

Arizona Authors Digest



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Issue 26

Arizona Authors Association

June-July 2023

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President's Corner by Toby Heathcote

Due to a recent hospitalization, Toby's column does not appear in this issue. She is currently recuperating at home. Get well, Toby; we all miss you!

To send well wishes, please write to:
toby@tobyheathcote.com

8th Annual AUTHORS & ARTISTS FESTIVAL

**Saturday,
July 15th**
9 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.
Mazatzal Hotel & Casino Ballroom

**This free family-friendly event offers
book and art lovers
of all ages a chance to meet
Arizona authors and artists,
shop, and enjoy the activities!**



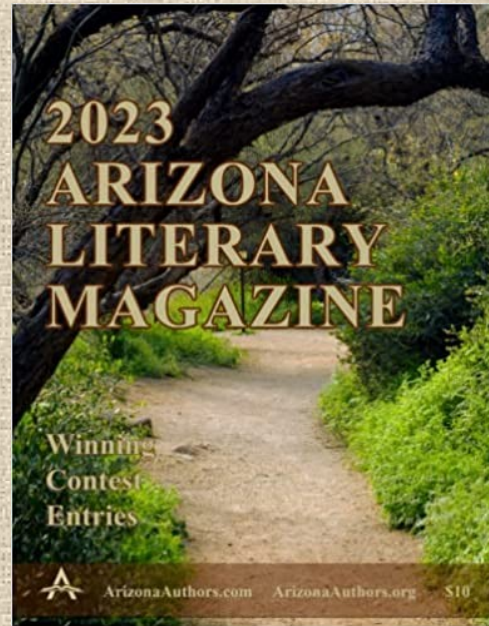
Facebook.com/PaysonBookFestival
Facebook.com/RimCountryArtists
RimCountryArtists.org
PaysonBookFestival.org

Contact us for more info:
info@PaysonBookFestival.org



Publisher's Weekly May Best Seller List

1. *Taylor Swift: A Little Golden Book Biography* by Wendy Loggia
2. *Magnolia Table Volume 3: A Collection of Recipes for Gathering* by Joanna Gaines
3. *Happy Place* by Emily Henry
4. *From the World of Percy Jackson: The Sun and the Star* by Rick Riordan
5. *Dog Man: Twenty Thousand Fleas Under the Sea* by Dav Pilkey
6. *Oh, The Places You'll Go!* by Dr. Seuss
7. *The 23rd Midnight* by James Patterson
8. *Meet Me at the Lake* by Carley Fortune
9. *Fourth Wing* by Rebecca Yarros
10. *The One and Only Ruby*, by Katherine Applegate



The 2023 Arizona Literary Magazine, is on sale [HERE](#)



Hedgehog Cactus

Photo by Arizona Authors Association member
Janet Alcorn

Have You Tried The Forum?

Are you a member of the Arizona Authors Association and looking for a place to advertise your book, article, editing service, or writing-related work for FREE? Join the Arizona Authors Association forum and post a message about it! Add all of your writing-related news and announcements. While you're there, say hi to our forum director, Kyle Patton, or our website admin, Kathleen Cook. Let's get this forum hopping!

[Arizona Authors Association Forum](#)



Desert Botanical Garden, Phoenix
Photo by Arizona Authors Association Member
Linda Radke

Arizona Authors Association Leadership

Board of Directors:

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

Additional Staff:

Literary Magazine Editor.....Penny Orloff
 Proofreader.....Sharon Sterling
 Forum Director..... Kyle Patton

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

Editorial correspondence and newsletter submissions may be emailed to:

faerland@yahoo.com or
arizonaauthorseditor@gmail.com

All other inquiries should be sent to:

arizonaauthorsassociation@gmail.com

Literary Trivia

(Answers on the Back Page)

1. Although this Thomas Pynchon novel was named one of the "All-Time Greatest 100 Novels" by Time Magazine, the 1974 Pulitzer Prize jury on fiction was offended by its content. Name the novel.
2. *A Raisin in the Sun*, the first Broadway play written by an African American woman, opened in March 1959. Name the author.
3. In what 1995 poem did Maya Angelou declare, "Pretty women wonder where my secret lies / I'm not cute or built to suit a fashion model's size?"
4. "Hell is other people" is the most famous line to come out of what Sartre play about three sinners trapped together forever?
5. Author John Green set his tear-jerker, *The Fault in Our Stars*, in which state capital?

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



Oak Creek Canyon, Arizona
Photo by Arizona Authors Association member
Janet Alcorn

Arizona Authors Association

Current Benefits and Submission Guidelines

Membership Benefits

The Arizona Authors Association offers several valuable benefits to our members. This digest 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 digest 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 Digest

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.

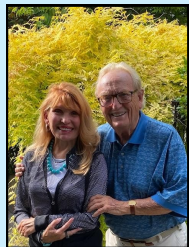
Road to Imagination seeks finished works of 800 words or less based upon the previous issue's story prompt. **Back Page Quotes** seeks jokes or quotes (200 words or less) on the foibles of writing, editing or publishing. We also need Arizona landscape **photos**, as inspiring space fillers for our newsletter. 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 Digest. 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!

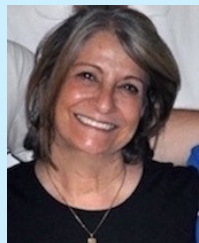
Recent Events



Patricia L. Brooks hosted the April meeting of the Scottsdale Society of Women Writers, which featured Betty Webb, the author of over twenty novels. Webb wrote the *Lena Jones* mystery series as well as the *Gunn Zoo* mysteries. Her latest series is *Lost in Paris*, set in 1922.

Patricia's special guest for the May meeting of the Scottsdale Society of Women Writers was Ann Videan, author, editor, book shepherd, and illustrator. It took place on National Smile Day, May 31, 2023, at 6pm, also at Panera Bread at Gainey Village, 8777 N. Scottsdale Road #302, Scottsdale, AZ. Ann gave tips and techniques for polishing manuscripts.

To learn more about the Scottsdale Society of Women Writers or to attend an upcoming meeting, please contact Patricia by visiting her [website](#) or emailing patricia@plbrooks.com. You may also text Patricia at: 480-250-5556.



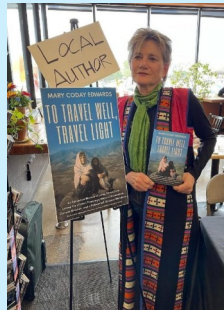
Diana Grillo was featured in the Spring Arizona Authors Series at the Desert Foothills Library on Wednesday, May 10. The Firebird Award winning author writes short stories and stage plays. Her book, *An Accidental Murder and Other Stories*, was adapted into a stage play. It explores the struggles of women, many of whom are in abusive situations.

To find out more about Diana and her work, visit short-storiesbydiana.com or her Arizona Authors [member page](#).



Donis Casey's April guest for her feature, **Tell Me Your Story**, was Will Thomas, author of *Heart of the Nile*, the 14th in the Cyrus Barker detective series. You may find that interview [HERE](#). To learn more about Donis and her featured guests, visit her [website](#) or her Arizona Authors

Association [member page](#).



Mary Coday Edwards was a featured author in two recent book signings. One took place at the Northern Arizona Book Festival held on April 2nd at Heritage Square, Flagstaff. The second occurred on Earth Day, April 22nd, at Bookman's Entertainment Exchange, 1520 S Riordan Ranch St. in Flagstaff, AZ. Pictured is Mary at the second

signing with an advertisement for her book, [To Travel Well, Travel Light](#).

To find out more about Mary, check out her [website](#) or visit her Arizona Authors Association [member page](#).



Arizona Authors columnist Mark D. Walker and his daughter, Nicolle, participated in PEN America's World Press Day event, which took place on May 3rd at Changing Hands Bookstore, 300 West Camelback Rd. in Phoenix. The guest list included six local media leaders from 3TV, *The Arizona Republic*, CBS News and more, discussing challenges to freedom of expression in the U.S.

