson; actor and filmmaker DezBaa'; National Book Award-winning authors Jason De León and James McBride; National Poetry Slam champion Hakim Bellamy; and National Book Award finalist Deborah Jackson Taffa.



Arthur Sze, U.S. Poet Laureate and longtime Santa Fe resident, has been added to the lineup and will kick off the Saturday evening sessions with a reading and presentation. “We are thrilled that the Library of Congress has appointed another poet with ties to New Mexico, and honored beyond measure to share space with Arthur Sze in May,” said Megan Mulry, executive director of SFILF. Sze’s session will precede Ocean Vuong in conversation with Rebecca Solnit.

One of the most highly anticipated sessions of the festival, the appearance by Vuong drawing a waitlist that had to be capped at 700, will now be livestreamed to the community. The presentation is made possible thanks to the support of Avalon Trust in partnership with the Lensic Performing Arts Center.

Another addition is a free community event featuring Sarah Weinman in conversation with noted civil rights lawyer Kate Ferlic. The talk, presented in partnership with NewMexicoWomen.org, will be about the case of Greta Rideout, which is at the heart of Weinman’s new book, *Without Consent*.

Tickets for the festival are still available, and many events, including the receptions, are complimentary with no tickets required. The full author lineup and details about the festival are on the SFILF website [here](#). Active Sustaining Members of NM Writers should stay tuned for a Perk Alert about a members-only event to occur during the 2026 SFILF.

New Mexico Writers Grantee News



2025 NM Writers grantee **Shebana Coelho** participated in a live stream reading of her play *are you safe [or 'the occupation of love']* as part of La MaMa Experiments Play Reading Series.



2025 NM Writers grantee **Mark Beauregard** celebrated the publication of a short story, *The Four Driftwood Misses Sing Songs of Love*, in *Kestrel: A Journal of Literature and Art*.



2025 NM Writers grantee **Marie Parks'** third novel and solo-authored debut, *Flightless*, will be published by **Artemesia Publishing** (Tijeras) on April 7, just after International Asexuality Day to honor the aro/ace main character.

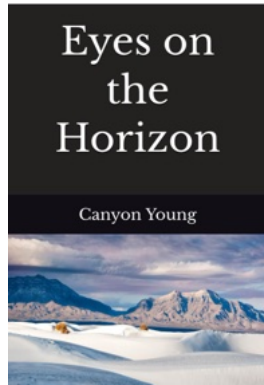


2023 NM Writers grantee **Chris Eboch** writing as Kris Bock will present *Do Your Covers Sell Books?* at the monthly Croak & Dagger Sisters in Crime meeting in Albuquerque on April 28.



2022 NM Writers grantee **Karen Petersen** will kick off National Poetry Month with a discussion and reading from her latest book, *Influences: The Irish Poems*, at the Santa Fe Public Library on April 4.

Briefly Noted



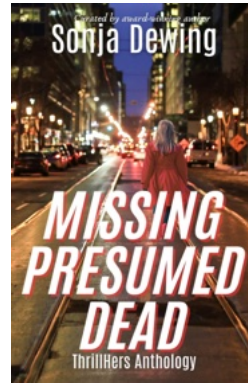
Canyon Young's debut novel, *Eyes on the Horizon*, was named a finalist for Best Western Traditional Novel in the 2026 Spur Awards.

Kirk Ellis participated in a book signing and discussion of *They Kill People* at Interabang Books in Dallas, which is being covered by C-SPAN for an April airing.

Charmayne Samuelson accepted the 2025 Southwest Book Award from the Border Regional Library Association in El Paso for *Mata Ortiz Poetry of the Clay*.

Saleema Ishq has taken over the role of Datebook Editor at *Albuquerque The Magazine*.

The New Mexico Entertainment Awards announced the top five nominees for the 2026 Top Author, recognizing **Dita Dow**, **Lauren Camp**, **Laurie Goodluck**, **Rebecca Roanhorse**, and **Saleema Ishq**.



