

General and Concurrent Workshop Sessions

Two FEATURE General Sessions with our special guest speakers Bob Boze Bell (True West Magazine) and Ryan Warner (National Public Radio).

Inspiration from the True West will feature crazy but true stories from the author and illustrator of a dozen so-so sellers (Bob Boze Bell, publisher of True West Magazine).

Radio Instamacy With Ryan Warner will offer tips and guidelines for effective author radio interviews (Ryan Warner, National Public Radio).

Breakout sessions: The conference will offer over thirty breakout sessions to share expertise on the publishing industry, options for publishing, craft, marketing & PR, creativity and inspiration. We've designed the breakout schedule so attendees can select among different general topic threads. As part of the virtual conference, we will offer recordings for a single add-on fee. Here's an alphabetical list, separated by broad categories.

Colorado Springs Focus

A Virtual Tour of Early Colorado Springs (*Joyce Lohse*): Visit the past through historical images from the early days of beautiful Colorado Springs. Learn about the city and its founders using research methods you can apply to your own writing. Author Joyce B. Lohse shares images from Colorado Springs' historical past.

Helen Hunt Jackson - Lessons from Writing and Life (*Doris McCraw*): Helen Hunt Jackson, renowned Colorado Springs resident, activist for improved treatment of Native Americans, and author of *Ramona* and *A Century of Dishonor* will visit via reenactment.

Writing with a View (to be confirmed)

Craft Sessions

Bleeding on the Page – Writing Emotion (*Laura Drake*): One of the most important tools in a Writer's toolbox is the ability express true emotion on the page. Laura will explain the tools you'll need to achieve and refine this skill.

Elbow Grease for Novelists: Turning Premise into Plot (*Angie Hodapp*): If you have a great idea for a novel—freeze! Before you start writing, come learn how to evaluate the strength of your premise, and then meet the many plots and structures you can choose from in turning your premise to plot.

First Page Perfect (*Robin F. Gaine*): Does your story grab the reader? Be certain that the first page of your manuscript is a page turner...

Make Your Writing Soar – Advanced Craft Tips (*Laura Drake*): You know the feeling – when you start a book and immediately suspend disbelief to fall into the story world. This workshop will help you understand the subtle differences that are the difference between a ‘good writer’ and a popular author.

Mosaic: Piecing Things Together in Life and Writing (*Ellen Waterston*): In this session, we’ll experiment with the elasticity and dynamism that this lyric style of writing encourages in poetry and prose. Together, we’ll examine examples of the “mosaic” by well-known authors as an effective way to achieve heightened impact in one’s writing.

Planning your Book with the Plotting Circle (*Becky Martinez*): Need help with plotting your next novel or planning your next biography or historical book? The Plotting Circle can help! Learn a proven method that has helped dozens of writers from beginners to multi-published writers.

Poetic Techniques to Power Up Your Fiction and Narrative Nonfiction (*C.M. Mayo*): For writers of fiction and narrative nonfiction (whether biography, nature writing, or memoir), award-winning poet and writer C.M. Mayo's workshop gives you a toolkit of poetic techniques to help you make your writing more vivid and engaging for your readers.

Secondary Characters: The Ties that Bridge Fiction (*Elizabeth Boyle*): Populating a book is more than casting stock characters. Learn how to add richly woven details to the friends, family and enemies who surround your heroine, while bringing new depth to your fiction.

Set the Scene (*Randi Samuelson-Brown*): Connect with your reader at gut level using the settings in which your story takes place and evoking the emotions inherent to that place. Western Focus.

True Grit: Creating Realistic Wilderness Characters and Settings (*Susanne Sener*): Have you ever come face to face with a mountain lion? Our presenter has, and she wants to share the details of her 28 years living solo on the top of a mountain to help you create realistic and believable wilderness settings and rugged characters.

Genre-Specific Sessions

Historical Research & Craft (*Randi Samuelson-Brown*): Writing Historical Fiction or Non-Fiction often relies upon similar skills. This class focuses on the fundamentals of research, including some pitfalls to avoid.

The Transcendent Memoir-Vistas and Vision (*Page Lambert*): Discover the symbolic synchronicities and deeper themes that form the pattern of your life.

Braiding the Essay: A Working Session on Excavating Deep Vistas (*Kathryn Winograd*): “Braiding” is a technique for framing an essay that deepens its “vertical movement” through the tools of poetry. Follow and model the excavation of one essay from rough compilation of “this

happened and then that” into a beautiful expansive meditation on personal and universal black holes. Bring computer, working draft.

Manuscript Query, Submission, and Contracting Sessions

Pitch Perfect (*Robin F. Gainey*): Whittle your book proposal or concept down to a 21-word (or less) nugget that holds no secrets, invites intrigue, and can be used to guide your creative process throughout the writing of your novel.

