

# THE BROADSHEET

L. to R.: NMPW President Sherri Burr, Denise Tessier and Anne Hillerman



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## A Message from the President

**BY SHERRI BURR**

Congratulations to long-term members Denise Tessier and Anne Hillerman whom NMPW Members voted to receive Courageous Communicator Awards at our 75th Anniversary conference scheduled for March 15-16, 2023.

The theme of the conference is "Profiling Courageous Communicators: Celebrating 75 years of New Mexico Press Women." Denise and Anne will be among the awardees attending the conference and discussing their professional work and the history of NMPW. More awardees will be announced forthcoming as the NMPW Board works to secure their attendance at our conference at the Isleta Conference Center and Hotel.

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## President

I am also pleased to announce that our Vice President and Broadsheet Editor Léonie Rosenstiel has endowed the NMPW's Rosenstiel Scholarship and Anne Hillerman has endowed the NMPW's Anne and Tony Hillerman Scholarship.

We are grateful to both women for generous contributions as the Board works with the Albuquerque Community Foundation to establish these scholarships.



Léonie Rosenstiel wearing the Communicator of Achievement medallion she received as NFPW COA finalist.

## News from the September Board Meeting

### Resignation

Ludella Awad, Social Media Chair (We need a new one.)

### New Board Members-at-Large

Arianna Andreatta

Regina Griego

Linda Lockett

### Current Zia Award Chair

Jennifer Hull

### Endowed Scholarship

NMPW has established a graduate and an undergraduate scholarship, administered by the Albuquerque Community Foundation. Contributions will be tax-exempt.

### Communications Contest and Zia Contest

Both contests began on October 1, 2023.

### 2024 Conference

Next year's NMPW Conference will be held at Isleta Resort on March 15-16, 2024.

### Finances

Treasurer Loretta Hall announced a \$300 surplus; \$250 will go to the scholarship fund.

## Writing for Healing and Social Change

By Regina M Griego, PhD

No one would wish for a tragedy like ours. My memoir, *Sins of the System: Trauma, Guns, Tragedy, and the Betrayal of our Children*, tells the story of the seven-year drama after my fifteen-year-old nephew shot and killed his father (my brother), mother and three siblings. I took guardianship of my nephew and supported him through his legal, therapeutic, and educational journey. It is a heartbreaking tragedy that was ironed flat by the media coverage, family, and the extended community.

This was not a good guy-bad guy story. I knew that because I knew the generational and cultural stories behind this tragedy. Why would I write a book like this? People say to me “it must have been cathartic.” Yes, I told the story as a *descanso* (Spanish for putting something to rest), pinning it to the page so it doesn’t rattle around in my brain.

More than that, I needed to make something good of the tragedy. I have been lobbying and testifying since 2019 for juvenile justice and gun sense laws. The NM legislature finally passed the Second Chances Bill (SB 64) which abolishes life without parole for people who have committed crimes as children. It also gives these people the opportunity to go before the parole board after serving fifteen years.

After an appeal and resentencing my nephew wouldn’t have gotten the chance to go before the parole board until age 52. He was a fifteen-year-old functioning as a thirteen-year-old who suffered a mental break. Now he will get a chance, much earlier.

I have also lobbied and testified for gun sense laws like the Bennie Hargrove Law on Child Access (HB 9) that also passed this year. It holds gun owners (usually parents) responsible if a child gains access to an unsecured firearm. It’s a misdemeanor for the owner if the child brandishes the weapon and a fourth-degree felony if their actions result in bodily harm. It is intended to encourage responsible gun ownership.

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Right: Regina Griego, in her advocacy garb.



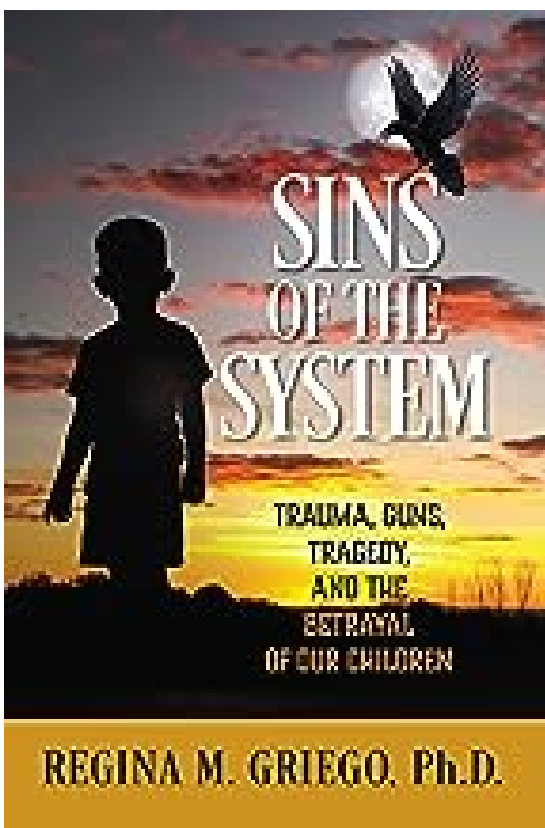
## Writing for Healing and Social Change (Cont'd)