Sonja Dewing announced the March release of *Missing Presumed Dead: ThrillHers Anthology*, a collection of eight gripping tales from the Women's Thriller Writers Association.

Casa Urraca Press (Abiquiú) will release a new book of illustrated poems from Betsy James, *Infinite and Dangerous and Bright*, on April 28.

Ruth Thaler-Carter is now editor of the *Voice*, the quarterly magazine of the La Luz community of Albuquerque; has recreated and relaunched the monthly newsletter of the Albuquerque NewComers Club; was a member of a panel about "Being Human as a Writer in the Age of AI" at the Awesome Con in Washington, D.C. in March; and will present a workshop at the annual New Mexico Press Women's conference in May.

Send Us Your News!

Having a book or article published? Doing a reading? Offering a workshop? Let us know, so we can share your news with other writers. We're particularly interested to hear from New Mexico and greater Navajo Nation writers.

[Drop us a line.](#)

Upcoming Events

April 3 at 5:30 p.m. [SOMOS](#) (Taos)

Join **Roberto Duran** and **Annalisa Martinez** for a reading to celebrate SOMOS' 14th year of April Poetry Month.

April 4 at 10:30 a.m. [Chatter North](#) (Santa Fe)

Join **Lauren Camp** for a reading from *Is Is Enough* and chamber music. Camp is a 2025 NM Book Awards winner for *In Old Sky*.

April 4 at 1 p.m. [Los Griegos Library](#) (Albuquerque)

Join **Neal Holtschulte** for an author event to celebrate the release of *Tall Boy Sun*.

April 4 at 2 p.m. [Placitas Community Library](#) (Placitas)

Join poet **Larry Goodell** for a reading from his work in celebration of April as National Poetry Month.

April 4 at 3 p.m. [Santa Fe Library](#) (Santa Fe)

Join **Karen Petersen**, 2022 NM Writers grantee, as she discusses her latest book, *Influences: The Irish Poems*.

April 4 at 3 p.m. [Books on the Bosque](#) (Albuquerque)

Join **Martin Stupich** for a reading and discussion around *Ore and Empire: Conquistadors to Guggenheims on the Camino Real* (**UNM Press**).

April 7 at 6 p.m. [Collected Works](#) (Santa Fe)

Join poets **Jami Macarty** and **Kyce Bello** for readings and signings of their latest works.

April 9 at 5:30 p.m. [Books on the Bosque](#) (Albuquerque)

Join **Tiffany Yu** for a reading from *The Anti-Ableist Manifesto: Smashing Stereotypes, Forging Change, and Building a Disability-Inclusive World*. ASL interpretation will be provided.

April 9 at 6 p.m. [Collected Works](#) (Santa Fe)

Join Pulitzer Prize-winning war reporter **Tod Robberson** in conversation with **Jim Falk**, Vice Chairman of Global Santa Fe and host of KSFR's The Forum.

April 10 at 5:30 p.m. [SOMOS](#) (Taos)

Join poets **Kate Kingston** and **Leslie Ullman** for a celebration of April Poetry Month with readings from their collections.

April 10 at 6:30 pm [FUSION](#) (Albuquerque)

Join **Dodici Azpadu** (*Cloak*), **Margaret Randall** (*The Calendar's Whim*), and **Tani Arness** (*Who Will Speak to Snakes*) as they read from their new poetry releases. Books will be available for signing.

April 11 2 p.m. [Books on the Bosque](#) (Albuquerque)

Join **Kathryn Kruse**, author of *To Receive My Services You Must Be Dying And Alone*, for a reading from the collection.

April 11 10:30 am [Chatter North](#) (Santa Fe)

Join poet **Wayne Lee** as he reads from his new collection of poems, *The Beautiful Foolishness* (**Casa Urraca Press**).

April 12 at 10:30 am [Chatter](#) (Albuquerque)

Join **Wayne Lee** for a reading from his new collection of poems, *The Beautiful Foolishness* (**Casa Urraca Press**).

