

The New Mexico Writer

MAY 2026

Supporting and connecting the literary community in New Mexico.

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

Annual Dinner Unites New Mexican Writers for a Night of Connection and Inspiration

Writers from across the state gathered at La Fonda on the Plaza on April 30 for the New Mexico Writers Annual Dinner, a cornerstone event for the organization's community. "This is truly a grassroots organization of writers supporting writers," said co-founder James McGrath Morris during his welcoming remarks while reflecting on the organization's ongoing mission.



The evening featured a conversation with poet and novelist Jennifer Givhan, who spoke with Cynthia J. Sylvester about her approach to writing. "I see writing as a spiritual practice," Givhan said. When she sits down to write, she asks, "What do I have to say today? What do my ancestors have to say?"

Givhan encouraged writers to embrace the evolving nature of their work. "I believe in the cyclical nature of storytelling," she said, describing a process of "composting" ideas rather than discarding them.

When asked how she handles rejection, Givhan offered a highly relatable one-word answer: "Chocolate," while also advising writers to "cast the net widely" when seeking representation and opportunities.

The dinner featured genre-specific tables, including fiction, nonfiction, poetry, journalism, playwriting, and screenwriting, where attendees had an opportunity to connect with others in common literary fields. "[The dinner] was just as inspiring as ever. I continue to be in awe of the sheer talent in the room—authors from every genre, publishers, screenwriters, and storytellers of all kinds. New Mexico is overflowing with creativity, and I think sometimes we forget just how special that is,"



said NM Writers Sustaining Member and local author Dita Dow, reflecting a sentiment shared by many.

The Annual Dinner serves to celebrate each year's NM Writers grant recipients. Grants Committee Chair Carmella Padilla announced the 2026 grant recipients, who were in attendance as honored guests, by calling each to the stage and presenting them with their grant certificate and award check. The 2026 grantees are Nicholas Baldwin, Allen Black, Jennifer Black, Victoriano Cárdenas, Bryce Emley, Sarah Helms, Kim Henderson, Jamie L. Natonabah, Miguel Santistevan, Ashley Serrao, and Fatima van Hattum. Attendees at the dinner also heard from

2025 grant recipients via recorded video on how their awards helped them in their writing journeys.

Donations made to the raffle held during the dinner will go to the NM Writers Grant Program to fund future writers. This year's raffle items were donated by local artists, authors, publishers, bookstores, literary events, film productions, and businesses. Raffle participants whose tickets were drawn took home a handmade ceramic platter, a hat from the Dark Winds series, three gift cards, two tickets to the 2026 Santa Fe International Literary Festival, and over twenty books by New Mexico publishers.



Lacking an actual baton, James McGrath Morris passed the Executive Director “dinner knife” to Lisa McCoy along with these words: “Now, we turn another page with the remarkable Lisa McCoy leading us as the new Executive Director of New Mexico Writers. In the few months since she has taken over, Lisa’s professionalism is transforming New Mexico Writers into a smooth-running organization better than ever able to meet its mission of supporting and connecting the literary community of New Mexico.” McCoy expressed gratitude to “all the supporters of New Mexico Writers for the privilege to serve the local literary community.”

The annual dinner continues to foster connection among writers across New Mexico. Writers may mark their calendars for the next dinner taking place on Thursday, April 29, 2027.

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

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Independent Bookstore Day Celebrated Across New Mexico

Independent Bookstore Day, held on Saturday, April 25, 2026, brought a renewed sense of excitement to independently-owned bookstores across New Mexico.

This year's celebration included a nationwide initiative from Libro.fm, which distributed "Golden Tickets" to more than 1,600 independent bookstores across the United States and Canada. The tickets were hidden throughout participating stores, and those lucky (or clever) enough to discover a ticket were rewarded with a year of audiobooks (12 audiobook credits) through Libro.fm.



Several New Mexico bookstores participated in the scavenger hunt, including Rainy Day Reads in Silver City, Quill & Quest in Farmington, Enchanted Books @ The Block in Rio Rancho, and Page 1, Bookworks, and Books on the Bosque in Albuquerque.

