

Purple Pros

The Official Newsletter of

Southeastern Writers

writers helping writers



PURPLE PROS – SOUTHEASTERN WRITERS NEWSLETTER – NOVEMBER 2024



Jim Furry
President

Hello my SWA friends,

I hope everyone is doing well and that none of our members were seriously affected by hurricanes Helene and Milton. We were very fortunate here in Conway, South Carolina. We had the usual riverbank flooding but

not much elsewhere except some beneficial needed rain. Our prayers are continuing for those who took the brunt of the hurricane damage. Because of the timing of the hurricanes, we had to cancel our plans for the Board of Directors retreat. Instead, we had an abbreviated Zoom meeting and were thrilled to have several of our new Auxilliary Board members attend. I believe our new Auxilliary Board members – Ricardo Romeu, Lori Duff, Mary Treadwell, and Pamela Taylor – will make an already dynamic Board even more dynamic.

As you all know, this is a very busy time of the year with upcoming traditional holidays. The SWA Board wishes each of you peace and happiness as you celebrate in your own way. Many of us will be enjoying a turkey dinner with all the trimmings with close family members and friends.

We are making a lot of progress in planning next June's conference. We just had a bit of a setback because one of the faculty members unexpectedly had to withdraw. Our faculty coordinator,

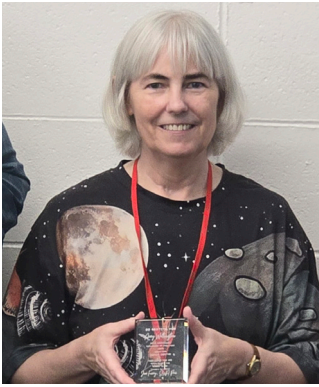
Amy Wethington, and our newsletter editor, Muriel Pritchett have secured another well-qualified faculty member, Kevin Steverson. See page 6 for the full lineup of faculty. In addition, our event planner and Vice President Jeff Newberry is working out the final details for the schedule. We are hoping to also learn from Epworth their costs, and be able to open up registration on the website before the end of the year.

Speaking of Muriel, I just ordered her recently released book on Amazon, *Aliens Spurlock*, written for middle grade/young teen readers. With seven grandchildren, I decided this would make a great Christmas present for one of them. All of our Board members are very talented writers, and I am honored to be part of this group and of SWA.

Almost every night, I make time to read before going to sleep, and with so many quality books available by all the members, faculty, and Board members, I rarely run out of things to read. In addition, my sister buys me one book for each month as a Christmas present. I never know what kind of collection she is going to give me. Anyway, I finally am getting around to reading Jeff Newberry's poetry book, *How to Talk about the Dead*, which I bought at the conference but can also be found on Amazon. I've read some very interesting poems that have reached into my heart and my memories.

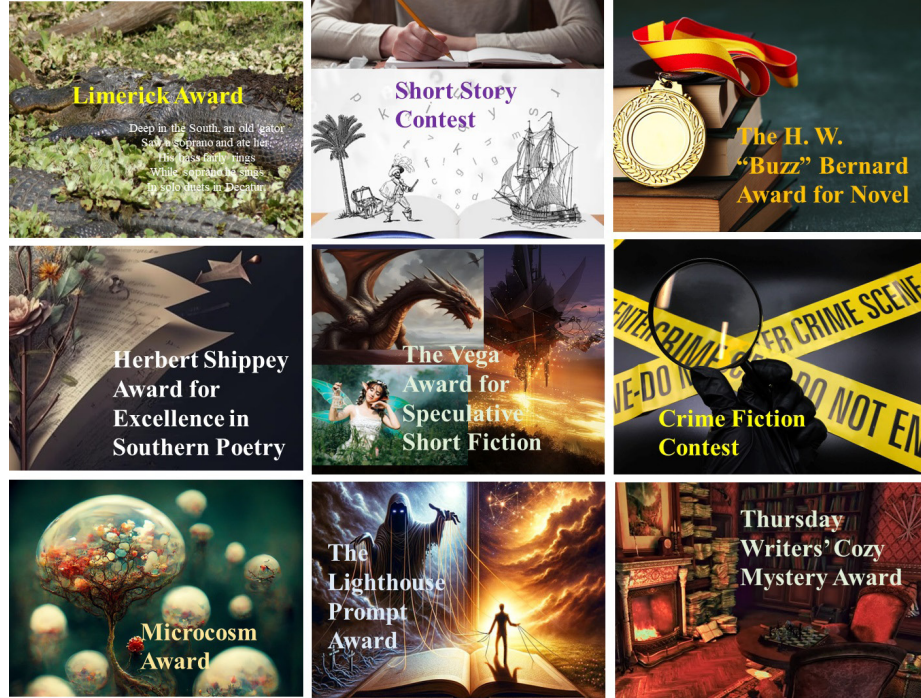
I am looking at Saturday, November 16th, at 10 a.m. for our next SWA Saturday morning coffee hour. I will confirm that date soon and send out

