

The New Mexico Writer

September 2026

Supporting and connecting the literary community in New Mexico.

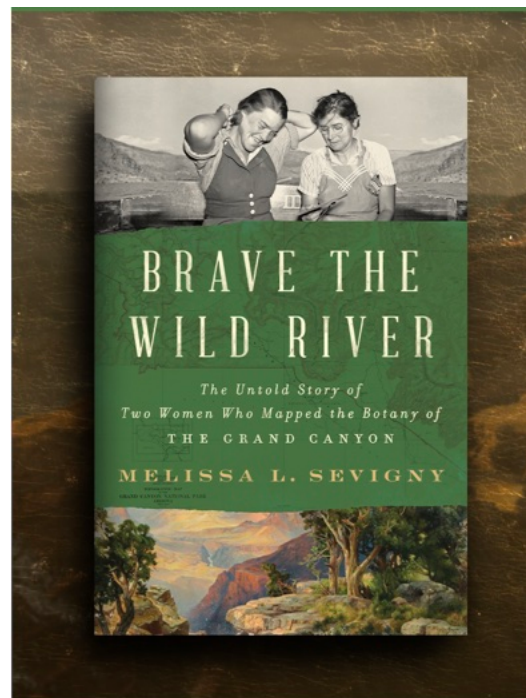
A publication of **NMwriters**

Forgotten Botanists Come Alive in *Brave the Wild River*

In the summer of 1938, Elzada Clover and Lois Jotter pulled off what was, at the time, considered a grand and daring adventure. Labeled by sensational news media as the first two women to boat the Colorado River, there was a lot of hype about their appearance, safety, and ability to endure the most dangerous river in the world—today, we call these stories clickbait. To Clover and Jotter, botanists from the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, being called the first women to boat the river was not only inaccurate; it was dismissive and even insulting. Their “boat trip” was a scientific expedition to catalog regional plants.

Almost ninety years later, Melissa L. Sevigny changes that narrative in her 2023 book *Brave the Wild River: The Untold Story of Two Women who Mapped the Botany of the Grand Canyon* (W. W. Norton & Company). “It was really satisfying to get to know these women as scientists who were serious about the work they were doing and to restore that part of the story to the record,” she said.

Clover and Jotter, along with four men and three boats, spent 42 days running the Green and Colorado Rivers. Those who knew the river, and many who didn’t, told Clover and Jotter they couldn’t do it. The women knew there was danger, “but also they felt the risk was smaller than what was being conveyed to them,” Sevigny said. “They understood that they were being targeted because they were women, and people didn’t think women should be doing that kind of thing. They were able to set that aside and go anyway. That took a lot of courage.”



On the river, the daily focus was on scouting and running rapids, keeping boats afloat, and feeding the crew. Little time was allotted for the botanical work the women came to do. “You can see their frustrations with the difficulty of getting their plant collection. And with how quickly they had to move, they were always behind schedule. They were always worrying about getting dinner together for the men. They were always wanting to stop but not able to as they were sweeping along in the boats,” Sevigny said.



Photo by Alexis Knapp

Despite the conditions, the women collected hundreds of plants and took detailed notes about the specimens and canyon ecology. They also kept diaries and wrote letters. It was from these materials that Sevigny pieced together the story. Scattered in archives across the country were “random notes kept on little scraps of paper,” she said. “It was like putting together a puzzle or detective work. Parts of the story kept unfolding themselves like origami. It was addictive.”

It took time for Sevigny to see the structure of the sprawling story. “We’re going downriver. Stay on the river. Every now and then slip out into a little eddy and talk about history or science. Small, quiet moments and then get back into the current,” she told herself as she wrote.

In those days, “the current” was the extravagant news of women boating the Colorado. In *Brave the Wild River*, Sevigny rescues botanists Clover and Jotter from the forgotten eddies.

Sevigny will be presenting a talk on *Brave the Wild River* at the Plants and People Program Lunch & Lecture on September 10, for the Santa Fe Botanical Garden.

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

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JOIN NOW

Rising Writers Invited to Spend Time with Established Authors

Registration is open for the 2026 season of Rising Writers, the NM Writers program that supports aspiring writers. Thanks to a generous donation by Ed and Maria Gale and the Gale Family Foundation, Rising Writers is a chance for emerging writers to

spend time in conversation with an established author or with other literary professionals. Rising Writers sessions are a place for encouragement and inspiration of new voices in the writing community, and they provide an opportunity to ask questions and hear from an expert about the craft and business of writing. Rising Writers sessions are held at coffee shops, bookstores, libraries, and nonprofit conference rooms all over New Mexico.

Session hosts and topics have been selected for the 2026 Rising Writers program, which will take place in September and October. There is no charge to attend the sessions. Each in-person conversation is limited to a small group of participants, so do not hesitate to register! The full schedule and RSVP details are provided on the NM Writers [website](#).