Submission Netiquette: Syns and Queries and Formatting, Oh, My! (*Deni Dietz*): An interactive workshop on queries and synopsis do’s and don’t, manuscript clean-ups and formatting, and today’s new “rules” or lack thereof. Queries and synopsis dissected and some laugh-out-load query moments.

Agent Acquisition Panel (*Guest agents*): Guest agents highlight their wish lists, query and submission process, discuss the industry, and answer questions.

The Dotted Line: Contracts Demystified (*Angie Hodapp*): Whether you’re about to sign your first agency agreement or you’ve already signed a dozen book contracts, there’s always more to learn about how to protect your rights. After discussing the good, bad, and ugly of agency agreements, we’ll break down the 18 things every book contract should contain. What’s negotiable? And, most importantly, when should an author walk away from a dotted line?

Editor Acquisition Panel (*Guest editors*): Guest editors highlight their wish lists, query and submission process, discuss the industry, and answer questions.

Marketing Sessions

Author Marketing Collectives (*Linda Ulleseit*): Is marketing the hardest part of being an author for you? Learn how to share the load and go further. This session will explore established marketing collectives like Paper Lantern Writers and show you how to start your own.

Goodreads for Authors (*Linda Ulleseit*): Goodreads has 90 million readers. Do they know about your book? Learn tips to make the most of this site.

Homesteading the Wild Wild Web (*Doris Eraldi*): A web site is your homestead on the Internet Frontier. Like pioneers journeying to a new life and home, having the right guide along the way, makes all the difference.

Looking for Love in All the Right Places: How to Get Book Reviews That Count (*Patti Thorn*): 20-year veteran book review editor Patti Thorn will offer a lively Power Point discussion on book reviews from A to Z. In an age when the burden falls increasingly on authors to take control of their own marketing and publicity, this is important for self-publishing and traditionally published authors alike.

Marketing (*Polly Letofsky*):

Peak Your Publicity- Set yourself high on the Mainstream Media Mountain (*Krista Rolfzen Soukup*): We will discuss the interesting world of today's media and how authors can get to the top of the Mainstream Media Mountain. Learn how to Peak your Publicity with professional branding, creation and timing of a pitch and the basics of an effective press release, including what to always include in a press release and the best way to submit. Get your book to new heights with useful tips and strategies.

Social Media for Authors (*Linda Ulleseit*): Today's authors are expected to be fully present on a variety of social media platforms, but is it all really necessary? This workshop will help you narrow your focus so you can successfully manage marketing yourself and your work on social media. No social media experience required.

Publishing Industry, General

Publishing Trends in a Post-COVID World (*Panel of Publishers, Editors, Agents, & Booksellers*): A panel of publishing professionals discusses the changes forced by the pandemic and how the industry has shifted.

Journal & Magazine Panel (to be confirmed) Guest publishers will offer insight into writing for magazines and journals in today's environment.

Special Interest & Creativity Sessions

Creative Synergy of Yoga (*Sherry Skye Stuart*): The fusion of yoga and writing produce physical, mental, emotional and spiritual benefits that yield a lively creative life balance.

Climbing Past the Fear: Don't Let it Hold You Back (*Laura Drake*): Every excuse we have for not writing boils down to *fear*. Laura has tips and logic to help you climb past it, to do your best work!

Open Mic Readings: A chance to step up and share your work. Prepare a three minute (please adhere to the time limit) reading from your novel. Briefly introduce yourself and set up your reading, then strut your stuff! No set order just volunteer to be next and take over the screen!

Sponsor Spotlights (to be confirmed): Spend some time in our "exhibit hall" learning about our conference sponsors and writing-related businesses that support WWW. Grab a cup of coffee and join us!

Welcome to WWW (for new attendees): An informal get-together to learn a bit more about Women Writing the West and get acquainted with other newbies (and a few long-time members).

Book Purchase Links

Since we can't hold our in-person Conference Books Store and Member Book-signing Gala, we will offer attendees a chance to provide online book purchase links which will be listed in the Virtual Program.

Thursday Evening Readings Reception

This event has become a favorite for attendees. Enjoy your own light hors' d'oeuvres, dinner, or cocktails (all as you desire at home) in our open social hour rooms prior to the readings. Then settle back and enjoy our readings! Finalists and winners of the Laura Award, Downing Journalism Award, and WILLA Literary Award will take the stage to share excerpts of their work. This is a special opportunity to hear some of the best writing around and pick your favorites (for purchase via online links).

Friday LAURA Award and DOWNING Journalism Award Ceremony and Keynote Address

The Friday evening ceremony honors those who are finalists for and winners of the Laura Award (short-stories) and the DOWNING Journalism Award. The LAURA Award is named in honor of Laura Ingalls Wilder, the DOWNING Journalism Award in honor of our own Sybil Downing. This is always a celebratory night and this year, special guest, **Bob Boze Bell**, publisher of **True West** magazine will join us to share a few words and present the DOWNING Journalism Award. Keynote speakers **Kathleen O'Neal Gear and W. Michael Gear** will leave us with words of inspiration.

