

Arizona Authors Digest



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Issue 24

Arizona Authors Association

February-March 2023

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President's Corner by Toby Heathcotte

The AAA Annual Meeting occurred on Zoom on January 14, 2023, from 10:00 to 11:30 AM. Below is my President's Report:

In 2022 our members had the opportunity to participate in the literary contest and magazine, newsletter, website, book fairs, workshops, and our booth at the Tucson Festival of Books.

We presented six workshops on Zoom on several interesting topics by talented presenters:

Karen Odden – Building a Backstory for Nuanced Characters and Authentic Conflict
 Patricia Brooks – The Art of Writing Memoirs
 Penny Orloff - "Let Them Talk!" - Writing Compelling Character Dialogue
 Donis Casey - Writing Mysteries
 Jane Ruby - The Snowflake Method
 Penny Orloff – Getting Your Work "OUT THERE" Part 1 and Part 2

The newsletter, edited by Kathleen Cook six times per year, gave members an opportunity to get publishing credits for writing columns, to display their photos, and to promote their books. Kathleen also runs the website and has added a forum and other relevant content. We are proud of our website and grateful to her for keeping it current and informative.

Although the contest was reasonably successful, we could definitely use more participation. Everyone who attended the banquet at Moon Valley Country Club had a wonderful time. It was highly successful for the winners, however few regular members attended if they were not a part of the festivities. We have to find a less expensive

continued on the next page

President's Corner, continued

venue from now on. Holding the banquet during lunch instead of dinner worked great. When our photographer failed to show up at the banquet, Kebba Buckley Button stepped in and took beautiful and entertaining photos of the winners and the happenings around the room.

We've decided to take a more professional approach to the contest this year, which Jane Ruby will explain to you in detail. We hope you'll find the changes useful and appropriate. Be sure to enter to help yourself and our association.

We published the 2023 Arizona Literary Magazine through kdp. We try to make it a professional showcase where winners and members can find their work. Past President, Russ Azbill, contributed all the photography. Kebba Buckley Button and Connie Osterlitz assisted with the production.

As of November 30, 2022, we had \$25 in Savings and \$14,129.11 in Checking at Desert Financial.

There are 154 total members now, including 29 new people. All of you who owe dues have already been contacted. If you have not heard from us, it's because you paid for multiple years or because you have contributed time.

We sponsored a booth at the Tucson Festival of Books this past year, but we won't this year because of the expense (almost a thousand dollars) and because we lacked volunteers to hold positions of responsibility.

Regretfully, this past December my health status has changed. I've had a diagnosis of atrial fibrillation. I hope to relinquish my daily activities to other members but remain on the Board serving as an Advisor and Statutory Agent. Please consider volunteering your time to fulfill the needs of the Association.

We are currently seeking people for these positions: Program Director who will organize and host workshops and festivals for members.

Forum Monitor who will post writer-related material on the Arizona Authors forum and monitor any unrelated activity there.

Membership Developer who will maintain the roster and promote new memberships.

Editor who will compile and publish Arizona Literary Magazine.

President's Corner, continued

All membership dues are comped for members who take on these responsibilities. I hope many of you will be willing to step up.

Toby Heathcote
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arizonaauthorsassociation@gmail.com

<https://tobyheathcote.com/>
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<http://www.arizonaauthors.com/>



*The 2023
Arizona
Literary
Magazine,
is on sale
HERE*



Folk Art in Pinetop-Lakeside
Photo by Arizona Authors Association member
Janet Alcorn



Cub in Tree Near Sycamore Canyon, AZ
 Photo by Arizona Authors Association member
 Mike Rothmiller

Arizona Authors Association Leadership

Board of Directors:

President.....Toby Heathcotte
 Treasurer/Literary Contest Director.....Jane Ruby
 Secretary/Editor/Website Admin.....Kathleen Cook

Unless expressly stated, Arizona Authors Association, including its newsletter staff, neither endorses nor takes responsibility for the opinions expressed in this publication.

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All other inquiries should be sent to:

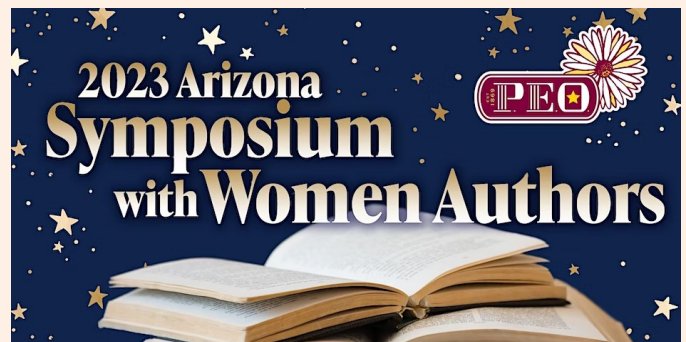
arizonaauthorsassociation@gmail.com

Winter Literary Trivia

(Answers on the Back Page)

1. This appropriately-named author wrote both Dust of Snow and A Winter Eden.
2. In the sci-fi novel *A Pail of Air* what wintry disaster is befalling Earth?
3. In *A Winter's Tale*, by Mark Helprin, a thief is redeemed when he takes pity on this young girl.
4. The Cross of Snow, a poem by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, commemorates this tragedy in his life.
5. In Winter Dreams, a story by F. Scott Fitzgerald, ambitious Dexter Green believes himself in love with this woman for 15 years, but that dream changes once she loses her beauty and wealth.
6. In what month does the snow start in the novel *The Snow* by Adam Roberts?

For more trivia, click [HERE](#).



2023 Arizona Symposium with Women Authors

FEBRUARY 4, 2023

1:00-4:00 PM MST

Desert Breeze Community Church
 17600 North Black Canyon Highway East
 Phoenix, AZ 85053

Cost: \$15:00

Keynote speaker Barb Solberg will kick the symposium off at 1:00pm. Come join this meet and greet event with approximately 15 women authors including Patricia L Brooks.

Arizona Authors Association

Current Benefits and Submission Guidelines

Membership Benefits

The Arizona Authors Association offers several valuable benefits to our members. This newsletter provides you with a bimonthly guide to workshops, events and activities, many of them free or low cost, designed to hone your skills as a writer. In addition, both our blog and our newsletter offer advice, suggestions, and insight to reinforce your expertise.

The yearly Literary Contest furnishes an opportunity to showcase your work and the possibility of earning prizes that will enhance your reputation as an author. Do you have an older book that never got the recognition it deserved? Our new “Oldie but Goldie” category offers a chance to relaunch and renew interest in it. We also offer online book fairs or other events through our Zoom account. Advertising under the Arizona Authors Association banner allows you to promote your work and increase your visibility with a minimum of expense and effort.

I hope you will take advantage of the newsletter to report your accomplishments. Our “Congratulations” page is designed to applaud your efforts and inspire other members. We also welcome your input on anything author related, such as your own literary news, useful tips, helpful websites, etc. Ask questions that will be answered in the next issue. Together, we will all benefit from the combined knowledge of our diverse membership.

Lastly, one of the biggest benefits of your Arizona Authors Association membership is the ability to reach others with your book releases and advertisements. At present, members may submit a quarter-page ad for author-related services without cost. Books released within the previous six months (or about to be released) will receive a free, full-page ad.



Submissions to the Newsletter

Your input is welcome! The following categories accept submissions through midnight on the **15th** day of odd-numbered months. Send all entries to: arizonaauthorseditor@gmail.com.

Features are generally between 800-1200 words (lengthier or shorter submissions will be considered). We seek articles that motivate and inspire writers, enhance their skills, assist in promoting their works and more.

What Are You Reading? asks members to share their current reading material in 200 words or less. Tell us why you like or dislike a book (written by anyone except yourself). This will help other members in their quest for new reading material.

Road to Imagination seeks finished works of 800 words or less based upon the previous issue's story prompt. **Back Page Quotes** seeks jokes or quotes (200 words or less) on the foibles of writing, editing or publishing. We also need Arizona landscape **photos**, as inspiring space fillers for our newsletter. If we use them, we'll credit you. Please be sure to state in your email that you took the photos.


If you published a book within the last six months, share it with the Arizona Authors Association Newsletter. We'd love to advertise it in our next issue. We will also list any upcoming book-related events, meetings, workshops, book sales, book signings, etc., across the state or in nearby regions as space permits. If you offer editing, proofreading, or other literary services, submit a quarter-page ad with us, currently without cost to members in good standing.

Send your articles in Word, Notepad or Wordpad format. Articles will be standardized to a Times New Roman 11pt font. Pictures may be gif, png or jpegs. Send large pictures, if possible, (no less than 2"x4") since we can shrink any picture without losing quality, but small pictures cannot be enlarged without deterioration. Note that all submissions are subject to light editing/proofreading. You will be informed in advance of publication if extensive edits are needed.

Thank you!

Recent Events

Mark D. Walker’s book review column was featured in the December 2022 issue of the "Reviewer's Book-watch." You may read it [HERE](#).



On 1/23/2023, Mark attended the event **PEN America: Reproductive Writes: Night of Free Expression, Fun & Body Autonomy**, which took place at the Changing Hands Book Store in Phoenix, AZ

On 1/28/2023, Mark presented **The Making of My Saddest Pleasures**, a Zoom event for the Arizona Professional Writers group. To pick up a copy of the book, click [HERE](#).

To find out more about Mark, click [HERE](#).



Elizabeth Ajamee-Boyer and her husband TJ Boyer presented a workshop, **World Building in Novels**, at the Prescott Library in Prescott, AZ. The workshop took place on 1/24/23. They also showcased their books in the **Tempe Fan Con** in Tempe four days later, on the 28th.

Many of those at the **Tempe Fan Con** were wearing costumes for the fun event.

To find out more about Elizabeth and her books, click on her [website](#) or visit her [Arizona Authors](#) page.

Clare Broyles was the guest author in January in Donis Casey’s website feature, **Tell Me Your Story**. Clare is the daughter of *New York Times* best-selling author Rhys Bowen, who created the popular *Molly Murphy* series.



Donis features a new author each month. To find out more about her feature or to read current or past interviews with other authors, visit her [website](#).

Mike Rothmiller’s video of Prescott’s recent snow was featured on both Fox News and on Yahoo News. You may see the video [HERE](#).



On 1/5/23, The New York Post published a story about Mike’s recent book on Frank Sinatra, featured in our last issue. You may read the story [HERE](#).

Mike recently received a letter from Joe Biden and a Christmas card from his wife, Jill. Mike’s book, *My Hero, Military Kids Write About Their Moms and Dads*, was featured along with Jill’s in the *Washington Post*. The book has forwards by Presidents Jimmy Carter and Bill Clinton, and General Norman Schwarzkopf.



To find out more about Mike, click [HERE](#).

Patricia L. Brooks, president of the Scottsdale Society of Women Writers, featured author Renee Siegel at the group’s monthly meeting held on 1/25/23.



Renee Siegel is a nonfiction author, counselor and life coach. Her topic was, “Reclaiming YOU: Addressing Trauma with the Enneagram.” To find out more about Renee and her work, click [HERE](#).

To find out more about Patricia and the Southwest Society of Women Writers, visit her [website](#).



Send us your writing-related events, both upcoming and recent, no later than March 15th to:

arizonaauthorseditor@gmail.com

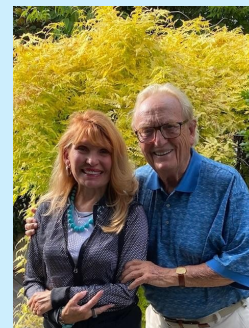
Upcoming Events



On Wednesday, 2/22/23, Mark D. Walker will be presenting, “My Daily Rituals: How I Write and Why” at the **Desert Foothills Library**, 38443 N School House Rd, Cave Creek, AZ 85331. This is part of the library’s Author Series. To learn more about this event, click [HERE](#).

To learn more about Mark and all of his upcoming projects and appearances, click [HERE](#) or visit his [Facebook](#) page.

Patricia L. Brooks will be speaking and reading at the 2023 **Arizona Women’s Symposium** at the **Desert Breeze Community Church**, 17600 N. Black Canyon Hwy on 2/4/23 between 9am-2pm. To find out more see the ad about this event on page 3 of this digest or click [HERE](#).



From 2/20 to 4/10, Patricia L. Brooks will facilitate **Write the Memoir to Remember**, a private eight week class for the Senior Living Center/Mirabella at ASU. The program is not open to the public.

On 6/7/23 between 3:30 to 4:30 Patricia L. Brooks and her author-husband, Earl L. Goldmann, will present their memoirs, five total, and read from their books at the **Desert Foothills Library** in Cave Creek, at 38443 N. Schoolhouse Road. RSVP to [DFLA](#) or call 480-488-2286. This event is part of the monthly Author Series.

