

# WOMEN Writing the West

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The swirl of late summer activity reminds me of a double dip, two-flavors ice-cream cone; sometimes you taste the top scoop, sometimes the bottom, and sometimes they get mixed up. But in the end, it's all good!

Just so, although 2020 has been mixed up (some might even say "twisted"), Women Writing the West (WWW) is making the best of it, and come October, because the pandemic has thwarted all hope for an in-person get-together, Conference Chair Pamela Nowak has championed the challenge and moved the physical conference to an entirely online venture. Visit the Conference page on the WWW website to "Read the Virtual Conference Update, including how YOU can help!" find the "Virtual Conference Schedule," learn about "Session and Event Details," see who will be "Guests and Keynote Speakers," and more. Most importantly, click on the "Register Online" button. For my part, I urge you to sign-up and attend the Annual Membership Meeting. Your presence is vital since, despite the conference being online, a quorum is still required to fulfill nonprofit voting rules as stated in the WWW Bylaws. However, if for some reason you cannot attend this historic conference, every WWW member will still be given an opportunity to participate in the Annual Membership Meeting, to be held on Saturday, October 17, 2020, from 1:45 pm to 2:45 pm. MST. Please employ your membership right to vote! Conference Chair Pamela Nowak will send a separate email with pertinent information on how everyone may attend.



Ballots for the incoming Board of Directors is an online-only process, the same as it has been for several years. Your ballot notification should have arrived in your inbox. If you haven't seen it, look for an email from [Women\\_Writing\\_The\\_West@mail.vresp.com](mailto:Women_Writing_The_West@mail.vresp.com). Also, when you renew your WWW Membership, please note: there is a \$5.00 increase per membership category.

And now for the last bite (I mean bit—still thinking about ice-cream!). The WWW business mailing address has changed. If you have an occasion for which you need to send anything via the tangible world, keep in mind that WWW Administrator Alice D. Trego will still take mail from the Bainbridge Island, WA address, but the business address, used primarily for, well, business, will use the updated address listed below the header of this letter.

Next, everyone on the WWW Board sends their congratulations to all winning entries of The LAURA Short Fiction Award and The DOWNING Journalism Award contests. In no particular order (final placement will be announced during the virtual conference):

### The LAURA Short Fiction Award

- “The Homestead” by Patricia Dreyfus
- “Wild Dogs” by Milana Marsenich
- “Taking the Bull by the Horns” by Candace Simar

### The DOWNING Journalism Award

- Jan Cleere, “Sharlot Hall Told the Region’s Stories as Writer, Historian” Arizona Daily Star
- Gayle Gresham, “Heart of the Pueblo Chile” Colorado Country Life
- Roni McFadden, “The Case of the Confounding Cough” EQUUS

The Board also sends their congratulations to all Winners and Finalists of the 2020 WILLA Literary Awards. This competition represents the best of 2019 published literature for women’s and girl’s stories set in the American West:

### The WILLA Literary Awards

#### **CONTEMPORARY FICTION**

WINNER—*The Lager Queen of Minnesota* by J. Ryan Stradal, Pamela Dorman Books /Viking Press

FINALIST—*Tracking Game: A Timber Creek K-9 Mystery* by Margaret Mizushima, Crooked Lane Books

FINALIST—*The Reckless Oath We Made* by Bryn Greenwood, Penguin Random House

#### **HISTORICAL FICTION**

WINNER—*The Glovemaker: A Novel* by Ann Weisgarber, Skyhorse Publishing

FINALIST—*Calamity: A Novel* by Libbie Hawker, Running Rabbit Press

FINALIST—*One for the Blackbird, One for the Crow: A Novel* by Olivia Hawker, Lake Union Publishing

#### **ORIGINAL SOFTCOVER FICTION**

WINNER—*The Red Dirt Hymnbook* by Roxie Faulkner Kirk, Fine Dog Press

FINALIST—*A PERFECT EYE* by Stephanie Kane, Cold Hard Press

FINALIST—*Soyala: Daughter of the Desert* by Cindy Burkart Maynard, BookBaby

#### **CREATIVE NONFICTION**

WINNER—*I Am A Stranger Here Myself* by Debra Gwartney, University of New Mexico Press

FINALIST—*Water Mask* by Monica Devine, University of Alaska Press

FINALIST—*Hummingbird in Underworld: Teaching in a Men's Prison, A Memoir* by Deborah Tobola, She Writes Press

#### **SCHOLARLY NONFICTION**

WINNER—*Arequipa Sanatorium: Life in California's Lung Resort for Women* by Lynn Downey, University of Oklahoma Press

FINALIST—*Interwoven Lives: Indigenous Mothers of Salish Coast Communities* by Candace Wellman, Washington State University Press

FINALIST—*Esther Hobart Morris: The Unembellished Story of the Nation's First Female Judge* by Kathryn Swim Cummings, High Plains Press

## POETRY

WINNER—*We Make A Tiny Herd: Poems to Honor the Burro Lady of Far West Texas* by Lucy Griffith, Main Street Rag

FINALIST—*Earthbound* by Sharon Salisbury O'Toole, Red Dashboard LLC

FINALIST—*Calming the Wilderness* by Annemarie Marek, BookBaby

## CHILDREN'S FICTION & NONFICTION

WINNER (Tie)—*Someplace To Call Home* by Sandra Dallas, Sleeping Bear Press

WINNER (Tie)—*THE SEAGIRLS of the IRENE* by KB Taylor, Boot Top Books

FINALIST—*All the Impossible Things* by Lindsay Lackey, Roaring Brook Press

FINALIST—*Beautiful Courage: A Young Woman's Journey West, 1852* by Diane M. Covington-Carter, Marshall and McClintic Publishing

## YOUNG ADULT FICTION & NONFICTION

WINNER—*Professor Renoir's Collection of Oddities, Curiosities, and Delights* by Randall Platt, HarperCollins

FINALIST—*Angel Thieves* by Kathi Appelt, Simon and Schuster

FINALIST—*Fire Pony* by Sheila Ruble, Barking Dog Press

In conclusion, I hope you enjoy the following blast from the past from former President and Founding Member Sybil Downing, who, at the inception of WWW, sent a snail-mail missive that remains imperative today. She asked, "What does Women Writing the West hope to accomplish?" The bullet points she used were: *Define the Market, Raise Awareness, and Win Recognition*. She also asked the pragmatic question, "Is there a need for such an organization?" Her answer still rings true: "More needs to be done to build respect for the range of writers who in the recent past have increasingly redefined "western" writing to include women's experiences."

Yes, indeed.

Gratefully yours,



Amy Nowak  
WWW 2020 President

Women Writing the West is a Colorado nonprofit corporation and is tax exempt pursuant to IRC 501(c)(3). Contributions are tax deductible to the fullest extent permitted by law (Federal ID#: 84-1207060). Women Writing the West is registered as a charitable organization by the Colorado Secretary of State (Approved Charitable Solicitations Filing # 20153037447).