The New Mexico Writer

November 2026

Supporting and connecting the literary community in New Mexico.

A publication of NMwriters

Jon Krakauer and Mark Bryant to Headline at NM Writers 10th Anniversary Dinner

Since New Mexico Writers first brought New Mexican writers together for a dinner at Santa Fe's La Fonda in 2017, keynote speakers have included poets laureate, literary advocates, fiction and nonfiction authors, and Indigenous writers. That first dinner was offered as a one-off; no one foresaw the expansive organization that was to follow.

NM writers
SUPPORTING *and* CONNECTING THE LITERARY COMMUNITY

A word from NM Writers co-founder James McGrath Morris

New Mexico Writers came into existence accidentally. No master plan for us.

In 2016, I was talking with Lucy Moore, an accomplished writer. I pointed out that there were many interesting writers in the state, but they didn't know each other. So, we decided it would be fun to create a means to bring them together. La Fonda Hotel, on the Plaza in Santa Fe, enthusiastically taught Lucy and me how to put on a dinner in the ballroom. We sent out invitations and waited.

They came. About 150 writers showed up. Doug Preston served as our first keynote speaker. When the dinner was over, we had money in the bank. That was not our intention! We decided to hold a second dinner, put together committees, and began to award fellowships to aspiring writers.

Since then, this rag-tag group has grown into an independent nonprofit organization with a salaried executive director. Now we publish a newsletter, *The New Mexico Writer*, with a circulation of almost 1,500. We run a statewide program called Rising Writers that connects aspiring writers with accomplished writers. We distribute modest grants to aspiring writers in the state and in the greater Navajo Nation (more than $80,000 to over 70

recipients). We like to think of them as “micro grants with macro power.” And we manage the New Mexico Book Awards.

For these reasons, New Mexico Writers has become important to the community of writers here.

It has a promising future. Now a second generation of writers has taken over running the organization. I am being put out to pasture. This is important proof that New Mexico Writers is succeeding in the way we hoped. An organization created by writers for writers.

A decade later, New Mexico Writers links together writers of differing abilities and genres from all around the state by actively supporting and connecting the state’s literary community through its publications, programs, and financial assistance. All in all, not bad for ten years.



On April 29, 2027, New Mexico Writers will host its 10th Anniversary Dinner at La Fonda on the Plaza in Santa Fe—in celebration of where it all began.

To kick off another decade of annual gatherings, keynote speaker Jon Krakauer, author of *Into the Wild*, *Under the Banner of Heaven*, and *Into Thin Air*, will be in conversation with Santa Fe International Literary Festival co-founder Mark Bryant.

Known for his exquisite investigative reporting, Krakauer received an Arts and Letters Award in Literature from the American Academy of Arts and Letters in 1999, and he was a finalist for the 1998 Pulitzer Prize. He is currently the Chairman of the American Himalayan Foundation Board of Directors. In 1996, Bryant, then editor of *Outside* magazine, sent Krakauer to research a story on Nepal and climbers on Mount Everest—the result was *Into Thin Air*.

Krakauer and Bryant, together with Linda Moore, recently founded Assignment, a nonprofit foundation for which Bryant is executive director. The organization trains, mentors, and supports writers in the craft of ambitious investigative reporting and creative nonfiction writing. Their mission is to support journalists embarking on deep investigation of complex stories.

“We are elated to celebrate our 10th Anniversary Dinner with Jon and Mark, whose wide reaching works are so deeply rooted in New Mexico, and who share our dedication to supporting other writers,” said Sarah Haas, chair of the New Mexico Writers Dinner Committee.

Ticketing for the 10th Anniversary New Mexico Writers Dinner will open in January 2027. Look for more details about the April 29th dinner in future issues of *The New Mexico Writer*.

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Joy Harjo Inspires Us to "Say Thank You in the Language that Speaks Your Heart Best"

By Kristin Lueke



On September 26, six hundred people filled downtown Albuquerque's historic KiMo Theater for "An Evening with Joy Harjo: Storytelling, Culture, and the Environment," the Leopold Writing Program's 7th Annual Leopold Lecture. Dedicated to building a culture of care for the planet, the program marked its largest, most experimental event yet, weaving together poetry, music, and land ethics.



Opening the night was Diné writer Santana Shorty, a 2024 Leopold Residency alumna who first met Joy Harjo as a high school student. "Keep up with the poetry," the former U.S. Poet Laureate had told her then. Shorty, now an Institute of American Indian Arts and Stanford University graduate, set a reverent tone: "Joy is a storyteller in the truest sense. Perhaps it's my own aging, or the era of AI, but the spoken word carries more weight to me than ever."

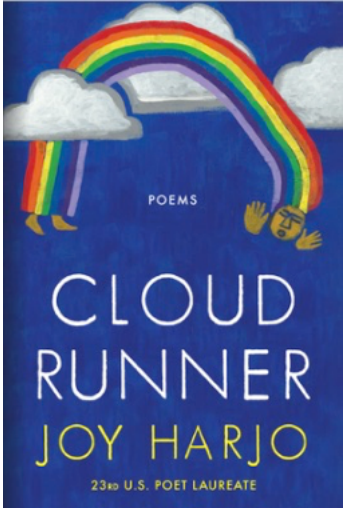
Then Harjo took the stage, and the sold-out crowd went wild. Her return to New Mexico was a homecoming.

"Albuquerque," she smiled. "I have stories..."