(President, continued on page 10)



Amy Wethington

Contest news from Amy . . .



Contest update:

The information regarding our annual Southeastern Writers Sponsored contests has been updated on our website. The online contest form is ready to receive entries when the contests open January 1st until they close April 30th [look for the buttons that say: “submit your work” or “apply now”].

The nine contests include:

Poetry

Limerick Award [Submit no more than two limericks (each consisting of five lines using an AABBA rhyme scheme). They can be nonsensical, comedic, outrageous, raunchy, or just plain fun]

Herbert Shippey Award for Excellence in Southern Poetry [a single poem of no fewer than 10 lines and no more than 50 lines addressing the Southeast in some broad way, either through subject matter or through style or through homage]

Short Stories

Microcosm Award [Fiction, any genre, no poetry, slice of life, or vignette. A complete manuscript with beginning, middle and end – which is character-driven and has a resolution. Less than 1,000 words; up to 999 words, not counting the title]

Short Story Contest [The author shall compose a fictional short story with the following constraints: Genre, thriller with a surprise ending, up to 1000 words, “unconscious young woman sitting in a sports car,” included in the text, and - “desperately searching for a flashlight,” as a critical part of the story. It will be judged on grammar, on adherence to the prompts, and word count]

The Vega Award for Speculative Short Fiction [up to 4,000 words, must be speculative in nature: e.g. science fiction, fantasy, horror, weird, magical, supernatural, superhero, utopian or dystopian, apocalyptic or post-apocalyptic, alternate history. Can be a complete story, a novel chapter, or a flash piece]

The Lighthouse Prompt Award [Explore the complex interplay between destiny and choice with the prompt, The Dance of Fate and Free Will. We welcome submissions from any genre of fiction or creative nonfiction. It can be written for any age group and set in any timeline—past, present, or future. Your entry can be self-contained or an excerpt from a larger work, as long as it: 1) doesn't exceed

4,000 words (according to Microsoft Word), and 2) follows the Shunn format <https://www.shunn.net/format/>. Are you ready to captivate us?].

Novels

The H. W. “Buzz” Bernard Award for Novel [first 10 pages of the manuscript (double-spaced); plus a 1-page synopsis and 1-paragraph “elevator pitch.” Any genre, literary or mainstream].

Crime Fiction Contest [Submit the first 30 pages or the first three chapters of a crime novel. 12-point font. Double space. Do not use tab indentions—use the paragraph formatting option to set paragraph indentions. A one-page synopsis recommended. File name should include Crime Novel Contest SWA, your title]

Thursday Writers’ Cozy Mystery Award [Submit first 10 pages of manuscript (double-spaced), plus a 1-page synopsis and 1-paragraph “elevator pitch.” Cozy mysteries are a sub-genre of crime fiction – a comfort read that leaves the reader satisfied rather than scared. The detective is an amateur sleuth, and the crime and detection take place in a small, socially intimate community. Think TV shows like *Murder She Wrote*, *Father Brown*, and *Death in Paradise* or Agatha Christie’s *Murder at the Vicarage*.

Click this link: <https://www.southeasternwritersassociation.org/contest-information> to:

- Find the complete descriptions of all nine contests including how to format them
- Find the rules and submission guidelines including information about our sponsors/judges, prize award amounts, the timeline for the contest, and how to enter.
- Read a Q&A regarding what our judges are looking for in a competitive entry
- AND see a list of our 2024 contest winners! Congratulations to our 2024 winners! It was a competitive year.