Though we won't enjoy a shared banquet in person this year, we've blocked off time for shared on-screen socializing. We will have several "rooms" available prior to the ceremony and attendees may move among them via the links in the Virtual Program sent out prior to conference. Bring your favorite beverage, dress up if you desire, and feel free to bring a gourmet meal if you have a mind to do so.

We'll meet in a large "room" for the ceremony where you can watch the ceremony, celebrate the finalists and winners, hear judges' comments, and toast the award recipients.

Saturday WILLA Literary Finalist Award Ceremony

Our Saturday luncheon honors the finalists of the WILLA Literary Award, winners in their own right, and they'll take a moment in the spotlight during our "lunchtime" ceremony. Feel free to bring a gourmet meal if you have a mind to do so as we meet in a large "room" for the ceremony. We'll take the time to honor our finalists and learn more about their works.

Saturday WILLA Literary Award Ceremony

Of course, the conference would not be complete without the WILLA Literary Award presentation. Named in honor of Willa Cather, this prestigious award recognizes novels that highlight strong women in western settings. It's always a night of fun and celebration.

Like Friday night, we've blocked off time for shared on-screen socializing. We will have several "rooms" available prior to the ceremony and attendees may move among them via the links in the Virtual Program sent out prior to conference. Bring your favorite beverage, dress up if you desire, and feel free to bring a gourmet meal if you have a mind to do so.

We'll meet in a large "room" for the ceremony where you can watch the ceremony and celebrate the winners. Then sit back and enjoy **Margaret Coel's** inspiring keynote address.

Afterward, we'll reopen the social rooms for awhile. Late night partiers are free to organize their own virtual socializing after our meeting rooms close for the evening.

Come & Go Open Social Hour Rooms

We'll have "rooms" available throughout the conference where attendees can spend on-screen time together. You may bring your own meal, beverages, or just yourself! Links for the "rooms" will be listed in the Virtual Program you receive a couple weeks before conference dates. Click on the link to enter a room and move between them as you desire (via a fresh click).

Show up and see who's there or pre-arrange to meet your friends in certain rooms (they'll be labeled in the program so you know which is which).

If you've never done virtual socializing, it can be a fun experience!

Pitch Appointments

Our acquiring guest editors and agents will offer their time to take virtual pitches. These free 10-minute appointments are geared for those who have completed novels ready for submission. Hone up your tag lines! And don't be nervous—the editors and agents will guide you through and experienced WWW members are always ready to offer advice.

If you're interested, mark the registration form and you'll be contacted by the Pitch Appointment Coordinator to set things up. All the editor/agent bios are listed on the website so you can find your perfect match. Log in with the pitch-room link a few minutes before your scheduled time and the host for the room will admit you when it's your turn.

Appointments are limited to one per person (if slots remain as conference nears, extra sessions can be scheduled at that time. We'll open the extra slots close to conference dates—watch for announcements on the website and the WWW Facebook page.

Annual Membership Meeting

Of course, we will hold our annual membership meeting so attendees can get updates on what the Board of Directors has done on behalf of members over the past year and see what's planned for next year. Don't miss the announcement about next year's conference location! Please note: a quorum of members is needed for this meeting so we urge all WWW members to attend.

Silent Auction

We're still working on the logistical aspects of our annual silent auction (proceeds support the WILLA Literary Award). Please watch for more information as we determine whether this is possible in a virtual format. Online display of item, bidding, payments, and shipping must all be considered. If you have any expertise in these areas, contact wwwconference2020@hotmail.com

Session Presenters

Elizabeth Boyle has penned 27 romance novels and novellas, with nearly all of them hitting bestseller lists including the New York Times and USA Today. A writer's writer, she loves all the nuts and bolts of craft and sharing that passion with others.

Bob Boze Bell is the president and executive editor of **True West** magazine, currently celebrating his 20th anniversary in the magazine business.

Deni Dietz is **Developmental Editor for Five Star Publishing**. A former Senior Editor for Five Star's Mystery line, Deni is now a Developmental Editor for their Frontier Fiction line.

Laura Drake is a New York and self-published author of twelve novels. Her debut, *The Sweet Spot*, the 2014 Romance Writers of America® RITA® award. A city girl turned Texan, she's currently working on her accent. She's a wife, grandmother, and motorcycle chick in the remaining waking hours.

Doris Eraldi writes, rides and hides in Mendocino County, California. Her 2010 Historical Fiction novel, *SETTLER'S CHASE* was a WILLA Finalist awardee. She also has nearly 20 years' experience designing and managing websites in her business, WebWitch Design, including WWW's website and numerous author sites.