Photo by Bear Guerra

Join host Jake Skeets in Gallup on September 9 for a session on “Words with a Poet.” Jake Skeets is the author of *Eyes Bottle Dark with a Mouthful of Flowers*, winner of the National Poetry Series, American Book Award, and Kate Tufts Discovery Award, and *Horses*, which was named one of Literary Hub’s Most Anticipated Books of 2026. His honors include a Whiting Award, Mellon Projecting All Voices Fellowship, NEA Grant for Arts Projects, and he was the 2023-2024

Grisham Writer in Residence at the University of Mississippi. He is currently serving as the third Navajo Nation Poet Laureate and teaches in the MFA program at the University of New Mexico in Albuquerque.

Join host Zach Hively in El Rito on September 30 for a session to “Hone Your Voice.” Zach Hively is a humorist, poet, and publisher. His essay collection, *Call Me Zach Hively Because That Is My Name*, earned the New Mexico Book Award. He’s the author of several short poetry collections, including *Owl Poems* and *Desert Apocrypha*, which received the Reading the West Book Award, and the co-editor of the anthology *A Year of New Mexico Poetry*. He continues to write a weekly column for various publications. He is also the founder of Casa Urraca Press, a traditional publishing house emphasizing creative works from New Mexico and the Southwest.



Join host DelSheree Spinner in Farmington on October 8 for a session on “Preparing to Work with the Media.” DelSheree Spinner hosts the *Write On Four Corners* show on KSJE Radio 90.9 FM at San Juan College. *Write On Four Corners* highlights authors from the Four Corners Region (New Mexico, Colorado, Arizona, and Utah), with occasional out-of-the-box guests such as authors or publishers from the Four Corners

DelSheree also hosts Write to Publish, a workshop series with authors who speak on topics related to improving the craft of writing—with a focus on teaching writers of all levels and experience how to craft high quality works for publishing. DelSheree has published several bestselling young adult series that have hit the USA Today Bestseller list twice as part of box sets. She also writes contemporary romance, cozy mystery, and paranormal new adult series. Founder of DelSheree Press, she helps authors publish based on mentorship, support, and great writing.

Join host Sherri Burr in Albuquerque on October 10 for a session on “Crafting Narrative Nonfiction: Finding the Idea, Researching the Story, and Putting Words on the Page.” Sherri Burr is a graduate of Mount Holyoke College, Princeton University’s School of Public and International Affairs, and the Yale Law School. At the University of New Mexico, she became the Dickason Chair and Regents Professor of Law Emerita in 2017 following her retirement from an approximately 30-year career as a full-time law professor. Burr is the prolific author or co-author of over 30 nonfiction law, business, and history books. Her *Complicated Lives: Free Blacks in Virginia, 1619-1865* (Carolina Academic Press, 2019) was nominated for the Pulitzer Prize in History. Her first memoir, *Living with Nephew: How I Got Voted the Meanest Parent in the World*, was published in 2026. She is currently working on her next narrative nonfiction history book, *The Qualities of His Heart and the Shackles of the Law: Why George Washington freed his slaves and his wife Martha did not*. To work on this book, she became the inaugural Black Women United for Action Scholar at the George Washington Presidential Library.



Illustration by Colin Murdoch

Join host Bram Meehan in Santa Fe on October 16 for a session titled “Yes, I’m Judging Your Book by Its Cover.” Bram Meehan is a graphic designer and creative director who has been helping individuals and organizations tell their stories visually for more than three decades. He received his B.A. in Graphic Design from Rochester Institute of Technology. Bram developed and taught “Creating Comics: The Design of Sequential Art” and the advanced “Creating Comics II: Mastering Comics,” and he led and taught the Student Marketing Team for the Performing Arts Department at Santa Fe University of Art and Design.

Join host Kris Neri in Silver City on October 28 for a session about “Becoming a Writer.” Kris Neri writes in multiple categories and enjoys a varied background in the book business, all of which she loves to share with others. Her published novels include mysteries and thrillers, paranormals, general fiction, and short stories. Her work has been honored by numerous national and regional awards, including three Lefty Award nominations for her humorous mysteries and six New Mexico-Arizona

Book Award wins for her own books and those to which she's contributed. Kris is a former bookseller, having co-owned The Well Red Coyote bookstore in Sedona, AZ, and is a highly-rated instructor for the Writers' Program of the UCLA Extension School.



Book Lovers Gather for an Evening of Cocktails and Conversation

By Dita Dow

NM Writers Sustaining Member

One new dress, one car loaded with books, and one five-hour drive placed me among 34 select authors at the After Dark event on August 7th. This inaugural adults-only "What to read when the lights go out" event opened the 2026 Springs Book Bash in Colorado Springs.