Things to note about our SWA sponsored contests:

- There are two contests that have specific prompts to keep in mind: Short Story Contest and The Lighthouse Prompt Award. Make sure you review them carefully before writing and then submitting your work.
- There are four contests that have specific genres to keep in mind: Short Story Contest, The Vega Award for Speculative Short Fiction, Crime Fiction Contest, and Thursday Writers’ Cozy Mystery Award. Make sure you keep this in mind before writing and then submitting your work.
- Last year, feedback was received by all entrants for Eight of our contests. Feedback was only sent to those who placed in the Herbert Shippey Award for Excellence in Southern Poetry. None of The Cappy Award for Humor entrants received any feedback. Cappy regrets that she will be unable to sponsor her contest this year.
- Positive responses were received from many entrants who received feedback including those who didn’t place.
- One big change to the rules regarding who can enter has been made. **Under Constraints: You can’t be a current faculty member.**
- While you do have the option of sending in your entries via email, last year most used the online form successfully.
- Last year there were at least three and as many as ten entrants for each contest category. Let’s see if we can beat that this year.

Faculty session title update

Below is what our faculty members plan to cover in our upcoming June 2025 conference! You can check out our full faculty along with their short bios on our webpage: <https://www.southeasternwritersassociation.org/events>

Wulf Moon <https://driftweave.com/>

- Keynote address: “Your Best Chapter Has Yet to Be Written.”
- “The Secret Sauce That Wins Awards”
- “The Keys to a Successful Kickstarter Campaign”
- “Magic Sword: The Secret Story Principle You Need to Know”
- “Stick Your Landing: Power Endings That Resonate”

John B. Edwards <https://www.amazon.com/stores/John-B-Edwards/author/B001HQ1HXU>

- “The Heart of Fiction: The Role of Empathy in Writing”
- “Southern Culture’s Influences in Plot, Character, and Dialogue”
- “Authentic Crime Writing and the Evolution of Forensics”

Lori B. Duff <https://www.loriduffwrites.com/>

- “The Business of Writing”
- “Persuasion and Drama”
- “Humor and the First Amendment: Is the U.S. Supreme Court losing its sense of humor?”

Kevin Steverson www.kevinsteverson.com

- “How to write Science Fiction”
- “How to weasel your way into a Shared Universe”
- “Guerilla Marketing your work”

Don Vaughan

[https://donaldvaughan.com/index.html#/,](https://donaldvaughan.com/index.html#/) <https://tafnc.com/celebrating-20-years-together/>

- “Freelancing 101”
- “The Seven Pillars of Freelance Success”
- “The Necessity of Detail”

Amy’s Health Update: I know many of you have been rightfully concerned about my health. I barely made it through last year’s June conference. What I thought was kidney stones wound up being bladder cancer. I am thankful to have a splendid medical team, an army of positive prayer warriors on my side, and the best husband in the whole universe. I have gone from a diagnosis of stage 4 bladder cancer to being accused of being healthy by my urologist the day he performed surgery to remove my stent. After my second PET scan I heard things like: no cancer in lymph nodes, disease-free, rare case, healthy, and looks like I can keep my organs if I want to [and I do].

My oncologist is cautiously optimistic and wants me to continue chemotherapy for now. I haven’t had that many side effects from chemotherapy, just a small bit of nausea here and there. Sometimes I get a rash that makes me itchy. My blood work has been good. My urologist decided to post a question regarding organ removal to a discussion board [and again, if possible, I’m keeping my organs].

For my part, I’ve been concentrating on positive things such as how much I’m looking forward to meeting Wulf Moon in person, how fun it will be to see Don Vaughan again, and how excited I am about our 2025 faculty lineup in general. I’ve been watching a lot of Netflix and Hulu. I’ve read a lot of books. My writing has taken a hit, but I’m slowly getting back into it.

I feel healthy and I’m a lot more energetic. Walking is no longer a painful chore. I don’t have to worry about where every public bathroom is when I travel. I’m so very thankful and grateful to each of you who have taken the time to check up on me, pray for me, send positive healing energy my way, and wish me well. I’ve also received phone calls, cards, emails, direct messages, and gifts. I’m delighted to find out just how nice people generally are. I’m not out of the woods yet, but I’m so much better now than I was last June.

Happy writing, y’all!