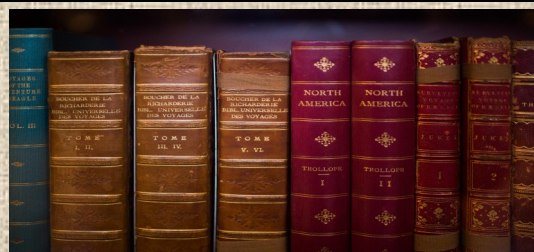
To learn more about these events, visit Patricia’s [website](#) or email patricia@plbrooks.com. You may also text Patricia at: 480-250-5556.

On Friday, 3/24/2023, Elizabeth Ajamee-Boyer will be giving a presentation on **World Building/ DND** at Connection Village of Oak Creek, 25 W Saddlehorn Rd, Sedona AZ 85631. The presentation will take place from 12 noon to 1:30 pm.



The next day, on Saturday, 3/25/2023, she will be at the Verde Valley Comic Expo, 100 6th St., Cottonwood, AZ 86326 from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

To learn more about Elizabeth and her husband TJ and all of their events, click [HERE](#).



New Name!

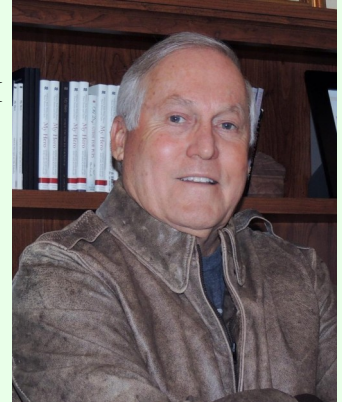
After 44 years, our publication finally has a name!
It is now the **Arizona Authors Digest**



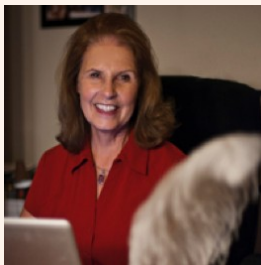
Congratulations to Our Members

In addition to Mike Rothmiller's many events on the [Recent Events](#) page of this issue, he also was interviewed on the program Coast to Coast on January 23rd, where he discussed two of his many books, [Bombshell: The Night Bobby Kennedy Killed Marilyn Monroe](#), and [Frank Sinatra and the Mafia Murders](#). As stated on its website, "Coast to Coast AM airs on more than 600 stations in the U.S., as well as Canada, Mexico and Guam, and is heard by nearly three million weekly listeners. It is the most listened to overnight radio program in North America." To learn more about his interview, click [HERE](#).

Mike's book on Sinatra has been available for a couple of weeks and has already hit #2 in Hot New Releases on Amazon. It was featured in the Finance section of Yahoo News [HERE](#). His *Bombshell* book, released more than a year ago, remains a best seller in England and Ireland and is doing extremely well globally. Mike reports that an earlier book on serial killer [H. H. Holmes](#) did extremely well over Christmas. It was ranked #4 on Amazon in its category on Dec. 26th.



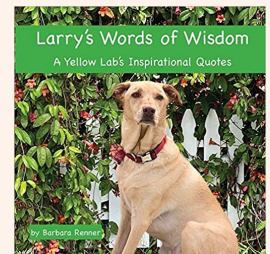
To find out more about Mike and all of his books, click [HERE](#).



[Larry's Words of Wisdom](#) won First Place for best Coffee Table & Gift Books in the 2022 Royal Dragonfly Book Award contest. This book is more than just a book of adorable dog pictures and feel-good quotes; it's inspirational for all ages.

Larry's book can be purchased from Barbara's [website](#). While you're there, sign up for Barbara's monthly newsletter. When you subscribe, you will receive a free download of the "Puppy Wisdom" chapter from *Larry's Words of Wisdom*.

Find out more at: <https://www.rennerwrites.com/>



Janet Alcorn recently published two short stories. Janet's suspense story, "Walk Me Home," won first place in the 2022 Jim Martin Memorial Short Story Contest from Arizona Mystery Writers. Her horror story, "The Fine Print," appears in *'Twas the Fright Before Christmas in Deathlehem*, a holiday horror anthology from Grinning Skull Press. Both of these stories are featured in the [Short Releases](#) section of this digest.

Read "Walk Me Home" free online [HERE](#). Purchase *'Twas the Fright Before Christmas in Deathlehem* from [Amazon](#).

Learn more about Janet on [her website](#).



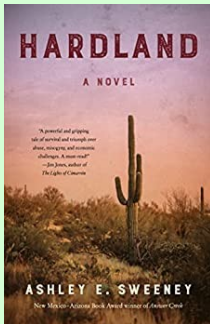
Congratulations, continued

Mark D. Walker received an excellent response to his “The Best of the Million Mile Walker Dispatch for 2022!” from fellow writers. It includes his best reviews and commentary of the year. Check it out [HERE](#).

Bill Miller of [Global Connections TV](#) will soon be interviewing Mark for the second time. Global Connections Television is unique in its approach and reach. Bill Miller interviews guests such as Jane Goodall and Peter Yarrow (of Peter, Paul and Mary.) Stay tuned!

Mark is now a contributor for [The Authors Show](#) and many of his reviews are now on their site. This group offers a platform for writers to promote their latest book—they interviewed Mark for his first book, and now they’ve asked him to establish a more formal platform for reviews to go along with their interviews. Check out some of Mark’s work [HERE](#).

To learn more about Mark, visit his [website](#) or his [Facebook](#) page. You may also visit his [Arizona Authors](#) page.



Ashley E. Sweeney’s third novel, [Hardland](#), was reviewed in the New Year's Day issue of *Arizona Daily Star*. If you are a subscriber, you may read this review [HERE](#).

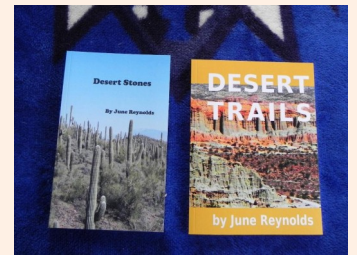
Ashley discussed the book in an interview last fall with Susan J. Tweit of Village Books, which may be seen on YouTube [HERE](#).

To find out more about Ashley, visit her [website](#) or her [Arizona Authors](#) page.



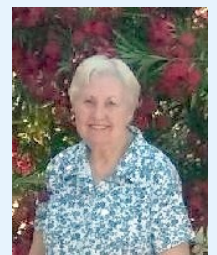
June Reynolds has just acquired two new venues for her books. [Desert Stones](#) and [Desert Trails](#) will be available at the [Ajo Copper News](#) in Ajo, AZ, as well as at [Antigone Books](#) on 4th Avenue in Tucson, AZ.

To find out more about June and her books, click [HERE](#).



Lorie Lux’s article, “Queen Elizabeth, a woman for all time,” appeared in the [Daily Independent](#) on December 28th. It is also featured in the [Short Releases](#) section of this issue.

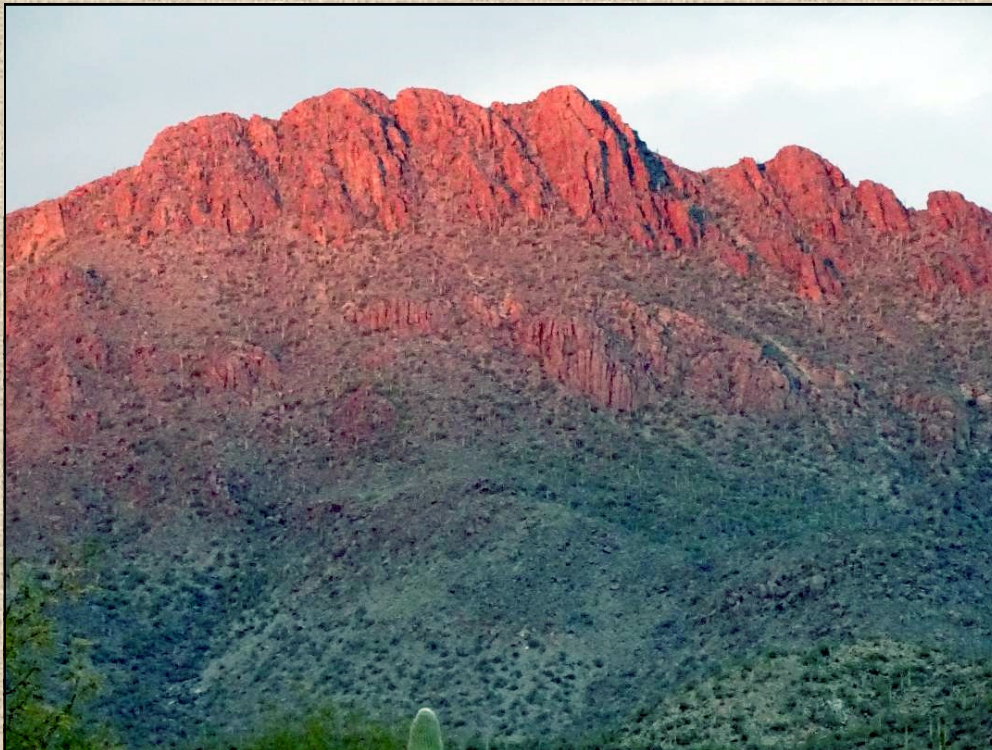
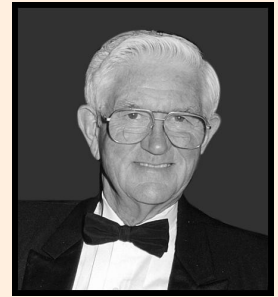
To find out more about Lorie and her books, click [HERE](#).



Congratulations, continued

Jack Hawn’s story, “Precious Items Lost and then Found,” appeared in the [Sun City West Independent](#) on December 14, 2023. The story is also featured in the [Short Releases](#) section of this issue of the Arizona Authors Digest.

To find out more about Jack, click [HERE](#).



“Life’s a bit like mountaineering – never look down.”

– Sir Edmund Hillary

Golden Gate Mountain
Tucson, AZ.
Photo by Arizona Authors
Association member
June Reynolds

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Arizona Authors Annual Meeting Minutes

by Kathleen Cook

The Zoom Meeting was called to order at 10:07 am, January 14, 2023. In attendance for at least part of the meeting were, in alphabetical order, Elizabeth Ajamee-Boyer, Michelle Beaver, Patricia Brooks, Kebba Buckley-Button, Kathleen Cook, Dana Davis, Toby Heathcotte, Penny Orloff, and Mark Walker.

Toby's Presentation:

Toby began with a recap of the association's features in 2022, including the Literary Contest, Literary Magazine, newsletter, website, book fairs, workshops, and our booth at the Tucson Festival of Books. A total of six workshops were presented by authors Karen Odden, Patricia Brooks, Donis Casey, Penny Orloff, and Jane Ruby.

Toby mentioned the newsletter and website and expressed appreciation to Kathleen Cook for that work. She noted that the Literary Contest was a "reasonable success." In the coming year, a more professional direction will be taken to increase interest in the contest. Toby stated that few regular members attended the awards banquet except those involved, but switching from dinner to lunch worked very well and will continue.

Toby recognized those who helped with the Literary Magazine, Kebba Buckley-Button and Connie Osterlitz. She also thanked our former president, Russ Azbill, for providing the cover photo and other pictures for the magazine. Toby reported that as of November of 2022 we had \$25 in savings and \$14,129 in checking at Desert Financial Credit Union. As of the first of the year, we had 154 total members. Those who have not paid for 2023 received notices in January.

Toby regretted that we would be unable to have a booth at the Tucson Festival of Books this year due to increased expense and low volunteer participation.

In a personal note, Toby revealed that her health had declined due to Atrial Fibrillation. Toby hopes to relinquish her duties as president but remain on the Board as an advisor and statutory agent. She asked for volunteers to help the association, including: Program Director, Forum Moderator, Membership Developer and Literary Magazine Editor. Those who volunteer their time will be compensated for their dues.

Toby ended her presentation with an explanation of some of these tasks, which were given in more detail later in the meeting.

Kathleen's Presentation:

Kathleen began with an announcement of a new name for the newsletter. She mentioned that over the years, people have asked her for the name of our publication. She always had to tell them we didn't have one. Jane suggested "Arizona Authors Digest" and it was adopted unanimously by Toby, Jane and Kathleen. The new name will appear in the February-March issue.

