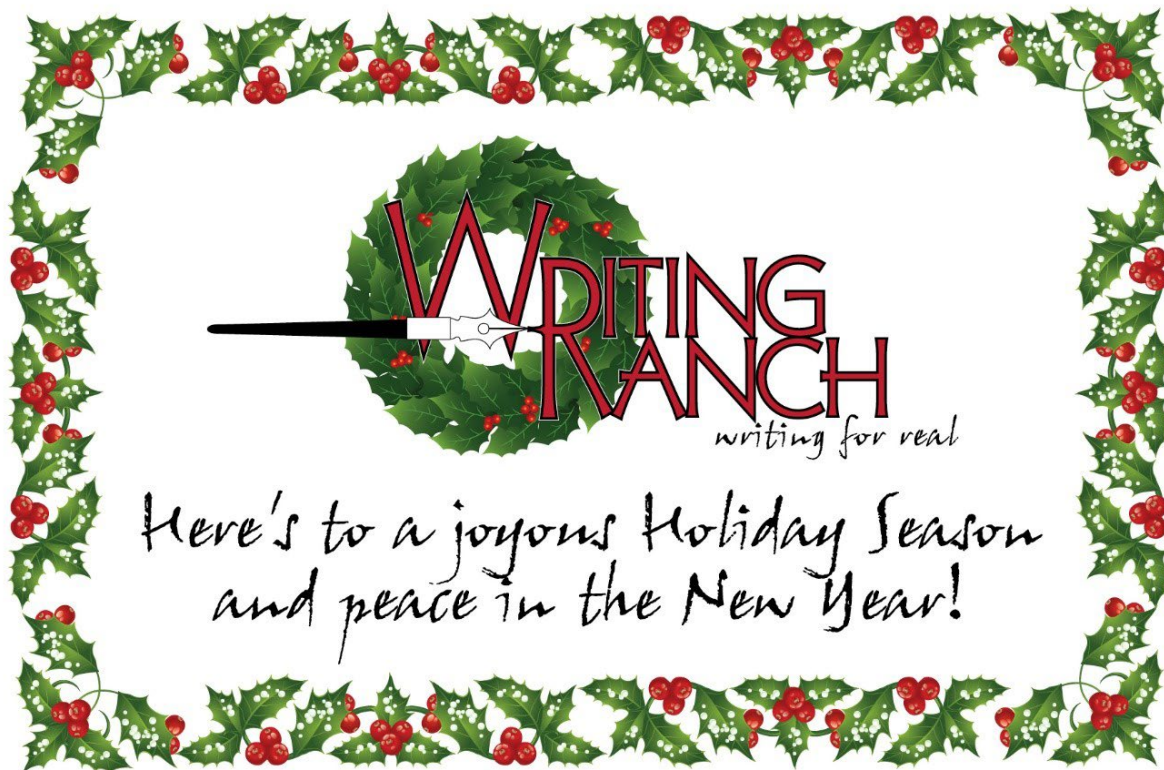




December 2022/January 2023



A Toast to Writing Ranch Alums!

On the eve of a New Year, I raise a glass to the 1,000 Writing Ranch writers who have participated in a workshop or retreat since 2000. A significant number have had books traditionally or self-published, had their writing included in anthologies, won writing awards and accolades. Each retreat or workshop reminds us of what a special pleasure it is to gather with “our tribe” and the inspiration that provides.

Especially memorable for me thanks to all of you—twelve years of Writing Down the Baja, five years each of Writing for the Health of It at St. Charles Cancer Center in Bend, The Story You Came to Tell at Central Oregon Community

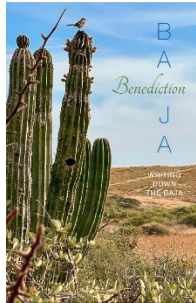
College, and as a faculty member of the Summer Fishtrap Gathering in Joseph. In addition, there are the countless retreats held at the GI and GR ranches in Paulina, Oregon, PLAYA on Summer Lake, and Bend's High Desert Museum, not to mention special invitation workshops. This tally doesn't include the Write NOW! classes and workshops held over the course of The Nature of Words' thirteen years nor the talented OSU Cascades Low Residency MFA students I have been lucky to work with since 2020.

Sincere thanks to all of you for the pleasure of your company.



