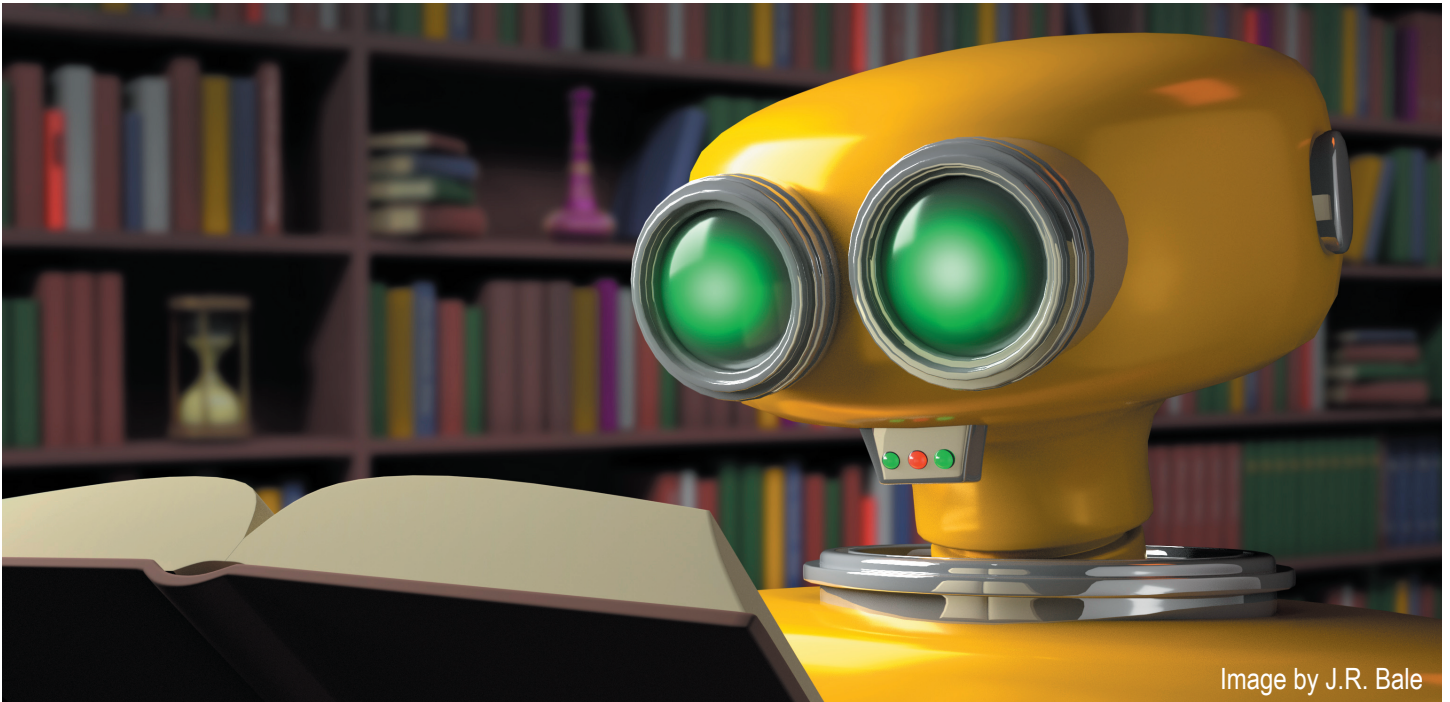




A.I. Books on the Horizon?



By J.R. Bale, *Book Lovers Dispatch*

Artificial Intelligence has been in the news and on everyone's mind lately. From the earliest days of science fiction, we've speculated on the outcome of artificial intelligence. Speculation ranged from the benign servitude of Robby the Robot to the malevolence of SkyNet and the Terminator. However, neither of them

presented the subtlety and complexity of real societal A.I. issues.

Technology has always reduced or eliminated jobs. Most of them were manual or tedious. The bulldozer reduced the need for muscular workmen. The ATM reduced the need for bank tellers. However, more recent technologies have been nipping at the (Continued on Page 4)

A Day or Two of Wine, Romance & More!