Kathleen expressed gratitude for the many contributors to the newsletter, including old hands such as Toby, Mark, and Jane, and newer columnists such as Jeanne Burrows-Johnson, who specializes in marketing techniques, and Ashley E. Sweeney, who specializes in the mechanics of good writing. Kathleen also mentioned guest columnists such as Peter Bernhardt and expressed thanks to Janet Alcorn, who took over the **Where in Arizona?** column from departing Dick Waters. Finally, she mentioned her son, Kevin Gundlach, who does the new **Puzzle It!** feature.

Continued on the next page.

Meeting Minutes, continued.

Kathleen said that Toby had been her proofreader since the beginning, and had always helped to maintain the excellence of the newsletter. Toby's skill in such tasks are unmatched, but with her health in decline, a new proofreader would be most welcome.

Pivoting to the website, Kathleen reported that the new website has been up for a little over a year. According to Wix analytics, it served 1,875 unique visitors (different people). The site averages 7-9 unique sessions per day. On Moonfruit, our former web host, we were getting about 2 unique sessions per week. So our traffic has gone up 30 times. Most popular pages are the home page, the members page, and the contest page. Over half of the people who visit the home page also visit the member page. Kathleen believes the value is there for our members, since most personal websites do not get thousands of unique visitors per year. Almost half of those who visit the home page also visit the contest page, so we're drawing interest in the contest as well.

Our membership is now at 154, which is a 33 percent increase over what it was before the website launched. Most new members visited the website before joining; many of them becoming a member through the website.

Of the 3132 site sessions, Kathleen reported that the vast majority came from the US, but 41 came from the Philippines, 32 from Canada, 20 from India, 19 from the UK, 8 from Australia, 7 from Mexico, 7 from Germany, 5 from Norway and 5 from Denmark. The website reached a lot of people in its first year, in comparison to our old website. Kathleen also stated that the average amount of time on our site is approximately 5 minutes per session, 18 percent higher than average for our area of expertise.

Kathleen then brought up an issue concerning this global outreach. A few months ago, we turned down a prospective member from India, telling him that we were a "US-only organization." Kathleen pointed out at the time that we had Canadian members, and she expressed a concern that it might not be legal to state a "US-only" policy. Kathleen noted that people may join directly from the web page on PayPal, and we cannot know whether they are US-based or not. If people are turned down and later find out that we do have members from other countries, there could be legal hassles.

Mark then stated that he is a featured reviewer on The Authors Show, and specializes in Latin American author reviews. He noted that we live in a global society and a broader reach is necessary. He was recently featured on Global Connections TV, which promotes global connections, and thought that accepting members from around the world was a very good way to grow our membership.

Patricia expressed surprise that people outside the United States would wish to join an Arizona group, and mentioned that her group (Scottsdale Society of Women Writers) only allows women. She added that she would love the exposure of a global membership, but wondered if it was advisable for an Arizona-based organization.

Kathleen mentioned that if membership were limited to Arizonans it would leave her out, since she no longer lives in Arizona.

Elizabeth then suggested the group might accept members from North America.

Mark added that his last publisher was in India, so if we limit membership we are losing a lot of opportunity to increase our reach globally.

Patricia expressed concern that people can join directly from PayPal without any vetting. She controls her own group so it cannot happen. She stated that she didn't believe we needed to limit members from other countries, but was simply concerned about intruders on our Zoom workshops and meetings.

Elizabeth noted that anyone not invited to our workshops and meetings would be intruders.

Continued on the next page.

Meeting Minutes, continued.

Kathleen stated that members must be invited, but that any disruptive member could always be muted or expelled from a meeting. She also stated that since we can't limit a membership that goes through PayPal, it may not be possible to limit it at all. She asked if we should state "US only" if we are not a US-only group. Although Kathleen agreed with Mark about adding foreign members, she believed that we need to check the legalities of this issue if the majority wished to limit membership.

Jane asked whether we should get legal counsel on this issue. She also wondered why anyone would pay 45 dollars if they don't speak English well enough to benefit from membership and worried about the possibility of trolls.

Mark thought they might wish to join to improve their English skills, if they were non-US authors.

Toby mentioned that the person she turned down did not speak English well, and Kathleen conceded that fact. Toby then mentioned that we've always had people from outside the US, including from Canada and one from Scotland, and Kathleen again reiterated her legal fears of telling people that we don't allow non-US in the group.

Patricia offered to contact her lawyer friend, an intellectual property attorney who is also an author and has written on legal subjects. She added that her attorney friend has never questioned the legality of her "women only" group and did not think this was a legal issue for us. She stated that over the years men have tried to join her group, but she did not allow it and no problems arose from it.

Kathleen said that it may be possible to cover ourselves by stating something on our website, if that was something the majority wished to do.

Mark said that a legal opinion is a good idea as a first step, and that the attorney Patricia mentioned, Maria Speth, was very good and he had seen her work before. He stated that as a second step, he could contact Pen America, an international writers group. They had branches all over the world and just opened one in Phoenix. We could start with asking Maria, and then go from there.

Kathleen agreed that it was a good idea.

Patricia said that she would contact Maria and ask a quick question on this issue.

Kathleen moved on to the Calendar page on the website. She said that every writer who is speaking at an event should contact her so she can add it to the Calendar page. Finally, she mentioned that she would love to have a Forum Moderator on the website, because she sometimes has to take down spam, and it would be nice to have a volunteer to do that and to add content and build the forum.

Jane's Presentation:

Prior to the meeting Jane created a set of 14 charts to use, in order to visualize the material presented and make it easier for viewers to absorb. The charts were very helpful in her presentation.

Jane reported that as of January 2, 2023, we had \$9,482 in the checking account. At the same time last year, we had \$5077.46 in the checking account. Therefore, our net gain for the year was \$4404.54. She mentioned that this number changes daily slightly, but these were the totals she got from the credit union on January 2nd.

Deposits were mostly from members. Withdrawals included the prize award checks that were cashed. One person donated the prize money back to the Arizona Authors Association, and Jane expressed gratitude for that unnamed member. She went on to say that we earned \$400 in membership renewals in early January, 2023.

Continued on the next page.

Meeting Minutes, continued.

Jane moved on to the Literary Contest, and reported that it generated \$2395 in income. The payouts for prize money totaled \$1075. Expenses for postage, boxes, etc, was about the same as last year, at \$358.65. Overall, the contest resulted in a net gain of **\$961.35**.

Banquet ticket sales totaled \$2300, plus a \$500 sponsorship from Jane for a total gross of \$2800. Expenses, including the venue of Moon Valley Country Club, totaled \$4510, for a net overall loss of **\$1710**. Jane reported that everyone had a great time and that the luncheon was a success. She thought the luncheon drew more people from farther away, such as Tucson and other areas.

Authors who bought advertisements in the Literary Magazine made up the bulk of the revenue from the magazine, at \$235. Hard copy magazine purchases totaled \$50. Printing costs came to \$280 and mailing costs, including envelopes and postage, came to \$113.33. Overall, the net loss from the Literary Magazine was **\$108.33**. Jane recommended that we cut our losses on the Literary Magazine by refraining from pre-ordering hard copies of future issues. We could also cut expenses by offering free PDFs to judges and winners, rather than hard copies.

Moving on to the Literary Contest for 2023, Jane announced changes to the structure and prizes. Although the number of cash prizes were reduced from 24 to 13 (with 8 additional category winners receiving recognition and a certificate), the prize amounts were greatly increased. The prize structure is as follows:

Grand Prize: \$300 for overall best entry

Three First Prizes of \$150 each

Three Second Prizes of \$75 each

Three Third Prizes of \$50 each

Three Fourth Prizes of \$25 each

Eight "Best of Category" winners will earn a certificate and entry in the Literary Magazine.

Jane pointed out that this is better than most contests, which may offer only one prize instead of thirteen cash awards and eight additional recognition awards. The contest rules were tweaked slightly from last year, with Kathleen Cook's input. Jane reported that all entries will now be in PDF form. Nearly all authors now have PDF copies. While it may prove problematic for Oldie but Goldie entries, it is very likely that they too, have pdfs. Jane stated that she'd work on any bugs in the new system as they come, but that overall, it will result in a great savings for the organization as well as authors, who will not have the extra expense of providing two copies of each book. It will also save the hassle of taking boxes of books to the post office.

Patricia asked if the Oldie but Goldie category was still as popular as ever.

Jane mentioned that we've only had the category for 2 years, but both years had about the same amount of interest. It was the most popular category with about 15 entries. Jane then asked Kathleen if the sample Contest Form contained a limit of 1 entry per Oldie category.

Kathleen replied that it was not included, and Jane said that this was only a suggestion. Jane discussed the urgent need for volunteer judges, particularly for this category.

Jane then asked if Kathleen had changed the form to include a word limit in the Short Story category. Kathleen stated that she had not yet changed it but intended to do so. Both Jane and Kathleen agreed that a 5000 word limit would be beneficial. Jane mentioned that it would avoid the problem of having too few words on a page, such as with dialogue that needs a line for each speaker.

Penny thought that a 5K word limit was a good idea, and Michelle said that she thought it was fantastic. It was agreed that the Short Story rule would be switched from 15 pages to 5000 words.

Continued on the next page.

Meeting Minutes, continued.

Michelle mentioned that she was involved with Pen America, and offered to help advertise the Arizona Authors Association within that group. We share the same goals even if we use different methods or approaches, so it would be beneficial for both organizations.

Jane then pivoted to the Tucson Festival of Books, which took place in March of 2022. We chose not to participate in 2023, not only because of expense but because of lack of enough volunteers to man the booth. The cost of an inside booth is now \$660 plus \$165 for electricity. A corner booth would run \$835. These prices reflect the discount nonprofits receive. Jane mentioned that a corner booth was much more valuable, since you can get traffic from two directions.

Patricia suggested that the Arizona Authors Association partner with her organization on a booth in 2024. Since her group is not a 501c3, she does not get the discounted prices and so the booth would be too expensive for her group. If she could share a booth with us, that would defray costs for both groups.

Penny mentioned that she has a 501c3 organization and can possibly sponsor another group at the festival in 2024. She also mentioned that we could fundraise ahead of time to cover costs.

Jane mentioned that Rico was a big help in setting up the booth. She also noted that the Tucson Festival of Books volunteers put up our heavy banner at no charge. (She later noted that Rodo Sofranac was a big help in tearing down the booth at the end.)

Dana Davis stated that she recalled a time when authors could sell under the banner of the organization, and not need individual licenses. She asked if this were still possible.

Jane answered that each author must have their own TPP license and that government officials often go to each booth and check licenses.

Toby noted that Dana was remembering a bookstore that used to provide license service to individual authors, so they didn't need their own. That bookstore no longer operates. On this note, Jane ended her presentation.

Old Business:

The Tucson Festival was covered already, but Toby wished to mention that the festival was a good way to attract members, and we should return there in 2024 if possible.

New Business:

Toby stated that due to her declining health, she needed volunteers to help with some of her tasks, such as:

A Program Director would plan zoom workshops and book fairs as well as other events.

Membership Director would send out notices, promote memberships, and promote the contest wherever possible in order to attract new members.

Literary Magazine Editor would work during Aug-Oct to create the literary magazine and oversee its design, editing, layout, and more.

In addition to Toby's needs, a Forum Moderator would help Kathleen and would provide content for the website forum and moderate the forum for non-writing related activity.

Toby suggested that the jobs may be split, if someone didn't want the whole task. She also expressed the difficulty in dealing with her diagnosis.

Michelle offered gratitude for all that Toby has done, and said it was clear that Toby has always worked tremendously hard to ensure the Arizona Authors Association's success. Everyone agreed.

Continued on the next page.

Meeting Minutes, continued.

Penny then suggested ways in which to earn money for the association. She belonged to a theater group in California where the theater allowed authors to use its venue on slow nights for readings on stage. For the theater, "an empty seat is money that you never get back." She suggested that six authors get together to do readings and charge ten dollars for tickets. The theater would earn perhaps 20 percent of that, as well as the ability to sell drinks and snacks to patrons. Penny said that such events were usually sold out at ten dollars each.

Penny went on to say that a Master of Ceremonies introduced each author, and many people came to see him since he was very entertaining. Sometimes the stories were tragedies, sometimes hilarious. They usually ended with a comedy. Since moving to Arizona, Penny has joined a theater in Scottsdale and suggested that the Arizona Authors Association try an authors' night to earn money.

Katy mentioned that Ken Weene used to hold an open mike for authors in Phoenix.

Toby remembered Ken's events, which were held in a restaurant in Phoenix. She said that he had moved to Tucson.

Penny then stated that authors could sell books in the lobby and could provide signed copies to the attendees. She would be willing to produce such events. She stated that if fifty people attended and we earned 500 dollars, minus a hundred to the theater, that's still \$400 that we didn't have before. The money could be earmarked for things like the Festival or banquet.