Even more independent bookstores across the state participated in the day's celebration with discounts and special author readings. Hoshō McCreesh and Sandi Wright appeared at Page 1 Books while Grace Spulak and Lauren C. Teffeau participated in a meet-and-greet at Bookworks. "It was cool of the bookstores to bring out authors and give us a chance," said McCreesh.

These events drew additional foot traffic to participating stores and highlighted the growing relationship between independent bookstores and local authors. The Golden Ticket hunt certainly added an element of fun to the celebration, but the broader impact of Indie Bookstore Day lies in supporting these local businesses year-round.

Young Writers Honored at Aldo Leopold Writing Contest

Nature and prose lovers alike gathered at the Rio Grande Nature Center State Park on April 19 to celebrate the winners and finalists of the Aldo Leopold Writing Contest.

The contest, open to students in Grades 6–12, has been running for nearly two decades. This year’s prompt invited students to reflect on two quotes by environmental writers Aldo Leopold and Joy Harjo, then “write about how we can learn important lessons by paying attention to the natural world.”



During the awards ceremony, Writing Contest Chair Dana Vackar Strang thanked not only the students themselves for their moving words, but also the individuals who supported them along the way. “Thank you parents, guardians, and teachers,” she said, noting that their encouragement helped the voices of these students be heard.

Winners and finalists traveled from as far as Gallup and Las Cruces to read their works and receive awards. Each was given a certificate, a book, and a plant provided by contest sponsors. In addition to the

writing contest, the Aldo Leopold Writing Program offers a residency program and an annual lecture.

2026 SFILF Events will Extend Beyond Festival Weekend

The long awaited Santa Fe International Literary Festival (SFILF) returns May 15–17 at the Santa Fe Community Convention Center. The star-studded lineup features more than 40 authors and moderators for a weekend of readings, panels, and conversations.

This year’s programming extends beyond the main festival weekend. On Friday, May 15, a free, public workshop will feature Navajo Nation Poet Laureate Jake Skeets, Santa Fe Poet Laureate Tommy Archuleta, author Deborah Jackson Taffa, and more. The event, titled “Voices in the Library,” is presented in partnership with





An event on May 18 at the Santa Fe Botanical Garden will feature author and naturalist Priyanka Kumar. This Speaker Series program will include a presentation and Q&A in the gardens.

More information on the full SFILF schedule, extra programming, and ticket availability can be found on the festival's [website](#).

Global Give-A-Book Opens New Headquarters in Albuquerque

Global Give-A-Book (GGAB), a New Mexico-based nonprofit focused on early childhood literacy, celebrated the opening of its new headquarters with a ribbon-cutting ceremony on April 17 at Central New Mexico Community College Montoya Campus in Albuquerque.

Founded by Sylvia Maser, the organization has distributed more than 35,000 children's books across New Mexico as part of its mission to close the literacy gap in underserved communities. "Every child deserves the opportunity to open a book and discover a brighter future," said Maser.

As it grows, GGAB invites local authors to participate in its programming. "We warmly welcome donations of new, high-quality children's books, and signed copies from local authors would be especially meaningful," Maser said. "Receiving a book signed by the author adds a powerful personal connection for a child and truly aligns with our mission of giving books with dignity."

Other opportunities include readings to children at community events and Read-a-Thons, participation in Lavender Libros, and guest storytelling through community partnerships with schools, community centers, and food pantry distributions.



Writing Tools Supporting Today's Authors

In today's digital age, writers have access to an ever-expanding toolkit. Programs, platforms, and apps can aid with anything from outlining to publishing. When asked which tools they consider "must-have" items, members of the New Mexico Writers community offered a range of responses. Many writers professed their love for Google

Docs and Microsoft Word, while even more reported all they need is a good old-fashioned pen and paper.

Scrivener proves to be a popular program choice that allows writers to organize and draft long-form projects. Writers can view their manuscript in an index card-style interface for easy tracking. Another program that is of particular interest to fantasy and science fiction writers is Inkarnate. This web-based tool allows writers to design detailed maps.

