

## Virtual Conference Update

Woo-hoo! Have we got a conference planned for you!

While the shift to a virtual conference was a tough decision to make, it looks like we will be able to pull together a fantastic virtual conference in terms of content and value!

The new information should be up on the website late this week along with the registration form. And, boy, will we be offering lots of “bang for your buck!”

Virtual conferencing might be new to many of our members but we’ve designed the format to make it as easy as possible. We’re reducing the price to encourage you to put your toes in and we’re planning a huge conference for the price...and no travel or hotel expenses!

We know there are lots of questions about what the conference will look like so here’s a brief rundown.

### **CONTENT:**

- Nearly all our original sessions (including Powerpoint presentation)
- Margaret Coel and Michael & Kathleen O’Neal Gear virtual keynotes
- Editor & agent panels and pitch appointments
- Special added content highlighting Colorado Springs...a virtual visit
- Purchase links to authors’ books in lieu of the bookstore
- Virtual social hours so we can get together and visit on-screen
- Finalist and award recipient readings
- Virtual ceremonies to celebrate finalists and award recipients
- All original Thursday add-on sessions
- Annual membership meeting
- Option to add-on post-conference access to recordings of all sessions

### **FORMAT:**

- Conference in real-time, October 15-17, using Zoom
- Concurrent and general sessions with ability to move between rooms
- Built-in breaks to ease screen-fatigue
- Upgraded security features on virtual platform
- Advance tutorials for attendees and presenters

### **PROCESS:**

- Online registration and downloadable forms just like usual
- Registrants will receive a link to the conference program as we near conference dates
- Program will have links to all sessions, social events, and ceremonies
- Registrants select what they want to attend and access those “meeting rooms” via the links
- Registrants can leave one room and join another at will
- Links to multiple social hour rooms

**PRICING:**

Significantly lower fees than many of the other virtual conferences are charging (because we know this is new to many of you and we know COVID has hit some of us hard)

Full Friday and Saturday registration at reduced rate (anticipated \$125-\$150 for members; non-members \$25 higher) with nearly all the original content

Thursday Add-ons at reduced rate

Recording Add-on to access all the concurrent sessions you can't attend live

**WHAT WE NEED TO MAKE THIS HAPPEN:**

Lots of volunteers to help spread the work-load. NONE of these jobs are complicated but we need your help! Sign up ASAP requested (so we can get all in place and training done).

- One MONITOR per session to welcome attendees, introduce presenters, monitor time and chat/hand-raising features, keep track of questions raised in chat features. Training provided.
- One ROOM ASSISTANT per session to handle glitches, consult Zoom Online Help or phone support if necessary. Training provided.
- SOCIAL HOSTS to oversee social hour rooms (assure everyone is welcome, etc.)
- One or two planners per ceremony to help our WILLA, LAURA, and DOWNING Chairs create ceremonies that are entertaining for attendees and memorable for finalists and award recipients
- A number of folks to serve as ZOOM BUDDIES to meet with registrants one-on-one prior to conference to answer questions about how the platform works and walk them through concerns (an addition to the training modules we will have available).
- Ten to fifteen people to serve as MEETING HOSTS (five per day) to open virtual meeting rooms each morning and close them each evening and be on-call throughout day/check-in with co-hosts as well as being responsible for admin settings. Training will be provided. Sessions throughout the day will be run by the Monitors and Room Assistants (as official co-hosts) but we'll need one host per room per day so we can limit our number of licenses under Zoom. If you can do more than one day, great!

If you can help with any of these, contact Pam Nowak ASAP at [wwwconference@hotmail.com](mailto:wwwconference@hotmail.com) to let her know you're willing to lend a hand and what you'd like to help with. PLEASE step forward.

**TIMELINE:**

Registration fees and the schedule will be finalized this week. All the details and registration forms will be posted on the website as soon as we are "set."

See you in October. You really won't want to miss what we have planned!