A citizen of the Mvskoke Nation, Harjo earned her BA from the University of New Mexico in 1976, after a stint at the Institute of American Indian Arts. During those years, she began to explore art as a form of activism and joined UNM's Kiva Club to organize local tribal communities and coordinate childcare so young parents could

join the march for Indigenous sovereignty and human rights. As a student, Harjo gave birth to her daughter Rainy Dawn Ortiz, whose death in 2023 grounds Harjo's latest collection, *Cloud Runner*.

"Reason has no home in this hour," she writes. And for an hour, Harjo indeed let intuition take the wheel.



She shared new and old poems, including one by Rainy Dawn, anecdotes about her life in New Mexico, and an encounter with a rainbow that spoke to her in a language she'd never heard, but understood. "Communication is ongoing between all living beings," she mused. At one point she came out from behind the podium to water a potted plant on stage.



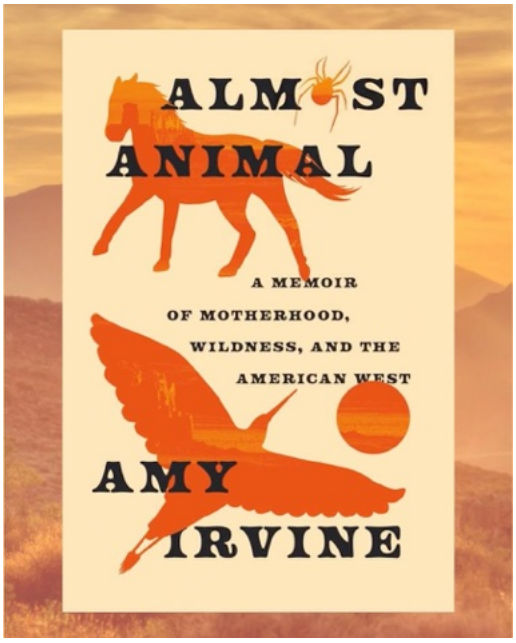
Harjo read one final poem from her forthcoming children's book, *Gathering the Light*, then stepped back as velvet curtains parted behind her, revealing her band, Poetic Justice. A saxophone materialized in her hands. Bathed in red and purple light, she incanted poems while the band grooved. After treating us to "She Had Some Horses" and one last tune, Harjo left the rapturous crowd with a parting blessing: "Keep moving forward together in a story that is us. That is love."

"Art has the power to influence, educate, and change people's minds," noted Leopold Executive Director Nina Simon. "Inviting Joy to perform spoken word in the form of music opens the door to invite and empower more people to take responsibility for caring for the land."

I sat in the front row, beside a man who turned out to be Harjo's stepson, whose knowing asides brought me even closer to the poet whose work has long shaped my own. My heart felt full and fed. To see the warrior poet in the flesh, watering a plant, commanding love—it felt like kinship. It felt like home.

Concentric Circles and the Stories We Need

Research into her family's past took Amy Irvine some effort and a measure of creativity. She turned up snippets, like a letter from Brigham Young to Irvine's great-great-great-great grandfather admonishing him to take his ex-wife and two daughters firewood, flour, and shoes. In Irvine's latest book, *Almost Animal: A Memoir of Motherhood, Wildness, and the American West* (Speigel & Grau), she twines these historical hints with her experience of growing up in Utah, and her exile as a new mother in Colorado. "It is like a ghost in the background," Irvine says of her Mormon history.



"It is such a bigger story, and my story sits firmly in it, because all of our stories do. We forget how many concentric circles of context are exerting force on our own stories at any time." She continued, "As you get further out in those rings of context, they become more ambiguous. Especially when it comes to women's lives because there are so few resources that record what women's lives were like. Plural wives, especially those out of favor, were all scraping for resources," she said. "Imagining from that one letter what their lives must have been like, I [added] as much as I dared to make history come to life."



Irvine has lived an expansive life as one of the top rock climbers in the country, a wildlands firefighter, and a park ranger. Like many women, her world shifted with the birth of her child, B, whose young life was fraught with undiagnosed illnesses. Living off grid on the Colorado Plateau with an assortment of domestic and uninvited animals, among them mountain lions and black widow spiders, often alone with B, Irvine "drifted toward a miserable, lonely homesteading life, because that's what my Mormon grandmothers lived. That's what my life felt like, even though I was living in the twenty-first century." She no longer had to imagine the hardships her foremothers bore.

Irvine's personal story absorbs and reflects the influence of those contextual ripples on her life and the West. Persecution in Missouri, where an extermination order against Mormons was in effect, forced them across the prairie, where they exterminated predators and contributed to a plunge in the Indigenous population. "We are so afraid of wilderness," Irvine said, "and that's why we exert such extreme dominion over it. Same way that men are afraid of women and native cultures, we're more comfortable in the wild mess and the unknown, unmapped regions."

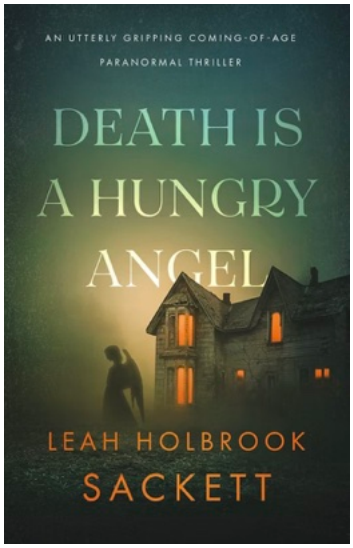
From the intense struggle to understand her life and that of B's in the context of their familial past and B's eventual diagnosis, Irvine weaves her encounters with the wild and explores our disconnection from it and the devastation we wrought. "How do I

carry [this]? And how do I help heal the past?" Irvine asked. "Can I start the conversation? Can I find the language? Can I dip a toe into the process and find some peace for myself? It's a legacy burden and it has harmed me and how I mothered my child."