To find out more about Mark, check out his [website](#) or visit his Arizona Authors [member page](#).



Rodo Sofranac launched his book signing tour for the 2nd edition of [The Red Tail Tale on the Arizona Trail](#).

Rodo appeared recently in these locations:

- April 1st – Duck and Decanter, Phoenix
 - April 15th – REI Tucson
 - April 22nd – Botanica at the Farm at South Mountain
 - May 11th – The Original Aunt Chilada's, Phoenix
 - June – Cameron Trading Post, Cameron, AZ.
- To find out more about Rodo, visit his [website](#) or his Arizona Authors [member page](#).

Upcoming Events



Patricia L. Brooks and her author-husband, Earl L. Goldmann, will do a presentation together with their memoirs, five total, and read from their books at the Desert Foothills Library in Cave Creek, at 38443 N. Schoolhouse Road. This event will take place on Wednesday, June 7, 3:30-4:30 pm.

From the Desert Foothills website: Husband and wife duo, Patricia L. Brooks and Earl Goldmann, are prolific writers with many stories to share. Patricia is the President/Founder of Brooks Goldmann Publishing LLC and Scottsdale Society of Women Writers, developing both over the past 18 years. Earl debuted his first memoir *[Bounce Back](#)* in 2017 at age 82, and is currently writing his third memoir, to be out at age 90! [Patricia's] *[Sick as My Secrets](#)* is a powerful, compassionate, moving memoir told by a strong and honest woman who overcame a desperate need for alcohol to handle stress in her young life.

RSVP to DFLA at <https://dfla.org> or call 480-488-2286. This event is part of the Author Series that goes on monthly.

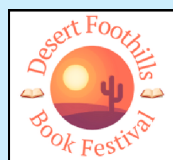
To learn more about Patricia and Earl, visit their [website](#) or email patricia@plbrooks.com. You may also text Patricia at: **480-250-5556**.

Longtime Arizona Authors Association member Jan Cleere will be featured at the Payson Book Festival on July 15th in Payson, Arizona. Jan is well known for her books focusing on Arizona women, pioneers, military wives, and Southwestern history.



Please see the ad on the first page of this digest or go to <https://paysonbookfestival.org/> for more information. The annual event features well known authors and will take place at the Mazatzal Hotel and Casino Ballroom in Payson.

To learn more about Jan, visit her [website](#) or her Arizona Authors [member page](#).



Registration is open for local authors wishing to exhibit their books at the 2nd Annual Desert Foothills Book Festival. Presented by The Holland Center and Desert Foothills Library, the event will take place at the Holland Center located at 34250 N 60th St., Scottsdale, AZ, 85266 on Saturday, October 21, 2023, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Interested authors can register to purchase a table at the festival's [website](#). Please see the ad on page [10](#) of this digest.

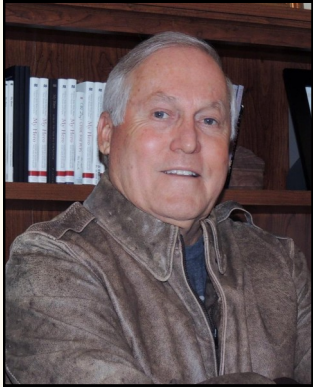


“Some of the most beautiful things worth having in your life come wrapped in a crown of thorns.”

-Shannon L. Alder

Desert Botanical Garden
Photo by Arizona Authors Association member
Linda Radke

Congratulations to Our Members



Mike Rothmiller's book, [*Frank Sinatra and the Mafia Murders*](#), hit number one on Amazon recently. The book has garnered phenomenal success and has been featured in episode 266 of [*Crime World*](#), one of the UK's most popular shows, as well as in its sister publication [*Sunday World*](#). During the week of April 13, Mike finalized negotiations to appear in eight episodes of a new true crime documentary series. The production company also has a publishing branch, and they are acquiring a true crime book he completed last year for publication.

Not to be outdone by this success, his previous book, [*Bombshell: The Night Bobby Kennedy Killed Marilyn Monroe*](#), remains at number 4-5 of Top Selling Books on Amazon. *Bombshell* recently passed over two thousand reviews on that site, with two-thirds of the reviews at five stars.

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



Arizona Authors Digest columnist Janet Alcorn appeared on a panel at the Left Coast Crime conference held in Tucson in April. She was one of four authors on a panel called **Packing It All In A Short Story**.

Pictured are, from left to right, Alan Orloff (moderator), Janet Alcorn, Gay Toltl Kinman, Stephen D. Rogers, and Kate Thorn. Left Coast Crime describes itself as, "an annual mystery convention sponsored by mystery fans, both readers and authors."

To find out more about Left Coast Crime, please visit their [website](#).

To find out more about Janet, please visit her [website](#) or Arizona Authors Association [member page](#).



Mark D. Walker was featured in the Spring 2023 issue of [*The Westerner*](#), the magazine of Western Colorado University, Mark's Alma Mater. Please see this article featured on page [32](#) of this issue of the *Arizona Authors Digest*.

Mark has two new books forthcoming, *The Guatemala Reader: What You Might Not Know And Why You Should Care*, and *Moritz Thomsen: The Best American Writer You Have Not Heard Of*, as well as several articles on immigration reform and race relations. As always, Mark continues to write reviews for Goodreads and other outlets.

To find out more about Mark, check out his [website](#) or visit his Arizona Authors [member page](#).

Congratulations, continued



Arizona Authors Association member Marilyn June Janson’s short story, “Lucky for Love,” was chosen for publication in the *Chicken Soup for the Soul* series. The story appears in [*Chicken Soup for the Soul: All You Need Is Love: 101 Tales of Romance and Happily Ever After.*](#)

See more on this story and book on page [32](#) of this issue of the *Arizona Authors Digest*.

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

Arizona Authors Association member and former columnist Ashley E. Sweeney has recently won the [Independent Press Award for Western Fiction](#). Her book, [Hardland](#), is set in the Arizona Territory in 1899 and centers around the character of Ruby Fortune, “once known as the ‘Girl Wonder’ on the Wild West circuit.”



Hardland is the third western novel that Sweeney has authored, and all of them have won numerous awards for authenticity and excellence.

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



Longtime Arizona Authors member Rodo Sofranac has been featured as a Modern Elder on Susan L Brooks’ website. Susan is a Modern Elder Academy graduate and one of the creators and hosts of the Thrive@55 event. Rodo and his wife appear in the most recent “I’m On Fire!” [newsletter](#).

Rodo, the ageless author of numerous children’s books, has won recognition for his work including awards in Mom’s Choice, The Authors Show, and the Arizona Authors Association contests. His most recent book, the revised [The Red Tail Tale on the Arizona Trail](#), was featured in the April issue of the *Arizona Authors Digest*.

To find out more about Rodo, visit his [website](#) or his Arizona Authors [member page](#).



Arizona Authors member Elizabeth Ajamee-Boyer was featured in the April edition of **Clean Romance Authors More Than a Review Spotlight**.

To read the feature on Elizabeth and her clean romance novel, [Cheyenne on Her Mind](#), go to [More Than A Review](#).

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

I always love More Than A Review newsletters. Today's is extra special with Elizabeth Ajamee-Boyer's book as one of the featured clean reads!



MAILCHIMP
This Month's Spotlight: Clean Romance Authors
When Coast Guard Investigative Service Special Agent LOGAN ...





What Pounds My Cake!

by Jane Ruby

Wanna know what pounds my cake? I'll tell you anyway—ordering from the deli department at a grocery store. Lately they think they know better than you. They want you to be 1000% satisfied with your purchase, even though you're 100% satisfied with what you've gotten for a billion years.

Since Covid restrictions have been lifted from most deli departments (including my favorite), customers are again allowed to taste a sample of meat, cheese, or macaroni salad before purchasing. I did so when spying a new type of beef pastrami. Now they have two types: "Classic" (my fav) and "Romanian" (the new kid—or rather calf—on the block, heh, heh, see where I went with this?). Anyway I wanted to taste the Romanian type before making my choice.