Once again, the Brook Hollow Winery in Columbia, NJ will host **Days of Wine Romance & More** on **May 2 & 3, 2026**, Saturday and Sunday, noon to 4 pm. Despite its name, this event is an impressive book event that was begun 12 years ago by romance author Roz Lee, and includes a wide range of genres beyond romance. Learn more at www adayofwineromanceandmore.com.

*A Day ^{or two} of Wine, Romance,
AND MORE!*

To subscribe to *Book Lovers Dispatch*, go to www.bookloversdispatch.com



Learning to Hate Poetry

By Elissa Matthews, *Book Lovers Dispatch*

In school, I was taught there's always one right answer; not knowing it meant bad grades and feeling stupid. "Reading" for class meant hunting for that answer: identify the theme, choose a, b, c, or d; explain the most important line—in 300 words, please. Plus, the stuff assigned in school was picked by old white men in England a century ago. It was boring, it was hard, and mostly it made me feel stupid. Thus I learned to hate poetry.

Except "poetry" is not just one thing. If I hate liver and onions, does that mean I hate all food? Sit me next to a pot of Häagen-Dazs rum raisin. Here and there a few lines snuck through that made me read closer, think again. "Because I could not stop for Death He kindly stopped for me." Ooooh... I stopped doodling in my notebook and actually looked up at the board. And the one that made me shiver when I found it in a library book: "Tomorrow do thy worst, for I have lived today."

And that's the secret—find what you like and read more of it. If Frost's "The Road Not Taken" speaks to you, try more Frost, or Mary Oliver. If silly rhymes made you smile, read "Casey at the Bat" or Billy Collins (US Poet Laureate) "To My Favorite Seventeen-Year-Old High School Girl" which includes the unforgettable: "But did you know that at your age Judy Garland was pulling down \$150,000 a picture, Joan of Arc was leading the French army to victory, and Blaise Pascal had cleaned up his room?"

So here's a small challenge for some cold winter afternoon: open a poetry website (I like Poetry Foundation) and skim a few poems for a line or two you enjoy. Don't sign up for a poem-a-day newsletter out of duty. Don't start at "A" and vow to read alphabetically to "Z." Just browse a little on a Tuesday. Maybe again on Thursday. Is it worth it? Sure—why not? There's nothing to lose, and maybe something to find.

As for me, did I learn to love poetry? Some of it. Just because I love ice cream doesn't mean I'll ever enjoy liver and onions. Although, who knows?



Photo by Ravi Kant

Visit the Salt Box Museum

1350 Springfield Avenue, New Providence, NJ
www.NewProvidenceHistorical.com 908-665-1034

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Half page	\$50	Quarter page	\$25
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To support our mission and arrange an ad, please go to www.BookLoversDispatch.com/contact.

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S.W. Hubbard: Writing for the Reader

By **Elissa Matthews**, *Book Lovers Dispatch*

Susan Hubbard has spent decades immersed in the professional writing life, moving from reader to writer to teacher and now back to writer. That's a complete cycle to mark the new year! She has an amazing 25 novels to her name, mysteries as well as women's fiction, traditional as well as independently published.

As a child, she was a devoted reader, tearing through *The Bobbsey Twins*, *Nancy Drew*, eventually discovering Agatha Christie when she was ten. Mystery became her professional starting point, culminating in her seven-book *Adirondack Mountain* mystery series, followed by the *Palmyrton Estate Sale* mysteries. Later, she branched into community and women's fiction: the *Palmyrton Women's Friendship* novels.