Irvine thinks of *Almost Animal* as the anti-trad wife manifesto. "This is an inflection point for women in America. I think it's important that we get clear what rights and freedoms we have and what we don't have because [they're] disappearing." She concluded, "Authoritarian regimes go hand in hand with environmental and social crises. We need stories that show us the way out."

The November release event for *Almost Animal* will be held at Paonia Books, in Paonia, Colorado. In December, Irvine will be at Bookworks in Albuquerque, at Collected Works in Santa Fe, and at SOMOS in Taos.

2026 Paul Rhetts Award-Winning Author Honored by Recognition



Leah Holbrook Sackett won the 2026 Paul Rhetts Award from the New Mexico Book Awards for her coming-of-age paranormal story *Death Is a Hungry Angel*, in which Anna and her family, grieving the loss of Anna's younger sister, move into a house where an angel of death already resides.

Published by Shadow Dragon Press (an imprint of New Mexico-based Artemesia Publishing), Sackett's book also garnered first place in the Young Adult category. Sackett, who has published numerous books and short stories, was previously nominated for a Pushcart Prize and the PEN/Faulkner Award.

The New Mexico Writer asked Sackett about *Death Is a Hungry Angel*, the Paul Rhetts Award, and her experience as a writer.



What does receiving the Paul Rhetts Award—for the most highly rated book in the 2026 New Mexico Book Awards—mean to you?

I am honored beyond words to accept the Paul Rhetts Award. It is a monumental milestone for my writing. *Death Is a Hungry Angel* is close to my heart, and for it to receive this recognition is thrilling.

What are the rewards and challenges of writing Young Adult horror?

I love writing and reading the coming-of-age genre, which naturally leads to YA horror, as the experiences in both

genres dig deep into characters' moral development. The challenge of writing YA horror is connecting with a young girl character to capture the experience of maturing under horrific circumstances while delivering an honest account of the protagonist's psychological framework. Conveying the emotional complexities of youth in a psychological thriller is rewarding. Getting in touch with the vulnerability of a young person on the cusp of both maturity and a horrific world opens up deep emotional rewards for me as the author, and hopefully for the reader as well.

Your work covers most aspects of the literary realm: instructor, editor, reader, author. Does this work influence what you write?

Yes, it keeps me in practice from all the different angles of the writing process. As an instructor and editor, I am constantly thinking about how to improve the writing process through constructive criticism. As a reader and author, I am immersed in the coming-of-age and YA genres. These roles keep me active in my pursuit of becoming a better writer.

Can you say a few words about working with Artemesia Publishing?

Working with Artemesia Publishing has been a wonderfully rewarding experience. The editing and publishing process was a fantastic journey, and I learned so much from it. Geoff Habiger has been the most supportive champion of this book, making it possible to reach my audience. His direction and experience are what have led to the success of this novel.

"Artemesia Publishing is thrilled for Leah to have received this prestigious award," said Geoff Habiger, owner of Shadow Dragon Press/Artemesia Publishing. "Having known Paul Rhetts for twenty years, it is an honor to know that one of our authors was recognized with an award named after him. We knew that *Death Is a Hungry Angel* was a special book when we published it, and for the judges of the New Mexico Book Awards to also recognize that reinforces why we got into publishing and why we love working with so many creative and talented authors like Leah."

It's been a little over a month since NM Writers announced the results of the 2026 New Mexico Book Awards. A complete list of the winners and finalists can be found **here**.



NM Writers is working with local bookstores to display winning and finalist books and to host author events. In October, Bookworks in Albuquerque hosted 2026 winners in the Historical Fiction, Literary Fiction, Romance, Short Story Collection, History, and Nature/Environment/Animals/Pets categories.

On November 7 at 1 p.m., Books on the Bosque will host 2026 winners and finalists in the young reader categories. Confirmed authors for this event are: Rachel Bate, author of *Hatch Chile Willie*; Katy Hammel, author of *Heroes of New Mexico History*; Khadijah VanBrakle, author of *My Perfect Family*; and Geoff Habiger, publisher of *Paul Weaver and the Soul Reaver* and the Paul Rhetts Award winner *Death Is a Hungry Angel*.

Look for details on other NM Book Awards events for this year (and next) in future issues of *The New Mexico Writer*.

Speaker Lineup Announced for the 2027 Santa Fe International Literary Festival

Hailing from the American Southwest and the four corners of the globe, authors and moderators converging for the 2027 Santa Fe International Literary Festival include Albuquerque's first Poet Laureate Hakim Bellamy; Diné poet Sherwin Bitsui; NPR's national political correspondent Mara Liasson; singer, songwriter, and author Patti Smith; Pulitzer Prize-winner Hernan Diaz; Santa Fe Art Institute 2027 Writer in Residence Lee Chia-Ying; UNM's Southwest Hispanic Research Institute director Myrriah Gómez; MacArthur Fellow Nicole R. Fleetwood; Booker Prize-winner Marlon James; curator, broadcaster, and author Ekow Eshun; and scriptwriter Nancy Foley.

