



COURAGE, CURIOSITY, & CHANGE
EXPLORING NEW FRONTIERS OF STORY

2026 Conference
October 15 – 17, 2026
Phoenix, Arizona

SCHEDULE IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE

Thursday, October 15

- 8:00am – 4:00pm **Registration Table Open (Ballroom/Palo Verde Room Area)**
- 9:00am -12:00pm **Visit to Western Spirit Museum in Scottsdale (Meet in Lobby)**
Indicate bus reservation on registration form. Admission fee paid at the museum
- 1:00pm – 5:00pm **Bookstore - Open For Drop Off (Canyon Room)**
- 2:00pm – 4:00pm **Roundtable Advance Critique with Editor/Agent (Palo Verde Room 1)**
\$35/member; \$45/nonmember
- 2:00pm – 4:00pm **“The Poems, Stories, and Songs in and Around Me” presented
by Arizona Poet Laureate Dr. Laura Tohe (Palo Verde Room 2)**
\$30/member; \$35/nonmember

Dinner on your own

- 7:00pm – 8:00pm **President’s Welcome and First Time Attendees’ Acknowledgement (Ballroom/Palo Verde Room Area)**
- 8:00pm – 10:00pm **Readings by WILLA Winners and Finalists (Painted Mountain Ballroom)**

Friday, October 16

8:00am – 4:00pm	Registration Table Open (Ballroom/Palo Verde Room Area)
9:00am – 10:00am	Injecting Play Into Your Writing Process (Wildfire Room) - Stephanie West Allen, Lynn Downey
9:00am - 10:00am	Homespun Marketing: What Worked and What Didn't (Raven Room) - Candace Simar, Krista Soukup
10:00am – 5:00pm	Bookstore Open (Canyon Room)
10:15am – 11:45am	Agents and Editors Panel (Painted Mountain Ballroom)
12:00pm – 1:45pm	The LAURA Short Fiction and The DOWNING Journalism Award Luncheon with Readings (Painted Mountain Ballroom) - Featured Speaker Melissa Sevigny
2:00pm – 5:00pm	Pitch Sessions (Palo Verde Room 2)
2:00pm – 3:00pm	Talking About Unmentionables: How Do Writers Research Personal Topics Which Were Taboo? A Brief History of Feminine Hygiene, Contraception, and Health (Wildfire Room) - Kimberly Burns
2:00pm – 3:00pm	Author, Publisher, Entrepreneur: The Successful Author-Publisher (Raven Room) - Joyce Sherry, Nicki Ehrlich
3:15pm – 4:15pm	Courage and the Power of Connection: Exploring Personal Leaps and Divine Nudges to Uncover the Power of Connection in Our Narratives (Raven Room) - Kate Hamberger
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4:30pm	Open Time to Find Your Friends

Dinner On Your Own

7:00pm - 7:30pm	Take a ride down the Colorado River with trailblazing women in this short feature film, “About Damn Time The Dory Women of the Grand Canyon” (Painted Mountain Ballroom)
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Saturday, October 17

8:00am - 9:00am	AI as a Writer's Assistant: Practical Systems for Protecting Creative Time (Wildfire Room) - Kristine Renae Brorman
8:00am – 9:00am	Saddle Up for Self-Publishing: Your Trail Guide to Going Indie (Raven Room) - Jayme Mansfield
9:00am – 10:15am	Pitch Sessions (Palo Verde Room 2)
9:15am – 10:15am	The Courage to Write What We Fear (Wildfire Room) - Kathryn Wilder
9:15am – 10:15am	How True Stories Inspire Fiction: What to Leave In and What to Leave Out...and Why (Raven Room) Natalie Bright, Cynthia Massey, Irene Sandell, Manuela Schneider
9:15am -10:15am	Writing from the Land (Palo Verde Room 1) - Susan J. Tweit, Dawn Wink, Pam Olson, Amy Hale
10:00am – 5:00pm	Bookstore Open (Canyon Room)
10:30am – 11:45am	WWW Membership Business meeting - <u>Mandatory for Voting Purposes</u> (Painted Mountain Ballroom)
12:00pm – 2:00pm	The WILLA Literary Award Finalists Luncheon with Readings (Painted Mountain Ballroom)
2:15pm – 4:30pm	Pitch sessions (Palo Verde Room 2)
2:15pm – 3:15pm	Pitch Perfect: Cut the Noise, Land the Hook (Wildfire Room) - Casey Cowan, President & Creative Director, Roan & Weatherford Publishing
2:15pm – 3:15pm	Writing on History's Sex Workers: A Feminist Approach (Raven Room) - Janelle Molony, David Grassé
3:30pm – 5:00pm	Book Signings (Raven & Wildfire Rooms)
6:00pm – 8:00pm	The WILLA Literary Award Banquet & The WWW High School Writing Contest Awardees Announcement (Painted Mountain Ballroom)
	Keynote speaker: Anne Hillerman
	Formal Farewell

**** All consigned books must be picked up by 8:30pm**