

The New Mexico Writer

AUGUST 2026

Supporting and connecting the literary community in New Mexico.

A publication of **NMwriters**

Leopold Residency Talk a Reminder to Grow Deep Roots like Desert Plants

At Michelle Otero's Leopold Residency Talk, she opened with: "I feel like a baker who has invited you in while everything is still in the oven and the kitchen is covered in flour." Otero had begun writing her talk during her Residency and finished it right before taking the podium.

The Aldo & Estella Leopold Residency provides a space for writers and respected thinkers to reflect and write about the relevance of Aldo Leopold's ideas to 21st century cultural and environmental issues. Two of the Residencies are based at historic "Mi Casita," Aldo and Estella's first home in Tres Piedras, New Mexico, and a third Residency is located at a small casita on the Galisteo Basin. The

Residency is for writers who are committed to reshaping the cultural story about the relationship between humans and nature. In 2026, the Leopold Writing Program celebrates the 14th anniversary of this influential residency. The 2026 Residents are Michelle Otero, Sarah Hines, and Alex Arzt.



Members of the community came together at the New Mexico Land Conservancy's Petchesky Conservation Center in Santa Fe to hear Otero present her Residency Talk titled "Thinking Like a Desert: Staying Rooted While Navigating Turbulent Times."

During her talk, Otero often returned to the theme: "We all live here. Let's all take care of here. We can all take care of our space." She talked about her daily task of weeding the labyrinth at her Tres Piedras Residency. While caring for the labyrinth, she would ask herself, "How has the path changed? How am I different?" She proposed that "weeding is about clearing a path so what is meant to be there can thrive."

Otero compared her weeding practice with her poetry practice and reminded attendees that “desert flora are tough.” In *Peril*, Otero’s poetry collection-in-progress, she explores the shared vulnerability of the desert ecosystem her family has called home for ten generations and the brown, female body. *Peril* is ultimately a plea for compassionate action and a warning that our collective tolerance for violence against the earth and those most at-risk harms not only the targets of that violence, but all of us.

NM Writers Executive Director Lisa McCoy was among the attendees who Otero invited to consider what is possible when we consider the Earth and its inhabitants as kin instead of commodities. “I walked out of the event feeling full of joy and hope,” said McCoy. “Otero’s perspective and poetry explore ways we can move forward in collaboration and peace.”



Also in July, Aldo & Estella Leopold Resident Sarah Hines presented her Residency Talk titled “The Life and Death of Glaciers: A Social and Environmental History of the Bolivian Andes.” Hines presented her talk at SOMOS in Taos.

Her talk was based on a book-in-progress that traces people’s relationships with mountains and glaciers in the Bolivian Andes from the beginning of human settlement to the present. The book will focus the ways that Aymara Indigenous communities and other groups have experienced and responded to glacier retreat since the 1990s.

Visit the Leopold Writing Program website for more information on the 2026 Residents and details for the final Residency Talk upcoming from Alex Arzt.

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New Mexico's Poet Laureate Shares Local Stories on a New Podcast



As New Mexico's State Poet Laureate, Manuel González believes "our stories hold medicine." His role as host of *Pass the Sopapillas*, a brand new podcast presented by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, allows González to bring these powerful stories to a wider audience. "I represent the city, the state, and this art form," he said. "One of my responsibilities is to collect these stories and narratives across the state, and the podcast is an extension of that."

Pass the Sopapillas brings together local educators, artists, policymakers, and community leaders—González hopes these conversations will help change the narrative of what it means to be from New Mexico. "All our stories hold power," he said.

"And we all have gifts that better ourselves, our communities, and, as an extension, our state."

One particular conversation that stood out to González appears in the podcast's second episode, titled "La Cultura Cura." It features La Plazita Institute, an Albuquerque-based organization that uses culture to change the trajectory of at-risk youth. Listen to *Pass the Sopapillas* on YouTube, Spotify, and all other podcast platforms.

A New Anthology Showcases Poets from New Mexico and Beyond

Poetry lovers who came to The ABQ Collective's Book Fest last month received an unexpected treat at author Zach Hively's booth: a sneak peak of *A Year of New Mexico Poetry*. With 366 poems by 193 poets, the forthcoming anthology by Casa Urraca Press has heft. Contributors, including Benjamin Green, Dita Dow, Paula Lozar, and Alissa Simon, stopped by to discover which day of the year their poem had landed on—helped by a handy Index at the back of the book. On finding her poem on March 17, Lozar exclaimed, "St. Patrick's Day! My ancestry is Irish!"