Toby agreed and endorsed the plan to do it, and the idea was well received by everyone.

With that, Toby asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Kathleen motioned to adjourn, Elizabeth seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 11:28 am MST.

To view the entire meeting on Zoom, click [HERE](#) and insert the password: p?\$3Q3.p

To comment on any issues discussed, please email arizonaauthorsassociation@gmail.com



**Cinder Hills in Snow, Flagstaff, AZ.
Photo by Arizona Authors Association member
Janet Alcorn**



The Road to Imagination

by Cherie Lee

Do you ever need a prompt to get you started? Try Cherie Lee's story starter to spur your imagination and get the sentences flowing. An award-winning author, Cherie wrote the following paragraph as a guide:

"This fictional teaser can be used by teachers or by anyone (recommend sixth grade and up through all adult ages) who wants a creative writing exercise or to jump start a new work. This idea is not meant to be genre specific, but left to the writer's imagination. There are no specific rules to follow. All the listed questions do not need answers. There is no order for preferred reading."

If you would like to share a story you create with this prompt (800 words or less), please send it no later than March 15 to arizonaauthorseditor@gmail.com and we may publish it.

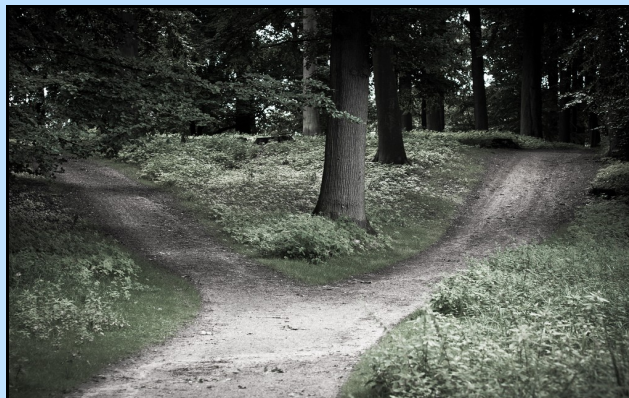
The Contest

Everyone received an entry blank, but only one could win. The choice of subject was up to each contestant, but the story must not exceed fifteen hundred words. Money and fame were not the prizes. The reward was far more important, but there was no time to dwell on that. The story must conclude before midnight. Each writer slipped into a four-by-five foot room that contained a desk, chair, paper, and a pencil with no eraser on the pencil's end. Every mistake would decrease the odds of winning. A dim light glowed above each desk, leaving the rest of the room in shadows. Midnight was only three hours away.

Questions:

1. Why did the contestants wish to enter?
2. If money and fame didn't factor in, what was the prize?
3. Are the contestants prisoners, patients, immigrants, or some other group?
4. Are there any consequences to the ones who fail to win?
5. Who will be the judges, and how will they judge the entries?
6. Do the contestants know each other?
7. What kind of story will win the prize?

Now it's your turn. Go forth and write!





Back to Basics

by Ashley E. Sweeney

LET'S TALK ABOUT LANGUAGE, YA SCUFFLEHEADS

“Hold your horses,” my Scottish granny used to say (she was a lover of all things Western, although she never traveled further west than Texas or Minnesota). As all my novels take place in the American West, there’s bound to be some slang thrown in. From “itchin’ to go North” in *Eliza Waite* to “cinch up” in *Answer Creek* to “hotter than a burnt boot” in *Hardland*, there’s an undercurrent of Western slang in all my work.

How to use slang in fiction? How much is enough? How much is too much? And what about vernacular and idiom? Enough? Too much?

One need not turn any further than Mark Twain for this argument. I’d bet five beans in the wheel that half of us would have Twain’s back as the best example of slang/vernacular/idiom and the other half would take issue with his use of language. Without a doubt, Twain is the first American author to use Southern vernacular throughout his narrative with plenty of slang and idiom thrown in for good measure. To some, it’s genius; to others, it might be labeled a distraction.

According to the University of Virginia’s “Mark Twain and His Times,” a collaborative effort of the Department of English at UVA, *Huckleberry Finn* has “been in trouble” since its publication in 1885. Hemingway said it was the “one book” from which “all American literature” owes a debt to, although many of Twain’s contemporaries viewed it as “coarse” and “racist.” It was banned almost as soon as it was published and has continued to be banned off and on for 138 years. Still, *Huckleberry Finn* remains near the top of novels read in U.S. high schools (various sources).

Let’s look at Twain’s language (it goes without saying that slang and vernacular have no place in academic or formal writing unless the topic expressly addresses the subject). Using slang in fiction, and in dialogue in particular, has the ability to bring the reader right into the narrative.

This, from Huck himself: “What’s the use you learning to do right, when it’s troublesome to do right and ain’t no trouble to do wrong, and the wages is just the same?” Here, we hear a young boy confronting his own better/worst angels as he wrestles earnestly with doing right vs. wrong.

This is from Jim, Huck’s African American companion: “Sometimes you gwyne to git hurt, en sometimes you gwyne to git sick, but every time you’s gwyne to git well agin.” Here, we picture Jim, without description, as he imparts a universal truth.

And this from Huck’s Pap: “Thinks I, what is this country a-coming to? It was ‘lection day, and I was about to go and vote, myself, if I warn’t too drunk to get there, but when they told me there was a State in this country where they’d let that n***** vote, I drewed out. I says I’ll never vote again.” Here, again from language only, we hear the words of a drunk bigot, prejudice dripping from his lips. Arguably, the language is brilliant. And arguably, it’s distracting (and disturbing).

I canvassed several peers—critique partners, authors, editors, and proofreaders—to ask the following:

continued on the next page

Back to Basics by Ashley E. Sweeney continued:

How much slang/vernacular/idiom is enough to bring time/place/mood/character alive?

Conversely, how much is too much?

“It depends on the reader and how complicated the vernacular and how unfamiliar the slang,” one author responded. “It’s a matter of balance—not too much, just enough to give it flavor.”

A proofreader weighed in to say it’s not distracting if you pepper your manuscript with slang/vernacular, ie. dropping the final “g” in words (givin’ you a hard time, workin’ your tail off) or using an occasional expletive for oomph, as long it’s intentional and not used indiscriminately.

An editor who’s partial to foreign fiction contends the essence of a place—especially through language—is what makes different worlds jump off the page and challenge perspectives.

With the rise of sensitivity readers, manuscripts that once might have passed muster with editors without a second thought are getting a thorough going over. The danger lies, however, in the manuscript being watered down for the sake of not wanting to offend.

Imagine if Huck had used proper grammar (“What is the use of learning to do right . . . ?”) or Jim had said, “Sometimes you might get hurt and sometimes you might get sick, but every time you’ll get well again” or Pap had said, “What is this country coming to?” It just rings flat.

I’m in the camp that appropriate slang/vernacular/idiom must be present in manuscripts for historical accuracy, especially in historical fiction and Western literature. My advice: used intentionally and creatively, especially in dialogue, use of period slang and vernacular and idiom help manuscripts find legs. (Note: If you use racial or ethnic slurs, consider including a footnote in your end pages, i.e. “While I do not condone the use of slurs used in the manuscript, I am unwilling to whitewash history.”)

Some of my favorite Western sayings, A-Z:

Adam’s Ale: water

Bones: dice

Cat’s sleep: pretending to be asleep to catch prey unawares

Death hunter: undertaker

Elbow grease: hard labor

Flash man: bully

Grease: to bribe

Hear the owl hoot: get utterly plastered

Irons in the fire: refers to branding, and the many irons used

Jabber: talk loud and fast

Keno!: “I’ve won!”

Light-fingered: thief

Murphies: potatoes

Night Horse: one who can find his/her way in the dark (literally and figuratively)

On tick: buy on credit

Peppered: inflicted with venereal disease

Quicken: when one finds herself pregnant

Rim Rocker: sturdy and tireless horse

Saddle Bums: drifters

Tonsil Paint: whiskey

continued on the next page

Back to Basics by Ashley E. Sweeney, continued

Under the gun: do or die

Vixen: comely woman

While the gate's still open: do something while you still have the chance

E(x)pended: Killed

Yack: refers to someone stupid

Zounds!: "What the heck?!"

*Gleaned from *The Cowboys*, by William Dale Jennings, *Cowboy Slang*, by Edgar R. "Frosty" Potter, and other references

Use of language—verbal and written—is an argument as old as time itself and I'm sure as shootin' we won't settle it here. Did I let the cat of the bag? The bullet out of the chamber? Maybe so. But I argue that, like anything of importance, use of language begs to be talked about and debated. Especially by authors.

Write me at contact@ashleysweeneyauthor.com with ideas you'd like to see covered in upcoming blogs.

Until next time, Happy Writing!

Ashley

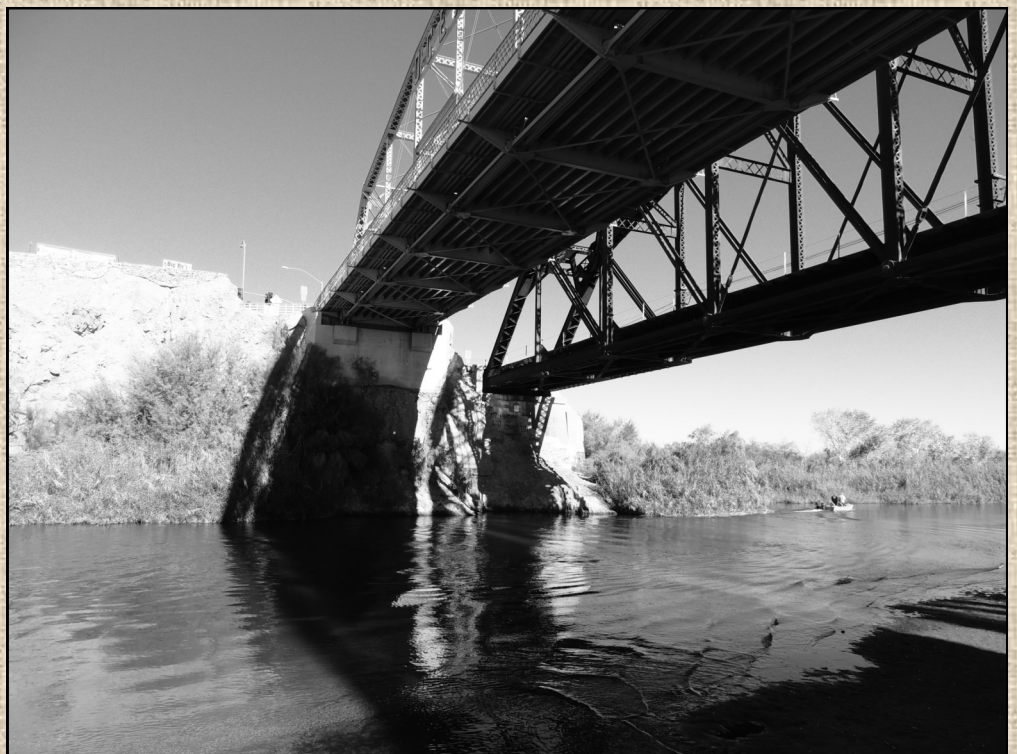
ashleysweeneyauthor.com

Ashley E. Sweeney is the winner of the 2017 Nancy Pearl Book Award for her debut novel, *Eliza Waite*. A native New Yorker, she is a graduate of Wheaton College in Norton, Massachusetts, and resides in Tucson. *Answer Creek*, released in May 2020, is her second novel. Her third novel, *Hardland*, is set in the Arizona territory at the beginning of the 20th century. It was released on September 13, 2022. Find out more about Ashley [HERE](#).

When you're moving forward, even the blacks and whites of your life are vibrant with inner color, just waiting to burst forth.

-Kathleen Cook

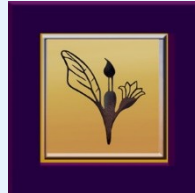
Colorado River Bridge, Yuma
Photo by Arizona Authors Association member Janet Alcorn





Energizing Your Marketing & Technical Strategies

by Jeanne Burrows-Johnson



Operational Organization for Authors and Artists Part 3

When I began this series of articles, my goal was to help authors, artists, and other creative professionals organize their physical environment to effectively plan and complete work projects, including aspects of their:

- ~ Office contents and arrangement
- ~ Updating hardware, software, and electronic gadgets
- ~ Using the Cloud for backup
- ~ Organization of books, files, and folders
- ~ Reviewing document and design elements for future usage

With the tools of your trade at hand and a New Year unfolding, it is time to consider the possibilities as well as the probabilities of the contents of your calendar for 2023. With our work spaces stocked and organized, we may appear ready to move forward into the year. But despite having reference materials, basic tools, and necessary folders and files readily available, past years may very well demonstrate that our plans can easily go astray. Even when one is fortunate to have assistance in our home or office, we may not be able to avoid some pitfalls while striving to meet our goals. As we examine the preparations we have made recently, there may be a few additional tweaks that can assure we are prepared to launch many months of a heavy work schedule. This could involve another round of polishing and cleaning, and the sharpening or replacement of key implements.