Robin F. Gainey is an award-winning novelist and optioned screenwriter. Her second novel, *Light of the Northern Dancers* won a Willa Award and a Will Rodgers Medallion, and is currently in development for a TV series.

Angie Hodapp is the **Director of Literary Development at Nelson Literary Agency**. She holds a BA in English and secondary education and an MA in English and communication development, and she is a graduate of the Denver Publishing Institute at the University of Denver.

Page Lambert's writing is found inside monumental sculptures at the Denver Art Museum, online at *Huffington Post*, and in dozens of anthologies about the West. Nominated for two Pushcart Prizes, she designs and teaches graduate writing courses for the University of Denver, leads outdoor creative adventures, and is the author of the best-selling memoir, *In Search of Kinship*.

Colorado author **Joyce B. Lohse** combines her journalism background, research skills, and a passion for western history to create award-winning books for all ages. Her seven Filter Press biographies have won two WILLA finalist awards, five Colorado Independent Publisher Association awards, and a Colorado Authors' League Top Hand award.

Becky Martinez is an award-winning journalist who spent 35+ years working in television news in newsrooms from Denver to Seattle to Los Angeles. For the past 15 years she has also written fiction, non-fiction and taught writing classes.

C.M. Mayo is the author of *Meteor*, which won the Gival Poetry Prize, and several books of creative nonfiction and fiction including the novel *The Last Prince of the Mexican Empire* (named a *Library Journal* Best Book) and *Sky Over El Nido*, which won the Flannery O'Connor Award for short fiction. www.cmmayo.com

Mona Neely (to be confirmed)

Randi Samuelson-Brown is the author of *The Beaten Territory* (Historical Fiction – Five Star Publishing) publication date October 2017, short story “*The Devil's Rope*” - The Spoilt Quilt Anthology 2019 and *The Bad Old Days of Colorado* (non-fiction – Two Dot Books) publication May 2020. From Golden, Colorado “where the West remains.” Now lives in Denver, where she speaks extensively on Colorado/Western History.

Since 1992, **Susanne Sener** has lived alone at the top of a mountain in Colorado. She explores, writes, and speaks about long-term solitude in a wilderness setting. In addition to living and hiking in the Rocky Mountains, her experience includes hiking in the Julian Alps, Himalayas, Andes, and the Brooks Range (Alaska). In 2012, she completed the Everest Base Camp Trek and in 2013, the Inca Trail Trek to Machu Picchu.

Krista Rolfzen Soukup is a literary publicist and owner of Blue Cottage Agency. Through her expert guidance, knowledge of the publishing industry and vast experience, she has successfully supported writers and authors across the country. This year, her authors were featured on the Oxygen Channel, CBS Morning with Gail King, Fox News with Shepard Smith, NPR, BBC, Essence Magazine, USA Today and major newspapers and news sources across the world.

Sherry Skye Stuart is an author, writer, historian, artist, and a certified Yoga teacher, with over 1000 teaching hours. Under her previous name (Sherry Johns) she authored four books on Local History. Currently she is working on “Forgotten Female Felons.” Sherry holds two Associate Degrees in Library Science and Fine Arts from Pueblo Community College.

Patti Thorn is co-founder of BlueInk Review, a fee-based service offering professional book reviews. She served 12 years as book review editor for the Rocky Mountain News before its closing in 2009. In addition, she is the co-author of Chronicle Books' Fun Places to Go with Children in Colorado.

Linda Ulleseit, Women Writing the West Marketing Director, has an MFA in writing from Lindenwood University. She wrote two short fantasy stories in anthologies as well as a series of young adult flying horse books before delving into her true love—historical fiction. She is the author of *Under the Almond Trees*, which was a semifinalist in the Faulkner-Wisdom Creative Writing Contest, and *The Aloha Spirit*, newly released this year.

Ryan Warner

High desert writer **Ellen Waterston** has published four poetry and three literary nonfiction titles, including, most recently, *Walking the High Desert: Encounters with Rural America Along the Oregon Desert Trail*, University of Washington Press, 2020. *Hotel Domilocos*, Moonglade Press, 2017 is her most recent collection of poetry. She is founder of the Writing Ranch, which conducts retreats for writers, and the annual Waterston Desert Writing Prize. She lives in central Oregon. Visit www.writingranch.com and www.waterstondesertwritingprize.org

Kathryn Winograd is a Colorado poet and essayist. Her books include *Slow Arrow: Unearthing the Frail Children*, *Phantom Canyon: Essays of Reclamation*, Foreword Review Indie Book of the Year finalist, and *Air Into Breath*, Colorado Book Award in Poetry. She teaches for Regis University's Mile High MFA program. kathrynwinograd.com