During an open call for submissions last year, Casa Urraca Press sought original poems for an anthology that offers readers a daily reflection on the richness of New Mexico. Editors Amaris Feland Ketcham and Zach Hively received submissions from several hundred poets. Submissions came from writers living in all four corners of New Mexico, other states such as Arizona and Massachusetts, and as far flung as the Philippines and the United Kingdom. Authors entered poems that show an affinity for New Mexico and appreciation of its land, peoples, cultures, languages, and traditions;

that capture the flavors of New Mexican life, from the poignant to the playful and the historical to the contemporary; and that evoke different cycles and traditions of the year, as well as timeless pieces that transcend calendar dates.

Poets featured in *A Year of New Mexico Poetry* include NM Writers grantees Denise Chávez (2020), Renata Golden (2021), and Zach Hively (2021), board member Priyanka Kumar, and 18 sustaining members. Other contributors with a connection to NM Writers are New Mexico Book Awards winners, finalists, and judges.

Casa Urraca Press and NM Writers will co-host an Albuquerque launch event the evening of Thursday, August 13. Featured readers at the event include Margaret Randall, Levi Romero, Hakim Bellamy, and Michelle Otero. NM Writers Sustaining Members also slated to read are: Wayne Lee, Michelle Holland, Benjamin Green, Sarah Kotchian, Alissa Simon, Thomas Molitor, PW Covington, VB Price, and Jacqueline Murray Loring.



The launch event will take place at the Rio Grande Center for Spiritual Living, a nondenominational open space at 2404 San Mateo Place NE. Doors open at 6 p.m., with music by Tim Gaulden. Literary themed mocktails and light fare will be served. Readings begin at 6:45 p.m. Early release copies of *A Year of New Mexico Poetry* will be available for purchase, and preorders from the Casa Urraca Press website will be available for pickup.

Casa Urraca Press is planning additional launch events, including at the Santa Fe Southside Library on Saturday, August 15, and at the Santa Fe Main Library on Saturday, September 12. Readings at these events will include several Santa Fe-area contributing authors. The featured readers for the August 15 event are Demetria Martínez and Carol Moldaw.

A Year of New Mexico Poetry, with cover design by Hayley Kirkman, will be officially released on September 15. In addition to the press website, the book is available for preorder through most online book retailers and independent bookstores.

Grantee Views Her Fellowship as a Gift

By Tamara Enz
2025 Grantee

Each applicant has a unique reason to apply for a NM Writers grant, namely, their story. Whether it is personal, fictional, or factual, there are as many stories as applicants. While a grant helps cover expenses for focused writing time, research, a conference or workshop, each grantee wishes to see their distinctive tale published.



I put my 2025 NM Writers grant money toward a Fishtrap Yearlong Writers Workshop, a remote 13-month intensive program that begins and ends at the Summer Fishtrap Gathering of Writers. An Oregon-based non-profit, Fishtrap also holds year-round workshops and readings. The Fishtrap Workshop has a different instructor each year, and cohort size is limited to twelve. My cohort's instructor was Amy Irvine, longtime public-lands advocate and author of multiple memoirs.

I am grateful for that financial support, but there's more. Well beyond the practical application of the funding, receiving a NM Writers grant encouraged me and offered validation of the words I needed to write. A little support can go a long way.



The creative non-fiction book I've written, titled *unfrozen*, is about living alone for three months on an Arctic Ocean island while studying seabirds. This adventure turned into a reckoning of everything I had lived and known to that

point. It is a weaving of my history, the Arctic, birds, and the larger picture of climate change.

When I began writing *unfrozen*, I told people, "It's about the birds." But it's about so much more, and the recognition that came with the grant brought me the confidence to see that. I realized my story is important and has a place in the larger picture of women in science, in America, in this shape-shifting world that we know so little about.

I am currently querying agents for *unfrozen*. It's no secret that being a writer has always been an arduous path, often with little support, recognition, or return. In a time when anyone can write novella-length social media posts and self-publish books, being recognized as having a tale worth telling a broader audience is a gift.

*This is a new series from NM Writers grantees
reflecting on their fellowship experience.*

New Mexico Writers Grantee News



2021 NM Writers Grantee **Jeanne Lyet Gassman**'s hybrid flash piece, "Phrynosoma Platyrrhinos," was published in the literary magazine, *Ghost Parachute*. Read the piece [here](#).



2021 NM Writers Grantee **Renata Golden** taught a workshop at the 2026 Taos Writers Conference at SOMOS.



2023 NM Writers Grantee **Deborah Jackson Taffa** was featured in an article for the Institute of American Indian Arts about Taffa being named a 2026 Howard Foundation Fellow by the George A. and Eliza Gardner Howard Foundation, administered at Brown University. Read the article [here](#).