For those who've never had pastrami, it's a beef brisket brined with spices then rubbed with more spices and finally smoked to not even taste like beef brisket anymore. I've heard it described as "beef bacon" but I don't think it tastes anywhere close to pork bacon. Just my opinion.

OK, so, back at the grocers, the deli dude sliced me a thin sample of the Romanian pastrami. "If you like spicy this is the one for you," he said, handing it to me on a small wax paper sheet.

It was early morning, and my just-brushed teeth were not ready for so much spice. Nevertheless, I took a bite, chewed it while rolling it over my tongue a bit before swallowing. Even with a minty-fresh palate, I didn't think it was any spicier than the Classic pastrami.

The deli clerk asked, "Well, what do you think?"

I answered, "Not bad; but it tastes the same as your other pastrami."

He looked surprised, his big bushy eyebrows rising to his scalp. "Can't you taste all the extra seasoning?"

"Not really."

"Maybe you should try a sample of the Classic for a direct comparison."

But I really didn't want more pieces of pastrami with its coarse-ground peppercorns, and allspice stuck between my teeth, especially since I didn't have any tooth floss in my purse. "No, thanks," I replied, "I'll just take a half-pound of the Romanian this time." After all it was on sale—and at the time cost less than the Classic pastrami.

Deli Dude really wanted me to compare both. He even offered to make two mini-sandwiches—on pumpernickel bread no less—to make sure I could tell the difference in taste. Wow, talk about going to great lengths!

I wanted to be polite, but it was getting hard to refuse this guy. "No, thanks, I'll just take a half pound of the Romanian pastrami."

Continued on the next page.

What Pounds My Cake, continued

Shrugging his shoulders, he turned to the slicer, filled my order, and handed it to me. “Keep your receipt in case you’re not satisfied with its flavor.”

Yikes. I snatched my pastrami order and dropped it into my shopping cart. “OK, I will, thank you,” I said, speeding away and ditching into the produce department. I wanted so badly to pick the beef shreds and spices out of my teeth. Pastrami is just not the ideal morning breath to have in my mouth. I headed for the checkout hoping not encounter any produce clerks wanting shoppers to sample the many varieties of onions there.

###The End###

Jane Ruby is an award-winning novelist, essayist, and short story writer. She’s also the Treasurer of the Association as well as the Literary Contest Director. Learn more about Jane [HERE](#).

Desert Foothills Book Festival

From the Website:

The Desert Foothills Book Festival grew from the desire of a group of local authors to connect personally with book lovers and to promote an appreciation of reading and the literary arts. With the Tucson Book Festival to the south and the Payson and Prescott Book Festivals to the north, this small group felt the greater Phoenix, Scottsdale, Cave Creek, and Carefree areas were missing a valuable opportunity to meet and engage with local authors from all genres.

Registration is open for local authors wishing to exhibit their books at the 2nd Annual Desert Foothills Book Festival. Presented by The Holland Center and Desert Foothills Library, the event will take place at:

The Holland Center
34250 N 60th St, Scottsdale, AZ 85266
Saturday, October 21, 2023, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Interested authors can register to purchase a table at the festival’s website at:

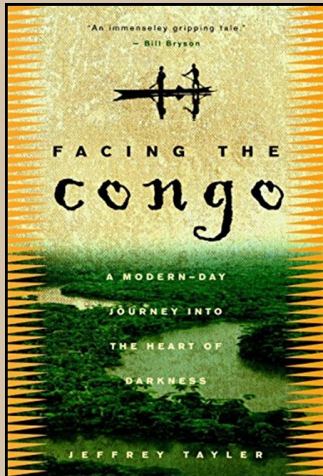
www.desertfoothillsbookfestival.com





The Million Mile Walker What We're Reading and Why

By Mark D. Walker



I'm always attracted to any adventure delving into the "heart of darkness" in Africa. In this case, it was a book inspired by Joseph Conrad's epic trip in 1890 down the Congo River on a steamer, after being appointed by a Belgian trading company. This story came to mind while floating down the Rio Dulce in Guatemala, where the dense tropical forest came up to the river's edges, and one could hear different languages on shore (mostly Q'eqchí). But Tayler's travel adventure, [Facing the Congo](#), is on an entirely different level as he follows the Congo River on a barge for 1,100 of the river's 2,900 total miles, in a country where over 220 languages are spoken. The width of the river, in that area, ranges from five to seven miles. The barge is steaming with deckhands, merchants, prostitutes, spiritual followers, fishermen, and children.

He was also planning the descent in a native, dugout canoe (pirogue), which hadn't been attempted since Stanley did it. Henry Morton Stanley coined the term "Dark Continent of Africa" around 1876, as he led an expedition that King Leopold I of Belgium financed to "prove that the Congo basin was rich enough to repay exploitation."

This colonial past explains some of the mistrust of foreigners, especially white foreigners, which Tayler had to deal with. This passage from the Lonely Planet provides an overview of the conditions the author would encounter on his adventure:

Because of the ongoing chaos in Zaire...security is a significant problem throughout the country...Regarding danger, Kinshasa is unrivaled in Central Africa... groups with knives and guns have attacked travelers in broad daylight, so even walking around Kinshasa during the daytime poses serious risk...Foreigners have been dragged at gunpoint from their cars at major intersections and murdered...

And yet the author was undaunted: "The Congo River filled my dreams and flowed through my waking hours, and my expedition took on a fated aspect." However, these dangers did convince him that before getting in a pirogue, he'd take a barge from Kinshasa upriver to Kisangani. This made perfect sense, considering the river is 15 miles wide at Kinshasa. I'd venture to guess that the author's experience as a Returned Peace Corps Volunteer bolstered his willingness to enter this journey where lesser travelers would have feared to tread.

The author tells how overwhelmed he was by the abject poverty of Kinshasa:

...But the smoke of burning garbage floated under the palms; the sun was flooding down razor-sharp, bleaching away colors and lending the city the incinerated look of Hiroshima after the blast. Dust, decay, crazed men in uniforms, starvelings, and cripple - it all hit me, and I was nearly broke. I felt nausea rising within me; pity and revulsion, and shock swamped me and kept at bay the fear I had thought I would feel. Although I had expected to see poverty, I had no idea it would upset me so much viscerally...

The real adventure doesn't begin until halfway through the book, "Alone on the River," when the author sets out in a pirogue with only one local guide, Desi ... "As we slipped away from the bank, the bow of our pirogue cut a pale gray V in the Indigo River. Sweat ran down my eyes, soaked through my shirt, and blanched into expanding blotches on the

continued on the next page

The Million Mile Walker, continued

thighs of my cotton trousers.” This is how the 1,100-mile journey down the Congo to Kinshasa began.

I empathized with the author based on my own travels upcountry in Sierra Leone, West Africa. When he stopped one evening to rest, “*The drums beat on, becoming muffled, and then a chanting began, a haunting dirge, and then there were shouts. It unsettled me, and I switched around in the tent to face the river through my net door. There was no moon, only a blackness filled with drums and chants and the high-voltage buzz of mosquitoes that screamed and whined thick as fog where my breath exited the gauze....*”

When they stopped in a city, the author was expected to check in with someone from the country’s secret police, SNIP. “In Zaire, most problems that didn’t crawl, bite, sting, or cause dysentery had to do with the police or military,” Tayler says. “The whole Zairian government had devolved into a sham institution, a façade of buildings with brass placards, doors with nameplates, people with titles, and nothing behind them; it builds nothing, performed no services, represented no one. It probably no longer paid the pettifogging SNIP officer sitting in front of me his salary.” Making corruption and bribery a way of life.