As successful authors and artists, the relationships we establish and maintain with colleagues and our local and even our international community can be vital to our productivity. So, moving forward in 2023, let us expand and refine our relationships. Such strengthening of connections near and far can greatly enhance the quality of our personal lives and our awareness of the life that flows around us.

Starting points for exploring such relationships can begin with reviewing our past year's calendar, as well as incoming and outgoing email and other communication, which should disclose potential elements for our forthcoming year. Checking the scheduled events of organizations to which we belong and the plans of fellow members will also reveal probable aspects of our own upcoming year. And that brings us to consideration of our own work and that of our editors, publishers, and other key figures in our personal and professional commitments.

By this point, you may feel overwhelmed by the amount of data being entered into your calendar template. But without details fleshing out the days, let alone the months yawning forward, it will prove difficult to see how the details of your completed projects, presentation materials, travel plans, and new events may result from these activities.

continued on the next page

Energizing your Marketing and Technical Strategies by Jeanne Burrows-Johnson continued

Wishing you the best in your creative endeavors,
Jeanne Burrows-Johnson, *author, narrator, consultant, and motivational speaker*

For more ideas to aid your career as an author or artist, visit:

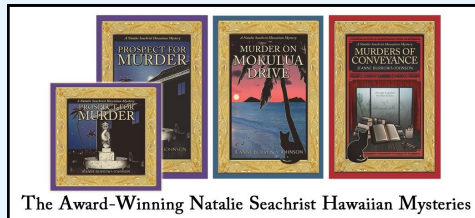
Author Website: JeanneBurrows-Johnson.com

Author Blog: Blog.JeanneBurrows-Johnson.com

Marketing Website: ImaginingsWordpower.com

You can email me at Info@Jeanne-Burrows-Johnson.com

Jeanne Burrows-Johnson is an author, narrator, consultant, and motivational speaker who writes works of fiction and nonfiction. She is the author of the award-winning *Natalie Seachrist Hawaiian Mysteries*, featuring pan-Pacific multiculturalism and history in a classic literary form that is educational as well as entertaining. She was art director, indexer, and a co-author of the anthology [Under Sonoran Skies: Prose and Poetry from the High Desert](#). Drawing on her interdisciplinary experience in the performing arts, education, and marketing, her authored and co-authored articles have appeared in literary, professional, and general readership publications such as *Newport This Week*, *Broker World*, the *Hawai'i Medical Journal*, and *The Rotarian*. Find out more [HERE](#).



Each page of your unfinished novel is like a step forward. Keep walking through the rough spots and you'll reach the finish line.

-Kathleen Cook

**Mallard on Ice
Esther Short Park
Flagstaff, AZ
Photo by Arizona
Authors Association
member
Janet Alcorn**



Getting Your Work “Out There”

by Penny Orloff

Preparing for Publication

The Blurb. Condensing a 100,000-word manuscript, or a 90-minute performance piece or film, or a 14-song CD into 300 words is a daunting task. But it is probably the single most important step to getting your finished work out there.

The descriptive copy on hardback books is known as “jacket” or “flap” copy. Paperback copy is called “back cover copy.” It can be used in any number of ways – cover letters, press releases, etc. - to promote your work. This writing is meant to give a brief description, grab readers' attention, highlight any reviews, and identify the author. This is where you have about twenty seconds to hook your audience.

Here are a few guidelines for distilling the essence of your work into promotional copy for your book, CD, film, or performance piece.

A-B-C. Accuracy, Brevity, Clarity. Keep in mind the goal of the blurb: to offer a brief summary of your work, engage your prospective audience, and offer them a reason to buy. Do not try to explain every character, plot twist, and feature of your novel. Do not go into all the personal reasons you wrote these songs. Stick with Accuracy, Brevity, Clarity.

Research. Visit a library or bookstore and read jacket copy. Look at copy on different types of books, films, CD's, focusing on work similar to yours. Whenever you find copy that really grabs your attention, jot down what you like about it.

Have someone else write a synopsis or distillation. Enlist the help of a friend or colleague who is willing to read through your manuscript, watch the video of your performance piece, or listen to your recorded tracks. Have them write a brief summary of your work, noting the specific points or plot elements they liked most. This is a great way to gain a fresh perspective on your work and can be a helpful starting point.

Excerpts. If you're having trouble condensing your project into a few brief paragraphs, comb through your manuscript, play, songs looking for passages or lines to excerpt. Place the passage in quotes and, introducing or underneath the quote, identify the passage as having come from your piece. For example, I summed up my novel and subsequent solo show, *Jewish Thighs on Broadway: Misadventures of a Little Trouper*, in one phrase— “Breaking into Show Business is like breaking into Fort Knox; breaking out, we're talking Alcatraz.”

Review quotes. If you've been fortunate enough to have your oeuvre reviewed, include the best quotes from those reviews. Take the most complimentary phrases from the review(s) and put them in quotes on the back cover. Name the source. **Note: you can do this even with “bad” reviews...**

Author bio. In one short paragraph list your accomplishments, other books you've published, schooling (if it's MIT or Juilliard), awards, grants, etc. Mention where your work has appeared - newspapers, magazines, online journals, theaters, radio, etc. Establish your authority on the subject. Do NOT include non-relevant accomplishments. Your breakthrough discoveries in vulcanology are not enhanced through mention of your college poetry prizes...

Try it on. Print out or visualize how the copy will look on the jacket and back cover of your book. Keep it BRIEF and MUSCULAR. Invite them in and give them a reason to stay.

continued on the next page

Getting Your Work Out There by Penny Orloff, continued

Reviews. A good review is the best form of free advertising any artist could hope for, but even a “bad review” is publicity.

Publicity departments of large publishing houses have the resources and staff to send out press releases, bound galleys, and multiple copies of completed books to reviewers. Smaller houses and self-publishers don't have the wherewithal for that. Instead, authors doing their own publicity should send a press release to all appropriate reviewing outlets. The press release should describe your book and highlight what sets it apart that might be worth a review. It should let reviewers know who you are, where you can be reached, and how soon you can get them a manuscript if they request it.

Contact your local newspaper, ask if they review books, and get the name of the appropriate editor. Many alternative weekly newspapers, special interest publications, literary magazines, newsletters, and websites also feature book reviews. The *Literary Market Place* contains listings and information on many periodicals.

Once the press release is written and mailed, your book may or may not get reviewed. If luck and timing are with you and your book is reviewed, excerpt the most complimentary parts of the review (a word, phrase, sentence, paragraph), and use this quote in a blurb to get the attention of your local bookstore, other reviewers, and publishers.

If you don't promote your work, it won't get promoted. It's worth taking the time to write an accurate, informative press release and send it to reviewers you believe would be most interested. Your ultimate goal is to let as many people as possible know your work is Out There, and having it reviewed is an important element of that process.

Constantly be ready to represent your work or arrange a signing or reading. Easiest is probably the Open Mic. Look for these in local papers, attend the event, and read your work!! Word of mouth is the most powerful advertiser. PS – bring copies to sell. You never know...

Bookstore Readings. Contact the store and get the name and correct spelling of the Community Relations Coordinator. Send this person a professional press kit. Include a copy of your book and any praise your work has received.

Follow up a few days later to ask when might be convenient for you to come in and discuss a possible in-store reading. Don't just show up and ask to see the CRC without an appointment. Calling or emailing and requesting time is professional courtesy.

If you have done other readings or lectures, be sure to bring flyers, newspaper clippings, or other evidence with you. This can help to sway a planner's decision to give time to an unknown local writer. If you do book the event, help promote it on your own. An article in a local paper or strategically placed posters or flyers around town can only help.

As you're talking with the CRCs, remember that while you know how great your book is, they know the clientele of their stores and what sells. Sometimes they say "no." In some areas, fiction books sell best; in others, political nonfiction packs the room.

Generally, CRCs are gregarious professionals who may have some great suggestions for improving your press kit or recommending other stores where your book may work better. Even if the meeting results in "No, thanks," be sure to send a quick note afterward to thank them for seeing you and to ask them to keep you in mind for other upcoming events. Better to be remembered for that friendly thank you note than as the temperamental Artiste who stormed out in a huff.

Most CRC's know other event planners within their company and competing companies. A bad impression on one could affect your chances at another store.

continued on the next page

Getting Your Work Out There by Penny Orloff, continued

Press Release. Probably the most important promotional tool at your disposal is the press release.

Keep it to one page. Your release should be double-spaced, have a killer headline, and start with the standard Who, What, Where, When, Why intro. Your contact info belongs at the top, with additional contact info (website address, phone number, email) at the bottom. Proofread your release!!

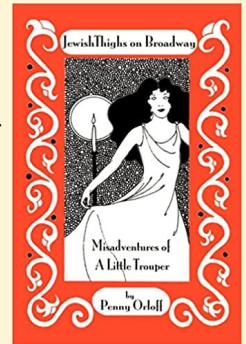
It's a good idea to write your press release like a news article with the main point first, followed by further details. Give enough information to get their attention and provoke questions. Write press releases and send them out, if possible, in conjunction with a relevant holiday or event: If your book is about finding True Love, send something out a few weeks before Valentine's Day. Include supporting quotes—these can be from you—or solicit quotes from another writer, a celebrity, or a recognized expert in your field. Stay clear of anything that smacks of hype.

Get accurate contact info and deadlines for releases sent to newspapers and magazines. Many monthly publications have as much as four-months lead time. Get the facts! Spell the editor's name correctly!!

Here's a tip: fold the letter with copy side out and position it in the envelope so the headline and opening lines of the first paragraph can't be missed.

If you get "free ink" or any type of feedback as a result of your press release, be sure to write thank-you notes. That's just good manners. And good manners count!

Penny Orloff was a working actor/dancer in Los Angeles when a Juilliard scholarship took her to New York. She had featured roles on Broadway, working for directors Harold Prince and Joseph Papp, and sang more than 20 Principal Soprano roles for New York City Opera under Julius Rudel and Beverly Sills. In a career spanning more than 50 years, she starred in over 100 productions off-Broadway, regionally and internationally. Her first solo show, "Jewish Thighs on Broadway" (based on her best-selling novel of the same name, available on [Amazon](#)), toured the U.S. for a decade, including a successful off-Broadway run in 2005. Having outlived most of her early competition for film roles, since 2012 she has enjoyed acting in a range of interesting shorts, Indie, and feature films (silver-white hair and a Botox-free face being, apparently, in short supply in L.A.) Find out more about Penny [HERE](#).



If a man empties his purse into his head, no man can take it away from him. An investment in knowledge always pays the best interest.

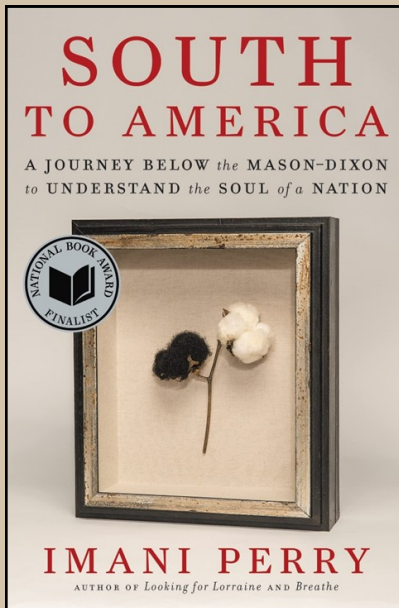
-Benjamin Franklin

**Old NAU Main Campus
Photo by Arizona Authors Association member
Janet Alcorn**



The Million Mile Walker What We're Reading and Why

By Mark D. Walker



With the brutal and very public killing of George Floyd and some 26 million people worldwide who have joined the **Black Lives Matter** protest, this seemed like an excellent time to educate myself better about racism and my privileges. Move out of my comfort zone and join with the Black and White communities ready to promote improved education, healthcare, and fair wages for all Americans.

I was brought up in Plainfield, New Jersey, and there were few Black kids. The only ones I saw were the few who were part of the “advanced” classes, and these kids seemed very scholastically motivated. My family moved to Littleton, Colorado, when I was 16, and from there to Evergreen in 1963. Shortly after we arrived in Colorado, all hell broke loose in New Jersey with violent race riots, burning property, shooting, and looting. And I remember thinking, “What was that about? Boy, did we get out of there just in time!”