2025 NM Writers Grantee **Anne Champion**'s manuscript, *Venom Lessons*, recently won the Marsh Hawk Poetry Prize, judged by Denise Duhamel. It will be released in the summer of 2027.



2025 NM Writers Grantee **Shebana Coelho** released *SINEW*, an illustrated poem with two accompanying audio pieces. This is the first offering from From the Wild Lands, a new creative space being built by Coelho.

Briefly Noted



Enchanted Books celebrated its first year anniversary on July 25. In an Instagram post, owner **Winston Malone** thanked Saleema Ishq and NM Writers for sharing about Enchanted Books in *The New Mexico Writer*.

Gigi Bella's *Without the Frills* book release party took place in July at the Launchpad. The event featured poetry by Damien Flores, a 2024 NM Writers grantee, and other local poets.

Dita Dow's story "Aligned by Fate" will be in *Chicken Soup for the Soul: Miracles and Other Wonders* coming October 2026.

The first act of **Bill Triplett's** work-in-progress, "Raft of the Medusa," received a public reading at Teatro Paraguas in Santa Fe in June. Also, his play "Route 666" was accepted into the 2026 Midwest Dramatists Conference in Olathe, Kansas.

Chiara Crisafulli received the 2026 Katie Besser Student Awards in Poetry and Academic Writing at Santa Fe Community College. She is also the recipient of the Richard Bradford Memorial Creative Writing Scholarship.

UNM Press recently released *Putting Our Youngest Children First: Building a Movement for High-Quality Early Childhood Education* by Lois Vermilya and Stephen Preskill, about UNM's Family Development Program.

Tasia Young released *The Changemakers: How New Mexico Became the Land of Women's Equality* (**UNM Press**) and shared a book launch at Bookworks with Jerry Ortiz y Pino. Young passed away just days after the launch.

In August, **Artemesia Publishing** releases *The Redux of Sam Murdoch* by Mary Kendall.

Kit Rosewater's latest book from Penguin Random House, *Buried Feelings*, was released on July 7. Rosewater's book is a star-reviewed, Junior Library Guild Gold Standard Selection.

The documentary *Mary Oliver: Saved by the Beauty of the World*, opened in select theaters on July 3rd and in Santa Fe on July 17th at the **Center for Contemporary Arts**.

Collected Works Bookstore hosted Ken Salazar, former U.S. ambassador to Mexico, U.S. senator, U.S. Secretary of the Interior, and author of *Borderlands: My Fight for an Inclusive America* in conversation with Javier Martínez, Speaker of the New Mexico House of Representatives.

Dr. Irene Blea, author of *Talking with Rudy: Platicando con Rudolfo Anaya*, was the featured guest at Las Comadres & Friends National Latino Book Club's July Summer Reading Happy Hour.

The 2026 National Federation of Press Women (NFPW) Communications Contest Winners are listed [here](#). The list includes work produced by **New Mexico Press Women** members across a wide range of communications disciplines, including journalism, public relations, photography, and creative media. Final award placements will be announced at the NFPW National Conference in Ellicott City, Maryland, this September.

Marie Parks will be selling her books at the Lantern Ridge Farm Market on August 8; reading on Strong Women Strange Worlds Third Thursday QuickReads on August 20; and featured at LAcon V with a virtual reading and table talk August 30–31.

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

August 4 at 6 p.m. [Bookworks](#) (Albuquerque)

Join **Caroline Starr Rose** for a reading and signing of her new picture book, *Books Up the Mountain: A Packhorse Librarian Story*.

August 6 at 5:30 p.m. [Books on the Bosque](#) (Albuquerque)

Join **Brian D. Hinson** in conversation with Lauren C. Tefteau to explore his book, *Skies of Fire and Smoke*.

August 7 at 5:30 p.m. [New Mexico History Museum](#) (Santa Fe)

Attend a panel discussion featuring the current **Palace Press** curators as they discuss literary art in New Mexico and the Palace Press (the longest running letterpress of its kind in the state).

August 8 at 2 p.m. [Placitas Community Library](#) (Placitas)

Join **Garrett Peck** as he discusses his new book, *The Bright Edges of the World: Willa Cather and Her Archbishop* (**UNM Press**).

August 8 at 3 p.m. [Books on the Bosque](#) (Albuquerque)

Join **Caroline Starr Rose** for a reading and signing of her new picture book, *Books Up the Mountain: A Packhorse Librarian Story*.

August 8 at 6:30 p.m. [Bookworks](#) (Albuquerque)

Join **Kit Rosewater** in celebrating the release of her newest YA novel, *Buried Feelings*.