April 12 at 2 p.m. [op.cit books](#) (Santa Fe)

Join **Dr. Sherri Burr** for a reading from *Living with Nephew: How I Got Voted the Meanest Parent in the World*.

April 12 at 3 p.m. [Books on the Bosque](#) (Albuquerque)

Join **Lynn C. Miller**, author of *The Surrogate: A Novel*, in conversation with **Minrose Gwin**.

April 14 at 5:30 p.m. [Books on the Bosque](#) (Albuquerque)

Join **Betsy Rubiner** to celebrate the release of *Our Diaries, Ourselves: How Diarists Chronicle Their Lives and Document Our World*.

April 15 at 6 p.m. [Collected Works](#) (Santa Fe)

Join **Peter Stark** for a reading and signing to celebrate the release of *The Lost Cities of El Norte: Coronado's Quest, the Unconquered West, and the Birth of American Indian Resistance*.

April 16 at 6 p.m. [Otero Arts Center](#) (Alamogordo)

Join **Charmayne Samuelson** as the guest speaker at the Otero Arts Reading Series for a talk about the creative process, writing, and making ideas manifest in book form.

April 17 at 5:30 p.m. [SOMOS](#) (Taos)

Join **Layli Long Soldier** and **Boderra Joe** for a celebration of April Poetry Month with readings of their works.

April 18 at 1 p.m. [Page 1 Books](#) (Albuquerque)

Join **June Bliss** for a book signing of *Starfish Street*. Starfish goodies will be available for those that purchase books while supplies last.

April 18 at 6 p.m. [Collected Works](#) (Santa Fe)

Join **Julia Alvarez** in conversation with **Carmella Padilla** to discuss Alvarez's latest poetry collection.

April 19 at 11 a.m. [Page 1 Books](#) (Albuquerque)

Join **Lauren C. Tefteau** for a book signing and celebration of her newly released eco-thriller, *Accelerated Growth Environment*.

April 19 at 2 p.m. [Erna Fergusson Library](#) (Albuquerque)

Join **Scott Wiggerman**, author of the newly released book of Dickinson-inspired poetry *Beginning and Ending with Emily: Ghazals & Golden Shovels* (**Casa Urraca Press**), for a reading.

April 19 at 4 p.m. [SOMOS](#) (Taos)

Join **Miriam Sagan** and **Kate O'Neill** for a celebration of April Poetry Month with readings of their poems.

April 19 at 4:30 p.m. [Collected Works](#) (Santa Fe)

Join **Margaret Randall** (*The Calendar's Whim, Pages Lost and New*) who will read her new poetry and essays alongside novelist **Maria Kelson** (celebrating the release of *Not the Killing Kind*).

April 21 at 6 p.m. [Collected Works](#) (Santa Fe)

Join opera storyteller **Desirée Mays** in conversation with **Mary Charlotte Domandi** to discuss “Lili Elbe,” a new work by Tobias Picker.

April 23 at 3 pm. [Zimmerman Library](#) (Albuquerque)

Join **Baker H. Morrow** for a reading from his Albuquerque-centered story collection *The Horse on the Sidewalk* (**Casa Urraca Press**). Books will be available for signing.

April 23 at 5:30 p.m. [Books on the Bosque](#) (Albuquerque)

Join **Marie Parks** and **Geoff Habiger** along with speculative fiction giants, **Mary Robinette Kowal** and **dave ring**, for a reading and signing.

April 23 at 6 p.m. [Collected Works](#) (Santa Fe)

Join father-daughter writing team, **Douglas Preston** and **Aletheia Preston**, to discuss *Paradox*, the second in their *Cash and Colcord* series.

April 25 at 11 a.m. [Page 1 Books](#) (Albuquerque)

Join **Hosho McCreesh** and his DrunkSkull Sidewalk Cinema, a multimedia experience involving timelapse videos of linocuts or collage covers, animated drunk poems, and video broadsides. McCreesh is a 2025 NM Book Awards finalist for *Psalms from the Badlands*.