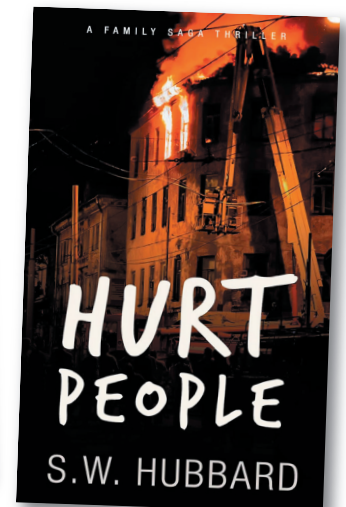
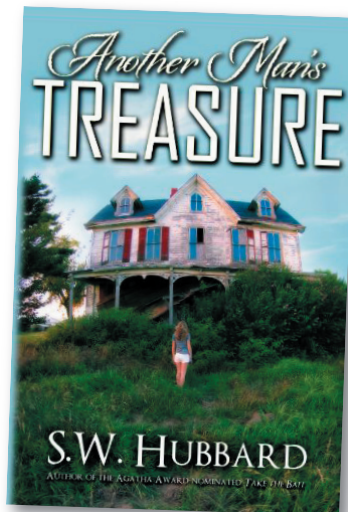
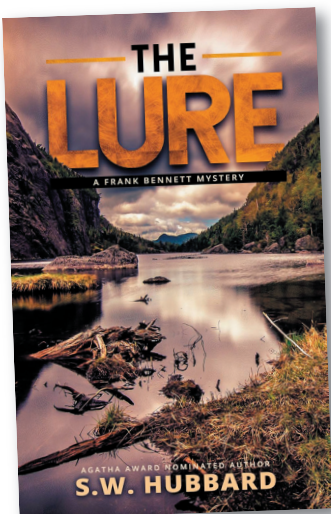
Learning to write, however, was far more complex than learning to read. The biggest surprise was becoming consciously aware of structure—something invisible to readers but unavoidable for writers. This has made her a much more demanding reader, now that she understands internal structure and technique.

What matters most to her is that someone reads and connects with her work. Unlike playing the piano, for example, which you can do for your own enjoyment, she feels writing only becomes complete when it reaches a reader. What she loved most were the responses—reviews posted online, emails from readers describing what resonated. Those moments of connection made the long hours worthwhile.



S.W. Hubbard

Over time, the demands of publishing took their toll. Marketing grew exhausting. She still had deadlines even when her husband was off enjoying himself. Writing competed with chores, schedules, and endless to-do lists. Eventually, Hubbard stepped back from teaching and publishing, and slowed down her writing. "I will always have stories in my head," she says, now toying with the idea of shaping them into an anthology. Keep an eye out, while you're reading her terrific existing novels!



heels of higher-level jobs.

As a college professor, I have caught many students cheating with Chat-GPT and other A.I. language models. I've found many of the A.I.-written submissions easy to detect. They are broad, thorough and usually without depth or insight. That's today. But what about tomorrow? I leave that to the professors of tomorrow, God help them.

Business people are using A.I. to analyze and write reports. Most people don't have a problem with this. Although there are problems, I won't address them here. However, A.I. isn't staying in the analytics lane. It's also swerving into the creative one.

Some have turned to A.I. to write fiction. I've even seen video seminars on how to write prompts for these A.I. story generators. The instructors sound like they are programming robots. Where's the fun in that? It negates the humanity. Derivative writing has always been an issue, but now it has the potential to be supercharged.



A.I. is competent at grammar and even writing short passages. Although it is terrible at long-form story construction. But that may not always be the case. A.I. completes its task by scanning literature across the internet. Copyright violations are ubiquitous and legally complex.

There have been many types of protests. Thousands of authors including Kazuo Ishiguro, Philippa Gregory and Richard Osman have published an “empty” book to protest against A.I. firms using their work without permission. The organizer of the book, Ed Newton-Rex, said the A.I. industry was “built on stolen work, taken without permission or payment.”

Copyright issues aside, this is a derivative process. A.I. will never embrace the philosophy of Robert Frost's *The Road Not Taken*, although it might copy it.

Derivative A.I. works are cheap and add little to the human experience. True creativity is a uniquely human quality. It is worth preserving and nurturing. A.I. can never experience, love, longing, pain or fear. It can never fully embrace the context of those emotions.

Writing is a process, not a product. The process includes failure, false starts, arbitrary synergies and juxtapositions.

One problem with any technology is that its ease enables the atrophy of certain skills. A.I. enables the atrophy of critical thinking and human creativity.

Recently, I've noticed some book festivals are banning authors who use A.I. in the creation of their books. Is that what we've come to? I was tempted to use an A.I. to generate the accompanying image. But how would that be different than using A.I. to write this article?

I was tempted to use an AI-generated image for the cover. I planned to point out the fact as a point of irony. But how is that different from the A.I. writing? So, I created the image myself in Maya and Photoshop. Resisting A.I.'s subjugation of human creativity will require vigilance and self-discipline by both writers and readers..