August 9 at 2 p.m. [Books on the Bosque](#) (Albuquerque)

Join **Bill McCamley** with Rep. Andrés Romero and Rep. Reena Szczepanski for a reading and signing of *Right My Dudes... Now What? Being a Man in the 21st Century Without Being a Dick*.

August 9 at 4:30 p.m. [Garcia Street Books](#) (Santa Fe)

Join **Garrett Peck** for a reading and conversation of his newest book, *The Bright Edges of the World: Willa Cather and Her Archbishop* (**UNM Press**).

August 11 at 5:30 p.m. [Books on the Bosque](#) (Albuquerque)

Join **Rachel Eve Moulton** for the paperback release of her latest novel, *Tantrum*.

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

Join **Laura Da'** for a reading from *Severalty*, with James Thomas Stevens.

August 13 at 2 p.m. [The Richard Eeds Show - SantaFe.com](#)

Listen to Richard Eeds and **Carla Chung Mattix** discuss her new book, *National Parks and the Supreme Court, Groundbreaking Legal Battles*, on the Richard Eeds talk radio show.

August 13 at 6 p.m. [Rio Grande Center for Spiritual Living](#) (Albuquerque)
Attend a launch party for the new anthology, *A Year of New Mexico Poetry* (**Casa Urraca Press**), with readings by contributing authors and music by Tim Gaulden. Co-hosted with NM Writers. Featured readers include **Margaret Randall**, **Levi Romero**, **Hakim Bellamy**, and **Michelle Otero**.

August 14 at 5:30 p.m. [SOMOS](#) (Taos)
Join **Steven Law** and **Renata Golden** for a special author appearance.

August 15 at 11 a.m. [New Mexico History Museum](#) (Santa Fe)
Join **Dorothy Denetclaw** (Diné) and **Matt Fitzsimons** as they introduce their new book, *The Sons of Gunshooter: A Navajo Resistance Story*.

August 15 at 12:30 p.m. [Collected Works](#) (Santa Fe)
Three-time James Beard Award-winning Oglala Lakota chef Sean Sherman will sign copies of his book, *Turtle Island*, alongside Kate Nelson and Jimmy Horn.

August 15 at 1 p.m. [New Mexico History Museum](#) (Santa Fe)
Join **Jennifer Denetdale** (Diné) and **Ramona Emerson** (Diné) in conversation with Lillia McEnaney as they discuss how Indigenous scholars, writers, and filmmakers are re-shaping horror and speculative fiction.

August 15 at 3 p.m. [Books on the Bosque](#) (Albuquerque)
Join **Maddie Mozley** for a reading and signing of her book, *Seraph's Flight*.

August 15 at 4 p.m. [Santa Fe Southside Library](#) (Santa Fe)
Attend a launch party for the new anthology, *A Year of New Mexico Poetry* (**Casa Urraca Press**), with readings by contributing authors such as NM Writers grantee **Renata Golden**. Featured readers include **Demetría Martinez** and **Carol Moldaw**.

August 15 at 5:30 pm. [SOMOS](#) (Taos)
Join **Celia Persephone Gregory** for a reading and conversation of *Hippy Wars*.

August 16 at 11 a.m. [Page 1 Books](#) (Albuquerque)
Join **Benjamin Radford** and **Casey Moores** for a special author appearance and book signing.

August 16 at 3 p.m. [Books on the Bosque](#) (Albuquerque)
Join **Samantha Rae Ortiz** for a reading and signing of her book, *Uncovered Earth*.

August 18 at 5:30 p.m. [Books on the Bosque](#) (Albuquerque)
Join **Jennifer Givhan**, in conversation with T. Kingfisher, for a reading and signing of her book, *The Sleeping Sisters*.

August 18 at 6 p.m. [Collected Works](#) (Santa Fe)
Join **Carla Chung Mattix** for a discussion of *National Parks and the Supreme Court: Groundbreaking Legal Battles*, in conversation with Dwight Pitcaithley, former Chief Historian of the National Park Service.

August 20 at 6 p.m. [Collected Works](#) (Santa Fe)
Join **Jennifer Givhan** for a reading and signing of her latest book, *The Sleeping Sisters*.

August 22 at 10 a.m. [Books on the Bosque](#) (Albuquerque)

Join **Travis Baldree** for a reading and signing of his books, *Brigands & Breadknives*, *Legends & Lattes*, and *Bookshops & Bonedust*.

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

Join **M. Rose Elliot** and **Anubis Black** for a special author appearance and book signing.