Twelfth Annual Writing Down the Baja

February 18-26, 2023



The twelfth annual "Writing Down the Baja" writing retreat in Todos Santos, BCS, Mexico has one spot remaining! An extra day has been added to the week, resulting in seven full days of workshops, guest presenters, field trips and writing. An anthology of participants' writings provides a memento of an inspiring week.

Please visit www.writingranch.com for information and grab that last spot!



Hold That Desert Thought!

"Lost in Place" Writing Intensive Moves to New Location

The High Desert Museum and the Writing Ranch will team up for the third annual "Lost in Place" nature writing intensive in September, this year basing out of the Malheur Field Station in Princeton, Oregon. Daily writing workshops will be informed by field trips led by guest faculty Jon Nelson, Curator of Wildlife for the High Desert Museum (pictured right), and Dennis Jenkins, University of Oregon archaeologist and Field School supervisor. Exact dates and details are forthcoming.



More information on 2023 retreats and events is available at www.writingranch.com.

Waterston Desert Writing Prize 2023

\$3,000 Cash Prize and Residency to Winner

The mission of the Waterston Desert Writing Prize, now a program of the High Desert Museum, is to strengthen and support the literary arts and humanities in the High Desert region through recognition of literary excellence in nonfiction writing about desert landscapes, through community interaction with the winning authors of the annual prize, and presentations and programs that take place in association with the prize.

The submission period for the ninth annual Waterston Desert Writing Prize opens January 1, 2023 with the awards ceremony and a reading by the winner scheduled for September 14, 2023. The guest judge for this year's grand prize is Rena Priest, the first Indigenous poet laureate of the state of Washington and the winner of a 2018 American Book Award for her poetry collection *Patriarchy Blues*.

Nonfiction book proposals concerning deserts anywhere on (or off) the planet are eligible. The Prize advocates for the vital role deserts play in the ecosystem and in the human narrative. It recognizes creative nonfiction that illustrates artistic excellence, sensitivity to place, and desert literacy, with the desert as both subject and setting. More information is available at www.highdesertmuseum.org.

Dust Off the Ms.

Visit www.writingranch.com for information on the Writing Ranch's Manuscript Lab.

Go Fish



Fishtrap registration for Snake River float (5 days of whitewater and writing) and/or for Summer Fishtrap Gathering 2023 is now open! www.fishtrap.org.

A Call to Arms

What's In It for the River

by

Ellen Waterston

Commissioned by the Deschutes River Conservancy for the 2022 RiverFest Gala

In the shadow of no rain, in this brittle-boned
desert we call home, we strut and fret on a stage
of basaltic sponge.

For volcanic eons, paleo to present, the desert
has banked water to loan to steelhead, frog, salmon—
and the likes of you and I who've filled our thirsty cups
to green home and working lands at the expense of wild.

The liquid currency of river, stream and lake rises
unbidden from deep under to straight arrow, meander,
and ox bow, meting out liquid nutrition on course
to the ocean.

We two-leggeds describe this cycle as though we invented it;
as though the river didn't know it until we got here to tell it,
showed up to interrupt it; as though we're separate
from the ways of water, but we're not.

Not from vapor, cloud, or dew. Not from watery passages far or here...
such beauties as Metolius, Whychus, Deschutes. If we see ourselves
as un-connected, might just as well tie a tourniquet around our bobbing,
naked hearts, stop the throbbing current, eclipse the moon tides
that rise inside us.

For we are of the rivers and oceans born. We've come full, slow,
crooked circle to a Native wisdom here long before. At last we're
moved to ask: What's in it for the river? What return on its generous
advance, its fund of trust, its freedom from interest?

What is in it for the river? We know the aquifer
is overdrawn, spent. Unless we raise the balance
in this artesian basin, raise the rate of saturation, pay back
the liquid with our gold, our attention, the answer to the river is:
Not much.

2022 Scrapbook



In A Landscape on Mt. Bachelor, Summer 2022
Inalandscape.org



Oregon Desert Land Trust Interview Project in the Trout Creek & Pueblo mountains



Summer Fishtrap Gathering 2022



Eleventh annual "Writing Down the Baja"



OSU Cascades Low Residency MFA in Creative Writing



Third annual "Lost in Place" nature writing intensive



The Source Weekly bendsource.com



Eighth annual Waterston Desert Writing Prize. Left to right: Founder Ellen Waterston, 2022 winner Caroline Tracey, Guest Judge Raquel Gutierrez