Upcoming Book Events in 2026

May 2-3, 2026
Saturday-Sunday
Noon - 4 pm

Days of Wine Romance & More
Brook Hollow Winery
Columbia, NJ 07832
www adayofwineromanceandmore.com

*A Day ^{or two} of Wine, Romance,
AND MORE!*

May 24, 2026
Sunday, Noon - 8:30 pm

Flemington Summer Book Fest
Act 2 Books
2 Central Avenue
Flemington, NJ 08822



June 5, 2026
Friday, 6 pm - 9 pm

Toms River Book Show
Toms River Artist Community gallery
40 Main Street (Route 9)
Toms River, NJ 08753



June 13, 2026
Saturday, 11am - 4 pm

Passaic County Book Festival
Weasel Brook Park
Clifton, NJ



July 11, 2026
Saturday, 10am - 4pm

BookfestPA
Schlow Centre Region Library
211 S. Allen Street
State College, PA 16801
bookfestpa.schlowlibrary.org



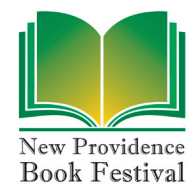
September 6, 2026
Saturday, 9 am - 5 pm

Authors Grove at Belvidere Heritage Day
Garret Wall Park
Belvidere, NJ 07823



September 26, 2026
Saturday, 9 am - 3 pm

New Providence Book Festival
Grounds of the Salt Box Museum
1350 Springfield Avenue
New Providence, NJ 07974
www.NewProvidenceBookFestival.com



October 3, 2026
Saturday, 10 am - 4 pm

Collingswood Book Festival
Haddon Avenue
Collingswood, NJ 08108
www.CollingswoodBookFestival.com



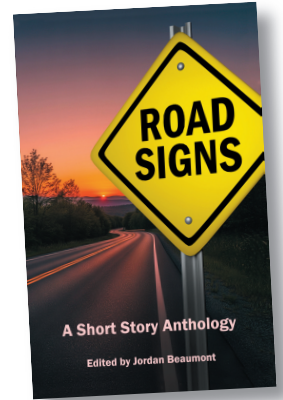
Recent Book Releases

Road Signs: A Short-Story Anthology

By NOWA

Road Signs is a short story anthology published by the Network of Writers & Artists (NOWA). While each story is connected to common road signs you might see every day, the stories are varied and exciting with intersecting genres.

Contributors include J.R. Bale, Geneva Broussard, Michael Stephen Daigle, Melanie Davis, Susen Edwards, Lynn Eisenhauer, Laurel English, Vivian Fransen, Pamela Hegarty, Eric Kemelis, Tom Kranz, Nev March, Elissa Matthews, Graham Matthews, M. C. Olmsted, Michael Penncavage and Kathleen Schumar.



Lookin' For Love

By Susen Edwards

Inspired by a gripping true story, *Lookin' for Love* follows young mother Ava from the go-go bars of the 1970s to the heart of Florida's drug trade to a Kenyan prison to, ultimately, a place of forgiveness, faith, and love through recovery.

Learn more at www.susenedwardsauthor.com.

Dear Orchid

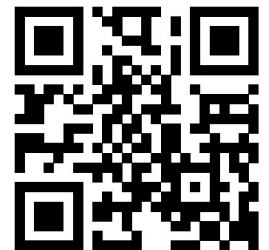
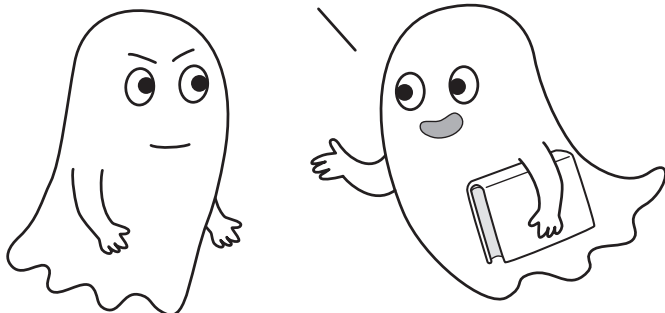
By Carol Van Den Hende

Told through a mix of true stories and new fiction, *Dear Orchid* opens the heart in unexpected ways: through loss and love, silence and recovery, and the hard-won resilience of people who don't always fit the mold.

Learn more at www.carolvandenhende.com.



Oh, I see the confusion.
I'm not a ghostwriter.
I'm a ghost writer.



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