Many use it solely for fictional worldbuilding, and some authors include the maps within their published books.



A new learning platform, StoryCraft Academy, touted as a “writers conference in your pocket,” was created here in New Mexico by Santa Fe-based couple Anna Claire Boyd and Luca Ceccarelli. Boyd is an author and Learning & Development expert while Ceccarelli brings 25 years of experience as a storyteller in the film industry and working with writers using his Storymetrics framework. Together, they built the

app Boyd wished she had as an author.

“StoryCraft Academy exists to provide a low barrier to entry for writers looking to improve their craft, confidence, and community,” Boyd said. “[We] hope that this platform will allow authors living in New Mexico and beyond to access industry experts in real-time, take courses, and support each other through the exciting (and very challenging) process of writing and publishing their stories.”

Saleema Ishq, NM Writers Sustaining Member Coordinator, has a class on the StoryCraft Academy app and offers live monthly coaching sessions through the platform. “The business of promoting a book is something many authors don’t prepare for,” Ishq said. “As one of the few writers out there who actually enjoys social media marketing, I’m thrilled to share my experience with the StoryCraft community.”

To support fellow New Mexico writers, Boyd and Ceccarelli have offered the NM Writers community a special discount code (NMW20) for \$20 off any plan on the StoryCraft Academy [website](#).

New Mexico Writers Grantee News



2021 NM Writers grantee **Jeanne Lyet Gassman** has had two pieces published recently. Her flash fiction, *What We Bring to the Shelter*, was published in *Milk Candy Review* in February, and her braided essay, *Burn Scar*, about the fires and flash floods in Ruidoso while coping with a family crisis, was published in April in the anthology, *A Brand New Word in the End Drops Out* (Iron Oak Editions).



2019 NM Writers grantee **Laurel Goodluck** is one of the top five nominees for Top Author in the New Mexico Entertainment Awards.

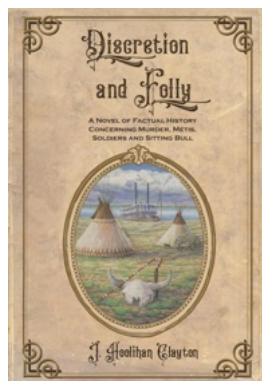


2023 NM Writers grantee **Chris Eboch** writing as Kris Bock announced the release of *Something Prowling in Paradise Park: A Kate Tessler Amateur Sleuth Mystery (The Accidental Detective Book 7)*.



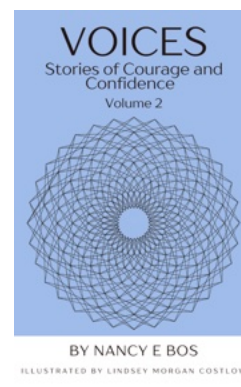
2024 NM Writers grantee **Grace Spulak** celebrated the release of *Magdalena Is Brighter Than You Think* with a reading at Books on the Bosque in early May.

Briefly Noted



J. Hoolihan Clayton's fifth book in The Discretion Series, *Discretion and Folly: A Novel of Factual History Concerning Murder, Metis, Soldiers, and Sitting Bull*, was published on April 3.

Daniel Gibson was recently informed by the Center for Southwest Research at UNM that his entire collection of journalist work completed over the past



Nancy Bos released *Voices: Stories of Courage and Confidence, Volume 2* through her independent press, StudioBos Media. She also recorded and produced the audiobook for *Mindful Success* in English while formatting the Spanish edition, *El Éxito Consciente*, for Dr. Magie Cook.

50 years (including some 1,295 newspaper feature and news stories, 766 magazine pieces, and 360 works in the public relations realm, as well as entire issues of magazines where he served as editor—such as 75 issues of *Native Peoples*) will be accepted into their permanent archives.

Deborah Taffa made an appearance as a celebrated author at the 30th Annual Literary Arts Festival at Grossmont College in California.