Springs Book Bash started with four friends who wanted to do a signing together but couldn't find a bookstore big enough for four tables. They found a bigger venue, but it was too big. Their solution? They invited more authors to join. With over a thousand readers in attendance, the Springs Book Bash is energizing the bookish community in Colorado Springs and the surrounding area. I got to be part of that energy and part of that community this year.



A sold-out crowd of 338 well-dressed readers gathered for After Dark cocktails, hors d'oeuvres, and author tables filled with dark fantasy, dark romance, mystery, thrillers, and more. My table held stacks of my debut novel, *Sins in Black*, and my novella, *27 Elmwood Drive*. But the books were only the beginning.

As readers and authors mingled, conversations moved from favorite books and characters to where ideas come from, how a novel takes shape, and the stories behind the stories. New writers had the opportunity to ask published authors how they got there.

This chance to talk made room for other stories. A new mother had come for a night out and the chance to enjoy some adult company. Couples made After Dark their date

night. Friend groups held cocktails, browsed books, and discovered authors together. It was easy to see what everyone had in common: a love of books.

For authors, moments like these are particularly meaningful. We spend months, sometimes years, alone with our characters before sending them out into the world. Most of the time, we never see the moment a reader discovers them. At After Dark, the distance between writer and reader disappeared.

Anyone could pick up a book and ask the person who wrote it, “Where did you get this idea?” A reader could talk about the kinds of characters she loves. An aspiring writer could ask the questions that might help her begin her own story.

As a New Mexico thriller author and sustaining member of New Mexico Writers, I wondered during that long drive what an author event in another state could teach me. By the end of the evening, I realized I had been asking the wrong question. It wasn’t about what Colorado could teach New Mexico. It was about what authors and readers could remind all of us.



Writing is solitary. Reading often is, too. Yet stories are meant to be shared. They give strangers an opening line, turn a night out into a conversation, and create connections between people who might otherwise never meet.

The Springs Book Bash After Dark Authors event wasn’t memorable because it sold out—or because I got to buy a new dress. It was memorable because, for one night, books brought an entire community together. And isn’t that what a good story is supposed to do?

Literary Community Members Join the NM Writers Board

New Mexico Writers has added four new members to its board of directors: Rachel Eve Moulton, Sarah Haas, Baro Shalizi, and Kyle Beachy. These members of the literary community were recommended by existing board members.

Rachel Eve Moulton is the author of *Tinfoil Butterfly*, which was long-listed for the Center for Fiction First Novel Prize, and nominated for both Shirley Jackson and Bram Stoker awards. Her second novel, *The Insatiable Volt Sisters*, was named one of the top ten horror novels of 2023 by *The New York Times Book Review*. Her latest novel, *Tantrum*, is a Janet Heidinger Kafka Prize Finalist. She’s spent most of her life as an educator, writer, and editor. Currently, she works as a writing coach



and is an associate fiction editor for *Narrative Magazine*. She lives with her husband and two daughters in the mountains east of Albuquerque.

Moulton first connected with NM Writers after moving to the Land of Enchantment in 2018 when a friend invited her to the annual dinner. This year, she felt called to become more involved. “I knew I wanted to offer more of my time and energy by playing a larger role in making New Mexican writers of all levels feel they have access to the resources they deserve,” she shared.

As a high school and college educator, Moulton aims to expand opportunities for young writers in particular, “giving them opportunities to see how writing can be a long-term part of their growth and career.”



Sarah Haas also hopes to see more young writers involved with NM Writers.

“In my experience, writers need two things in order to succeed: financial support and someone to believe in them,” she said. “New Mexico Writers does both.”

Haas initially joined the organization as a volunteer on the dinner committee. She now serves as the dinner committee chair. She hopes to help develop additional opportunities, “potentially including reading series and a residency program.”

Sarah Haas’ debut book, *JEALOUSY: A MEMOIR*, is forthcoming from Catapult (November 2026). Her essays and criticism appear in *Lit Hub*, *Longreads*, and *Los Angeles Review of Books*, among others. An Editor-at-Large for *Brink Literary Journal*, she is also a freelance manuscript editor (Graywolf, Spiegel & Grau, etc.). Before turning to literature, Haas worked as a features journalist and columnist. With an MFA in Creative Nonfiction, she facilitates writing workshops, most recently in the New Mexico State Penitentiary, with low income adults, and at the Santa Fe Community College. With an MBA, she has ten years of experience directing and managing nonprofits.

Baro Shalizi was born in India and lived in Pakistan, Afghanistan, and the former Soviet Union before moving to the U.S. Baro received his B.A. in Languages and Literature from Brandeis University in Boston and his M.A. in International Law & International Business from The American University in Washington, D.C. Baro worked as Assistant Editor for the International Year of the Child, UNICEF in New York City, and later in advertising with Young & Rubicam, NY.

In 1983, Baro moved to Santa Fe as Director of Development and Marketing for the Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival and later for the Native American Preparatory School. In 1999, he opened his own Brokerage, Shalizi Real Estate.