August 23 at 2 p.m. [Albuquerque Museum](#) (Albuquerque)

Join **Nathaniel Tetsuro Paolinelli** on a panel titled “Photographing the Other Route 66,” after which Paolinelli will sign copies of his book *Seventh and Central: Lowriders* (**UNM Press**).

August 24 at 6 p.m. [Books on the Bosque](#) (Albuquerque)

Join **Kit Rosewater** for a special appearance and reading from her book, *Buried Feelings*.

August 25 at 5:30 p.m. [Books on the Bosque](#) (Albuquerque)

Join Grammy winning musician and author **Darlene Koldenhoven** for a reading and signing of her book, *Put Your Dress Down and Sing*.

August 25 at 6 p.m. [Bookworks](#) (Albuquerque)

Join **Carla Chung Mattix** in conversation with Dave Simon, the City of Albuquerque Director of Parks and Recreation, for a discussion and signing of her new book, *National Parks and the Supreme Court, Groundbreaking Legal Battles*.

August 26 at 4:30 p.m. [Garcia Street Books](#) (Santa Fe)

Join Grammy winning musician and author **Darlene Koldenhoven** for a reading from her book, *Put Your Dress Down and Sing*.

August 28 at 5:30 p.m. [Books on the Bosque](#) (Albuquerque)

Join **Sonja Dewing** for a pirate-themed party followed by a reading and signing of her book, *Daughter of the Black Flag*.

August 29 at 3 p.m. [Books on the Bosque](#) (Albuquerque)

Join **Piper Sheldon** for a reading and signing of her book, *Fall Shook Up*.

August 29 at 11 a.m. [Page 1 Books](#) (Albuquerque)

Join **Diana Sussman** and **Anne Champion** for a special author appearance and book signing.

August 29 at 5:30 p.m. [Books on the Bosque](#) (Albuquerque)

Join **Flint Del Sol** with Dr. Janelle Garcia for a reading and signing of the book, *The Teach Like an Ally Workbook*.

August 30 at 11 a.m. [Page 1 Books](#) (Albuquerque)

Join **Jory and Marcia Rosen** for a special author appearance and book signing of *The Homestead Café* (**Artemesia Publishing**).

August 30 at 11 a.m. [Page 1 Books](#) (Albuquerque)

Join **James C. Wilson** for a special author appearance and book signing.

September 4 at 5 p.m. [New Mexico History Museum](#) (Santa Fe)

Attend an informal demonstration with hands-on activities of the letterpress with **Palace Press**.

More Opportunities for Writers

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



NMBA 2026 Summer Gala

The New Mexico Book Association will host its annual Summer Gala on **August 28** at Las Campanas. This year's gala will feature a keynote address by U.S. Poet Laureate Arthur Sze, the 25th Poet Laureate of the United States, and the presentation of the Southwest Book Design and Production Awards. For more information and to purchase tickets, go [here](#).

Workshop: Writing with Casa Urraca Press

Join instructors Jonatha Kottler (UNM Honors College) and Zach Hively (Casa Urraca Press) for a generative mini-workshop on **August 4**. This workshop is online, open to all at no cost, and will include two real-time writing exercises. Join on [Zoom](#) at 6:30 p.m. No RSVP needed.

Back Porch Poetry Reading

Jules' Poetry Playhouse in Placitas presents Donald Levering and Leslie Ullman for a reading from their latest works, with a conversation to follow, on **August 6**. For more information and to purchase tickets, go [here](#).

Presentation: International Poetry

At the New Mexico State Poetry Society – Albuquerque Chapter monthly meeting on **August 8**, held at the Rio Grande Center for Spiritual Living, a collection of international poems that resonate for American poets will be performed. Contact [Jonathan Reeve Price](#) for more information.



7th Annual Leopold Lecture

Spend an evening with Joy Harjo speaking on Storytelling, Culture, and the Environment at the Leopold Writing Program's annual lecture on **September 26**. The event will be held at The KiMo in Albuquerque. Learn more and purchase tickets [here](#).

An Evening with Hampton Sides

Collected Works, in association with Santa Fe International Literary Festival, presents an evening with Hampton Sides on history, literature, and the 20th Anniversary of *Blood and Thunder*. The event will take place at The Lensic on **October 3**. Hampton will be in conversation with Ed Roberson. Learn more and purchase tickets [here](#).

Workshop: All About Audiobooks

At the New Mexico Book Association's online workshop on **October 7**, Laurie Bower will talk about the benefits of turning a print book into audio and how the process works. Learn more [here](#).

Workshop: The Poem Rise Up

At the New Mexico State Poetry Society – Albuquerque Chapter monthly meeting on **October 10**, held at the North Domingo Baca Multigenerational Center, author, poet, and performer SETH will present a hands-on workshop exploring poetic language, how it works, and why it works. Contact [Jonathan Reeve Price](#) for more information.