"The 2027 Santa Fe International Literary Festival will again feature writers from far away and close to home, which means we'll be sharing the talents of many New Mexico writers," says Carmella Padilla, SFILF co-founder and former NM Writers board chair. "Our New Mexico lineup includes poets, novelists, biographers, scriptwriters, scholars, activists, and others whose unique voices and perspectives speak to the diversity of our state and the vitality of our literary community. Since our inception, the Festival has partnered closely with NM Writers and we look forward to seeing the organization's members at our annual Festival reception."

The 2027 Santa Fe International Literary Festival will be held May 14–16 at the Santa Fe Community Convention Center. Tickets go on sale January 25 at 7 a.m. The full author lineup and details about the festival are on the SFILF website.

Treasures Uncovered at the Archives Bazaar

By Carla Chung Mattix

The 2026 New Mexico Archives Bazaar revealed a treasure trove of rare and unique historical documents, photographs, maps, publications and many other materials from archives, libraries, and museums in northern and central New Mexico. This year's Archives Bazaar theme, "New Mexico at the Crossroads: Archives and America's 250th," celebrated the state's rich history and culture, including the centennial of Route 66.



Sponsored by the New Mexico Library Association and the Society of Southwest Archivists, this free annual event is an opportunity to learn about preservation and regional history. The October 6th event was held at the State Records Center and Archives in Santa Fe, where archivists, librarians, and curators were available and happy to answer questions.

Dr. Rick Hendricks, State Records Administrator and former State Historian, delivered an insightful talk titled, “Celebrating a (R)Evolution: Historical Research and Archives.”

Additional participating institutions included: Center for Southwest Research at the University of New Mexico, Georgia O’Keeffe Museum, New Mexico Museum of Art, New Mexico History Museum, Institute of American Indian Arts, UNM Health Sciences Library, International Folk Art Museum, Albuquerque Museum, National Park Service, Supreme Court Law Library New Mexico Military Museum, New Mexico Museum of Art, New Mexico Highlands University, and New Mexico State Library.

I left the Archives Bazaar with quite the haul—ideas, contacts, and maybe even inspiration for a new book.

NM Writers Grantee News



2022 NM Writers grantee **Zahra Marwan** is the keynote speaker for the Society of Children’s Book Writers and Illustrators (SCBWI) New Mexico Handsprings 2026 conference celebrating children’s literature and its creators in Albuquerque on November 6–8.



2019 NM Writers grantee **Laurel Goodluck** will also be presenting at the SCBWI Handsprings 2026 conference on how picture books foster identity and empathy development.



2023 NM Writers grantee **Deborah Jackson Taffa** will be the Keynote Speaker for Prose at A Day with Santa Fe Authors: Poetry and Prose, a fundraising event for Reading Quest, which helps at-risk children improve their literacy skills and reading proficiency and connects local authors and book lovers.



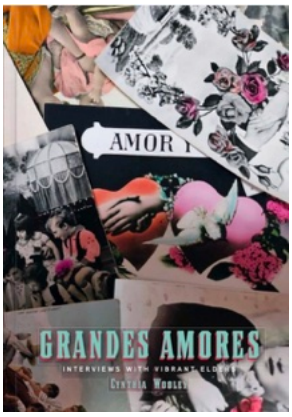






2020 NM Writers grantee **Emily Withnall**; 2024 NM Writers grantee **Damien Flores**; 2025 NM Writers grantee **Mark Beauregard**; and 2023 and 2026 grantee **Victoriano Cárdenas** will present at the Delta Kappa Gamma International fall conference for the New Mexico chapters of this women educator's society. Grantees will participate in a panel titled "Heroes and Villains in New Mexico Writing."

Briefly Noted



Cynthia Wooley, author of *Grandes Amores: Interviews with Vibrant Elders*, held several readings accompanied by music performed by interviewees.

Michael Walter released *Another in the Fire: The Michael Walter Story* in October.

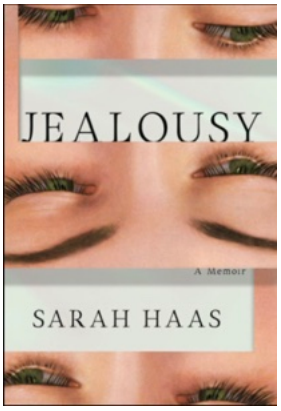
Neal Holtschulte, along with **Sarena Ulibarri** and **Marie Parks**, were Alternative Realty: Fantasy and Science Fiction panelists at the Libros of Enchantment Book Fiesta on October 31. **Neal Holtschulte** will be discussing the creative process as a panelist at Sage & Ink Book Festival on November 7.

Michael A. Thomas, author of *Ostrich* and co-founder of Conexiones in the UNM Honors College, will release *Sister City and Other Stories* in a new collection by **Casa Urraca Press** on November 10.

Rachel Bate's new children's picture book, *Lavender Lamb*, is scheduled for release on November 10.

Justin Hunt is releasing a full-length poetry collection called *Requiem in Wide-open Minor* (CavanKerry Press) in April 2027.

Mary Saracino's second book of poetry, *Awakening*, was released on November 1. Saracino's first poetry book, *Motherlines*, was released earlier this year. They have also published two novels, all with Pearlsong Press.