My brother had eight firearms (among them, two AR-15s) and 15,000 rounds of ammunition all accessible to the four children in his household. He was confident that putting them in an unlocked closet and telling his wife and children to use them only if there was an outside threat was enough. After writing the book, I do feel lighter, and I've grown less ashamed and insecure about telling my difficult story. Part of this comes from the community of writers I have joined.

It's extremely supportive when people say that the book was a "page-turner" or ask about my nephew, or say the book influenced how they will parent. I learned about the New Mexico Press Women's (NMPW) organization and their contest. Eager to learn more I joined the organization and entered my book into the 2023 Communications Contest.

I felt so affirmed when I won first place in the memoir/autobiography category! As I learned more about the organization, I realized they were a part of a national organization, the National Federation of Press Women (NFPW), which has been around for more than 80 years. My book was automatically submitted for the national contest, and it was an honor to receive first place in memoir/autobiography there, as well.

Even as a newly minted author, I felt the welcome at the NFPW annual conference. and basked in the support of those amazing writers who came from across the nation. I'm learning how to be a writer and author. It is humbling, starting over as a writer, after a long career as an engineer, but I have found a new home and a community of wonderful people who have welcomed me, and more than that welcomed my story.



Left: Dr. Griego's prizewinning book.

## *Holes in Our Hearts* Goes Statewide

By Jim Tritten

NMPW members and other New Mexico authors have been featured in a series of regional book launches and public readings of SouthWest Writers' (SWW) military anthology *Holes in Our Hearts*.

Donna Pedace organized one such event at the Los Lunas Museum of Heritage and Arts, and NMPW member Jim Tritten organized a similar event at the Corrales Community Library, both in July. Book launches and readings followed these in August at the Santa Fe Public Library, organized by Paula Nixon and by NMPW Vice-President, Léonie Rosenstiel, at the Cherry Hills Public Library.

Unlike many anthologies, the public readings of *Holes in Our Hearts* are incorporate the spoken word as part of the healing process. Each reader speaking their innermost thoughts out loud to strangers in an unfamiliar place is a significant milestone and a big step on the road to recovery. It is the reason the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) sponsors creative writing groups at each hospital and why they have national competitions that feature creative writing.

Left: NMPW member (and SWW President) Rose Kern, and author Kevin Lenkner show off the first carton of *Holes in Our Hearts*.

SWW made a significant contribution to that effort this year. Each veteran in the local creative writing group at Albuquerque's Raymond G. Murphy VA Medical Center got published, and each will be participating in the annual competition, mainly motivated when their work was added to *Holes in Our Hearts*.

Eight authors in the anthology had never been published before, and another dozen had only seen minor letters or the like in print. Two now-published veterans do not own computers or cell phones, and one is legally blind.

Volunteers from the VA Creative Writing Group and SWW helped by getting their submissions into a publishable format. New Mexico Arts (NMA) funded the project with two mini-grants that included distribution of the book to every public library in the state.

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## *Holes in Our Hearts Goes Statewide (Cont'd)*

Two more public readings are scheduled for November. On Saturday, November 4, SWW will hold a book launch at the UNM Continuing Education site.

Readings will be from Paul David Gonzales, Linda Harris, Carol Kreis, Caroline LeBlanc, Butch Maki, Elaine Carson Montague, Evelyn Neil, Earl Rugen, Regina Washington, Josephine White, NMPW President Sherri Burr and NMPW member Jim Tritten. Following the readings, Jim will also lead a workshop on how to write about the military.

Marine Corps veteran Carl Hitchens has organized a regional book launch and public reading at the Placitas Community Library on Veterans Day, November 11th. Joe Brown, Mark Fleisher, Mike Hays, Carl Hitchens, Paula Nixon, Harper O'Connor, Regina Washington, Dan Wetmore, and Ben White will be featured.