Abiquiú Writers Retreat

Presentation: Location, Location, Location

At the SouthWest Writers meeting in person and via Zoom on **August 8**, Jonathan Miller will talk about how techniques involving a “sense of place” can be used in creating compelling fiction. Learn more [here](#).

Workshop: Collage Poems

Jules’ Poetry Playhouse in Placitas presents a collage art and poetry class with Jules Nyquist on **August 8**. For more information and to purchase tickets, go [here](#).

Presentation: The Southwest Native Plant Primer

Join the Santa Fe Botanical Garden and the Native Plant Society of New Mexico (Santa Fe Chapter) on **August 11** for an evening with Jack Dash, co-author of *The Southwest Native Plant Primer*. This talk will explore how gardeners—at any skill level—can make informed, regionally appropriate plant choices that support biodiversity and respond to the realities of a warming, water-limited climate. Following the presentation, Dash will be available for a book signing. For more information and to purchase tickets, go [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 **August 12**. Learn more [here](#).

Back Porch Poetry Reading

Jules’ Poetry Playhouse in Placitas presents Scott Wiggerman and Jonathan Price for a reading from their latest works, with a conversation to follow, on **August 12**. For more information and to purchase tickets, go [here](#).

DimeStories Open Mic

DimeStories, hosted by Cynthia Sylvester, is held every second Thursday at Quirky Used Books in Albuquerque. The next DimeStories event is **August 13**. Learn more [here](#).

Prompt Nights at SOMOS

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

October 8–12 dedicated to your writing in community. Sustaining Members of NM Writers are eligible for a discount. Learn more and register [here](#).

Women Writing the West Conference

The annual Women Writing the West Conference taking place **October 15–17** 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**. Register [here](#).

Workshop: Jazz Poetry

Jules’ Poetry Playhouse in Placitas presents a Jazz Poetry class with John Roche on **October 24**. During this writing-inspired class, attendees will have time to write poems and share with the group. For more information and to purchase tickets, go [here](#).

SouthWest Writers Book Fiesta

The 2026 SouthWest Writers Book Fiesta “Libros of Enchantment” will take place on **October 31** at the University of New Mexico Continuing Education Center in Albuquerque. The day-long event will allow both readers and authors to hear speakers and panelists, share the behind-the-scenes magic. James McGrath Morris, NM Writers board member and the author of several New Mexico-related nonfiction books, will be the opening keynote speaker, sharing insights about the literary landscape in New Mexico. There will also be a bookstore of works by local authors where readers can purchase books, meet their favorite authors, and get their books signed. Find information about vendor tables and ticket sale dates [here](#).

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 **August 13**. Learn more [here](#).

Thirsty Ear Poetry

Thirsty Eye Brewing is hosting a featured poet with limited open mic every second Thursday. The next event is **August 13**. Contact [Don McIver](#) for more information.

Workshop: Perfect Your Prose

At the SouthWest Writers workshop in person and via Zoom on **August 15**, Kirt Hickman will share the secrets to crafting prose. Learn more [here](#).

Write Together Series: Where Words Meet Wellbeing

Hosted by the Student Wellness Center at Santa Fe Community College in partnership with the New Mexico Book Association, these gatherings bring students, writers, and community members together with one shared purpose: to show up and put words on the page. The next event will be held in-person and via Zoom on **August 19**. Learn more [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 **August 20**. Learn more [here](#).

Bubonicon 57

Bubonicon, New Mexico's longest-running Sci-Fi & Fantasy literary and arts convention, will take place in Albuquerque **August 21–23** with panels and presentations (featuring top authors, artists, and scientists), a costume contest, art show, dealer's room, Green Slime Awards, charity auctions, fan programming, and more. This year's convention features co-guests of honor

Blue Mesa Review Submissions

The *Blue Mesa Review*, a publication by graduate students at University of New Mexico's MFA program, invites submissions of art, poetry, nonfiction, and fiction between **July 1 and October 31**, for publication in the Fall issue. Learn more [here](#).

Kauai Writers Conference

The Kauai Writers Conference, taking place **November 2–8**, offers a selection of twenty four-day master classes on all aspects of the craft and business of writing, plus one-on-one meetings with many top literary agents and editors. NM Writers members and fans may use coupon code WG789 to save on tickets. Find details and register [here](#).

Workshop: On the Border

At the New Mexico State Poetry Society – Albuquerque Chapter monthly meeting on **November 14**, held at the North Domingo Baca Multigenerational Center, Cheryl Howard will facilitate a workshop on the issues facing the U.S.–Mexico border. Contact [Jonathan Reeve Price](#) for more information.