UNM Press (Albuquerque) announced the release of several books, including *The Maze of History* by **David Martinez** and *Lone Star* by **Alison Fields**.

A new literary and fine arts magazine, **Horizon Review**, part of the nonprofit FUSION, a theatre, cultural, and fine arts hub in Downtown Albuquerque, premiered in April.

Joan Schweighardt's forthcoming novel, *In the Wonder*, will be published by Regal House Publishing in 2027.

Ella Schaeffer and **Rena Sapon-White**'s sophomore novel, *Sweet Talk*, is a finalist in the Golden Crown Literary Awards.

A screening of the docu-comedy *Rebel with a Clause*, starring grammar guru **Ellen Jovin**, was shown at the Guild Cinema.

David Farmer's biography, *Jack Rittenhouse, A Western Literary Life*, is being published by **UNM Press** and is scheduled for release on May 5.

Wayne Lee's memoir-in-verse *Dining on Salt: Four Seasons of Septets* (Cornerstone Press) has won the 2026 North American Poetry Book Award.

In May, **Artemesia Publishing** (Tijeras) releases *Beatrice and the Dirty Diggers* by **Rosemary Zibart**.

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

May 7 at 6 p.m. [SOMOS](#) (Taos)

Join **Christine Reed** for a book reading to celebrate the launch of *Alone in Wonderland*.

May 8 at 6 p.m. [SOMOS](#) (Taos)

Join **Veronica Golos**, **Margaret Lee**, and **Jock Jacober** for a reading of their poetry.

May 9 at 11 a.m. [Page 1 Books](#) (Albuquerque)

Join **Chet Rogenski** for a signing of *The Longest Staircase: An Alzheimer's Journey*.

May 9 at 1 p.m. [Bayard Public Library](#) (Bayard)

Join **Marty Eberhardt** for a reading and signing of her new book *Crime on the Coast*, published by **Artemesia Publishing**.

May 9 at 1 p.m. [Bookworks](#) (Albuquerque)

Join **Laurel Goodluck** for the launch of her new picture book, *Stories Are the Heart of the World* with a reading and signing.

May 9 at 2 p.m. [Daniel Cooney Fine Art](#) (Santa Fe)

Join **Margaret Randall** as she reads new poetry from *The Calendar's Whim* as the keynote speaker in conjunction with an exhibition of photographs by Robert Giard.

May 9 at 3 p.m. [Books on the Bosque](#) (Albuquerque)

Join **Cassie Sanchez** to celebrate the release *Battle Beyond the Veil*.

May 9 at 4 p.m. [SOMOS](#) (Taos)

Join **Kay Matthews** for a release party to celebrate Antonio “Ike” DeVargas—*Norteño Warrior: The Politics of Land, Water, and Justice in Northern New Mexico*.

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

Join **Elizabeth Rose Quinn** in conversation with **Jeff C. Carter** for a book release celebration of *Payback*.

May 10 at 11 a.m. [Page 1 Books](#) (Albuquerque)

Join **Diana Lee** for a signing of *Blood on the Ball and Skitters*.

May 10 at 4:30 p.m. [Collected Works](#) (Santa Fe)

Join **Elizabeth Kendall** in conversation with **Catherine Oppenheimer** to discuss *Balanchine Finds His America: A Tale of Love Lost and Ballet Reborn*.

May 11 at 6 p.m. [Collected Works](#) (Santa Fe)

Join **Andrew Guthrie Ferguson**, author of *Your Data Will Be Used Against You*, in conversation with **Cristopher Moore**, professor at Santa Fe Institute.

May 13 at 6 p.m. [Bookworks](#) (Albuquerque)

Join **Eileen Garvin** and **Nancy Foley** for a reading and signing of their latest releases.

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

Join **DM Gordon** for a book reading and signing of *Loosestrife for Porcupines*.

May 14 at 6 p.m. [Collected Works](#) (Santa Fe)

Join **Scott Simon** in conversation with **Hampton Sides** to discuss Simon’s release, *Ulysses S. Cat and Other Animals I Have Known*.