Eventually, intrigue with his assistant and a soldier the author hired for protection (for a section where the local population was known to kill any whites who turned up) plus illness, took its toll. Tayler writes, “Later, after we returned to the hotel, I fell ill in the debilitating heat of the late afternoon. Tormented by nausea, my intestines tightening into knots, I rolled from side to side on the lumpy mattress in my green room, weak and clammy, listening to the lizards crawl up the walls and the parrots squawking outside my window....”

Finally, the author would have to abandon his quest, with 470 miles to go. At this point, this adventure entered what I’d referred to in my latest book, **My Saddest Pleasures**, those trips which held great expectations, but would fail to the point that all involved were in dire straits. The author’s helper, Desi, distracted him with Christian chants and hymns. But Desi’s health then deteriorated to the point that he might not make it. These are the journeys we remember the most, and they always include a certain level of regret:

I did not know what to say. I felt I was to blame for having undertaken this trip, which now seemed like it could cost the life of this poor fellow, or leave him more debilitated than ever, which would ruin the lives of a dozen other people, given his position of breadwinner for an extended family, in all my preparations I had never imagined that it would be my guide whose health would fail and not my own. But an isolating fear settled like a stone on my heart, isolating because, even in the company of others, we face death alone...

Here's the link for the rest of the review: <https://millionmilewalker.com/2023/04/facing-the-congo-the-modern-day-journey-into-the-heart-of-darkness-by-jeffrey-tayler-reviewed-by-mark-d-walker/>

**POVERTY,
BY AMERICA**

MATTHEW DESMOND
PULITZER PRIZE-WINNING AUTHOR OF **EVICTED**

My interest in the impact of poverty was heightened when I joined the Peace Corps and began working in countries worldwide to alleviate suffering. And after thirty years, when I spent more time in the U.S., like the author, I was haunted by how the wealthiest nation in the world had so many people living in poverty. One in every nine people in America is officially poor, and one in eight children—why do we tolerate so much suffering amid so much wealth?

According to Princeton sociologist Matthew Desmond in his book, [*Poverty, By America*](#), there are many reasons, but the **big one is that the rest of us benefit from it**. This author brings a unique perspective by not focusing on the “poor,” but on the rest of us and the economic and social systems that keep them poor.

continued on the next page

The Million Mile Walker, continued

Like a Peace Corps volunteer, his perspective was on seeing poverty up close and personal. His awareness of poverty started as a child in the Route 66 town of Winslow, Arizona. His father was a pastor at the First Christian Church, and as a graduate school student at the University of Wisconsin, he focused on the housing crisis. He moved to Milwaukee, living in a mobile home and then a rooming house, where he befriended families who had been evicted.

Matthews' extensive research reveals the mind-boggling scope of poverty in the U.S. - 38 million can't get the basics, 39 million don't have medical insurance, and one in three families with two children makes \$55,000 or less. They face a fear of eviction, police brutality, and run-down neighborhoods where death comes early. The U.S. allows a much higher proportion of its children—over 5 million—to endure deep poverty than any of its peer nations.

And yet, according to the author, the U.S. spends almost as much combating poverty as other industrialized societies, second only to France. But how we try to help the poor explains why poverty persists.

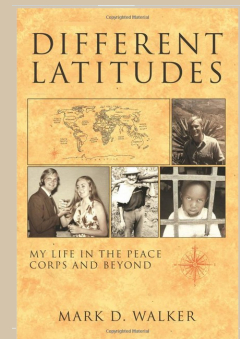
To begin with, the most extensive welfare program in the country focuses on the wealthy and middle class in this country. Much of that goes to the well-off—such as the home mortgage deduction, one of many tax breaks accruing to the wealthiest America--\$1.8 trillion dollars.

Follow this link for the rest of the review: <https://millionmilewalker.com/2023/05/poverty-by-america-by-matthew-desmond-reviewed-by-mark-d-walker/>

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/>

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.





"The moment you doubt whether you can fly, you cease forever to be able to do it."

-J.M. Barrie

**Monarch Butterfly
Prescott, Arizona**

**Photo by Arizona Authors Association member
Mike Rothmiller**



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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Join like-minded people for literary conversation, to share your projects and to support the Arizona writing community at PEN America's Arizona chapter events. Founded in 1922, PEN America stands at the intersection of literature and human rights to support free expression in the U.S. and worldwide. Current and past PEN members include Maya Angelou, Langston Hughes, John Steinbeck, Barbara Kingsolver, Salman Rushdie, Toni Morrison and many other prolific artists.

Arizona Authors Association member Michelle Beaver launched the Arizona chapter of PEN America in April 2022, and the chapter has hosted many events at Changing Hands Bookstore, Grassrootz Bookstore, Palabras Bilingual Bookstore, and downtown Phoenix restaurants. Speakers have included poets, journalists, best-selling authors, Arizona Sen. Christine Marsh, *The Arizona Republic's* famed columnist E.J. Montini, a global human rights attorney, etc. We're now collaborating with groups such as ASU's Virginia G. Piper Center for Creative Writing, where Michelle serves as a teaching artist.

The coming year will include more great panels as well as social events that feature complementary appetizers and drinks. PEN membership is not mandatory for attendance. If you'd like more information, please contact the founder and director of PEN America's Arizona chapter, Michelle Beaver, at: Michelle.L.Beaver@gmail.com.



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 May 15 to arizonaauthorseditor@gmail.com and we may publish it.

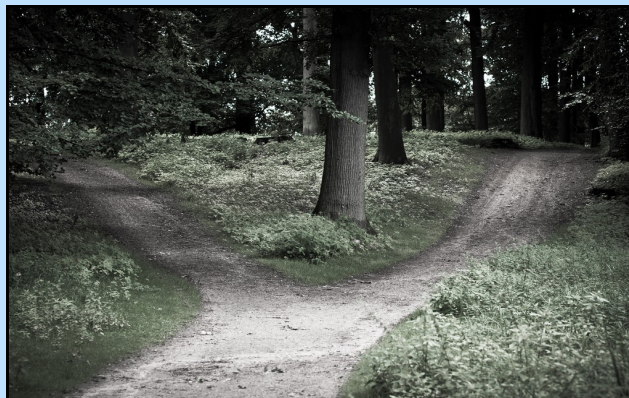
Doors

Each door was different. Some were richly carved, a tribute to their former glory. Some were painted with gold leaf, with large sections peeled off and barely a trace of the gold remaining. The attached houses had broken but beautiful cobblestone walkways, some littered with so much debris that you had to jump, step, and bounce over junk to reach the doors. These townhouses looked as if they had not been in use for years, though one had curtains waving through a broken window pane. The only sound in the neighborhood came from the wind whistling through the isolation. Signs in most windows begged for a renter or a sale; others merely said, "Keep Out!"

Questions:

1. Who is the narrator and why did he or she visit this desolate place?
2. What was this neighborhood like in its heyday?
3. Is someone hiding behind those curtains, or is the place really devoid of people?
4. Where is this place and when is the story taking place?
5. Who owns these houses and why did they leave?
6. Did the town's resources dry up, or did economic growth elsewhere lure the residents away?
7. Was there a plague or other disaster, or is the place haunted?

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





Art as Lifework, Life as Artwork

Free 3-part Zoom Workshop Presented by
Award-Winning Author Penny Orloff

Saturday, September 9
Saturday, September 16
Saturday, September 23
10am-Noon MST online

Email [Toby Heathcotte](#) or [Jane Ruby](#) to participate.

Part One: GET INSPIRED

Enabling whole-brain creative process, elimination of blocks, recognizing innate abilities, freeing the Authentic Self, rediscovery of joy. The Synchronicity Log. The Wish List.

Part Two: GET TO WORK

Step-by-step approach to the discipline of creative expression, slowing down time, controlled surrender, the magic of manifestation. Baby Steps. Playmates. The Wish List in action.