SWW plans to continue supporting the military community with healing through the written word. It has just submitted a 2024 NMA min-grant proposal to provide online instruction for veterans and active-duty service personnel who want to learn how to get started writing memoir.

Participation by veterans in the rural area of New Mexico is an explicit goal of next year's program. The instructor will be Latayne C. Scott, a former NMPW member.

NMPW members can assist in recruiting veterans as students for this project. Tell them to contact [jimtritten@comcast.net](mailto:jimtritten@comcast.net). SWW plans to apply to NMA in 2025 to produce another anthology using memoirs produced during the course, as well as submissions from other New Mexico military and veteran family members and caregivers.



The VA Writers' Group holding copies of *Holes in Our Hearts*

## Member News

**NMPW President Sherri Burr's** Martha Leibert Public Library lecture about her book *Complicated Lives: Free Blacks in Virginia, 1619-1865* became the June 23 cover story for the *Sandoval Signpost*. Burr also gave several talks at Renaissance Weekend during the Labor Day conference at Santa Fe's El Dorado Hotel. In one, she discussed New Mexico history and in another The Underground Railroad. She also participated on the closing evening panel.

**Pat Hodapp**, President of the Northern New Mexico New Mexico Chapter of NMPW, reports that her group hosted Navajo actor DezBaa' in conversation with NMPW member **Anne Hillerman** this summer. They expect Sen. Peter Wirth to address them this fall on legislative issues, and Pat herself will discuss book banning.

On November 3, **Léonie Rosenstiel**, NMPW Vice-President, will present a Zoom workshop, *Protecting Mama*, for Well Connected-Front Porch, a national nonprofit serving seniors. Her book, *Protecting Mama*, has now won four awards--First Place in the New Mexico-Arizona Book Awards, Second Place in the Global Book Awards and Third Place in both the Colorado Independent Publishers EVVY Awards and the NMPW Communications Contest.



Member **Katy Hammel** reports that her YA novel, *Meg and the Rocks*, that won Second Place this year in the NMPW Communications contest and Second in the NFPW Contest, will be receiving the WILLA trophy this month from Women Writing West. (The award is named for Willa Cather.)

Member **Jim Tritten** has just received the Writer of the Year Award from the Military Writers Society of America.

**Diane Layden** is working on two projects. The first, an article, discusses legacy plaques at the Santa Fe Jewish Cemetery and the second, a booklet underwritten by the New Mexico Jewish Historical Society, talks about the history of Las Vegas' Temple Montefiore (New Mexico's oldest synagogue).

# Officers and Board Members

## NMPW Officers

*President:* Sherri Burr

*Vice President:* Léonie Rosenstiel

*Secretary:* Lynne Hinton

*Treasurer:* Loretta Hall

## NMPW Board

*Broadsheet Editor:* Léonie Rosenstiel

*Communications Contests Chair:* Carolyn Carlson

*Zia Book Award Chair:* Jennifer Hull

*Communicator of Achievement Chair:* Adam Biederwolf

*Scholarship Chair:* Brandon Larrañaga

*High School Contest Coordinator:*

Margaret Cheasebro

*Social Media Chair:* (Currently Vacant)

*Website Coordinator:*

Pamela Ofori-Boateng

*Public Relations Chair:* Léonie Rosenstiel

*Historian:* Robert Flinkman

*Albuquerque Press Women Steering Committee:* Karen Wentworth

*Northern Chapter Representative:* Patricia Hodapp

*Las Cruces Chapter Representative:* Tamara Fetzer

## Members at Large:

Arianna Andreatta

Regina Griego

Linda Lockett

## NMPW Nominating Committee

Nominating Committee Members Denise Tessier, Carolyn Carlson, and Karen Wentworth will propose a new slate of NMPW officers by January 2024. They will be voted into office at the 2024 Annual Meeting, to serve terms from 2024 to 2026. They are now beginning their work. Please feel free to contact them at:

NewMexicoPressWomen@gmail.com. Place the person's name in the subject line.

## Northern New Mexico Board Press Women Officers

Pat Hodapp, *President*

James McGrath Morris, *Vice President*

Ree Sheck, *Secretary*

Kay Lockridge, *Treasurer*

## Albuquerque Press Women Steering Committee

Merilee Dannemann

Loretta Hall

Linda Lockett, *Treasurer*

Sherry Robinson

Karen Wentworth

TO CONTACT ANY BOARD MEMBER OR OFFICER,  
FEEL FREE TO EMAIL:  
NEWMEXICOPRESSWOMEN@GMAIL.COM WITH  
THE PERSON'S NAME IN THE SUBJECT LINE.