Workshop: The Gentle Art of Mashup

At the New Mexico State Poetry Society – Albuquerque Chapter monthly meeting on **December 12**, held at the North Domingo Baca Multigenerational Center, Bob Weber will lead a workshop on putting things together in new ways: from a mixing of senses, to emotions, and finally to a mixing of stories. Contact [Jonathan Reeve Price](#) for more information.

Local Author Showcase

The New Mexico Counseling Association seeks authors for their Local Author Showcase, celebrating New Mexico authors and providing an opportunity to connect with conference attendees, share their work, and sell their books. The author showcase will take place at the 2027 Annual Conference, **March 12–13, 2027**, at the Clyde Hotel in Albuquerque. Authors of all genres are welcome to apply; however, priority

Patricia Briggs and Martha Wells; toastmaster Travis Baldree; guest artist Jon Sanchez; and science speaker Matthew Fetrow. Learn more and buy tickets [here](#).

Presentation: Research Strategies and Avoiding the Infodump

At the Write to Publish Series event on **August 22** at Quill & Quest Bookstore, Garrett Peck will help writers find the balance between sharing information without overwhelming readers. Learn more [here](#).

Presentation: A New Approach to Publishing Short Stories

At the monthly Croak & Dagger meeting on **August 25**, Winston Malone, owner of Storyletter Xpress Publishing, will discuss his approach to publishing short stories. Learn more [here](#).

Presentation: Scams, Scammers, and How to Notice

At the SouthWest Writers meeting via Zoom on **August 26**, Computer Programming expert Ace Nations will give a breakdown of some common scams and some examples of real-life scams. Learn more [here](#).

The Carol Shields Prize

The Carol Shields Prize for Fiction is now open to submissions for the 2027 Prize. The winning author will receive \$150,000 USD, and four shortlisted authors \$12,500 USD each. The early bird deadline for submissions is **August 28**. The final submissions deadline is **October 2**. Learn more [here](#).

Workshop: Meditational Writing and Medicinal Land-Based Healing

As part of the Leopold House Environmental Writing Series, this writing workshop on **August 29** will be led by instructor Jessica Helen Lopez, City of ABQ Poet Laureate, Emerita. To apply, go [here](#).

Mesa Verde Writers Conference and Literary Festival

The Mesa Verde Writers Conference will take place **September 2–4** in Mancos,

consideration will be given to books that explore themes related to mental health, wellness, personal growth, resilience, relationships, or other topics that align with the interests of the counseling community. Apply [here](#).

Sandia Starforgers Writers Retreat

The fourth annual Sandia Starforgers Writers Retreat and Workshop for science-fiction, fantasy, and horror writers is taking place **April 30 to May 3, 2027**, in Albuquerque. The instruction theme is “Characters, Conflict, and Connection.” Instructors at this event include Premee Mohamed, Sarah Gailey, Mary Robinette Kowal, Geoff Habiger, and Marie Parks. For more information and to register, click [here](#). An early bird discount is available until **October 15, 2026**.

Lunar Awards Contest

The Lunar Awards is a yearlong event broken into nine rounds focusing on three genres (Fantasy, Horror, and Science Fiction). At the end of the year, the winning stories will be published in a physical book. Learn more [here](#).

ABQ The Magazine Submissions

Albuquerque The Magazine is seeking freelance writers for its publication. Topics vary from notable locals to upcoming events and range in length from 250 to 900 words based on the column. Email the magazine’s [editor](#) for more details.

Backlit Submissions

Backlit, an online literary magazine that offers in-depth editorial exchanges between Good Light Editors and the writers accepted for publication, is accepting submissions of previously unpublished works of all genres. Learn more [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](#).

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**. 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](#).

Presentation: Brave the Wild River

As part of the Santa Fe Botanical Garden's Plants and People Program, attend a Lunch & Lecture with award-winning science writer and author Melissa L. Sevigny, whose book *Brave the Wild River* tells the true story of botanists Elzada Clover and Lois Jotter and their 1938 expedition through the Grand Canyon. This event will take place on **September 10**. Following the lecture, Sevigny will be available for a book signing. For more information and to purchase tickets, go [here](#).

Workshop: Nature Poetry

At the New Mexico State Poetry Society – Albuquerque Chapter monthly meeting on **September 12**, held at the North Domingo Baca Multigenerational Center, Terry Dunbar will lead a workshop on nature poetry, featuring a nature walk, prompts, and exercises. Contact [Jonathan Reeve Price](#) for more information.