April 25 at 11 a.m. [Page 1 Books](#) (Albuquerque)

Join **Jeff Clemens** for a signing of various graphic novels and comics, including *The Robot Guy* series.

April 25 5:30 p.m. [op.cit books](#) (Taos)

Join father-daughter writing team, **Douglas Preston** and **Aletheia Preston**, to discuss *Paradox*, the second in their *Cash and Colcord* series.

April 26 at 4 p.m. [SOMOS](#) (Taos)

Join **Mary Morris** and **Mike Burwell** for a celebration of April Poetry Month with readings from their collections.

April 28 at 6 p.m. [Collected Works](#) (Santa Fe)

Join **Megan O’Grady** in conversation with **Lucy Lippard** discussing O’Grady’s *How It Feels to Be Alive: Encounters with Art and Our Selves*.

April 29 at 6 p.m. [Collected Works](#) (Santa Fe)

Join **Hafeez Lakhani** in conversation with **Jamie Figueroa** for a signing and discussion around *Abundance*.

May 2 at 9 a.m. [Open Space Visitor Center](#) (Albuquerque)

Join **Wayne Lee, Rene Mullen, Sharon Niederman, Margaret Randall, Tom Andes, Dale Harris,** and **Scott Wiggerman** for a celebration around the power of words and the beauty of nature at the Open Space Visitor Center’s Annual Poet’s Picnic.

More Opportunities for Writers

Please note, there may be fees associated with these opportunities.



NMPW Annual Conference

Registration is open for “Resilient Communicators — Thriving in Challenging Times,” the 2026 annual conference of New Mexico Press Women (NMPW), to be held at the Isleta Resort & Casino in Albuquerque from **May 1–2, 2026**. Speakers include NMPW President Regina Griego, Melanie Stansbury, Dede Feldman, Saleema Ishq, Ruth E. Thaler-Carter, Gwyneth Doland, and more. Learn more [here](#).

New Mexico CreativeCon

Attend a CreativeCon event across New Mexico between **March 7 and June 6, 2026**. Find more details and register [here](#).

Los Alamos Writers Group

Local writers meet for a writers’ group at the Los Alamos Public Library every second Wednesday. The next meeting is **April 8, 2026**. Learn more [here](#).

Prompt Nights at SOMOS

Carrie Nassif and Christine Reed are hosting Prompt Nights every second Thursday at SOMOS Salon & Bookshop in Taos. Writers of any genre are welcome, and generative writing prompts will be provided. The next Prompt Night is **April 9, 2026**. Learn more [here](#).

Jack Williamson Lectureship

The 2026 Jack Williamson Lectureship will be held **April 9–11, 2026** at Eastern New Mexico University. The guest of honor will be Ursula Vernon, who writes as T. Kingfisher. Learn more and register [here](#).

Workshop: Joy, Death, and Memoir in Short Form Poetry

At the SouthWest Writers meeting in person and via Zoom on **April 11, 2026**,

Mesa Verde Literary Festival

The 2nd Annual Mesa Verde Literary Festival, taking place **September 5, 2026** in Mancos, CO, is open for author submissions. Invited authors may be offered one panel discussion and/or an individual author talk, as well as the opportunity to sell their books. Submissions close **May 1, 2026**. Learn more and submit [here](#).

Tadpole Press Writing Contest

Tadpole Press welcomes submissions for their 100-Word Writing Contest through **April 30, 2026**. Learn more [here](#).

The LAURA Short Fiction Award

Women Writing the West members may submit short story entries to the LAURA Short Fiction Award through **May 1, 2026**. Learn more and submit [here](#).

Noemi Press Book Award

Noemi Press is accepting submissions for their poetry book awards with a prize of \$2,000. Entries are accepted through **May 1, 2026**. Learn more and enter [here](#).

Presentation: Write to Publish

At the next Write to Publish meeting on **May 2, 2026** hosted by Quill & Quest Bookstore, Mark Stevens will discuss taking the long view of a writing career. Learn more [here](#).