Sarah Haas will release her debut book, *Jealousy: A Memoir* (Catapult), in November. A launch party and reading are planned at The New Museum in New York City on November 13. Haas will also appear in conversation with Jennifer Croft at Magic City Books in Tulsa, Oklahoma on November 17 and with Sarah Manguso at Diesel Books in Los Angeles on November 19. See the Events section of this issue for her local book events.

SouthWest Writers announced the winners of the 2026 Annual Writing Contest *By Human Hands*. See the list of winners **here**.

Lauren Camp, former New Mexico Poet Laureate, has several new poems in the journal *Public School Poetry*, and will be reading night-sky poems from across eras and cultures in a planetarium at the Poets for Science Gathering at Kent State University.

Santa Fe International Literary Festival, New Mexico Rural Library Initiative, and Moise Memorial Library partnered to celebrate Rudolfo Anaya's birthday with **Carmella Padilla**, **Susan Wiley**, **E. Joe Brown**, and **Maximiliano Tenorio** for a reading of Rudolfo Anaya's work.

Sacred Elements Press, a Southwest writers' collective, is releasing *FLAME: An Anthology of Fire Poems and Prose*, the third in a quartet of literary anthologies on water, earth, fire, and air. The collection shares poetry and prose from 28 Four Corners writers.

Priyanka Kumar was interviewed on Santa Fe public radio (The Last Word on KSFR) on October 23. Kumar's latest book *The Grassland Queen: An Avian Love Story in the American Plains* released on November 3. *Psychology Today* has deemed the book an "Essential Read." Read the full article **here**.

In November, **Artemesia Publishing** releases *Unspeakable* by Geoff Habiger and Coy Kissee, the first in their Night Watch Origins series from the world of *Unremarkable*.

Casa Urraca Press will reissue *Mythwaking - Homeric Hymns: A Modern Sequel*, **V.B. Price**'s classic work of poetry, on November 17.

Pasatiempo wrote about how New Mexico Book Awards recipients have stories to share. Read the full article **here**.

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

November 5 at 6 p.m. Collected Works (Santa Fe)
Join **Priyanka Kumar** in conversation with historian **Dan Flores** as they discuss *The Grassland Queen: An Avian Love Story in the American Plains*.

November 6 at 5 p.m. Books on the Bosque (Albuquerque)
Join the **Society of Children's Writers and Illustrators** for a mingle and mocktails with multiple authors.

November 6 at 5:30 p.m. SOMOS (Taos)
Join **Baker H. Morrow**, author of *The Horse on the Sidewalk* (**Casa Urraca Press**), for a reading as part of Prose Month.

November 6 at 5:30 p.m. Still Spirits North (Albuquerque)
Join **Hosho McCreesh** for a poetry reading from *A Year of New Mexico Poetry* (**Casa Urraca Press**).

November 6 at 6 p.m. Collected Works (Santa Fe)
Join **Angelica Page** for a reading and signing of *Bountiful: Growing up with Geraldine Page*.

November 7 at 11 a.m. Page 1 Books (Albuquerque)
Join **Ginger Pinholster** for a reading of *The Train to Santa Fe*. Join **Lennette Newell** for a showing and signing of *PRIMATES: A Kinship with All Creatures*.

November 7 at 1 p.m. Books on the Bosque (Albuquerque)

Join **NM Writers** to hear authors read from their 2026 NM Book Awards winning and finalist books in the young reader categories. Confirmed winners and finalists for this event are: **Rachel Bate**, author of *Hatch Chile Willie*; **Katy Hammel**, author of *Heroes of New Mexico History*; **Khadijah VanBrakle**, author of *My Perfect Family*; and **Geoff Habiger**, publisher of *Paul Weaver and the Soul Reaver* and the Paul Rhetts Award winner *Death Is a Hungry Angel*.

November 7 at 2 p.m. El Rito Library (El Rito)
Join **Oro Lynn Benson**, **Michael Burwell**, **Monica Devine**, and **Zach Hively** for a reading from the new anthology, *A Year of New Mexico Poetry* (**Casa Urraca Press**).

November 7 at 5:30 p.m. Books on the Bosque (Albuquerque)
Join **David R. Slayton** for a reading from *Backwoods Banshee*.

November 8 at 11 a.m. Page 1 Books (Albuquerque)
Join **Susan Metallo** for a reading of *Hearts on the Table*.

November 8 at 2 p.m. Belen Harvey House Museum (Belen)
Join **Richard Melzer** for a reading of *A History of New Mexico in 100 Objects*.

November 8 at 4:30 p.m. Belen Harvey House Museum (Belen)
Join **Colleen Cambridge** for a discussion and signing of *Death Down the Aisle.*

November 8 at 6 p.m. Vital Spaces (Santa Fe)
Join **Miriam Sagan** and **Claire Benzadón** for a Floating Words Poetry potluck and social hour. Readings begin at 7 p.m.

November 10 at 6 p.m. Collected Works (Santa Fe)
Join **Sarah Haas**, author of *Jealousy: A Memoir,* in conversation with literary translator **Caroline Froh**.

November 10 at 6 p.m. Bookworks (Albuquerque)
Join **Priyanka Kumar** in conversation with historian **Laura Paskus** as they discuss *The Grassland Queen: An Avian Love Story in the American Plains*.

November 11 at 6 p.m. Bookworks (Albuquerque)
Join **Brian Laidlaw** for a reading and signing of *Erratica: On Climbing, Language, and Touching Stone*.