Amy R. Wethington

Southeastern Writers Association Conference

June 6-10, 2025
Epworth by The Sea
St. Simons Island, Georgia



Fifty Years of Writers Helping Writers

For more information, visit
<https://www.southeasternwritersassociation.org/>



KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Wulf Moon

Award-winning author, teacher, and writing coach



FACULTY

Lori B. Duff

Humor Writing



FACULTY

John B. Edwards

Crime Writing



FACULTY

Kevin Steverson

Science Fiction



FACULTY

Donald Vaughan

Freelance Writing

Wulf Moon to Give Keynote Address

[EDITOR'S NOTE: In each upcoming issue of *Purple Pros*, Vice President Jeff Newberry will feature one faculty member teaching at our June conference. The first faculty member will be Wulf Moon, who will deliver the Keynote Address as well as teach conference sessions.]

The Southeastern Writers Association is thrilled to announce that Wulf Moon, a renowned author, writing coach, and voice actor, will be the keynote speaker at the 2025 Southeastern Writers Association Conference. Moon's unique blend of creativity, expertise, and engaging personality promises to inspire and enlighten everyone from writers to fans.

Moon's stories have graced the pages of prestigious publications like *Writers of the Future* and *Future Science Fiction Digest* and won numerous awards, including Best Author of the year for 2019-2022 from the Critters Readers' Choice Awards.

As a voice actor, he has lent his talents to a variety of projects, bringing characters to life with his distinctive voice. His passion for storytelling extends to his work as a podcast director for *Future Science Fiction Digest*.

Moon's expertise extends beyond science fiction and fantasy. An award-winning writing coach and editor, he provides advice and help for writers of all genres, ranging from poets to essayists to fiction writers. A multitude of writers have cited his award-winning "Super Secrets Online Resource and Writing Workshop" (with over 900,000 views) as the reason they obtained their first professional sales and wins in national and international writing contests. His award-winning book, *How to Write a Howling Good Story*, published in 2023, ranked as the #1 New Release on

Amazon's Fiction Writing Books Best Seller list for its first six weeks and has been in the Top 100 list ever since.

Wulf Moon's keynote address at SWA 2025 is sure to be a highlight of the conference and leave a lasting impression on attendees. According to his own fan base, the Wulf Pack, Moon is a speaker for all and will deliver a presentation that no one wants to miss. Join us in welcoming him to our conference.



Jeff Newberry
Vice President



Hey Y'all,

There are few things in this life that are truly a great bargain. If you are a writer of books, poetry, or music, SWA is that bargain you hope to find. I researched a few of the more popular conferences to compare with our SWA annual event. I found that our SWA conference is the best.

If you have questions about SWA you can always contact our president Jim Furry at swapresidentjim@gmail.com or Marlene Ratledge Buchanan at MsRatWrites@gmail.com

Finalized planning for our Jun 6-10, 2025, conference will be announced soon. Check the website or the *Purple Pros* newsletter for details. Details on the contests are in this month's newsletter. Entering them is free.

SWA has been described as "Writers Helping Writers. The best little conference in the Southeast!" Southeastern Writers Association is a group dedicated to instruction and camaraderie. All one has to do is reach out and someone will give you a helping hand.

Please note, contests are open to all members and are FREE. This is very different from other writing groups. Room and Board includes a very nice room and three buffet meals each day. Only dinner on the first night and breakfast on the last day. Free parking, beautiful grounds, near the beach, and coffee available 24 hours a day---my elixir of life. Only one instructor presents at a time, so you don't miss anything. There may be a fee for 1:1 time with instructors. Last year it was \$10. Most places charge \$25 or more.

Come have a fantastic time with people who share your interests and want to know you.

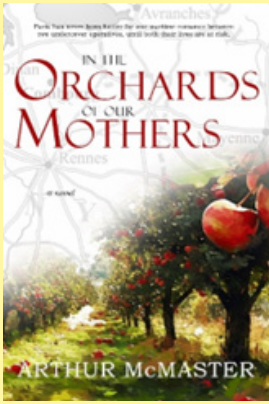
I am looking forward to SWA 2025. Hope you are.

Happy writing,

Marlene

Marlene Ratledge Buchanan

SWA Member News



Arthur McMaster's new book, *In the Orchards of Our Mothers* (TouchPoint Press), launched October 15.

This historical fiction novel is set in the final two years of WWII in Europe. In this story, French resistance fighter Jacques Berlangier and his determined, American OSS partner Claire Skiffington struggle to survive a series of hazardous assignments in support of Allied operations.