I went to school on the western slope of Colorado and didn't see many Blacks, and then went overseas, where I was exposed to a more diverse population, including three years working in West Africa. But when I returned home, I ended up in Scottsdale, Arizona. I found a home in what we considered the best school district,

Paradise Valley, which is predominantly white, as property taxes fund schools in this country, so those who can purchase the best homes often have access to the best schools.

My interest and awareness peaked in 2021. The newscasts reported that three white men had tracked down a Black jogger, Ahmaud Arbery, in Brunswick, Georgia, in a pickup and killed him because he looked “suspicious.” Initially, police didn't arrest them, and the Justice Department didn't prosecute them—only when video/cell images emerged were the local authorities forced to act. The three white men were eventually convicted of hate crimes.

I'd been traveling to and from Brunswick for over ten years, so I thought I knew the area. I often headed to Jekyll Island to enjoy the blackened catfish, cheese grits, and fried okra, among other local delicacies. Everyone was so friendly; one of our staff taught me the proper pronunciation of the iconic Georgia Bulldogs, or the “Dawgs,” as they're known. I shared my surprise about the killing of Arbery with the executive who hired me at the organization I worked with. He said, “I'll never forget the day (at that organization) when, after we instigated a plan to formally include MLK day as an official holiday...the ... director of HR came barging into my office to ask me when we will be offering a holiday for her family members that were part of the Confederacy. That was quite a cross-cultural experience.” After hearing this, I realized that there were no Black members on the organization's Board at the time, and only two Black staffers worked in the warehouse.

Although I thought I knew the South, the author of *South to America*, which just received the National Book award, seemed far more capable of explaining the region's complexities. She's a native of Alabama and a Professor of African American Studies at Princeton. Most impressively, the author shows how the South is linked to the rest of the country and why one must understand some of this uniqueness to understand our nation.

continued on the next page

The Million Mile Walker, continued

Her journey is marked by nuances and surprising encounters in places and with people. She tells her stories of the South with transparency and honesty, including some troubling history and typical humiliations and joys that make Southern life what it is for a Black American woman. Here is a link to my entire [review](#).

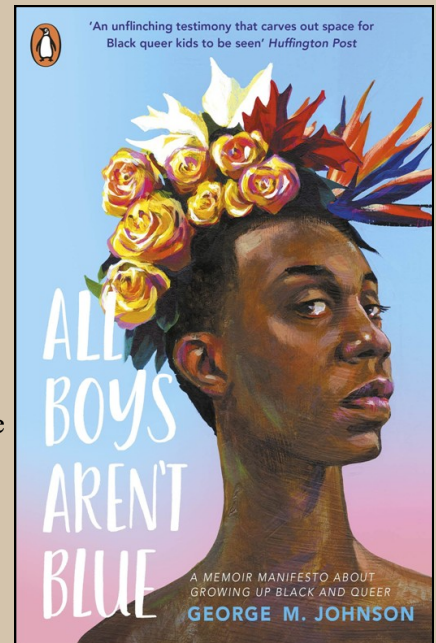
This book caught my attention for several reasons. I was brought up in the same community as the author, Plainfield, New Jersey, a bedroom suburb of the New York metropolitan area. We even went to the same elementary school, Fredrick W. Cook, although I was 15 in the early 60s and the author was that age in 2004, missing each other by some 40 years. Still, understanding how communities change over the years to benefit some at the detriment of others is essential to recognize. My grandfather worked for Mack Truck, one of several manufacturing companies in the area, and my father worked for Johnson & Johnson.

In my first year of middle school, I remember seeing few Black children in my classes because I was in higher-level courses. These Black kids were studious and seemed effeminate. I also remember a “millionaires’ row” of houses from the wealth generated by the railroads of these mansions owned by white families. According to the author, this contrasted with “Black folks, who don’t get to have intergenerational wealth like our white neighbors just one block over.”

Plainfield had its rebellion in 1967, in the wake of the Newark riots, resulting in the New Jersey National Guard being called in to restore order. The violence led to a massive “white flight,” and Black residents went from 40% in 1970 to 60% in 1980. And, although I’ve never returned to Plainfield, my middle daughter did when she was in college, and she said the neighborhood where my parents and grandparents lived was now a predominately Black community. So much changed from when I was a child to when the author was brought up there.

Another reason I wanted to read this book is that I am an active member of **PEN America**, which promotes freedom of expression. I was aware that this book is among the most challenged and banned books in the country, not surprisingly, as it is rated first or second for many of the most targeted genres: Teen and Young Adult books on sexuality, intimacy, and LGBTQ issues—making this a book that needed to be recognized.

As the author explains, the book does deal with subjects that will make some readers uncomfortable, like sexual assault, loss of virginity, homophobia, racism, and anti-Blackness. Still, these are experiences that many readers will encounter, and he wants them to be “seen and heard.” He wrote the book expressly to give voice to marginalized communities “whose experiences have not yet been captured between the pages of a book.” Here’s the entire [review](#).



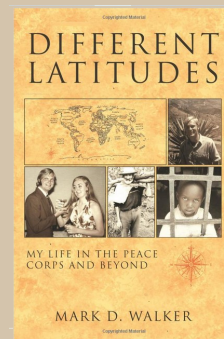
The opinions stated in this article are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Arizona Authors Association. You can find the entire reviews of these two books and 70 others on my website under the “Library” tab. Please let me know what you think - about this newsletter, my reviews, and most importantly, what you are reading so I can ponder all of it and share some of your comments in my next column. You can email me at: Mark@MillionMileWalker.com or through my websites: <http://www.millionmilewalker.com/> or Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/millionmilewalker/>

continued on the next page

The Million Mile Walker, continued

Walker was a Peace Corps Volunteer in Guatemala and spent over forty years helping disadvantaged people in the developing world. He came to Phoenix as a Senior Director for Food for the Hungry, worked with other groups like Make a Wish International and was the CEO of Hagar USA, a Christian-based organization that supports survivors of human trafficking.

His book, *[Different Latitudes: My Life in the Peace Corps and Beyond](#)*, was recognized by the Arizona Authors Association for nonfiction and according to the *Midwest Review*, “. . . is more than just another travel memoir. It is an engaged and engaging story of one man’s physical and spiritual journey of self-discovery . . .” His honors include the "Service Above Self" award from Rotary International. His wife and three children were born in Guatemala. You can learn more at www.MillionMileWalker.com or follow him on his [Facebook](#) page.



Marilyn June Janson M.S. Ed. CEO of Janson Literary Services, Inc. offers her literary expertise to both new and veteran authors.

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Have questions? Ask Marilyn @ janlitserv@cox.net, www.janwrite.com, or call her at 1-480-699-6389



Arizona Authors Association member Michelle Beaver launched an Arizona chapter of PEN America in April 2022 and the chapter has hosted four events since then, with several AAA members in attendance. PEN America stands at the intersection of literature and human rights to protect free expression around the world. The Arizona chapter bolsters this work and gives local writers the chance to commiserate on shared interests.

Events have been hosted at Changing Hands Bookstore, Palabras Bilingual Bookstore, Michelle Beaver’s home and at downtown Phoenix restaurants. Speakers have been plentiful, including Arizona Sen. Christine Marsh, *The Arizona Republic*’s famed columnist E.J. Montini, a director of the American Civil Liberties Union, etc.

The coming year will include more great events, including panels and social hours featuring free appetizers and one complementary cocktail per person. PEN membership is not mandatory for attendance. If you’d like more information, please contact the founder and director of PEN America, Michelle Beaver, at: Michelle.L.Beaver@gmail.com.



Puzzle it!

A Logic Puzzle for Valentine's Day by Kevin Gundlach



Valentine's Day is the perfect time for romance novels! You will be given a list of four authors, their book titles, and the main character and the love interest in each book. Your assignment, if you choose to accept it, is to match all authors with their own book, the main character, and his or her heart's desire.

While the easiest method is simply to Google the answers, that would be cheating! You may know or deduce some of these without the need for clues, and if so, then congratulations! You're a smart cookie! The rest of the answers will be revealed by the clues on the next page.

You may make your own list or create a grid on scratch paper, or print the grid on the next page to simplify the process of elimination. Just right click on the page; you'll see a "print" icon (or the word "print," depending upon your browser). Click the print icon and then ... very importantly ... **set the page** that you wish to print in the document (page 29). If you just click "print" without selecting the page, you'll wind up printing the whole newsletter!

Put an "X" in any boxes that connect two implausible choices and an "O" in the boxes that connect two correct choices, until you eliminate all wrong answers. Happy Puzzling!

Books:

The Thornbirds, A Walk to Remember, Mistress of Mellyn, One Last Stop

Authors:

Nicholas Sparks, Casey McQuiston, Victoria Holt, Colleen McCullough

Main Characters:

Meggie, Martha, Landon, August

Love Interests:

Jamie, Ralph, Jane, Connan

Let's give a hint on the first clue to get you started. It says, "The four novels are: the one written by Nicholas Sparks, the one featuring August as the main character, the one featuring Connan as the love interest, and *The Thornbirds*. From this clue, you know that Nicolas Sparks did not write *The Thornbirds*, or the one with Connan or August. You also know that August is not a main character in *The Thornbirds* or the one with Connan. Keep eliminating possibilities until you have only one choice left. Good luck! If you solve the puzzle in 30 minutes or less, let us know and we'll congratulate you in the next issue.

continued on the next page

CLUES

1) The four novels are:
 - the one written by Nicholas Sparks
 - the one featuring August as the main character
 - the one featuring Connan as the love interest
 - *The Thornbirds*

2) In *A Walk to Remember* the love interest is not Jane, but it does feature either Landon or August as the main character.

3) *A Walk to Remember* was not written by Casey McQuiston.

4) *Mistress of Mellyn* is either written by Victoria Holt or it features Landon as the main character.

5) Ralph is either the love interest of August or he is featured in Colleen McCullough's book.

6) Connan is not the love interest of Meggie.

7) The novel featuring August was either written by Casey McQuiston or it is the one where Connan is the love interest.

8) Victoria Holt did not write *The Thornbirds*.

9) Martha did not love Ralph or Jamie.

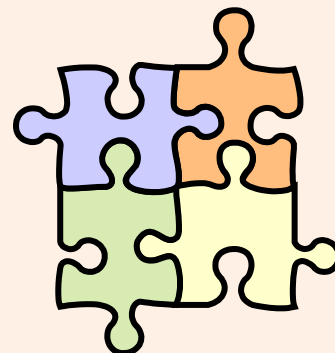
10) *The Thornbirds* was either written by Colleen McCullough or features Jamie as a love interest.

		The Thornbirds	A Walk to Remember	Mistress of Mellyn	One Last Stop	Nicholas Sparks	Casey McQuiston	Victoria Holt	Colleen McCullough	Meggie	Martha	Landon	August	Jamie	Ralph	Jane	Connan
Books	The Thornbirds	O	X	X	X												
	A Walk To Remember	X	O	X	X												
	Mistress of Mellyn	X	X	O	X												
	One Last Stop	X	X	X	O												
Authors	Nicholas Sparks					O	X	X	X								
	Casey McQuiston					X	O	X	X								
	Victoria Holt					X	X	O	X								
	Colleen McCullough					X	X	X	O								
Main Characters	Meggie									O	X	X	X				
	Martha									X	O	X	X				
	Landon									X	X	O	X				
	August									X	X	X	O				
Love Interests	Jamie													O	X	X	X
	Ralph													X	O	X	X
	Jane													X	X	O	X
	Connan													X	X	X	O

Printing Tip

To print this puzzle, right click on this page and open the "print" icon. Be certain to select **Page Number 29**, to print **ONLY** this puzzle page, rather than the whole newsletter.

Good luck! Let us know if you solved the puzzle in 30 minutes or less.



Kevin Gundlach was a senior software developer who, unlike most, undertook the flight between academia and industry in reverse order. He co-authored *Tryn*, *Just An Ordinary*, *Time-Traveling*, *Alien High School Teacher*. Find out more about Kevin [HERE](#).



Application for Membership

Benefits of Membership

Literary Contest Awards Banquet Literary Magazine
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Writers Published or Unpublished:

One year \$45
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Three years \$110

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and Editors:
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Two years \$110
Three years \$165

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ALL MEMBERSHIPS RENEW EACH JANUARY

Arizona Authors' Association is a Non-profit 501c3 organization. Its mission: To foster literary achievement, advance the art of writing and serve the writers, authors, editors, publishers and allied professionals of Arizona and the nation. Arizonaauthors.com, Arizona.authors@yahoo.com
toby@tobyheathcotte.com



Where in Arizona?

by Janet Alcorn

Can you guess where in Arizona this picture was taken? Be the first to guess correctly and we'll publish your name along with the correct answer in the next issue! Send your guesses to arizonaauthorseditor@gmail.com.