Shalizi, who has been writing for about 15 years, became interested in joining the NM Writers board after attending the annual dinner and talking with friends already serving on the board.

“New Mexico Writers is already offering aspiring and established writers in New Mexico and the Navajo Nation many benefits,” he said. “I hope that over the next few years it will also be able to offer them contacts to agents, editors, and publishers.”



Photo by Michael Worful

Kyle Beachy joins the board after about two decades in academia. He aims to continue advocating for literacy amid challenges ranging from book bans to the increasing normalization of AI-generated work.

“I hope we can offer a reminder that some of the things we hear are ‘inevitable’ simply are not,” Beachy said. “And a big reason they’re not is because groups like New Mexico Writers exist.”

Beachy is one of very few people to have writing appear in both *The Paris Review* and *Thrasher Magazine*. His memoir, *The Most Fun Thing: Dispatches From a Skateboard Life*, was named a best book of 2021 by NPR, Electric Lit, and others. His first novel, *The Slide* (The Dial Press) was named the Chicago Reader’s Readers’ Choice for Best Book by a Chicago Author.

Beachy spent 20 years in Chicago as a professor of literature and creative writing, eventually co-directing the MFA Program at Roosevelt University. In 2023, he stepped away from both, moving to Cerrillos, New Mexico, where he now lives with his wife, the poet Kristin Lueke, and works as an independent educator, editor, and writing coach.

The four new members join the existing board in continuing to shape programming for New Mexico Writers in support of its mission. “We’re thrilled to welcome Rachel, Sarah, Baro, and Kyle. They bring a range of skills and experience which will be invaluable to our board and to our mission,” said JJ Amaworo Wilson, board chair of New Mexico Writers.

Grantee Gains Confidence to Speak Goat

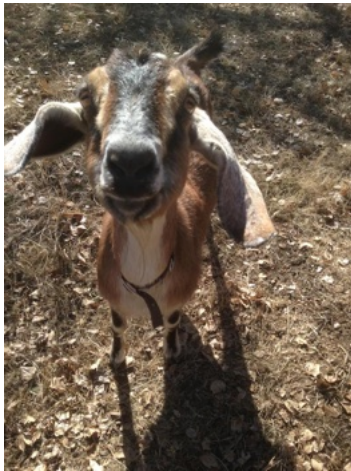
By Mark Beauregard
2025 Grantee

My next-door neighbors keep chickens. Their spacious run has a six-foot-tall chain-link fence to keep out coyotes and a large wooden coop. A dozen chickens and a rooster live there.

Recently, the neighbors bought a goat and put it in the chicken run. She bawled piteously. On the first day, my girlfriend and I walked over to check on her; physically, she was fine. She was lonely. Goats prefer to be with other goats. A goat alone will sometimes stop eating and suffer immune-system breakdowns.



Photo by Tira Howard



As the goat acclimated to her surroundings, she stopped bawling. We heard her bleating normally, but then something remarkable happened. We woke one morning to the goat baa-ing like a rooster. Imagine a rooster's crow, cock-a-doodle-doo. Now imagine that same call and cadence in a goat's voice. To fit in, the goat was speaking rooster.

In everyday life, this is often how writers feel. We spend a lot of time alone, but we're small group mammals, and it's sometimes painful to be isolated. To fit in, we can start adopting the language of those around us. The saving grace that the New Mexico

Writers grant offers is to affirm that, though we're tempted sometimes to act like chickens, writers are valuable for who we are.

I apologize, dear reader, for comparing you to a goat. If it's any comfort, I'm a goat, too.

New Mexico Writers awarded me a grant last year to support a finished novel manuscript called *Every Book & More*, a satire of corporate bookselling set in Albuquerque. An independent publisher agreed to publish it; the grant was intended to help with editing, marketing, and promotion, but the publisher got cold feet and backed out. My novel, though not entirely critical of chain bookstores, is ultimately ambivalent about them. A similar pattern emerged when my agent submitted the manuscript to other publishers: editors enjoyed it, especially those who had once worked as booksellers, but everyone agreed that satirizing corporate bookselling was a non-starter. Even non-corporate presses offered no refuge.

I despaired. I bawled hideously. I considered returning the grant money. But then, I thought, New Mexico Writers had not invested in a particular project, per se; rather, they had put faith in me as a writer. At least, that's the position I talked myself into.

At the time, I was working two part-time jobs to make ends meet. I ultimately used my grant to afford the time away from work to finish a short story: a love story about ghosts set in 1880s New Mexico. That story, "The Four Driftwood Misses Sing



Songs of Love,” was published in the summer 2025 edition of *Kestrel: A Journal of Literature and Art*.

I am grateful for the confidence that New Mexico Writers showed in me and for the success of that short story. I’m still looking for a publisher for the original project, but the fact that “The Driftwood Misses” found readers with help from this grant reminds me that, even though I sometimes have to act like a chicken to get by in everyday life, other goats are still out there, and we can still hear each other.