SOMOS for Taos Poet Laureates

A SOMOS event will be held on **May 2, 2026** with a reading from each of the five Taos Poet Laureates: Sawnie Morris (2017-2018), Catherine Strisik (2019-2021), Joshua Concha (2022-2023), Miguel Santistevan (2024-2025), and Sylvia Rains Dennis (2026-2027), as well as refreshments and live music by violinist, Rachael Penn. Find more information and register [here](#).

Sara Frances will offer a presentation on an alternative way to share sparkling bits of experience, without the full narrative burden. Learn more [here](#).

La Mesa: A Santa Fe Story Exchange Workshop

Join Joe Lambert for La Mesa Santa Fe Story Exchange, a Center for Contemporary Arts event co-sponsored by the Santa Fe Library. These two-hour workshops held on **April 11, 2026** and **May 2, 2026** are designed to help participants craft a story of 7 minutes or less for performance. Learn more and register [here](#).

Workshop: BARD-WIRED

Mary Maurice will be hosting BARD-WIRED: An Unconventional Writer's Workshop at Jezebel's Soda and Fountain in Madrid on **April 12, 2026**. For more information, email Mary [here](#).

Workshop: Adding Authenticity to Your Work: Going Beyond Google

An online workshop hosted by New Mexico Book Association will take place on **April 16, 2026**. Join author and library historian Suzanne Stauffer for a workshop on using your public library as a treasure trove of resources for non-fiction and fiction writing alike. Register [here](#).

Open Mic at SOMOS

Carrie Nassif is hosting Spoken Word Open Mic every third Thursday at SOMOS Salon & Bookshop in Taos. Writers of any genre are welcome to share poetry, prose, storytelling, a capella. The next Open Mic is **April 16, 2026**. Learn more [here](#).

Presentation: Albuquerque Science Fiction Society

At the **April 17, 2026** Albuquerque Science Fiction Society meeting, Lauren C. Tefteau and Brian D. Hinson will talk about their latest and forthcoming releases. Learn more [here](#).

Writing Workshop: River Writing

Join Karen Bayard on **April 22, 2026** for 2 Hours @ the Table, a friendly space to

Retreat: Meeting What Calls You

Through the Four Sacred Portals

A retreat based on NM author Roxanne Howe-Murphy's newest book will be held in Taos **May 2–5, 2026**. Register [here](#).

Workshop: Building Author Visibility on Social Media Without Losing Writing Time

An online workshop hosted by New Mexico Book Association will take place on **May 14, 2026**. Join author Saleema Ishq for a presentation on using social media to market books. Register [here](#).

Santa Fe International Literary Festival

The 2026 Santa Fe International Literary Festival will be held **May 15–17, 2026** at the Santa Fe Community Convention Center. The star-studded author lineup includes Ada Limón, Jake Skeets, Kirk Ellis, Caroline Fraser, Craig Johnson, DezBaa', Priyanka Kumar, JJ Amaworo Wilson, among others. Learn more [here](#).

Creative Expression Retreat: Poetry & Movement

Local poet Emily Hyland is hosting National Book Award finalist Gabrielle Calvocoressi in Santa Fe for a weekend retreat **June 4–7, 2026**. Workshops and readings will be held at YogaSource Santa Fe. Register [here](#).

Taos Writers Conference

The 10th annual Taos Writers Conference, sponsored by and held at SOMOS, will be held **July 24–26, 2026**. Learn more and register [here](#).

Writing Excuses at Sea

Sail with the hosts of the Hugo Award-winning Writing Excuses podcast from Seattle, WA to Alaska **September 3–11, 2026**. During this writing retreat, you'll hone your craft, connect with fellow writers, and make progress on your latest projects. This is the final annual cruise (for now). Learn more [here](#).

Abiquiú Writers Retreat

Hosted by Casa Urraca Press, join fellow writers for an extended weekend

read poetry aloud, find prompts, then write with pen and paper to “say the truest things we can say.” Learn more and register [here](#).