November 12 at 6 p.m. Collected Works (Santa Fe)
Join author and poet **John Brandi** for a reading of *The Diamond Other: Mountain Poems*.

November 13 at 5:30 p.m. SOMOS (Taos)
Join **Mirabai Starr** and **Tania Casselle** for a reading of *Becoming the Queen of Spades*.

November 14 at 11 a.m. Page 1 Books (Albuquerque)
Join **Rosemary Zibart** for a reading and signing of *Beatrice and the Dirty Diggers* (**Artemesia Publishing**). Join **Carla Beene** for a reading and signing of *The Twin Within* and *Beneath the Praire Stars*.

November 14 at 2 p.m. Quill & Quest (Farmington)
Join **Terry Nichols** to celebrate the launch of her middle-grade book *The Turquoise Bead* (**Artemesia Publishing**).

November 15 at 2 p.m. Books on the Bosque (Albuquerque)
Join **Leslie Prichard** for a reading of *Finding Elvis.*

November 15 at 4 p.m. SOMOS (Taos)
Join **David Farmer** for a reading of *Jack Rittenhouse*.

November 15 at 6 p.m. Collected Works (Santa Fe)
Join author **James P. Lenfestey** for a reading and signing of *Coyote and Thunderbird*.

November 17 at 6 p.m. Bookworks (Albuquerque)
Join **V.B. Price** and **Baker H. Morrow** for a reading and discussion to celebrate the release of *A Reader's Guide to New Mexico Literature: Classic to Contemporary*.

November 17 at 6 p.m. Santa Fe Main Library (Santa Fe)
Join **Kimberly Blaeser**, former Wisconsin Poet Laureate and founding editor of Indigenous Nations Poets, in conversation with author **Jamie Figueroa** about Blaeser's new book *Red Ants*.

November 19 at 6 p.m. Bookworks (Albuquerque)
Join **Dean Norris** of *Breaking Bad* for the release of *Do What You're Gonna do: The Definitive Oral History of Breaking Bad*.

November 19 at 6:30 p.m. Carlsbad Public Library (Carlsbad)
Join **Chuck McCutcheon** for a reading and signing of *Nuclear Reactions: The Ongoing Politics of a Radioactive Waste Site*.

November 20 at 3:00 p.m. Cortez Public Library (Cortez, CO)
Join **Terry Nichols** for a reading and signing of *The Turquoise Bead* (**Artemesia Publishing**).

November 20 at 5:30 p.m. SOMOS (Taos)
Join **Robert Westbrook** and **Stevie Czerniel** for Prose Month readings.

November 20 at 6 p.m. Collected Works (Santa Fe)
Join **Chuck McCutcheon** in conversation with **Senator Jeff Bingaman** to discuss *Nuclear Reactions: The Ongoing Politics of a Radioactive Waste Site*.

November 21 at 5:30 p.m. SOMOS (Taos)
Join **Weyodi OldBear** for a reading from *The Root and The Seed* for Prose Month.

November 22 at 12 p.m. Books on the Bosque (Albuquerque)
Join **Chuck McCutcheon** in conversation with **Ty Bannerman** to discuss *Nuclear Reactions: The Ongoing Politics of a Radioactive Waste Site*.

November 22 at 2 p.m. Corrales Historical Society (Corrales)
Join **Enrique R. Lamadrid**, author of *Hearts in Motion, Hearts in Place: The Quest for Querencias on Turtle Island and Abya Yala* (**Casa Urraca Press**), for a talk as part of the Corrales Historical Society Speaker Series.

November 22 at 3 p.m. Books on the Bosque (Albuquerque)
Join **Jeff C. Carter** as they present *A Spooky Scaremus: History of Krampus*.

November 22 at 6 p.m. SOMOS (Taos)

Join **Rebecca Solnit** for a reading from *The Beginning Comes After the End: Notes on a World of Change* and **Ben Gucciardi** for a reading from *Arguments*.

November 24 at 6 p.m. Collected Works (Santa Fe)
Join **Gretel Ehrlich** in conversation with author and conservationist **William DeBuys** on the 40th anniversary of *The Solace of Open Spaces*.

November 27 at 5 p.m. Books on the Bosque (Albuquerque)
Join **Lennette Newell** for a reading and signing of *PRIMATES: A Kinship with All Creatures*.

November 28 at 3 p.m. Books on the Bosque (Albuquerque)
Join **Ana Baca** for a reading of *Tia's Tamales* and *Benito's Bizcochitos.*

December 1 at 6 p.m. Bookworks (Albuquerque)
Join **Amy Irvine** for a reading from *Almost Animal: A Memoir of Motherhood, Wildness, and The American West*.

December 2 at 6 p.m. Collected Works (Santa Fe)
Join **Amy Irvine** for a reading from *Almost Animal: A Memoir of Motherhood, Wildness, and The American West*.

December 4 at 6 p.m. SOMOS (Taos)
Join **Amy Irvine** for a reading from *Almost Animal: A Memoir of Motherhood, Wildness, and The American West*.

For all events listed, please check with the venues as changes sometimes occur.

More Opportunities for Writers

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

Reading the West Book Awards
Mountains & Plains Independent Booksellers Association is open for the 37th Annual Award nominations **October 15, 2026–January 31, 2027**. Learn more **here**.

Workshop: Enter the Wild Lands
Join a four-month creative circle meeting twice-monthly **September 13–December 20** via Zoom. Contact Shebana C for more information.