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

New Mexico Writers Grantee News



2025 NM Writers Grantee **Ashley Gallegos** released *The Speed of the Vertebrae: Harbingers of Wood, Cloak and Salt*, a poetry collection.



2024 NM Writers Grantee **Susan Mihalic** was elected president of the SOMOS Board of Directors in 2025. For the last four years, she has taught a full-day workshop titled “Wearing Their Skin: Creating Your Characters from the Inside Out” at the Taos Writers Conference.

Briefly Noted



Santa Fe International Literary Festival announced the appointment of four new board members: Hakim Bellamy, Juliet Erickson, Andrea Fellows Fineberg, and Deborah Jackson Taffa.

Hafeez Lakhani held readings and book signings for *Abundance*, a People Magazine Most Anticipated Book of 2026, at Barnes and Noble in Santa Fe and for Santa Fe Story Lab at the Santa Fe Public Library.

UNM Press has two new releases slated for September: *Weird New Mexico* by **Benjamin Radford**, which explores folklore and paranormal sightings in the state, and a poetry collection by **Barbara Rockman**, *Night said*.

La Cienega Valley Library recently opened. The library is a community gathering place bringing books, information, technology, learning opportunities, and fun activities to La Cienega and La Cieneguilla.

Jennifer Givhan's celebration of the launch of her new novel *The Sleeping Sisters* at Books on the Bosque in Albuquerque was selected by *Publishers Weekly* for their Picture of the Day.

Artemesia Publishing garnered awards for **Skye Griffith**'s *Bone Hash* (1st Place in the 2026 Colorado Author League Awards for mystery) and **C.C. Harrison**'s *The Women of Bandit Bend* (winner in the 2026 American Fiction Awards in the Historical Mystery/Suspense category).

Susan Sherman and **Demetria Martínez**, authors of *Poetry in Dangerous Times* (**Casa Urraca Press**), will read along with Jan Clausen at the Brooklyn independent bookshop, Unnamable Books, on September 19. Another event with these authors will take place at New York's Hudson Park Library on September 24.

Charmayne Samuelson has several appearances lined up for the fall, including a TV interview, at the San Antonio Museum of Art, at the SNM Book Festival, and at a book signing in Mata Ortiz, Mexico.

Marie Parks will be selling her books at the Cavern City Renaissance Festival in Carlsbad on September 25 and 26.

Friends of the Santa Fe Public Library threw an End of Summer Reading party to celebrate children who read throughout the summer. Over 300 guests joined the Library and the Friends to swim, play games, get free books, eat treats, and pick out prizes for their participation this year.

The Lunar Awards announced the Fantasy Winner and Runners-Up for Round 4. See them [here](#). The Lunar Awards highlights speculative fiction, focusing on Science Fiction, Fantasy, and Horror genres, with any subgenres falling into those. **Storyletter XPress Publishing** offers the winning writers and the runner-up of each round the opportunity to sign a publishing contract.

In September, **Artemesia Publishing** releases *Wrath of the Sea Hag* by Robert Skead, the second in his Prince Asgar of Tundral middle grade series.

Casa Urraca Press is releasing *A Year of New Mexico Poetry*—a year's worth of poetry about and from NM, including work from U.S. Poet Laureate Arthur Sze, multiple state poets laureate, other renowned authors, and debut poets—on September 15. Releasing on September 29 is *Chaco Now: New and Archival Poems* by V. B. Price. The book will include Price's newest suite of poems (about the importance of, and threats to, Chaco Canyon) as well as a reissue of his previously published *Chaco Trilogy*.

Sarena Ulibarri announced the release of her new book, *Wandering Star & Other Stories*, a collection of twelve mythic fantasy stories.

Manuel González received a Poet Laureate Fellowship from the Academy of American Poets. González, the current poet laureate of New Mexico, intends to use his Fellowship grant to expand poetry workshops and performances through his Voces de la Tierra initiative.

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

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.

September 5 at 9 a.m. [Mesa Verde Literary Festival](#) (Mancos, CO)

Join **Carla Chung Mattix** to discuss *National Parks and the Supreme Court: Groundbreaking Legal Battles*.

September 5 at 11 a.m. [Page 1 Books](#) (Albuquerque)

Join **Dr. Nina Ross** for a special author appearance and signing of *Intimacy with Image: The Art of Archetypal Psychology*.

September 6 at 4:30 p.m. [Garcia Street Books](#) (Santa Fe)

Join **Jerry Ortiz y Pino** for a talk and signing of his novel *Beyond the Edge of the Known World* (**UNM Press**).

September 6 at 4:30 p.m. [Collected Works](#) (Santa Fe)

Join **Robin Maguire** and her mother, **Joan Tewkesbury**, in a reading and discussion of *The Weight of Sunshine*.