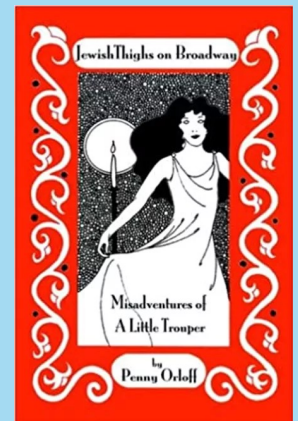
Part Three: GET THE MONEY

Funding the Work—Arts markets, private/group studio, scholarships, the ABCs of grant writing. Write your elevator speech/press release/bio. Create a workable budget and timeline.

For artists in every medium—
musicians, singers, dancers,
actors, writers, visual artists,
filmmakers, arts students/
teachers, seniors.

Penny Orloff was a working actor and dancer in Los Angeles when a Juilliard scholarship took her to New York. She sang more than 20 Principal Soprano roles for New York City Opera, and played featured roles on Broadway under directors Harold Prince and Joseph Papp. Theater, concert, and opera engagements took her all over the US, Europe, and the former Soviet Union. Her solo show, *Jewish Thighs on Broadway*—based on her novel of the same name—toured the US for a decade, including a successful run off-Broadway in 2005. Her current show, *Songs and Stories from a Not-Quite-Kosher Life*, is restarting after the Covid break.

She is the author of "Art as Lifework, Life as Artwork," a creativity seminar and workbook offered nationwide since 1991; and is still procrastinating on her new book, "Who Would You Be If You Had Nothing to Bitch About?" A Tarot reader for over 50 years, Penny has used the cards in her counseling practice for decades. She is a regular contributor of stories to the Chicken Soup for the Soul series, and has worked for a dozen years as an arts journalist for various online and print media. Find out more about Penny and her work [HERE](#).



Penny's award-winning book, [Jewish Thighs on Broadway: Misadventures of A Little Trooper](#) is for sale on Amazon and other outlets.



Puzzle it!

A Logic Puzzle for Summer by Kevin Gundlach



Summer heat is upon us, so let's play with some sizzling hot titles! You will be given a list of four authors, their book or play titles, a genre, and the year it was first published. Your assignment, if you choose to accept it, is to match all authors with their own works, genre, and the year of publication.

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 18). 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!

Works:

The Heat Will Kill You First, Dead Heat, Cat on a Hot Tin Roof, Texas Heat

Authors:

Biba Pearce, Tennessee Williams, Jeff Goodell, Fern Michaels

Genre

Thriller, Nonfiction, Romance, Drama

Year of Publication:

1986, 2023, 2022, 1955

Good luck! If you solve the puzzle in 30 minutes or less, let us know so that we may congratulate you in the next issue! This should be an easy one, folks, so let's turn up the heat and get puzzling!

continued on the next page

CLUES

- 1) The four separate books are:
 - A. The one published in 1955
 - B. Texas Heat
 - C. The Thriller
 - D. The one written by Jeff Goodell

- 2) The work published in 2022 was either *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* or the one by Biba Pearce.

- 3) The thriller was published before *The Heat Will Kill You First*

- 4) The work by Tennessee Williams was either a drama or published in 2023

- 5) The work by Fern Michaels was published before the one by Jeff Goodell

- 6) The earliest work is a well known play by an author named for a state.

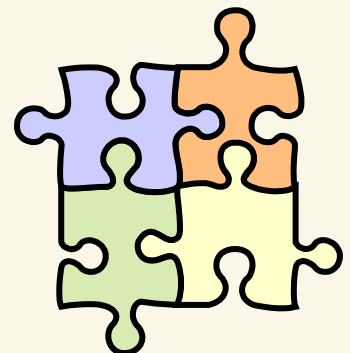
- 7) The romance novel was published before the book by Biba Pearce.

		The Heat Will KYF	Dead Heat	Cat on a Hot Tin R	Texas Heat	Biba Pearce	Tennessee Williams	Jeff Goodell	Fern Michaels	Thriller	Nonfiction	Romance	Drama	1986	2023	2022	1955
Title	The Heat WKYF	O	X	X	X												
	Dead Heat	X	O	X	X												
	Cat on a HTR	X	X	O	X												
	Texas Heat	X	X	X	O												
Author	Biba Pearce					X	X	X	X								
	Tennessee W.					X	O	X	X								
	Jeff Goodell					X	X	O	X								
	Fern Michaels					X	X	X	O								
Genre	Thriller									O	X	X	X				
	Nonfiction									X	O	X	X				
	Romance									X	X	O	X				
	Drama									X	X	X	O				
Date Pub.	1986													O	X	X	X
	2023													X	O	X	X
	2022													X	X	O	X
	1955													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 18**, 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](#).



Literary Contest Report

by Jane Ruby



Arizona Authors Association

May 15, 2023

As of May 15, 2023, we have received 57 Entries:

Published Oldie But Goldies --16
Published Fiction --7
Published Nonfiction -- 10
Published Juvenile/Young Adult -- 4
Published Children's Picture Book.-- 8

Unpublished Poetry/Prose -- 3
Unpublished Short Story --3
Unpublished Essay --2
Unpublished Novel -- 4

While we are loaded in the published categories, we are sparse in the unpublished ones. If you have an unpublished poem or essay sitting on your computer, now's the time to resurrect it. Don't make me finish my unpublished works just to fill up the categories. GET WRITING!

We can also use a few more judges. If you have some extra hours at the internet café or sailing the Puget Sound, please consider judging. We could use the help/expertise.

Jane Ruby, 2023 Literary Contest Director
Arizona Authors Association
www.arizonaauthors.org

Editor's Note: The contest deadline is JUNE FIRST.



Application for Membership

Benefits of Membership

Literary Contest Awards Banquet Literary Magazine
Book Festivals Book Signings Facebook Page Critique Groups
Newsletter Blog Workshops Website Page

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

HOME PHONE _____

CELL _____

EMAIL _____

WEBSITE _____

TYPE OF MEMBERSHIP _____

PUBLICATIONS OR CURRENT PROJECTS: _____

Writers Published or Unpublished:

One year \$45
Two years \$80
Three years \$110

Professional Membership:

Related Services such as Publishers,
Agents,
and Editors:
One year \$60
Two years \$110
Three years \$165

Send Checks or Money Orders To:

Arizona Authors Association
6145 West Echo Lane
Glendale AZ 85302-5709

Or Pay With:

Paypal.com to:

arizonaauthorsassociation@gmail.com

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 (or Nearest City):

Apache Junction

Tucson

Kingman

Prescott

Safford

Globe

Yuma

Holbrook

Gila Bend

Ajo

Write to arizonaauthorseditor@gmail.com no later than July 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 in Tucson AZ. We had two incorrect guesses but no winners. We appreciate the participation, so keep the guesses coming!





What Are You Reading?

by Kathleen Cook

I picked up the book, *My American Journey* by Colin Powell, late last year on the one-year anniversary of his death. Life has been so busy lately, I didn't get around to reading it until last week, but I was glad that I finally did. Colin Powell served as a highest-ranking general and in many different capacities in the US Government.

While I didn't always agree with his politics, at least he was sane, reasonable, calm and genial, unlike so many politicians nowadays. At one time, he thought of a run for president and he might have made a good one. He wasn't always right, and was vilified in the press when he was wrong, but he lived by his conscience and that's more than I can say for many who serve (or serve themselves) in government.

The book contains tons of photos from his time as a child, his visit to Jamaica to reconnect with his roots and meet many previously unknown relatives, and tons of photos from his time in the Reagan, both Bush and Clinton administrations.

My politics differ greatly from his, but even so, I long for a return to the days of the Colin Powell republicans and democrats, where gentlemen and gentlewomen conducted business in a rational, civilized manner and where no one slung the kind of hash being slung lately. *My American Journey* reflects the era of at least partial cooperation and mutual trust. I miss those days. Thank you for your service and your example, General Powell.

Find *My American Journey* on [Amazon](#), [Barnes and Noble](#), and other outlets.