Possible Locations:

Jerome

Sedona

Tombstone

Peach Springs

Goldfield

Bisbee

Yuma

Flagstaff

Oracle

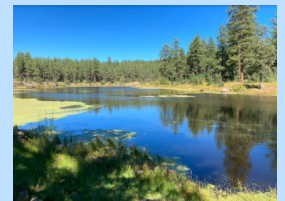
Prescott

Write to arizonaauthorseditor@gmail.com no later than March 15th if you know the location of the photo. Good luck!

Janet is a librarian, published short story author, and aspiring novelist. She writes mostly suspense and horror with the occasional foray into other genres. Learn more about Janet and her writing at:

<http://janetalcorn.com>.

Last issue's photo was taken at **Bootleg Lake, Pinetop**. **Robert Ronning** guessed the location correctly, and **Elizabeth Ajamee Boyer** came close with her Showlow guess. We appreciate the participation!



2023 Arizona Authors Literary Contest



The Arizona Authors Literary Contest is now underway and the Association has gone digital! This will save authors \$\$\$ and will make for a speedier, hassle-free contest. Plus, prizes have increased this year. Join us in making 2023 the best year ever for the Arizona Authors Literary Contest!

Grand Prize:

\$300 & Featured in Arizona Literary Magazine

3 First Prizes:

\$150 & Featured in Arizona Literary Magazine

3 Second Prizes:

\$75 & Featured in Arizona Literary Magazine

3 Third Prizes:

\$50 & Featured in Arizona Literary Magazine

3 Fourth Prizes:

\$25 & Featured in Arizona Literary Magazine

Best of Category:

Featured in Arizona Literary Magazine.

Best of Category Unpublished Poetry/Short Stories will be nominated for Pushcart Prize. Value: **PRICELESS**

Categories:

Unpublished:

Poems
Short Story/Essay/Review
Novel /Novella

(Critiques offered at low rates for unpublished works.)

Published:

OLDIE BUT GOLDIE
Fiction
Nonfiction
Children's Picture Book
Juvenile/Young Adult



For more information on the Arizona Authors Association Literary Contest, click [HERE](#). Or read the new rules [HERE](#).

Don't Forget

CONTEST DEADLINE:

June 1, 2023

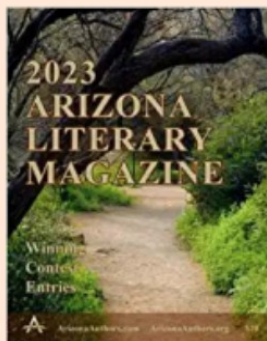
Submit your work today!

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Since 1978, the Arizona Literary Magazine has launched the careers of many authors.





The Inevitable Author

by Kathleen Cook

Winter Incentives

Before 2022, one thing that had always bothered me about winter was that I tended to eat more sweets than in summer. There were always five or ten more pounds to deal with come spring. I scrambled to exercise frantically, wearing myself out in order to fit into a bathing suit before the upcoming visits to Sebec Lake, the main highlight of just about everyone's summer around here. (Yeah, I'm rural, and yeah, folks don't have a great deal to do in a town of 600 people.)

Last year, I decided to change my behavior and my eating habits by coupling my desserts with writing. Whenever I wanted a piece of pie, I told myself, "Okay, but first you have to add 500 words to that new novel." By the time I finished 500 words, I was already "in the zone" and churning out another 500, delaying the treat for so long that it wound up being supper time. I had to forego the pie until after supper, when I would have had some anyway. One slice is always better than two, and I cut my pie intake in half.

Late at night, when I got up for a midnight snack and wanted a cookie, I told myself, "Think up a joke for the newsletter first, and then you can have it." I got back into bed to stay warm while I put my thinking cap on for a joke, and pretty soon I was fast asleep. No cookie for me.

Is there a special treat, or an event, or an activity that you like to do? Tie it to your writing and see your pages multiply. I confess, treats aren't my only guilty pleasure. I'm an Elvenar fan. It's an internet game and I'm the archmage of a group of 25 players in a world called Sinya Arda. I lead the team in tournaments, fellowship adventures, and events.

When I realized my addiction for the game had eaten up my writing time, I decided to tie the two together. Now, if I wake up at 7am and want to go straight to the game, I tell myself "just one page more on the book, and then you can play." I force myself to do it before I enjoy an hour on the game, and sometimes I even forget to play until 9.

I do the same thing for exercise as I do for writing ... "Just 10 pushups and you can go to the game." It works; the doctor told me I'm the fittest person among his patients above 60, and I just turned 72.

It's amazing how much you can achieve when you tie the things you love with the things that seem a chore. The things you can accomplish, writing a novel, getting healthy, cleaning the house, taking a jog, or tending the garden, accumulate and give a sense of pride, which spurs you into doing even more.

And one thing that's even more astounding ... when you get in the habit of doing such chores, they get easier over time. You may even get to the point where you become addicted to the chores, foregoing the things that you once used as incentive. In other words, the stick becomes the carrot.

I play fewer games than I used to. I eat fewer sweets and I exercise more than I used to. It all started with tying things together. Maybe winter isn't so bad after all, if it gives me a reason to write that great American novel.

continued on the next page

The Inevitable Author, continued.

Kathleen Cook is a retired editor and the author of more than twenty books. A former copy writer/editor for Demand Studios, she also served as the Fictional Religion Editor for the ODP (Open Directory Project) in the internet's early days. She is currently the Arizona Authors Association Editor as well as the website administrator. Find out more about Kathleen [HERE](#).



*Reach for the stars,
even if you have to stand on a cactus.*

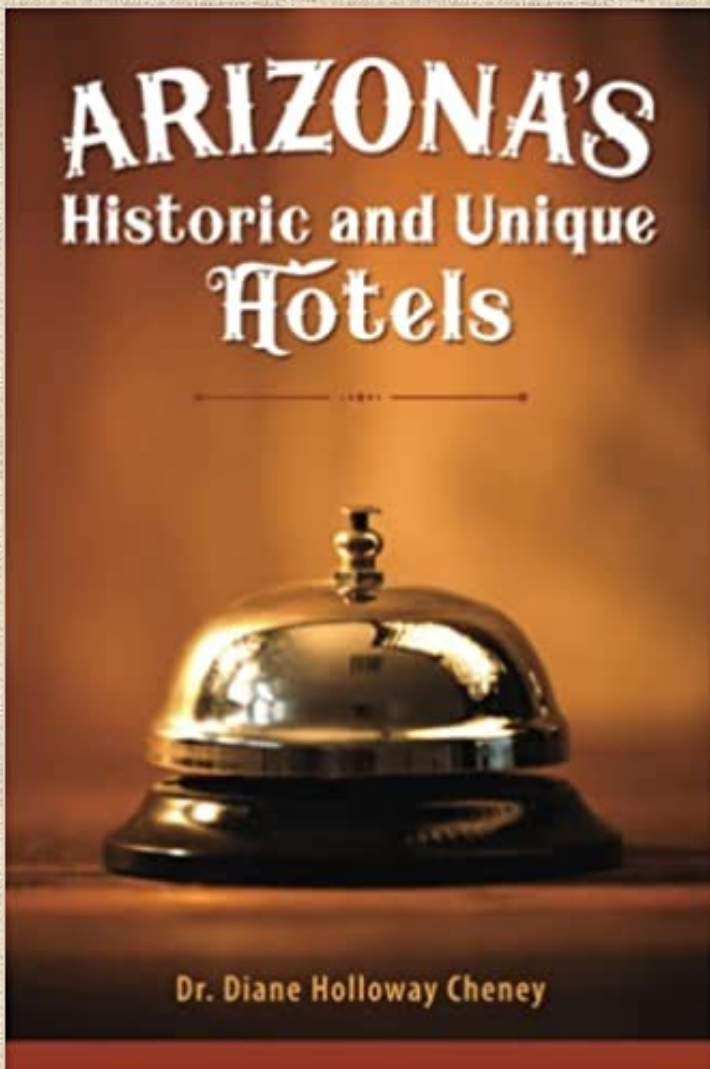
-Susan Longacre

Javalina Rocks
Saguaro National Park

Photo by Arizona Authors Association member Janet Alcorn

NEW BOOK RELEASE

by Dr. Diane Holloway Cheney



Arizona's Historic and Unique Hotels

The criteria for designation as an American Historic Hotel is to be at least fifty years old. The first ten hotels are Historic and the next seventeen are notable for unique features.

Arizona is a unique state with characteristics not found elsewhere in America or the world. There are beautiful natural wonders such as the Grand Canyon. Early Western history is recreated at dude ranches, and there are even historic "treatment" facilities such as the Castle Hot Springs Resort.

Historic hotels capture earlier times. This comprehensive guide describes rooms, rates, and amenities. It includes details of movie locations, famous guests, and notable recipes. This history of Arizona includes hotels famous for the "Five C's of Arizona:" Cattle, Citrus, Climate, Copper, Cotton, and even an extra C for Convalescence, since doctors prescribed a visit to Arizona as treatment for many ailments. Guests armed with this knowledge can better enjoy their visit to all parts of Arizona.

Find this book on [Amazon](#), [Barnes and Noble](#), [Walmart](#) and other outlets.

Dr. Diane Holloway Cheney was a director of Study Abroad, Inc., lived in the United Kingdom and Europe, and later worked as a psychologist and management consultant to various US hotels and dining establishments. In this role, it was necessary to help hoteliers and restaurateurs meet the expectations of guests such as Loew's Anatole Hotel, Dallas; the Westin hotel chain; Dallas restaurants; and the Dallas Petroleum Club. A secondary career began when Dr. Cheney was appointed the "Drug Czar" of Dallas by the mayor, which led to applying for federal grants to fund the elimination of drug users and dealers. She was honored at the White House for her efforts by US Drug Czar William Bennett, President Reagan, and First Lady Nancy Reagan, who was known for her "Just Say No" program. Find out more about Dr. Diane by clicking [HERE](#).

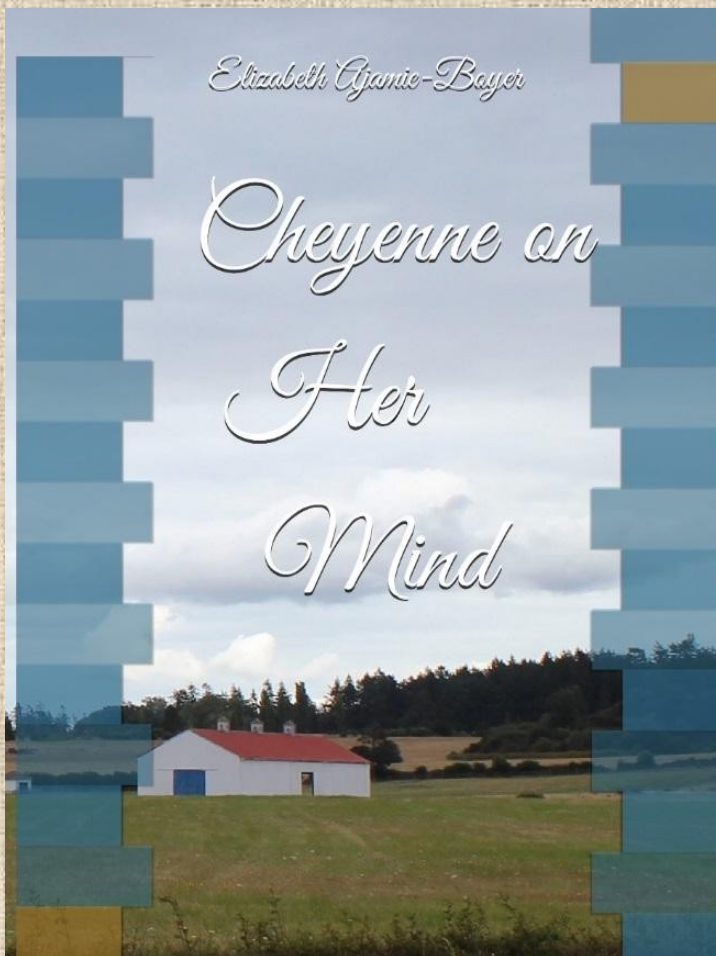


NEW BOOK RELEASE

by Elizabeth Ajamee-Boyer

Cheyenne On Her Mind

Release Date: February 1st, 2023



Edgier than sweet or cozy romance...