In the war's immediate aftermath, in love and together in Paris, they decide to return to his family's apple farm business in the Breton countryside. There, residual and unforeseen trouble rivals the dangers they thought were well past. Revenge, murderous alliances, and heroic efforts from unexpected sources propel the action.

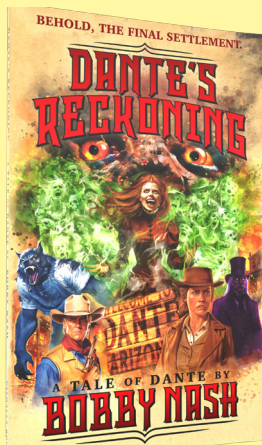
The book is available for purchase on Amazon or Barnes & Noble.
Website: www.arthurmcmaster.com

The series is about the town of Dante, Arizona, which was born when the discovery of a fortune's worth of gold and silver turned paupers into land barons. But the town has been dying and now is the time to settle up unholy debts.

The cover was created by Jeffrey Hayes.

The book is available on Amazon. Book 1 (*Dante's Tenth*) and Book 2 (*Dante's Showdown*) are still available for purchase on Amazon. Book 4 (*Dante's Rebirth*) is currently in production and scheduled for release in 2025.

Nash is constantly on the road traveling from one author's event to another. His most recent ones include the Acworth Book and Storytelling



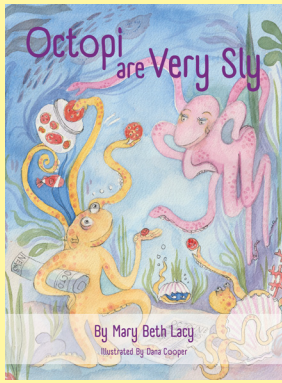
Festival (top photo), and OLLI or the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at UGA (where he presented a session, "I've written something. Now what? Writing and Publishing in 2024" – bottom photo).

Website: bobby@bobbynash.com

Mary Lacy's new book *Octopi Are Very Sly* (self-published through Ingram Spark) was released in July 2024.

Lacy's children's book explores the life of Harry, a clever and mischievous octopus living in a zoo aquarium. His world is turned upside down with the arrival of Suzette, a distressed pink octopus. Together, they dream of returning to the sea and embark on a series of adventurous escape attempts. Their journey is filled with humor, challenges, and the building of an unexpected friendship.

The story culminates in a touching act of kindness from Terrance, a zoologist who helps them achieve their dream of freedom. This tale beautifully intertwines themes of intelligence, compassion, and the importance of respecting wildlife



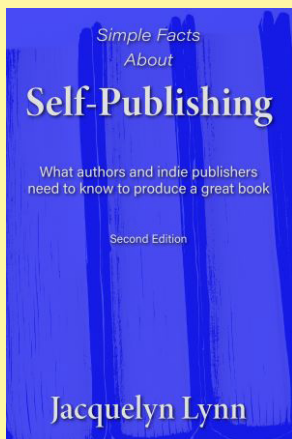
and their natural habitats.

Illustrations were done by Dana Cooper.

The book is available for purchase at Amazon, Books a Million, Barnes & Noble, Walmart, and at independent bookstores nationwide and internationally.

Website: www.mary-bethlacy.com

Ginny Shepard's short story, "Not So Blue, After All" received an Honorable Mention in the *WritersWeekly* 2024 Fall 24-Hour Short Story contest. The contest sends out required content and word limit at noon on a Saturday and writers have until noon on Sunday to submit their story. Shepard publishes as L.N. Passmore.



Jacquelyn Lynn's new book *Simple Facts About Self-Publishing: What authors and indie publishers need to know to produce a great book* (Second Edition – TCS) was published on September 8.

Lynn calls her genre Business, Reference.

The book teaches the basics of self-publishing,

what it takes to produce a quality book, and how to decide on the best publishing path for you and your project. This revised and expanded second edition includes advice on how to work with a hybrid (pay-to-publish) publisher, how to self-publish a previously published book, and more.

The book is available on Amazon, B&N, Apple, and other online booksellers.

Author website: CreateTeachInspire.com

Julie Green's short story, "The Hearing," which won the Low Country Award at the SWC in 2023, will be published this month in the *SEastern Magazine's* online journal, *Well Read*.

John Doriot will teach a poetry class titled "An Interview with a Poetry Lover" on November 21, 2-3:15 p.m. in Aiken SC at the Center for Continuing Education.