*We have forgotten
what rocks still
know. We have
forgotten how to be
still, to be where
life is here and
now.*

-Adapted from a quote by
Eckhart Tolle

Henderson Flat Cliff House

Photo by Arizona
Authors Association member
Mike Rothmiller



Energizing Your Marketing & Technical Strategies

by Jeanne Burrows-Johnson



UNEXPECTED BENEFITS FROM OUR TRAVEL OPPORTUNITIES

Knowing that artists and other creative professionals join the Arizona Authors Association, I use this column to explore both technical and creative means by which our members can expand the effectiveness of their personal and professional experiences, as well as the impact of the works they produce.

In my last article, I discussed the promotional as well as sales opportunities provided by trips beyond our home area. Regardless of whether speaking engagements are included, travel can offer multiple chances to introduce ourselves to the general public and professionals who may work in fields related to ours.

By planning our journeys with care, we should be able to enjoy each phase of our travel experiences. There's no way of knowing who or what we may encounter along the way, but I can state positively that I have established new readers and organizational contacts, with whom I have remained in touch beyond our initial meeting, at events or at points along my journey.

SEASONAL OPPORTUNITIES

As we move into the third quarter of the year, the majority of us are facing a considerable increase in the heat we will experience on many days. Therefore, when deciding to embark on a trip for personal and/or professional purposes, I urge you to choose aspects of travel that can serve multiple purposes. Despite the challenges of the season, are there variations in the potential pleasure of the very mode(s) of travel you choose? Which mode may provide the greatest likelihood of meeting people with whom you will enjoy conversing, and who may prove useful in enhancing your journey and even future life experiences?

WHERE WILL YOU CHOOSE TO JOURNEY... HOW MIGHT YOU PARTICIPATE IN EVENTS ALONG THE WAY?

~ At this time of year, there are a multitude of literary events in which authors and readers of their books can partake. Some are one, two, or more days in length. Even if you are unable to participate personally, you may be able to schedule someone from an organizing body to man a booth for you—or at least a slot of time within the event. If you are a member of the organization, you may not need to pay for such services. Conversely, depending on your circumstances and schedule, you may want to hire someone to represent you for one or more occasions. If so, you may need to sign books in advance that will be offered for sale, or provide book plates with your signature.

continued on the next page

Energizing Your Marketing and Technical Strategies by Jeanne Burrows-Johnson, continued

~ Because people often take vacations at this time of year, families (that believe the perils of COVID have abated sufficiently) may choose to schedule a large gathering. Even when such an assembly may seem wholly personal, there will be opportunities to announce one's latest project and/or upcoming events featuring our books or other artistic creations. At this time, two members of my husband's family are regular readers of my Natalie Seachrist Hawaiian mysteries. With their expressed disappointment that there has not been a new offering since COVID, I have been pleased to announce the forthcoming release of *Yen for Murder*, the fourth volume in the series.

~ Companies and community organizations also use this time of freedom from schooling and/or work to plan team-building events that may include their employees' family members. In addition to participation as an organizational member, you may find such events ideal for your complete or partial sponsorship. Perhaps there will be an event flier, ad, or brochure in which you can place promotional images or text. You might have images of yourself or one of your creative projects printed on T-shirts for members of something like a little league soft-ball team.

YOUR APPEARANCE WHILE TRAVELING

In several articles, I touch upon the importance of one's appearance in our interactions with the public. Often, authors and artists feel there is no reason to be concerned about the look they project. In fact, many feel that projection of a casual (or even lackadaisical) look is an indication of their artistic professionalism. To this perspective I ask, "How does such a choice leave a positively impressive memory of you...and the potential quality of your work?" An opposite argument can be that the elegance of one's dress and coiffure might indicate that one's work is not equal to one's appearance.

Admittedly, there are times when a less-than professional appearance is appropriate to our activity, such as hanging an art exhibit, or dashing to a printer to finalize materials required for a public showing of our work. However, one's preparations for an event are not complete until *we* are prepared to greet other professionals and attendees of the event.

I recall an instance when the director of a large metropolitan event completed technical preparations for the annual occasion almost single-handedly. Unfortunately, he subsequently appeared on television disheveled, wearing the same attire in which he had moved sets and furniture throughout the day. While the focus of the evening was admittedly on its participants, it would surely have helped the image of, and support for, its sponsoring organization for him to look professional.

Beyond toiletries, cosmetics, and emergency items of clothing, I suggest that we carefully plan how we will look throughout a journey—and at the events in which we may participate. Since it is possible that our luggage may not make it through every phase of a trip, try to carry essential items for maintaining the quality of your "look" on your person or in a handbag and/or carry-on pieces. If you are using a vehicle to transport clothing and promotional materials, you will need to check that the items on which you will rely are available at each point at which you stop. Men may often find it useful to pack multiple ties, handkerchiefs, and cufflinks. Beyond the packing of items for our toilette, dressing, and promotion, it is also useful to carry materials for cleaning stains as well as a small sewing/repair kit.

GREETING CONTACTS ALONG OUR PATHWAY

While business cards are the traditional staple for greeting people one may meet, authors and artists have more visually stimulating pieces to distribute during our travels. I have found it particularly useful to wear a jacket with pockets. During the warm seasons of the year, this means wearing one that is not heavy, or even lined. One friend, who is an artist, always makes a point of wearing a scarf or jacket that offers one or more images of her work.

For me, the ideal choice is wearing something that offers an image suggestive of Hawai'i. In my pockets I carry folding business cards and bookmarks with images of my mysteries. In my handbag I usually have fliers describing the

continued on the next page

Energizing Your Marketing and Technical Strategies by Jeanne Burrows-Johnson, continued

mysteries and/or special events or releases of new work. Sometimes I even carry small packages of candy or nuts from the islands. But because one cannot know who may have allergies to such items, they must be packaged and kept away from other objects I might distribute.

For further details on maximizing your travel experiences, see Part 2 of “Public Speaking” in the April/May 2022 issue.

Wishing you the best in your creative adventures,

Jeanne Burrows-Johnson,

author, narrator, consultant, and motivational speaker

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

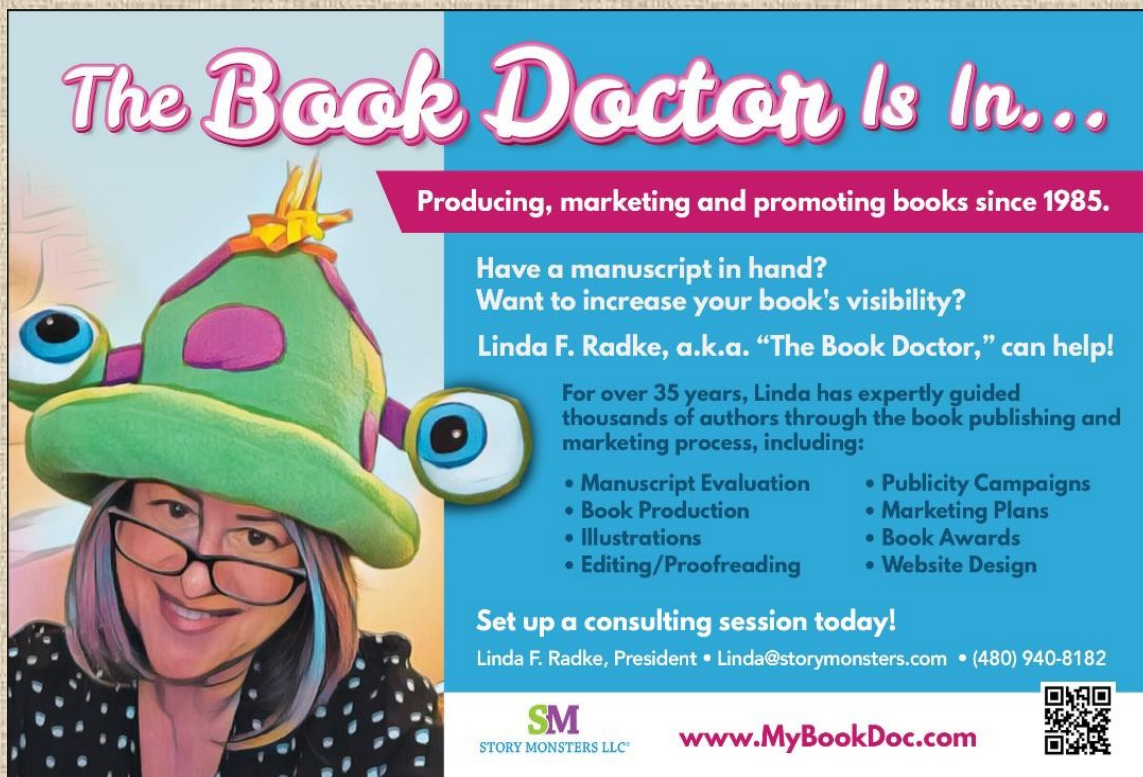
Author Website: JeanneBurrows-Johnson.com

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](#).