Presentation: What Makes a Compelling Story?

At the SouthWest Writers meeting via Zoom on **April 22, 2026**, Debbie White will explore what makes a compelling story and why. Learn more [here](#).

Sandia Starforgers Writers Retreat

The third annual Sandia Starforgers Writers Retreat and Workshop for speculative fiction writers, **April 24–27, 2026**, is sold out. To join the waitlist for future events, click [here](#).

Presentation: Do Your Covers Sell Books?

At the monthly Croak & Dagger meeting on **April 28, 2026**, Kris Bock will speak on making your book covers work for you. Learn more [here](#).

Whistler Independent Book Awards

Non-Canadian self-published authors may now enter the International Whistler Independent Book Awards through **April 30, 2026**. Learn more and enter [here](#).

WOW! Creative Non-Fiction Contest

Women On Writing is accepting submissions for its quarterly creative non-fiction essay contest through **April 30, 2026**. Learn more [here](#).

October 8–12, 2026 dedicated to your writing in community. Learn more and register [here](#).

Women Writing the West Conference

The annual Women Writing the West Conference taking place **October 15 – 17, 2026** in Phoenix, AZ is open for registration. The conference will feature three days of speakers, workshops, and presentations, as well as pitch sessions with editors, agents, and publishing professionals. The WILLA Literary Award, The LAURA Short Fiction Award, and The DOWNING Journalism Award will be presented. Learn more and register [here](#).

Retreat: Writing Into the Ocean

Join Emily Hyland, Marie Howe, and Mark Doty in Baja, Mexico for the Writing Into the Ocean retreat **October 17–23, 2026**. Register [here](#).

Green Fire Times Submissions

Green Fire Times, a platform for regional, community-based voices, invites submissions of articles about New Mexico and the Southwest. Learn more and submit articles [here](#).

NM Jewish Journal Submissions

The *New Mexico Jewish Journal*, whose mission is to connect, inform, enrich, and celebrate the vibrant and diverse Jewish communities of New Mexico and the region, invites submissions of articles, art, and more. Learn more [here](#).

2026
Southwest Book
Design & Production Awards

The **Southwest Book Design & Production Awards** are designed to showcase excellence in book design and publishing, and to help raise the standards of book design and production, throughout the Southwest

NEW MEXICO BOOK ASSOCIATION

The banner features a dark red background with a lighter red horizontal band in the middle. The text is white and gold. On the left side, there is a circular gold seal with a book icon and the text 'NEW MEXICO BOOK ASSOCIATION WINNER'. At the bottom center, there is a stylized logo of an open book with rays emanating from it, flanked by the words 'NEW MEXICO' and 'BOOK ASSOCIATION'.

The New Mexico Book Association (NMBA) is now accepting submissions for the **2026 Southwest Book Design Awards**, which recognize excellence in book design and publishing across the Southwest.

The awards honor outstanding achievement in cover design, interior design, and overall book production. The submission deadline is **June 19, 2026**.

For eligibility details, categories, and submission guidelines, visit the NMBA [website](#).



SouthWest Writers (SWW) announced the theme of their **2026 Writing Contest**. “By Human Hands” refers to writing by humans: you, your voice, your story, your passion, by your own hands. This year’s contest includes 18 writing categories across a broad array of genres.

Winners will receive cash prizes and an opportunity to be included in the SouthWest Writers Contest Anthology to be published later this year.



The contest will open for submissions on **May 1, 2026** and closes at midnight on **June 8, 2026**.

SWW encourages aspiring and experienced writers of all cultures and backgrounds to enter. They welcome a diversity of creative expressions and points of view. Writers do not have to be a member of SWW or live in the Southwest to enter. Find more information about the contest [here](#).

In Others' Words

“If I feel physically as if the top of my head were taken off, I know that is poetry.”

— Emily Dickinson

Have a favorite quote about writing you'd like to share? [Send it to us!](#)

// CONNECT WITH US //



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