Workshop: Pitching

Chris Eboch will lead a workshop on pitching for the Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators – New Mexico branch on **September 22**. Details are forthcoming.

Back Porch Poetry Reading

Jules' Poetry Playhouse in Placitas presents Tani Arness and Mary Strong Jackson for a reading from their latest works, with a conversation to follow, on **September 22**. For more information and to purchase tickets, go [here](#).

Horizon Review Submissions

The *Horizon Review*, a fine arts magazine based in Albuquerque, will soon begin accepting submissions of literature (fiction, poetry, and creative nonfiction), visual art, and open media for its Spring 2027 issue. Learn more and submit [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](#).

Call for Board Members

The Leopold Writing Program is seeking nominations for Board Members. Learn more about the Board of Directors, Board Member expectations, and how to self-nominate [here](#).

NM State Poetry Society Workshops

The Albuquerque Chapter of the New Mexico State Poetry Society meets monthly for a workshop on poetic forms, famous poets, or process. If you are interested in being a speaker, or providing a topic, for a group workshop of 20 or 25 poets on Saturdays in 2027, please contact [Jonathan Reeve Price](#).

Write On Four Corners Podcast

KSJE Radio's show Write On Four Corners, hosted by DelSheree Spinner, is looking for authors to interview. In order to be considered, authors must either be located in the Four Corners Region (New Mexico, Arizona, Utah, Colorado), or write on a topic related to the Four Corners region. Authors who are interested in being interviewed for the podcast should fill out this [form](#).

Making Comics with 7000 BC

7000 BC, a comic creators nonprofit, holds monthly meetings in Albuquerque and Santa Fe. The organization provides opportunities for comics writers and artists to develop their personal styles and storytelling "voices," while promoting an understanding of the cultural significance of comic art

Southern New Mexico Book Festival

The 2026 Southern New Mexico Book Festival planned by Las Cruces Writers is scheduled for **October 3**. The event will be open to the public and held again at the Doña Ana Community College. Authors from Southern New Mexico and beyond will host writing workshops, author readings, book sales, and signings. Apply to be a vendor [here](#).

Workshop: Pacing Techniques

Chris Eboch will lead a workshop for Virginia Romance Writers on **October 3**. Details are forthcoming.

through seminars and workshops.

Meetings are casual events to socialize, share work, and discuss production and promotion. All those interested in making comics are welcome. Learn more [here](#).

The Backyard Story Series

Hosted by the Historic Leopold House, join your neighbors, friends, strangers, professional writers, and amateur writers to share and listen to true stories. For dates/themes and to sign up to be a storyteller, go [here](#).

2026 New Mexico Book Awards Banquet



The 2026 New Mexico Book Awards Banquet will be held on **Friday, October 2**, in Las Cruces. Winners and Finalists in each category will be announced during an awards ceremony.

Each entrant of the 2026 NM Book Awards will receive one free ticket to the event. Additional tickets are priced at \$40. Registration information will be sent to entrants via email from the NM Book

Awards director. Ticketing will open to the public in early September.

The banquet will be held at La Posta de Mesilla in Las Cruces. A New Mexican dinner buffet, including steak fajitas and vegetarian options, will be provided. A cash bar plus complimentary non-alcoholic beverages will be available.

The event starts at 5 p.m. with a mix & mingle hour. The dinner buffet will open at 6 p.m., and the awards ceremony will begin at 6:30 p.m. After the awards ceremony, a cake cutting is planned to celebrate the 2026 Winners and Finalists.

A pop-up bookstore by Enchanted Books (from Rio Rancho) will sell books by 2025 NM Book Awards Winners during the event. After the awards ceremony, books by 2026 Winners will be available for purchase.



This event is co-hosted by NM Writers and Visit Las Cruces.

After the October 2nd awards ceremony, 2026 NM Book Awards Winners and Finalists will be listed on the NM Writers website.

In Others' Words

“Long patience and application saturated with your heart’s blood—you will either write or you will not—and the only way to find out whether you will or not is to try.”

— Jim Tully

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

Contributors

- **Saleema Ishq** is the Editor of *The New Mexico Writer* and New Mexico Writers Sustaining Member Coordinator.
- **Lisa McCoy** is the Executive Director of New Mexico Writers and Director of the New Mexico Book Awards.
- **Tamara Enz** is a 2025 New Mexico Writers grantee, author of two bird guides, and her pieces have been published in *El Palacio*, *Polarlit*, and *Proteus*.
- **Tyler Miller** is an intern with New Mexico Writers, a photographer, and an emerging writer who recently earned a degree in English.

Interested in contributing to *The New Mexico Writer*? [Let us know!](#)



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