Lynn Hesse reports that she will be featured at a book event with author Kathy Nichols on December 3, 7-9 p.m., at the Vintage Pizzeria, 5510 Chamblee Dunwoody Road, Dunwoody GA. She said she has finished her historical fantasy novella manuscript set in the mid-1800s in Arkansas with a midwife as the main character. Anyone interested in being a beta reader, please contact her at lynnhesse85@gmail.com.

Pamela Taylor, author of the Second Son Chronicles historical fiction series, did a session on



"Publishing with a Small Press" at the DFW Writers Conference in early October.

"Looking for a new metaphor for a wide range of options, I found this great image

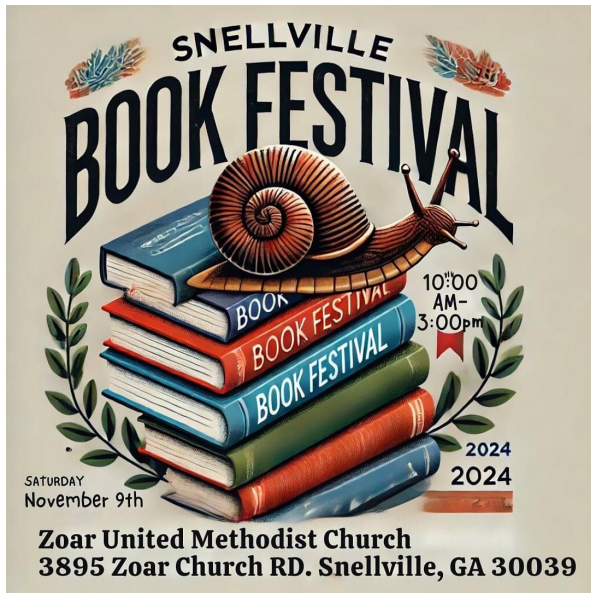
of spices in spoons," Taylor said and used that metaphor to discuss the wide spectrum of small press services.

She said the conference attracts about 400 attendees for tracks on craft, the business of writing, marketing and promotion, and panel discussions.

Former president of the Southeastern Writers Association, **H. W. "Buzz" Bernard**, has been awarded his fourth Gold Medal by the Military Writers Society of America (MWSA).

The medal was presented to Bernard for his novel *Down a Dark Road* at the MWSA's annual conference in San Diego, California, on September 28, 2024.

Bernard's next novel, *When Heroes Flew: When the Dawn Comes Up Like Thunder*, will be released February 11, 2025.



SWA Members will attend Snellville Book Festival

A number of **Southeastern Writers Association members** will be selling and signing copies of their books at **The Snellville Book Festival** on Saturday, November 9, at the Zoar United Methodist Church, 3895 Zoar Church Road, Snellville GA.

Members who will be there include **SWA secretary Marlene Ratledge Buchanan, Lynn Hesse, John Edwards, Bobby Nash, John Doriot, Mike Owens, and Julie Clarke.**

SWA Board Members 2024-2025

Jim Furry, President
furbear87@aol.com

Jeff Newberry, Vice President
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Patrick Hempfing, Treasurer
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Marlene Buchanan, Secretary
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Amy Wethington, Contest Coordinator
physa42@gmail.com

Muriel Pritchett, Purple Pros Editor
muriel@pritchett.org

Auxiliary Board Members

Lori Duff
Ricardo J. Romeu
Pamela Taylor
Mary Treadwell

(President, continued from page 1)

the Zoom link. I invite you to attend if you have the time. If you have something you would like to share, I try to be as inclusive as the size of the group permits. It is also a good excuse for me to visit Dunkin beforehand and have my hot coffee available to sip during the meeting!

Please continue to utilize our website and Facebook pages to interact with each other. It is wonderful to read recommendations for events that members feel can benefit others. You all are our ambassadors to those who do not know about SWA, and I thank all of you for identifying others who may benefit from membership in our group.

At last report, we have over 150 current members, which is a nice number. Hopefully, this membership growth will remain a strong, positive force for our community. We, as a Board, are gratified when writers succeed. I am excited about the future of SWA and look forward to keeping it a close group of caring authors.

God bless you all. If I don't see you at the SWA Saturday Coffee, I hope all members and their families have a very happy Thanksgiving.

Truly yours,

Jim