After a heart-breaking, tumultuous divorce, Ruth Adams runs to Cheyenne, WY, to begin anew. Her dream to own her own home, a business, and perhaps to have a fresh, new romance only leads to trouble. What about her family in Phoenix? Will they understand Ruth's desire to go on a walk-about? Will her new friends, her new church, and perhaps a dreamy new man lead to the new life Ruth pines for? Or will the entire enterprise end in disaster?

When I say this story is edgier than sweet or cozy fiction, I mean there are tough issues in the story. However, the language and physical stuff remains pretty clean. I believe you can write a good story without graphic, ugly language or scenery. I believe books like that appeal to many people. I hope you agree with me.

To find out more about this book and how to purchase it, click [HERE](#).

To find out more about all of Elizabeth's books, visit her [website](#) or her [Arizona Authors](#) page.

From Phoenix, Arizona, Elizabeth graduated from East High School, South Mountain Community College, and Arizona State University. She writes her own books, and co-writes with her husband, TJ Boyer, primary author of *The Mirror Gate Chronicles* series. As a Christian, Elizabeth is called to write gentle romance and historical fiction. Elizabeth and TJ have two children and three grandchildren.

Elizabeth's BLOG: <https://mirrorgatechronicles.wordpress.com/elizabeths-blog/>

Find out more about Elizabeth [HERE](#).



NEW BOOK RELEASE

by Dannette Hunnel

Where Did Gecko Go?

Where Did Gecko Go?



Where Did Gecko Go? Written for ages 2-4, a little mystery, written in large print, colorful pictures, introduces new words. Meant for Lap Reading to small children. Also available in Spanish as: *¿A Dónde Fue Geco?*

From the Amazon website:

Mommy doesn't know it yet, but Baby is having fun and learning new household words as he follows a quick gecko throughout the house and yard. A colorful, short, easy read. Recommended for toddlers ages 2-4 years.

Find *Where Did Gecko Go?* on [Amazon](#), or for more information, visit Dannette's website at:

www.dannettehunnel.com

Dannette Hunnel is the author of 10 children's books and the recipient of the 2006 Best Book Award for Parenting. In 2021, she received an Honorable Mention for Kids Books about Pets ([Getting To Know Huey](#)), and an Honorable Mention for Kids Books about Making a Difference ([Gage and the Googly-Eyed Guest](#)), and in 2017 she received an Honorable Mention for Best Juvenile Fiction. ([Hensley's Plastic Spoon](#)).

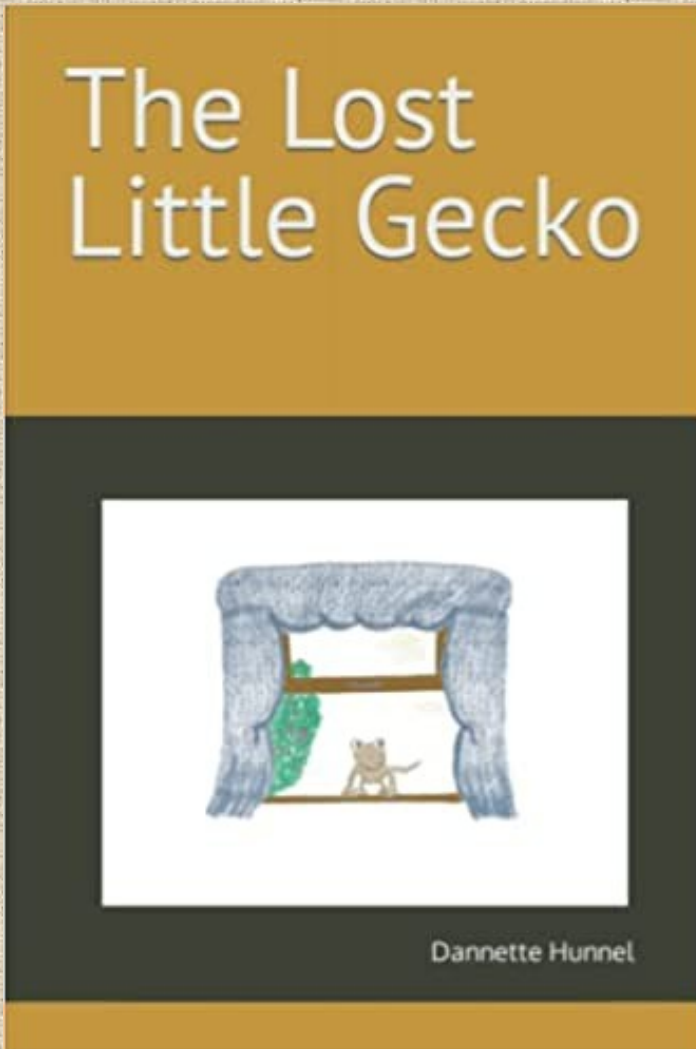
Dannette truly enjoys creating stories and art with her 6 grandchildren in mind. Most stories tell of the simple joys in life and include a life lesson and a few health tips. Her books are easy to read, colorful and written in large print.

A retired travel professional, Dannette resides with her husband, Gary, in both Arizona (Winters) and Mexico (Summers). Find out more about Dannette [HERE](#).



NEW BOOK RELEASE

by **Dannette Hunnel**



The Lost Little Gecko

The Lost Little Gecko- written for ages 5-6, written in large print, colorful pictures, increases kindness and empathy, meant as a lap reader for cuddling and quality bonding time. Also available in Spanish as: *El Pequeño Geco Perdido*.

From the Amazon website:

It's an interesting day when a little gecko gets lost in a child's home.

A short, easy to read, rhyming story.
Emphasizes empathy and kindness.
Written by a grandmother to encourage her young grandsons to read.

Recommended reading: ages 5-6 years
Preschool-Kindergarten. 186 words

Find *The Lost Little Gecko* on [Amazon](#), or for more information, visit Dannette's website at:

www.dannettehunnel.com

Dannette Hunnel is the author of 10 children's books and the recipient of the 2006 Best Book Award for Parenting. In 2021, she received an Honorable Mention for Kids Books about Pets ([Getting To Know Huey](#)), and an Honorable Mention for Kids Books about Making a Difference ([Gage and the Googly-Eyed Guest](#)), and in 2017 she received an Honorable Mention for Best Juvenile Fiction. ([Hensley's Plastic Spoon](#)).

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NEW BOOK RELEASE

by Dannette Hunnel



Poops and Pranks

Poops and Pranks— A full day for Gecko is written for ages 7-9, is funny and includes actual fun facts about geckos. Also available in Spanish as: *Cacas Y Bromas*

From the Amazon website:

Poops and Pranks is a short, fun story and a bit of a mystery, using actual facts about the common house Gecko. Geckos are cute, friendly, fast and helpful, but... geckos poop *anywhere and everywhere!*

Written by a Grandmother to encourage her grandsons to read, a level 3, elementary reader, with 681 story words. Plus, 137 words added using fun gecko facts, with colorful pictures to enhance comprehension. Recommended ages 7-9, Grades 2-4

Find *Poops and Pranks* on [Amazon](https://www.amazon.com), or for more information, visit Dannette's website at:

www.dannettehunnel.com

Dannette Hunnel is the author of 10 children's books and the recipient of the 2006 Best Book Award for Parenting. In 2021, she received an Honorable Mention for Kids Books about Pets ([Getting To Know Huey](#)), and an Honorable Mention for Kids Books about Making a Difference ([Gage and the Googly-Eyed Guest](#)), and in 2017 she received an Honorable Mention for Best Juvenile Fiction. ([Hensley's Plastic Spoon](#)).

Dannette truly enjoys creating stories and art with her 6 grandchildren in mind. Most stories tell of the simple joys in life and include a life lesson and a few health tips. Her books are easy to read, colorful and written in large print.

A retired travel professional, Dannette resides with her husband, Gary, in both Arizona (Winters) and Mexico (Summers). Find out more about Dannette [HERE](#).



SHORT RELEASES

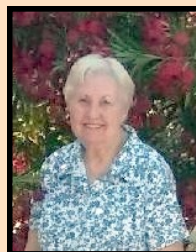
If you have a short story, article, essay or other work that has recently been published, submit it by contacting our editor, Kathleen Cook, at arizonaauthorseditor@gmail.com. The work may be on any topic of general interest published within the past six months.



Janet Alcorn’s short story, “Walk Me Home,” won 1st place in the 2022 Jim Martin Memorial Short Story Contest sponsored by the Arizona Mystery Writers. You may download this story for free on their [website](#).

Another of Janet’s stories, “The Fine Print,” appeared in *’Twas the Fright Before Christmas in Deathlehem: An Anthology of Holiday Horrors for Charity*. You may purchase the book on Amazon [HERE](#).

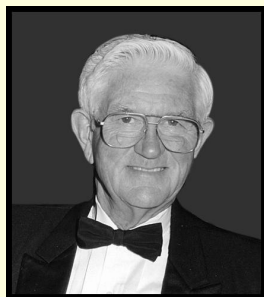
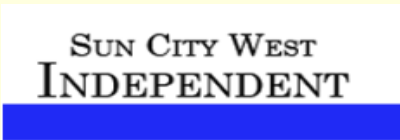
To find out more about Janet and all of her writings, visit her [website](#).



Lorie Lux wrote a heartwarming tribute to the late Queen Elizabeth II in the December 28th issue of the *Daily Independent*. The piece, titled, “Queen Elizabeth was a woman for all time,” highlights the fact that women can make great leaders.

You may read the piece on the *Daily Independent’s* [website](#).

To find out more about Lorie, click [HERE](#).



Jack Hawn’s article, “Precious items lost then found,” appeared in the December 14th edition of the *Sun City West Independent*. In it, Jack relates the entertaining tale of a lost ring that was eventually found.

To read this article, click [HERE](#) and then click on the December 14th issue.

To find out more about Jack, click [HERE](#).



Mark Walker’s latest review of Paul Theroux’s book, *Deep South*, was recently published on the Peace Corp Worldwide [website](#).

Mark has read and reviewed eight of Paul Theroux’s books and has written his own book, *My Saddest Pleasures: 50 Years on the Road*, in part as a tribute to Paul Theroux.

To read Mark’s review of the iconic travel writer, Paul Theroux, click [HERE](#).

To find out more about Mark, visit his [website](#).





A Writer's Tip

From Karen Odden

USA Today Bestselling Author Karen Odden gave this tip in her recent newsletter:

“Read your work out loud. Yes, out loud. Not whispered or read silently to yourself in your head. Really. Get a cup of coffee or tea or your favorite beverage to keep your mouth from getting dry and talk it. Your ear will catch what your eye misses -- especially if you've rewritten a passage a few times. Your ear will also catch the awkward repetitions (too many characters ‘shrugging’ or a word repeated too often) and dialog that sounds lazy and can be tightened up, or have the tags (‘she said’) omitted.”

Karen Odden served as an Associate Lecturer at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee and taught classes in English literature at New York University and the University of Michigan-Ann Arbor. She has written introductions for Barnes and Noble's Classics Series and served as an Assistant Editor for the academic journal *Victorian Literature and Culture* (Cambridge UP). A member of Mystery Writers of America and Sisters in Crime, Karen was awarded a 2021 Grant from the Arizona Commission on the Arts.

For more writer's tips and other news, subscribe to Karen's newsletter [HERE](#) or visit her [website](#).

You may also visit her Arizona Authors page [HERE](#).

Literary Trivia From Page Three

Answers

1. Robert Frost
2. A rogue planet pulls Earth out of orbit, causing it to freeze.
3. Beverly Penn
4. His wife's death
5. Judy Jones
6. September

Back Page Jokes and Quotes

In seed time learn, in harvest time teach, and in winter, enjoy.

-William Blake

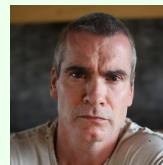
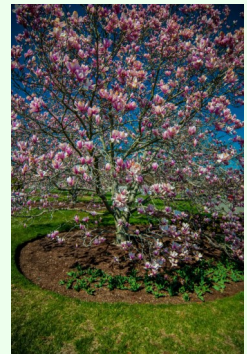


Winter forms our character and brings out our best.

-Tim Allen

What did the tree say after a long, cold winter?

“What a relief!”



In winter, I plot and plan. In spring, I move.
Henry Rollins

Do you know a joke about writing, publishing or editing, or a quote from a famous author? Share it with Back Page Jokes and Quotes and if we use it, we'll credit you with the entry.

Send it to:

arizonaauthorseditor@gmail.com before the 15th of odd-numbered months, and it may appear in the next issue.