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The Diarists'
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The Diarists' Workshop

*A School of Personal Writing
and Creative Journaling*

Open my book, see the images I have placed there, read the words I have written, know my deepest thoughts, fears, desires, and dreams, a visual documentation of my inner journey. Charlene's classes enable me to live my life consciously, not just drifting along, buffeted by the winds of fate. I have entered a new, uncharted, and exciting place...the person that is me. - Karen Wood

An unexpected twist in the road of life...the outcome of a dinner party. Closest friends laugh and share over a pasta repast, when the subject turns to Charlene's journals, her trove of personal diaries that, until that night, no one had ever read. Over the years, several of the guests had noticed the abundance of overstuffed journals in the antique cabinet, whose door would stand slightly ajar if not locked.

Urged by her friends and the evening's perfect mood, Charlene opened the cabinet, revealing nearly 50 books, some old and thick and bulging, others thin and small and efficient. She passed around a dozen of her private journals (save the ones most intimate) and before an hour had passed, had a core of first students challenging her to begin a class. The Diarists' Workshop was born of such a simple moment.



The initial lessons evolved into a formal series of classes, enrollment blossomed by word of mouth, and soon Charlene was teaching out of her home and at the Community College. Within a year she retired as an interior designer, and moved the Diarists' Workshop into its own studio with large tables and abundant supplies for writers, new or experienced.

She broadened her curriculum, introducing a class for couples, then private sessions, always nurturing a safe haven for intimate writing, and a supportive environment for creative expression. Books of life...works of art.

From the workshops have come retreats, lectures, a one-woman show, and a public exhibit of her students' selected pages. A former student and her out-of-town guest, a publisher of several acclaimed authors, attended the opening lecture for the student exhibit, out of which came the offer to publish Charlene's first book on the art of journal writing, *Inner Outings*, co-authored with Claudia Jessup. New World Library released this first book in the fall of 2002.

[Story about the Charlene and the workshop from the October 20,2002, issue of the New Mexican Newspaper.](#)