



Western Writers of America announces 2022 Spur Award winners

Native American writer picks up his third Spur in two years

TUCSON, ARIZONA, USA, March 12, 2022 /EINPresswire.com/ -- David Heska Wanbli Weiden is getting his fourth Spur Award in three years, and bestselling novelists Michael Punke and C.J. Box are also 2022 winners, [Western Writers of America](#) announced Saturday at the Tucson Festival of Books.

Presentations to winners and finalists are scheduled for June 22-25 during WWA's [convention in Great Falls, Mont.](#)

Weiden, an enrolled citizen of the Sicangu Lakota nation, won for his short story "Skin," published in *Midnight Hour: A Chilling Anthology of Crime Fiction from 20 Authors of Color* (Crooked Lane Books). Weiden's *Winter Counts* was a 2021 Spur winner for contemporary novel and first novel. Both the novel and short story feature a Rosebud reservation "enforcer" who takes charge when the criminal-justice system fails. His *Spotted Tail* won in 2020 for juvenile nonfiction book.

Punke's *Ridgeline* (Henry Holt & Company), about the Fetterman battle in northern Wyoming in 1866, won for historical novel. It's the first Spur for Punke, who is best known for *The Revenant* (2002), which was adapted into an Academy Award-winning movie in 2015.

Box's *Dark Sky: A Joe Pickett Novel* (G.P. Putnam's Sons) won for contemporary novel. It's Box's second career Spur, following *Off the Grid*, a 2017 winner. Both novels are part of Box's long-running mystery series – which has been adapted for the television series *Joe Pickett* – about a Wyoming game warden that debuted with *Open Season* (2001), a Spur finalist.

Chase Pletts's *The Loving Wrath of Eldon Quint* (Inkshares) received honors for traditional novel and first novel. Anne MacKinnon's *Public Waters: Lessons from Wyoming for the American West* (University of New Mexico Press) won for first nonfiction book.

Founded in the early 1950s, WWA ([WesternWriters.org](#)) promotes and honors the best in Western literature with the annual [Spur Awards](#), selected by panels of judges. Awards, for material published in the previous year, are given for works whose inspiration, image and literary excellence best represent the reality and spirit of the American West.

Total entries this year were 348, Spur Awards chair Tim Nicklas said. Rules and entry forms for 2023 will be posted on WesternWriters.org in August, Nicklas said, adding that the competition is open to all writers and publishers, not just WWA members.

Other 2022 winners:

Biography: Wynne Brown's *The Forgotten Botanist: Sara Plummer Lemmon's Life of Science and Art* (Bison Books/University of Nebraska Press).

Contemporary Nonfiction Book: Finis Dunaway's *Defending the Arctic Refuge: A Photographer, an Indigenous Nation, and a Fight for Environmental Justice* (The University of North Carolina Press).

Historical Nonfiction Book: Terry Mort's *Cheyenne Summer: The Battle of Beecher Island: A History* (Pegasus Books).

Original Mass-Market Paperback Novel: Brett Cogburn's *This Side of Hell: A Widowmaker Jones Western* (Pinnacle/Kensington Publishing).

Romance Novel: Susanna Lane's *Imperfect Promise* (Five Star Publishing).

Juvenile Nonfiction Book: Steph Lehmann's *Montana History for Kids in 50 Objects: With 50 Fun Activities!* (Farcountry Press).

Juvenile Novel: S.J. Dahlstrom's *Cow Boyhood: The Adventures of Wilder Good, #7* (Paul Dry Books).

Children's Picture Book: author Emily Crawford Wilson and illustrator Jeanne Bowman's *Charlie Russell and the Gnomes of Bull Head Lodge* (South Dakota Historical Society Press).

Short Nonfiction: Shane Dunning's "The Right Man to Do a Wrong Thing: Charlie Thex, the Bear Creek Sheep Raid, and the Primacy of Fear" (*Montana The Magazine of Western History*).

Poem: karla k. morton's "Cimarron Herd" (Texas Review Press).

Song: Micki Fuhrman's "You Oughta See Wyoming" (MyMyMy Music).

Drama Script: Lee Martin's *Last Shoot Out* (Feifer Worldwide).

Finalists:

Biography: *Cockeyed Happy: Ernest Hemingway's Wyoming Summers with Pauline* by Darla Worden (Chicago Review Press); *Jim Bridger: Trailblazer of the American West* by Jerry Enzler (University of Oklahoma Press).

Contemporary Nonfiction Book: *Making Circles: The Memoir of a Cowboy Journalist* by Barney

Nelson (University of Oklahoma Press); Brothers on Three: A True Story of Family, Resistance, and Hope on a Reservation in Montana by Abe Streep (Celadon Books).

Historical Nonfiction Book: War on the Border: Villa, Pershing, The Texas Rangers, and an American Invasion by Jeff Guinn (Simon & Schuster); Iron Women: The Ladies Who Helped Build the Railroad by Chris Enss (TwoDot).

Contemporary Novel: A Particular Madness by Sheldon Russell (Cennan Books of Cynren Press); Dissolution: The Wyoming Chronicles: Book One by W. Michael Gear (Wolfpack Publishing).

Historical Novel: The Last Comanche Warrior by James D. Crownover (Five Star Publishing); The Healing of Natalie Curtis by Jane Kirkpatrick (Revell/Baker Publishing).

Original Mass-Market Paperback Novel: The Too-Late Trail by Matthew P. Mayo (Berkley); Lost Mountain Pass by Larry D. Sweazy (Pinnacle/Kensington Publishing).

Romance Novel: The Transformation of Chastity James by Kathleen Morris (Five Star Publishing); Madame's Daughter by C.K. Crigger (Wolfpack Publishing); Land of Heroes by Dorothy Wiley (independently published).

Traditional Novel: Deputized by T.L. Davis (Five Star Publishing); The Comanche Kid by James Robert Daniels (Cutting Edge Books).

Children's Picture Book: Come 'n Git It! Cookie and His Cowboy Chuck Wagon by author Jennifer Coleman and illustrator Julie Dupré Buckner (Pelican Publishing); Montana's Memory Day: A Nature-Themed Foster/Adoption Story by author Sue Lawrence and illustrator Erika Wilson (Mascot Books).

Juvenile Novel: Maddie McDowell and the Rodeo Robbery by LuAnn M. Rod (Chicken Scratch Books); Bats, Bandits & Buggies: A Ruby and Maude Adventure by Nancy Oswald (Burro Books).

Short Nonfiction: "C.E. Lively: The Man Who Started a War" by R.G. Yoho (Goldenseal, Summer 2021); "Ella Mad Plume Yellow Wolf: Photographs by a Native American Woman in the Early 1940s" by Rosalyn LaPier (Montana The Magazine of Western History, Winter 2021).

Short Fiction: "The Ferry and the Road" by Lawrence Coates (Story Magazine, Spring 2021); "Coming Clean" by Leslie Budewitz (Alfred Hitchcock's Mystery Magazine, January/February 2021).

Poem: "Awinita (Cherokee - b. 1878)" by Linda Neal Reising, published in Stone Roses: Poems (Kelsay Books); "She Thought About Montana" by Betty Lynne McCarthy, published in After Sundown (Sunlit Silver Bit Publishing).

Song: "What a Moon" by Micki Fuhrman, released on the single What a Moon (MyMyMy Music);

“Yellow Horse” by Doug Figgs, released on the CD Yellow Horse (Slash DC Music).

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