September 8 at 6 p.m. [Bookworks](#) (Albuquerque)

Join **Benjamin Radford** for a reading and signing of *Weird New Mexico: MORE Miracles, Magic, and Monsters in the Land of Enchantment*.

September 9 at 5 p.m. [Zollinger Library](#) (Gallup)

Join **NM Writers** and host **Jake Skeets** for a Rising Writers session "Words with a Poet." [RSVP](#) to attend this session.

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

Join **Betsy Gaines Quammen** and **Annette McGivney** for a reading and signing of their new books, *This Haunted Land: Reckoning with Ghosts and the Stories That Shape America*, and *Plastic Shaman: The True Story of a Deadly Self-Help Retreat and America's Misguided Quest for Wellness*.

September 9 at 6 p.m. [La Estrella Event Center](#) (Placitas)

Join **Kellie Tinnin** for the launch of her debut, *This Taught Me That*.

September 10 at 6 p.m. [Collected Works](#) (Santa Fe)

Join **Elizabeth Kendall** for a reading of *Balanchine Finds His America: A Tale of Love Lost and Ballet Reborn*.

September 10 at 6 p.m. [Bookworks](#) (Albuquerque)

Join **Betsy Gaines Quammen** and **Annette McGivney** for a reading and signing of their new books, *This Haunted Land: Reckoning with Ghosts and the Stories That Shape America*, and *Plastic Shaman: The True Story of a Deadly Self-Help Retreat and America's Misguided Quest for Wellness*.

September 11 at 5:30 p.m. [SOMOS](#) (Taos)

Join **Robert Jensen** for a reading and discussion of *This I Don't Believe: A Fulfilling Life without Meaning*.

September 12 at 5:30 p.m. [SOMOS](#) (Taos)

Join **Kate O'Neill** for a reading and signing of *Harp in Hand: Poems of Ireland*.

September 13 at 4:30 p.m. [Collected Works](#) (Santa Fe)

Join **Désirée Zamorano**, author of *Amarisa's Cooking Pot*, and **Margo Chávez-Charles**, author of *Vessels*, for a conversation about the power of writing communities and the importance of Latina representation in literature.

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

Join **Barbara Rockman** for a reading and signing of *Night said*.

September 17 at 6 p.m. [Collected Works](#) (Santa Fe)

Join **Laila Lalami**, a Pulitzer Prize Finalist, for a reading and signing of *The Dream Hotel*.

September 17 at 7:00 p.m. [The Source](#) (Albuquerque)

Join **Holly Wilson's** Third Thursday Open Mic at The Source. Featured reader **Hakim Bellami**, followed by open mic. Sign up begins at 6:30 p.m.

September 18 at 4 p.m. [Santa Fe Southside Library](#) (Santa Fe)

Join **V. B. Price**, author of *Chaco Now: New and Archival Poems* (**Casa Urraca Press**), for a reading and discussion of the current state of Chaco Cultural Historical Park.

September 18 at 6 p.m. [Flickinger Theater](#) (Alamogordo)

Attend the premier performance of **Pablo Jasso's** play, *Four Suicides Looking for a Place to Happen*.

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

Join **Elizabeth Gabel** for a special author appearance and signing of *Gates of Erin*.

September 19 at 3 p.m. [Santa Fe Main Library](#) (Santa Fe)

Join **Carla Chung Mattix** for a talk, reception, and signing of *National Parks and the Supreme Court: Groundbreaking Legal Battles*. Proceeds from book sales at this event will support the Friends of the Santa Fe Public Library.

September 19 at 3 p.m. [Thomas Branigan Memorial Library](#) (Las Cruces)

Join **Dr. Wendy Johnson, M.D.** for a discussion about *Kinship Medicine: Cultivating Interdependence to Heal the Earth and Ourselves*.

September 20 at 11 a.m. [Page 1 Books](#) (Albuquerque)

Join **Roger Jameson** for a signing of his books *The Leopard of New Babylon* and *Devils Garden*.

September 22 at 6 p.m. [Bookworks](#) (Albuquerque)

Join **Miriam Horn** for a reading and signing of her latest biography, *Homesick for a World Unknown: The Life of George B. Schaller*.

September 24 at 6 p.m. [Collected Works](#) (Santa Fe)

Join **Joy Harjo** for a reading and signing of *Cloud Runner*.

September 26 at 11 a.m. [Page 1 Books](#) (Albuquerque)

Join **Bladen Mercutio** for a signing of *SouthWest Gothic*.

September 26 at 2 p.m. [Placitas Community Library](#) (Placitas)

Join **Jules Nyquist** and **John Roche** as they share poems from an assortment of work.

September 26 at 3 p.m. [Santa Fe Main Library](#) (Santa Fe)

Attend a release event for the new anthology, *A Year of New Mexico Poetry* (**Casa Urraca Press**), with readings by several contributing poets. The featured reader will be anthology contributor **Arthur Sze**, the current U.S. Poet Laureate.