Library Author Fair
Meet local authors from around the Four Corners at the Farmington Public Library Author Fair on **November 7**. Learn more **here**.

Submissions: *Blue Mesa Review*
The *Blue Mesa Review*, a publication by graduate students in University of New Mexico's MFA program, invites submissions of art, poetry, nonfiction, and fiction between **December 1, 2026 and February 28, 2027** for publication in the Spring issue. Learn more **here**.

Workshop: How to Write Sketch Comedy
Santa Fe Improv and Benjamin E. Taxy offer an approach to sketch comedy that focuses on idea selection and development. **October 29–December 17** (no class November 26). Late starts are acceptable. Learn more **here**.

Workshop: Fun with Haibun!
Creative Roots Foundation presents a special four-session poetry series via online live webinar with Michelle Holland on **November 2, 9, 16, and 23.** Learn more **here**.

Conference: SCBWI New Mexico Handsprings 2026
The Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators (SCBWI) is hosting an in-person and virtual conference celebrating children's literature and its creators in Albuquerque **November 6–8**. Learn more **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 learn more about attending this event, go **here**.

Workshop: Inkpot Writing
Attend an in-person learning circle with Jessica Maggie Brophy in Albuquerque on **November 7**. More information **here**.

Workshop: Hope and Imagination in Environmental and Nature Writing
Join Dr. Wendy Johnson for a Loft Literary Center virtual class taking place over two Saturdays, **November 7 and 15.** Learn more **here**.

Workshop: *Prepare to Die!!!*
Peter Callan presents a three-week workshop based on his book, *Prepare to Die!!! And Other Stuff Nobody Told You: A Practical Guide for Dealing with the Inevitable,* at Santa Fe Community College. Registration closes **November 7**. A more in-depth five-week workshop, will run Saturdays **January 30–February 27**. Learn more **here**.

Workshop: Poetry Circle
Join Emily Hyland on **December 6, 2026 and January 3, 2027** at YogaSource Upstairs Studio in Santa Fe for a monthly poetry circle. Learn more **here**.

Open Mic: Fixed and Free
Via Zoom on **December 10**. **Email** or **text** Billy 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.

Aldo and Estella Leopold Residency
The Aldo Leopold Writing Program is accepting applications for Residencies in Tres Piedras and Galisteo in July and November 2027. Deadline is **February 16, 2027**. Learn more **here**.

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**.

Tucson Festival of Books
The Tucson Festival of Books is scheduled for **March 13–14, 2027** at the University of Arizona campus. Learn more **here**.

Los Alamos Writers Group
Local writers meet for a writer's group at the Los Alamos Public Library every second Wednesday. The next meeting is **November 11**. Learn more **here**.

Open Mic: DimeStories
DimeStories, hosted by Cynthia Sylvester, is held every second Thursday at Quirky Used Books in Albuquerque. The next DimeStories event is **November 12**. 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 **November 12**. Learn more **here**.

Open Mic: Thirsty Ear Poetry
Thirsty Eye Brewing is hosting a featured poet with limited open mic every second Thursday. The next event is **November 12**. Contact **Don McIver** for more information.

Open Mic: Poetry
Attend a poetry open mic on second Fridays and Saturdays at Jamila Coffee in Las Cruces. The next Open Mics are **November 13 and 14**. Learn more **here**.

Bedlam Writing Fellows
An inclusive, community-based writing group meets every other week at Vital Spaces in Santa Fe. The next meeting is on **November 11**. Find more information **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.

Conference: Left Coast Crime
Attend the 36th Left Coast Crime Conference, themed "The Big Chile Rides Again," on **April 1–4, 2027** in Santa Fe. Learn more **here**.

Writing Workshops Santa Fe
Instructor-led workshops, craft seminars, one-on-one conferences about the craft and business of writing. Applications for the **April 7–11, 2027** workshop are now open. 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**.

Open Mic: Feat of Clay
Join Feat of Clay in Aztec for an open mic evening of poetry, music, stories, and surprises. For upcoming events, go **here**.

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 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**.

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

Leopold Writing Program: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. The final 2026 Backyard Storytelling Night is **November 15**. This month's theme is Migration. For more information and to sign up to be a storyteller go **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 a virtual class, "Crisis Creates Us: The Secret Heart of Story", with Daniel José Older on **November 15**. Register **here**.

A Day with Santa Fe Authors: Poetry and Prose
Reading Quest, in association with nonprofit Partners in Education for the Santa Fe Public Schools, helps at-risk children improve their literacy skills and reading proficiency and connects local authors and book lovers. The third annual fundraiser will occur on **November 15** at the Center for Contemporary Arts Muñoz Waxman Gallery. Hosted by Bettye Kearse, local poetry and prose authors attending include Margaret Randall, Carol Moldaw, Hakim Bellamy, Deborah Jackson Taffa, Carlene O'Connor, and Dr. LaNysha Adams. Learn more and register **here**.

Open Mic: Holly Wilson
The next third Thursday gathering in Albuquerque is **November 19**. Learn more **here**.

Open Mic: Spoken Word
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 **November 19**. Learn more **here**.

winning stories will be published in a physical book. Learn more **here**.

Chanticleer International Book Awards 2026–2027
The CIBAs recognize the best in fiction and nonfiction across 28 named genre divisions. Find your genre division and enter **here**.