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Volunteer Openings

Join our family of volunteers and make the Arizona Authors Association even better!

Openings include:

Membership: Do you have a knack for details and keeping records? Are you friendly and able to talk to people who may be curious about joining or renewing their membership with the Arizona Authors Association? Contact Toby at toby@tobyheathcotte.com if interested.

Zoom Workshops: Would you like to do one or more Zoom workshops in the coming year on a topic of interest and benefit to writers? Zoom workshops usually last 90-120 minutes, so you'd need enough material to keep your viewers engaged. Past topics include mystery writing, memoir writing, marketing your book, and writing methods. Pitch your topic to us today!

Perks include a free year's membership to the Arizona Authors Association and our undying gratitude. Thank you!

Contact:

arizonaauthorsassociation@gmail.com



AZ Women for the Arts



ANNOUNCING INAUGURAL GRANT OPPORTUNITY!

New funding will be available from AZ Women for the Arts.

A big part of our mission is to foster the growth of Arizona's women artists.
To that end, we are proud to announce our inaugural grant program!

This is not a juried show.

Rather we aim to support artistic projects in any medium:
fine art, dance, music, literature, and the list goes on!
A selection committee will review the grants based **exclusively** on a clearly articulated project plan.

Two **\$1,500 grants** will be awarded for projects in
any artistic medium and in **any phase of development**.

Are you ready?

The grant portal will be open from **June 1 - July 31, 2023**.
Inaugural recipients will be announced in early September, 2023.

For more info, visit AZWomenfortheArts.org.

And such good luck!

info@AZWomenfortheArts.org

(480) 510-5624



The Inevitable Author

by Kathleen Cook

Comics' Evolution into Graphic Novels

When I was a kid (and probably you too) comics were not a serious literary genre. Boy, are we old fashioned! Nowadays, comics/aka/graphic novels are the most popular genre for teens, but even adults are reading more graphic novels, such as George Takei's *They Called Us Enemy*, Marjane Satrapi's *Persepolis*, and Art Spiegelman's *Maus*.

Graphic novels represent one of the biggest surges in high school and college libraries across the nation. Some of them, such as *Marbles* by Ellen Forney, are used in psychology courses and as literary resources.

So, maybe it's time for you to get on the graphic novel bandwagon. But what do you do if you're an author like me, with virtually no artistic talent? Well, have you tried AI? Although I'm a complete novice at Stable Diffusion, one of the best "free" AI art programs available, I had some success with it over the course of a few minutes of playing around.

When I typed in "old woman at a well holding a bucket" it gave me the image on the right. Not perfect, but heck, not bad. I'll have to fix her hand, which is obviously too long, but that's not as hard as generating a picture from scratch.



Please note that this art has never been seen before anywhere, and is perfectly and totally copyright free.

Here's another image I generated. I typed in "old man with two grandchildren" it gave me the image on the right. This isn't a real grandpa and those aren't real kids. They're AI generated.



Sure, I'll need to fix a couple things, but you're talking absolute neophyte here, not an artist. I can't even draw a straight line if you hand me a titanium ruler! For me, I'd say I'm going places with AI.

If you want black and white sketches instead of color, what about the picture on the next page? I typed in "Elf in the style of Lord of the Rings." It gave me the following image:

continued on the next page

The Inevitable Author, continued.

Not bad! I could see myself creating a graphic novel with this! As you can see, even those with zero artistic talent can manage a graphic novel nowadays, with a little help from their digital friends at Stable Diffusion. There are other products out there as well, but this is the one I know the best. Check them all out!

Downsides?

So, is there a downside to writing graphic novels? There are two obvious ones. Firstly, many of "our" generation don't consider graphic novels to be "real" reading. That attitude is changing, and the number of parents and grandparents buying such reading material for their kids has risen from 31 percent in 2021 to 37 percent a year later. As perceptions change, you may find this "downside" has disappeared except for a few die-hard purists.

The second downside is that graphic novels are targeted by ultra-religious groups for book bans. Depending upon your graphics, you may find yourself banned in certain conservative districts. If you're careful not to offend them, you'll probably be fine. And if you aren't careful, you may find your book even more popular. It's funny how many unknown novels have become known *because* they were banned!

So consider this genre for your summer writing project. If you are an artist, this should be a great venue for you. And if you aren't, play with Stable Diffusion and see how easy it is to do a great job in this genre. Happy writing/drawing!

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](#).



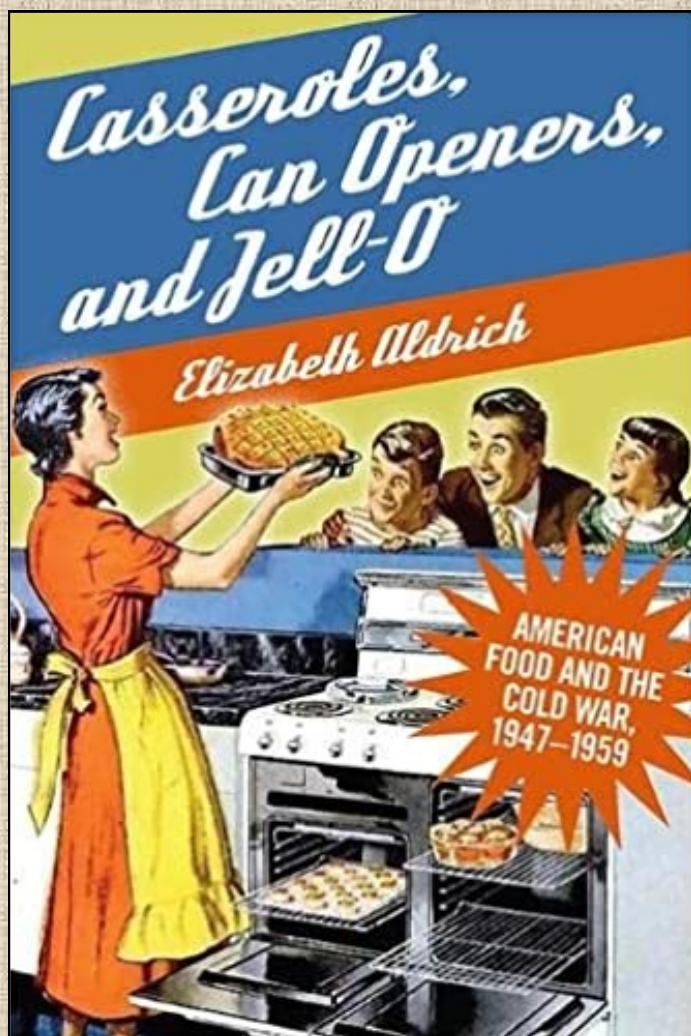
*Water is a
desert's gold*

-Matshona Dhliwayo

Desert Botanical Garden,
Phoenix Arizona
Photo by Arizona Authors
Association Member
Linda Radke

NEW BOOK RELEASE

by Elizabeth Aldrich



Casseroles, Can Openers and Jell-O

From Amazon's website:

Casseroles, Can Openers, and Jell-O provides insight on how American food culture developed during the early years of the Cold War. Highlighting gender roles, the promotion of democracy and capitalism, and the impact of mass market advertising, the book draws on cookbooks, popular magazines, television advertisements, government publications, and industry pamphlets to paint a vivid picture of what Americans ate and how food was enlisted as a symbol of America's postwar dominance.