September 27 at 2 p.m. [Museum of International Folk Art](#) (Santa Fe)

Join **David R. Farmer**, author of *Jack Rittenhouse: A Western Literary Life* (**UNM Press**), for a lecture about Jack Rittenhouse on Route 66 and a signing to benefit The Friends of Folk Art.

September 27 at 4:30 p.m. [Garcia Street Books](#) (Santa Fe)

Join **Thomas Lowe Fleischner**, in conversation with **Priyanka Kumar**, about his book *Astonished by Beauty*.

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

Join **MaryFrank Sanborn** for a reading and signing of *The Lightning Field*.

September 30 at 3 p.m. [El Rito Library](#) (El Rito)

Join **NM Writers** and host **Zach Hively** for a Rising Writers session “Hone Your Voice.” [RSVP](#) to attend this session.

October 1 at 6 p.m. [Collected Works](#) (Santa Fe)

Join **Jon Else** for a reading and signing of *Frenchman Flat: The Rise and Fall of Atomic Bombs*.

October 2 at 4 p.m. [Santa Fe Main Library](#) (Santa Fe)

Renowned historian **Thomas E. Chávez** will read from his collection of stories, *A Soliloquy of Some Disconnected Tales* (**Casa Urraca Press**).

October 3 at 11 a.m. [Page 1 Books](#) (Albuquerque)

Join **Nicholas Aragon** for a signing of *Curly Crow Goes to the Balloon Festival*.

October 4 at 12:30 p.m. [Page 1 Books](#) (Albuquerque)

Join **Irene I. Blea** for a signing of *Talking with Rudy and Dragonfly*.

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

Join photographer and award winner **Lennette Newell** for a discussion and signing of her book *PRIMATES*.

More Opportunities for Writers

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



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** at Christ Church at 1213 Don Gaspar. Following the lecture, Sevigny will be available for a book signing. For more information and to purchase tickets, go [here](#).

Mesa Verde Writers Conference and Literary Festival

The Mesa Verde Writers Conference will take place **September 2–4** in Mancos, CO, followed by the 2nd Annual Mesa Verde Literary Festival on **September 5, 2026**. Learn more and register [here](#).

Books and Blooms

Join the Santa Fe Botanical Garden on **September 4** for a story time program for children 4 and under. Learn more [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



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](#).

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 Gailley, 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**.

Author Panel: Guide to Mystery and Suspense at Friendship

At the monthly Croak & Dagger meeting on **October 17**, see a panel of local authors discuss a "Guide to Mystery and Suspense." Learn more [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](#).

Performance: The Curious Life of Edgar Allan Poe

projects. This is the final annual cruise (for now). Learn more [here](#).

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. *Backlit* is accepting poetry and nonfiction writing submissions until **September 8**. 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 **September 9**. Learn more [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 **September 10**. 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 **September 10**. 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 **September 10**. Contact [Don McIver](#) for more information.

Presentation: Keep the Pages Turning: Pacing Techniques

At the SouthWest Writers meeting in person and via Zoom on **September 12**, Chris Eboch will talk about how to make your stories more dramatic through pacing and anticipation. Learn more [here](#).

Workshop: Nature Poetry

Ballet 5:8 brings "The Curious Life of Edgar Allan Poe" to the National Hispanic Cultural Center on **October 17**. The full length story ballet explores Poe's life, imagination, grief, love, and the experiences that shaped some of his most enduring work. Learn more and purchase tickets [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. Buy tickets [here](#).

New Mexico State Poetry Society

The 2027 **New Mexico State Poetry Society** anthology, to be titled *Cadence!* is accepting submissions through **October 31**. Contact [Zach Kluckman](#) for more information.

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](#).

Santa Fe Literary Review

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.

Screening: *The Librarians*

Attend a free screening of this award-winning documentary by Academy Award nominee Kim A. Snyder at the Placitas Community Library on **September 12**. Learn more [here](#).

Clarion West Deep Dive

From time to time, Clarion West brings together authors and the public for the opportunity to interview prominent writers in both intimate and public settings. Upcoming sessions include “Post-Dystopia Space Exploration” with Mary Robinette Kowal and Dr. Sian Proctor on **September 12**; “Mycology, Decay, and Metaphors for Community” with T. Kingfisher and Daniel Winkler on **September 24**; “A.I. in Medicine” with Justin C. Key and Lakshmi Krishnan on **October 15**. Register [here](#).

Clarion West Workshop

Join Aigner Loren Wilson for “Crafting Your Story’s Atmosphere” online and in-person on **September 13**. 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 **September 17**. Learn more [here](#).

Workshop: In the Beginning: Grabbing readers’ attention

At the SouthWest Writers workshop in person and via Zoom on **September 19**, Cornelia Gamlem will explore what makes a great opening line. Learn more [here](#).