May 16 at 11 a.m. [Page 1 Books](#) (Albuquerque)

Join **P.M. Vance** for a signing of her latest release, *GAME*.

May 16 at 2 p.m. [Books on the Bosque](#) (Albuquerque)

Join **Sonja Dewing** and the Women’s Thriller Writers Association for a murder mystery game to celebrate the release of the organization’s latest anthology, *Missing Presumed Dead*.

May 16 at 5:30 p.m. [Books on the Bosque](#) (Albuquerque)

Join **Mary Oishi** and **Margaret Randall** for a night of poetry, where they will read from their works.

May 17 at 11 a.m. [Page 1 Books](#) (Albuquerque)

Join **Christopher Warner** for a signing of *Playing for Keeps: Legendary Athletes in Combat During World War II*.

May 17 at 1 p.m. [Books on the Bosque](#) (Albuquerque)

Join **Neal Holtschulte** for a reading and signing of his recent release, *Tall Boy Sun*.

May 17 at 5 p.m. [Teatro Paraguas](#) (Santa Fe)

Join **Wayne Lee** (*The Beautiful Foolishness*) and **Scott Wiggerman** (*Beginning and Ending with Emily*) to celebrate the release of their newest poetry collections from **Casa Urraca Press**.

May 18 at 5:30 p.m. [Books on the Bosque](#) (Albuquerque)

Join **Elan Les Vies** for a signing and reading from *The Lemon Twist*.

May 18 at 6 p.m. [SOMOS](#) (Taos)

Join **Erin Bad Hand** for a reading in honor of her sister, the Songbird of Taos.

May 19 at 5:30 p.m. [Books on the Bosque](#) (Albuquerque)

Join **Brian Lee Young** for a release party to celebrate *Shards of Silence*.

May 22 at 6 p.m. [Collected Works](#) (Santa Fe)

Join **Michael Clinton**, author of *Longevity Nation*, in conversation with **Owen Lipstein**, owner of *Santa Fe Magazine*.

May 23 at 11 a.m. [Page 1 Books](#) (Albuquerque)

Join **Suzanne Schneider** for a signing of *Guilt Without Remorse*, the first book in her *Danny Markham PI* series.

May 23 at 2 p.m. [Books on the Bosque](#) (Albuquerque)

Join **G.S. Harrington** for a reading and signing of *What We Have Tamed*.

May 23 at 5:30 p.m. [SOMOS](#) (Taos)

Join performance poet **SETH** and **Nathan Brown** for an evening of poetry, prose, performance, and song.

May 24 at 11 a.m. [Page 1 Books](#) (Albuquerque)

Join **Paula Terrero** for a local author showcase signing of *Sowers of Light: Stories of My Reiki Journey*.

May 27 at 5:30 p.m. [Books on the Bosque](#) (Albuquerque)

Join **Caitlin Rozakis** in conversation with **T. Kingfisher** for a release celebration of *Startup Hell*.

May 27 at 6 p.m. [Collected Works](#) (Santa Fe)

Join **Steven L. Davis**, author of *Beating Heart of the World: The Taos Art Colony, the Pueblo Resistance, & Battle for Indigenous America* (**UNM Press**), for a book reading and signing event.

May 30 at 12 p.m. [Drury Plaza Hotel](#) (Santa Fe)

Join 40+ authors, including **Kit Rosewater**, **Lauren C. Teffeau**, for Books In Santa Fe, a book signing event hosted by Book Bliss.

May 30 at 5 p.m. [Willison West](#) (Santa Fe)

Join **Lancee Whetman** (*Rosy-Cheeked, I Like You Like You*), **Nicky Schott** (*Love Is Infinite, Isolation Androgynous*), and **Hosho McCreech** (*Psalms from the Badlands*),

A Deep & Gorgeous Thirst) for a night of live poetry readings, typewriter performances, and the Drunkskull Sidewalk Cinema.

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

Join **Jessica Danger** for a book signing and reading from *No Heroic Measures: A Memoir*.