Featuring eighty recipes, the book shows how the food industry promoted new processed foods to an increasingly industrialized nation. For anyone wanting to better understand how America's food culture developed during the mid-twentieth century and for those who were raised on TV dinners and Campbell's soup, the book offers an engaging and evocative look at the story of American cuisine during the early years of the Cold War.

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

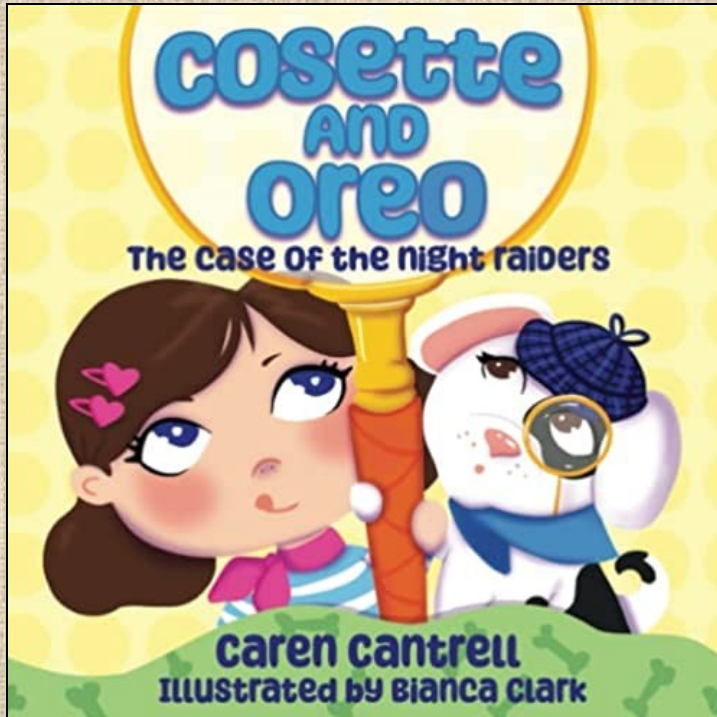
Elizabeth Aldrich is well known for her dance choreography. Her work has been featured in films such as *The Remains of the Day* starring Anthony Hopkins, *Jefferson in Paris* starring Nick Nolte, *The Age of Innocence* starring Michele Pfeiffer, and many others. She also served as the Curator of Dance at the Library of Congress, retiring from that position in 2012. She spent a semester as a Visiting Professor of Dance at the University of New Mexico in Albuquerque. From 2014-2019, she lived in Chile.

Elizabeth moved to Arizona in 2019 with her husband Brian and their dog Lulu. She has written numerous books and continues to write on a variety of topics. Find out more about Elizabeth on [Wikipedia](#) or on her [Arizona Authors Page](#).



NEW BOOK RELEASE

by Caren Cantrell



Cosette and Oreo

The Case of the Night Raiders

From Amazon's website:

Cosette's dream comes true when she rescues Oreo from the animal shelter. Now she has a little dog to play with and love. But messes keep happening in their home - overturned trash cans, half-eaten cakes, and spilled flour bags. Cosette's mom is sure Oreo is the one creating all the trouble. Mom threatens to send him back to the shelter if Cosette can't make him behave.

Cosette knows Oreo is a good dog. He wouldn't have made any of those messes. She'll need to use all her detective skills to find the real troublemakers and save Oreo!

A fun book about the love between a child and her adopted pet. Cosette's curiosity and her desire to keep Oreo lead her to find a way to solve the mystery and uncover the real culprits. Included are two activities your child can do at home to hone their own detective skills - writing secret messages with invisible ink and lifting fingerprints.

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

As an author, Caren Cantrell writes books for children. She has numerous picture books published to date, and she also writes an eBook series for Kindle called *Planet Discovery Books for Kids* under the pen name Matthew Taylor.

Her business is 102nd Place. Here she assists others who wish to indie-publish to get their books out to the world. She provides ghostwriting, editing, interior design, and cover development services. When she's not writing or visiting with her eight grandchildren, you can find her on the golf course. She lives in Cave Creek with her husband, Bill and their little dog, Daisy.

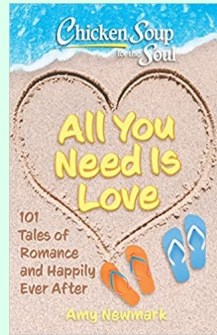
Find out more about Caren on her [website](#) or on her [Arizona Authors page](#).



SHORT RELEASES



Check out the [feature](#) on Mark D. Walker in the *Westerner Magazine* from Western Colorado University. To find out more about Mark, please visit his [website](#) or his Arizona Authors [member page](#).



Read Marilyn June Janson's short story, Lucky for Love, in this issue of *Chicken Soup for the Soul: All You Need Is Love: 101 Tales of Romance and Happiness Ever After*. Find out more about Marilyn by visiting her [website](#) or Arizona Authors [member page](#).

Behind the clouds, the sun is still shining

-Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

**Wupatki National Monument
Flagstaff, Arizona**

**Photo by Arizona Authors Association member
Janet Alcorn**





A Writer's Tip From Karen Odden

Embrace Thorns

We all know a book needs an Antagonist -- someone or something whose goals are in direct opposition to the Protagonist. But people sometimes overlook the power of the secondary character known as the Thorn. This is someone who pokes at the Protagonist with snubs, injustice, even cruelty.

In Harry Potter, Voldemort is the Antagonist; Draco Malfoy is one of the Thorns -- someone who causes trouble and conflict and is perhaps enough like the Protagonist in station or situation to know how to press his or her buttons. Thorns can be powerful tools for the writer, especially for the emotional arc.

Karen Odden is a USA Today bestselling author; her latest book is [Under A Veiled Moon](#), an Inspector Corravan mystery. 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 Association page [HERE](#).

Literary Trivia From Page Three

Answers

1. *Gravity's Rainbow*
2. Lorraine Hansberry
3. Phenomenal Woman
4. *No Exit*
5. Indianapolis

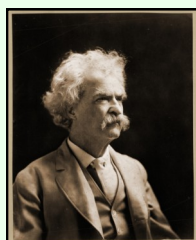
Back Page Quotes and Jokes



"I bought a pen that can write underwater."

"That's not so special. My pen can write other words as well!"

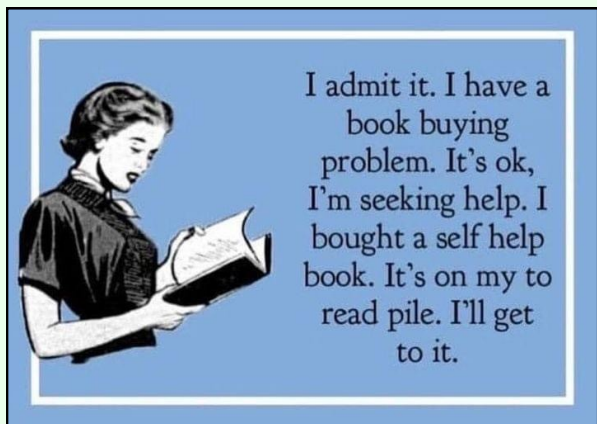
"I'm going to write a book about a tornado, but it's currently just a draft."



From Mark Twain:

"It is better to keep your mouth closed and let people think you are a fool than to open it and remove all doubt."

Submitted by Janet Alcorn:



I admit it. I have a book buying problem. It's ok, I'm seeking help. I bought a self help book. It's on my to read pile. I'll get to it.

Do you know a joke about writing, publishing or editing, or a quote from a famous author? Share it with Back Page 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.