The *Santa Fe Literary Review* invites submissions **July 15–November 1** of poetry, dramatic writing, fiction, creative nonfiction, and visual art. The 2027 suggested theme is “Connection: Networks, Relationships, and Alienation.” 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](#).

Sage & Ink Writers Festival

The inaugural Sage & Ink Festival brings together local authors, writers, poets, publishers, and readers on **November 7** to celebrate New Mexico’s literary community. To register as an exhibitor, go [here](#). To learn more about attending this event, go [here](#).

Library Author Fair

Meet local authors from around the Four Corners at the Farmington Public Library Author Fair on **November 7**. Learn more [here](#). Authors interested in participating in the fair should contact [Lisa Vest](#).

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.

Presentation: Introduction to Story Structure

Join DelSheree Spinner at the Write to Publish Series event on **September 19** at Quill & Quest Bookstore. Learn more [here](#).

New Frontiers in Writing 2026 Conference

Texas High Plains Writers will hold a conference on **September 18–19** in Amarillo, Texas. New Frontiers in Writing is an opportunity for writers of every genre to come together with industry VIPs for inspiration and connection and to delve into the craft and business of writing. Learn more [here](#).

Workshop: Rooted Reflections

Join the Santa Fe Botanical Garden for a mindful nature and journaling workshop on **September 20**. Learn more [here](#).

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**.

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](#).

Presentation: What did you say?

At the SouthWest Writers workshop via Zoom on **September 23**, Judy Castleberry will talk about creating good dialog and how to make your characters sound real. Learn more [here](#).

Autumn Theme Reading Showtime

Presented by the New Mexico School for the Arts on **September 24**, this is a chance for students to present poetic works for an onstage reading. Learn more [here](#).

Enter the Wild Lands

Join a four-month creative circle meeting twice-monthly **September 13–**

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 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](#).

Jack Williamson Lectureship

The Jack Williamson Lectureship, held at Eastern New Mexico University on **April 8–10, 2027**, includes a luncheon with presentations by the guest of honor and toastmaster, readings by guest authors, time for book sales and signing, and panel discussions on a variety of science fiction and fantasy topics. All events are open to the public and the luncheon is the only event that requires advance reservations and a fee. Learn more [here](#).

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.

Green Fire Times Submissions

December 20 via Zoom. Contact [Shebana C](#) for more information.

Tucson Festival of Books

The Tucson Festival of Books welcomes participation in their Indie Authors Experience. Authors may represent a variety of genres and formats, including self-published, small/independent presses, pay-to-publish, vanity presses, and e-books. Apply by **September 30**. 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 submissions deadline is **October 2**. Learn more [here](#).

Workshop: Pacing Techniques

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

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 at the Doña Ana Community College. Authors from Southern New Mexico and beyond will host writing workshops, author readings, book sales, and signings. More information about the festival [here](#). Apply to be a vendor [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](#).

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](#).

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

Abiquiú Writers Retreat

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](#).

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.

MSU Roadrunner Review Submissions

The *MSU Roadrunner Review* seeks submissions for its ninth issue, which will launch in December 2026. A student-driven literary journal out of the Creative Writing program at Metropolitan State University of Denver, submissions are open to all writers outside of the university. Original, previously unpublished work is invited to be submitted **September 6–October 10**. For submission details, go [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](#).

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 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, and professional and amateur writers to share and listen to true stories. For dates/themes and to sign up to be a storyteller, go [here](#).

Feat of Clay Open Mic

Join Feat of Clay in Aztec for an open mic evening of poetry, music, stories, and surprises. For upcoming events, go [here](#).

Santa Fe Story Lab at the Santa Fe Main Library presents a live storytelling series celebrating true, personal stories. Check events scheduling [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 at the banquet.

Tickets are priced at \$40. Purchase your tickets [here](#).



Entrants of the 2026 NM Book Awards may register for free tickets to the event; registration information was sent to entrants via email from the NM Book Awards director.

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

"Lock up your libraries if you like; but there is no gate, no lock, no bolt that you can set upon the freedom of my mind."

— Virginia Woolf

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

Contributors

- **Tamara Enz** is the Editor of *The New Mexico Writer*, a 2025 New Mexico Writers grantee, author of two bird guides, and has published work in *El Palacio*, *Polarlit*, and *Proteus*.
- **Lisa McCoy** is the Executive Director of New Mexico Writers and Director of the New Mexico Book Awards.
- **Dita Dow** is a New Mexico Writers Sustaining Member and an award-winning author, artist, and songwriter.
- **Saleema Ishq** is the Assistant Editor of *Albuquerque The Magazine*, a speaker, and a thriller author.

- **Mark Beauregard** is a 2025 New Mexico Writers grantee and author of *The Whale, Blood and Chocolate*, *Give the Drummer Some*, and other novels.
- **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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