May 31 at 11 a.m. [Page 1 Books](#) (Albuquerque)

Join **Jennifer Nelson** for a book signing of *Don't Get Blood on the Daisies*.

May 31 at 12 p.m. [Books on the Bosque](#) (Albuquerque)

Join **Rebecca Byron** for a reading and signing event for *A Memory Not Mine*.

June 2 at 6 p.m. [Collected Works](#) (Santa Fe)

Join **Betsy James** in a reading from *Infinite and Dangerous and Bright* (**Casa Urraca Press**), along with **Anne Valley-Fox** and the forthcoming *The Fight Across the River [a meditation on war]*.

June 9 at 6 p.m. [Bookworks](#) (Albuquerque)

Join **Brian Jay Jones** for a reading and signing to celebrate the release of *The Capitol: The Surprising Biography of an American Building*.

More Opportunities for Writers

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



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](#).

Presentation: Albuquerque Science Fiction Society

At the **May 8, 2026** Albuquerque Science Fiction Society meeting, Matthew Fetrow, retired civilian scientist with the Space Force and Air Force, will talk about space, the space business, and how it relates to New Mexico. Learn more [here](#).



Cat Writers' Association Contest

The Cat Writers' Association of America welcomes submissions for their annual communications contest through **May 31, 2026**. All submitted writing, photos, designs, etc. must include felines within its content. Find details and submissions [here](#).

New Mexico CreativeCon

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

WriteHive Annual Conference

The 2026 WriteHive Annual Conference, a free, virtual conference for writers, will take place **July 10–12, 2026**. Learn more and register [here](#).

Presentation: Writing Poetry as a Civil Right

At the SouthWest Writers meeting in person and via Zoom on **May 9, 2026**, Irene I. Blea will share her personal experience writing, presenting, and publishing poetry as a civil rights and feminist advocate. Learn more [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 **May 13, 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 **May 14, 2026**. Learn more [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](#).

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 **May 21, 2026**. Learn more [here](#).

Presentation: Writing from Personal Experiences

At the SouthWest Writers meeting via Zoom on **May 27, 2026**, Veterans and family members who were published in *Holes in Our Hearts* (2023) or *Unbreaking the Circle* (2025), or who participated in the 2024 online memoir course, will conduct readings of their published writing. Learn more [here](#).

Presentation: Write to Publish

The ABQ Collective Book Fest

The ABQ Collective's Second Annual Book Fest, to be held **July 11–12, 2026**, is accepting vendors. Authors may purchase a vendor space to sell books, merchandise, and connect with readers. For more information, visit The ABQ Collective's [website](#).

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](#).

WOW! Creative Non-Fiction Contest

Women On Writing is accepting submissions for its quarterly creative non-fiction essay contest through **July 31, 2026**. Learn more [here](#).

Mesa Verde Literary Festival

The Mesa Verde Writers Conference will take place **September 2–4, 2026** in Mancos, CO, followed by the 2nd Annual Mesa Verde Literary Festival on **September 5, 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 **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

At the Write to Publish meeting on **May 30, 2026** hosted by Quill & Quest Bookstore, Traci Hales will discuss the process of revising your work and how working with critique groups can polish your writing. Learn more [here](#).

WOW! Flash Fiction Contest

Women On Writing is accepting submissions for its quarterly flash fiction contest through **May 31, 2026**. 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](#).

‘Burque Bee Team Spelling Bee

The Annual ‘Burque Bee Spelling Bee, presented by Ethos Literacy, will take place on **June 5, 2026**. Teams of three spellbinders may register [here](#).

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](#).



The deadline to enter the **2026 New Mexico Book Awards** is **May 8, 2026**.

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's 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.

Full guidelines and entry information are available on the NM Writers [website](#).

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 (June–August). Previous year judges will need to sign up again and re-choose categories. The deadline for judging is August 31, 2026.



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](#).

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 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](#).

In Others' Words

“Independent bookstores are more than retail shops—they're cultural spaces that help writers connect directly with readers.”

—Rebecca Pomeroy of Black Cat Bookstore

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



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