



# Western Writers of America Ready to Celebrate 70th Anniversary During 2023 Convention in Rapid City

---

*Owen Wister Award recipient, Spur Award winners to be honored*

CENTRAL, UT, UNITED STATES, May 12, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [Western Writers of America](#), a 700-plus-member nonprofit that promotes and honors Western literature, celebrates its 70th anniversary during the organization's [annual convention](#) in Rapid City, South Dakota, June 21-24.

"Western Writers of America is honored and eager to celebrate our 70th anniversary in an area as vibrant as Rapid City," WWA President Melody Groves said. "Surrounded by Black Hills history, our writers will undoubtedly be influenced by the grandeur of South Dakota."

Highlights of the convention, which is open to nonmembers, include a tour of nearby Deadwood; a presentation of the history of the Crazy Horse Memorial; a panel on 70 years of WWA and True West, a Cave Creek, Arizona-based Western history magazine that also celebrates its 70th anniversary this year; and a Friday fundraising auction sponsored by the Homestead Foundation, a 501(c)(3) that supports WWA by providing educational and award support.

Holiday Inn Rapid City Downtown-Convention Center is the convention hotel.

Other highlights include:

✓ Presentation of the [Owen Wister Award](#) for lifetime contributions to Western Literature to Joseph M. Marshall III, an Oglala/Sicangu Lakota writer of nonfiction and fiction who grew up on the Rosebud Indian Reservation, 10 miles southwest of White River, South Dakota.

✓ Induction of Marshall and Charles Badger Clark (1883-1957), South Dakota's first poet laureate, into the Western Writers Hall of Fame, which is housed outside the McCracken Research Library at the Buffalo Bill Center of the West in Cody, Wyoming.

✓ Presentation of the annual Spur Awards and Spur Award finalist certificates to the 2023 recipients (for materials published/released last year) whose works, inspiration, image and literary excellence best represent the reality and spirit of the American West.

Western Writers of America was founded in the early 1950s by writers Harry Sinclair Drago (1888-1979), Norman A. Fox (1911-1960), D.B. Newton (1916-2013), Nelson C. Nye (1907-1997), Wayne D. Overholser (1906-1996) and Thomas Thompson (1933-1982). The first convention was held in 1954 in Denver, and WWA has met in different cities annually each June since – except in 2020 when the pandemic canceled the convention scheduled for Rapid City.

“WWA members were saddened when COVID silenced our 2020 Convention in Rapid City,” Groves said. “We’re fortunate to be able to return this year for our 2023 Convention, and we’re all looking forward to visiting beautiful South Dakota.”

WWA last met in Rapid City in 1999. Next year’s WWA convention is scheduled for June 19-22 in Tulsa, Oklahoma.

The organization has grown from writers of traditional Western fiction to writers across the world, including bestselling novelists C.J. Box, Sandra Dallas, Anne Hillerman, Craig Johnson, David Morrell and the husband-wife team of W. Michael and Kathleen O’Neal Gear; award-winning nonfiction authors Tom Clavin, Jeff Guinn and Paul Andrew Hutton; Emmy Award winners Kirk Ellis and Walter Hill; and award-winning children’s book author Virginia Driving Hawk Sneve, a Lakota who lives in Rapid City.

“I have been a continuous member of Western Writers of America for more than one-half of the organization’s existence,” says early frontier historian James A. Crutchfield, WWA’s first executive director (2004-2006) and the 2011 Owen Wister Award recipient. “Trust me, a lot has gone on since those earlier days. The last half of WWA’s existence has definitely presented challenges that our old friends, the pulp writers, never had in the 1950s. The important thing, however, is that we faced each issue as it was presented, worked our ways through the difficulties, and still ended up friends at the end of the day.”

Among the writers scheduled to attend the Rapid City Convention are South Dakota historians Bill Markley and Peggy Sanders; children’s book author-illustrator SD Nelson, a member of South Dakota’s Standing Rock Sioux Tribe; songwriters Patty Clayton, Micki Fuhrman, Jim Jones and W.C. Jameson, a past WWA president; and past WWA presidents Johnny D. Boggs, Loren D. Estleman, Preston Lewis and Nancy Plain, all winners of multiple Spur Awards.

Groves will pick up her first Spur Award, winning in the Best Western Biography category for *Before Billy the Kid: The Boy Before the Legendary Outlaw*.

Other 2023 Spur winners scheduled to attend the convention include Kathleen O’Neal Gear (for Best Short Western Fiction, “No Quarter,” published in *Rebel Hearts Anthology*); Randy Huston (Best Western Song, “Way of the Cowboy,” released on *Times Like These*); Matthew Ross Kerns, (Best Western Short Nonfiction, “Texas Jack Takes an Encore,” published in *Wild West* magazine); Candy Moulton and Bob Noll, (Best Western Documentary Script, *The Battle of Red Buttes*); Ann Parker (Traditional Western Novel, *The Secret in the Wall: A Silver Rush Mystery*); Bob Rosebrough (Best Western Contemporary Nonfiction Book, *A Place of Thin Veil: Life and Death in Gallup, New Mexico*); Larry D. Thomas (Best Western Poem, “New Mexico Bootheel: A Triptych,”

published in San Pedro River Review); CK Van Dam (Best Western Romance Novel, Best First Novel, Proving Her Claim: On the Dakota Frontier); and James Wade (Contemporary Western Novel, Beasts of the Earth).

For membership information, log on to [www.WesternWriters.org](http://www.WesternWriters.org) or e-mail [wwa.membershipchair@gmail.com](mailto:wwa.membershipchair@gmail.com).

Johnny D. Boggs  
Western Writers of America  
+1 505-920-4113  
[roundupwwa@aol.com](mailto:roundupwwa@aol.com)  
Visit us on social media:  
[Facebook](#)

---

This press release can be viewed online at: <https://www.einpresswire.com/article/633263276>

EIN Presswire's priority is source transparency. We do not allow opaque clients, and our editors try to be careful about weeding out false and misleading content. As a user, if you see something we have missed, please do bring it to our attention. Your help is welcome. EIN Presswire, Everyone's Internet News Presswire™, tries to define some of the boundaries that are reasonable in today's world. Please see our Editorial Guidelines for more information.

© 1995-2023 Newsmatics Inc. All Right Reserved.