Submissions: *ABQ The Magazine*
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.

Submissions: *Backlit*
Backlit, an online literary magazine, is accepting submissions of previously unpublished works. *Backlit* offers writers accepted for publication in-depth editorial exchanges with Good Light Editors. Learn more **here**.

Submissions: *Green Fire Times*
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**.

Submissions: *NM Jewish Journal*
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**.

Submissions: *Pueblo County Pulse*
The *Pueblo County Pulse*, showcasing the heart of Pueblo County, Colorado, invites submissions of short stories, poetry, photography, and artwork. Learn more **here**.

Submissions: *Trickster*
Trickster, a literary magazine based at Northern New Mexico College, is accepting submissions of previously unpublished poetry, fiction, nonfiction, artwork, and any combination therein

Presentation: Mining Family Stories to Create Literary Gold
At the New Mexico Book Association's online workshop on **November 21**, Sherri Burr will encourage individuals to recall, interview, research, and evaluate their family stories to determine whether they should write them into articles and books. Learn more **here**.

Conference: Desert Bloom
A tribute to the brilliant women of New Mexico, Desert Bloom brings together conversations, creativity, and collective imagination on **November 21** at the Santa Fe Convention Center. Session 4 features Shirley Edmondson, Jamie Figueroa, Willow Koseoglu, Natachee Momaday Gray, Mary Oishi, Olivia Romo, Maida Ryan, & Santana Shorty; curated by Natachee Momaday Gray; sponsored by Collected Works Bookstore. Learn more **here**.

Retreat: Sandia Starforgers Writers
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. A single scholarship is available; apply by **November 30**. For more information and to register, click **here**.

from New Mexico writers. The 2027 theme is "Echoes." Submission deadline **March 26, 2027**. 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**.

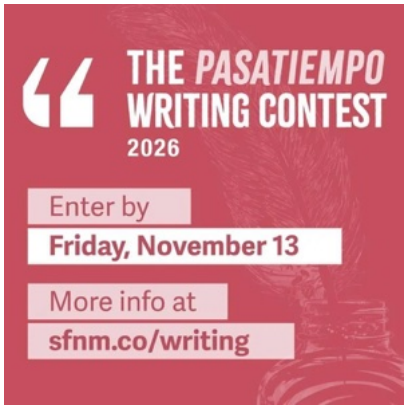
NM State Poetry Society Workshops
The Albuquerque Chapter of the New Mexico State Poetry Society meets monthly for a workshop on poetic forms, famous poets, or process. If you are interested in being a speaker, or providing a topic, for a group workshop of 20–25 poets on Saturdays in 2027, please contact **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. To be considered, authors must either be located in, or write about, the Four Corners Region (New Mexico, Arizona, Utah, Colorado). Authors interested in being interviewed for the podcast should fill out this **form**.

Job Opening at *Pasatiempo*
Pasatiempo, the weekly arts and culture magazine of *The Santa Fe New Mexican*, is hiring a Staff Writer. Job description and how to apply can be found **here**.

2026 *Pasatiempo* Writing Contest

For more than a decade, the ***Pasatiempo* Writing Contest** has published outstanding literary works from a variety of genres. There are three categories this year: Fiction, Nonfiction/Essay/Memoir, and Poetry. The entry deadline is midnight on **Friday, November 13**.



This year's judges include a panel of writers and editors from NM Writers.

Submissions must meet the word count requirements and cannot be previously published. The contest is open to writers who live in New Mexico. Winning

entries will be published in the December 18 issue of *Pasatiempo*.

The contest opened for entries on **Friday, October 9**. For contest details and entry form, go **here**.

2027 Leopold Writing Contest

For nearly two decades, the **Leopold Writing Contest** has invited essays from New Mexico students Grades 6–12 in response to a carefully crafted and thought-provoking prompt inspired by the writings of Aldo Leopold. Contest entries may be in Spanish or English. Entry deadline is midnight on **Friday, February 19, 2027**.

There are four categories: English language Grades 6–7, English language Grades 8–9, English language Grades 10–12, Spanish language Grades 6–12.

A panel of volunteer judges evaluates each essay in these categories for responsiveness to the prompt, eloquence of expression, writing skill and language usage, and connection to Leopold's "land ethic." Judges choose First Place essayists in each of the three categories, as well as Honorable Mentions as merited. Each student winner receives a cash award of up to $500 and a certificate.

This year's quotation and essay prompt:
"Land is not merely soil, it is a fountain of energy flowing through a circuit of soils, plants and animals."
— Aldo Leopold, A Sand County Almanac

Leopold describes land as a "fountain of energy" moving through a connected system of soils, plants, and animals.

Consider the "fountain of energy" of food systems: the land, people, plants, animals, and traditions that shape food systems. As humans, what roles do we play as we interact with and depend upon these systems?

Spanish language contest instructions can be found here.
English language contest instructions can be found here.

In Others' Words

"The soul should always stand ajar, ready to welcome the ecstatic experience."
— Emily Dickinson

*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.
- **Kristin Lueke** is a Chicana poet and author of the chapbooks *(in)different math* and *here i show you a human heart*. She lives in Cerrillos and writes a newsletter called The Animal Eats.
- **Carla Chung Mattix** is on the board of New Mexico Writers and served as a US Department of the Interior attorney working with the National Park Service. Her first book *National Parks and the Supreme Court: Groundbreaking Legal Battles* was released in August 2026.
- **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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