

KWA

Kansas Writers Association

all genres. all formats. ALL WRITERS.

FEBRUARY 2010

A Writer's Guide to the Web

FEBRUARY WORKSHOP

Saturday, Feb. 20

1:30-4 p.m.

Rockwell Library

5939 E. 9th St.

Wichita

You know the Internet is packed with writers' resources — but it seems like too much of a good thing. You've wondered, where do I begin? Which sites should I trust?

Join us in February for a panel discussion of how to put the Web to work for you. You'll come away

with a guide to the best sites for writers, online reference guides, places to search for freelance work, agents, editors, and more. We'll also discuss how to be savvy about seeking credible resources, and answer whatever other questions you have about using the Web in your work.

Volume 14, Issue 2

Editor: Erin Perry O'Donnell

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The "Scene" is Set — Conference is March 27

We've got some changes in store for the 2010 KWA Scene Conference, which is set for Saturday, March 27, at the Hilton Wichita Airport.

The first you may notice is the name — we've decided to expand our scope beyond crime and mystery writing, although several of our speakers are still aimed squarely at this genre. We've planned 14 workshops designed for all writers — half fiction, half non-fiction — plus a keynote speaker during lunch. Look for the complete roster of speakers to be announced soon on the KWA website, www.kwawriters.org.

For a small additional fee, you can get a

10-minute private consultation with a publishing expert to discuss your writing project. You can also enter the crime scene writing contest — we'll stage a crime scene at the hotel room, and the best story written about the scene wins a prize. KWA members who attend the conference also may display their own books for purchase (up to three titles).

The registration form is included in this newsletter; send yours in early to get the best deal. All KWA members are encouraged to attend, but you don't have to be a member to take part in the conference. Members, non-members, and students are invited. See you there!

Calendar

- Feb. 25: **Planning Meeting for KWA Scene Conference**, 7 p.m., Borders East
- March 27: **KWA Scene Conference**, all day, Hilton Wichita Airport
- April 17: **Regular Meeting**, Topic TBA

Our mission: to inform, support, encourage, and promote the writer.

DID YOU RENEW?

All KWA membership fees were due at the beginning of January. If you haven't paid for 2010, please do so before the end of the month to avoid being dropped from the membership rolls. See back page for payment details.

Member News

Starla Criser, writing as Starla Kaye, sold a novel, *Bet Your Boots*, to Blushing Publications. It is currently being published as weekly chapters through March 2010. She has recently updated her website, starlakayeromance.com, and has added a blog to the website that will discuss various aspects of the writing craft for writers in different phases of their career. She would enjoy having KWA members visit the blog and offer comments and additional suggestions.

Conrad Jestmore has had five poems published in the anthology *Poetry is for Everyone*, edited by Mary M. Chase and published by Rough Road Books. They include four previously published poems ("Scanning the Cartographer's Lines," "Uisce Beatha," "Red Draw," and "On the Cottonwood") and one new poem ("Seeking Protection, KS"). The anthology is available through Amazon.com.

President's Remarks: Back to the Basics



By A. Lisette Walker
KWA President

It was great to see so many people at our January meeting! Our next meeting will be on using the Internet as a resource for writing. There are many people, young and old, who do not realize all that the Internet has to offer. I hope you'll come and learn — and toss in your own two cents! There are always new things to discover for all of us.

The KWA Board is looking to refocus our monthly meetings and bring the topics back to writing. We've all heard people say that they want to know more about point of view, or dialogue, or structure. If you have any areas you would like us to discuss, please tell me or one of the other Board members — we are always looking for program ideas, and we want our programs to address the needs of our members.

We are also working on restructuring our monthly programs to include time for writing and perhaps providing feedback. It's always fun to change your pace a little bit and work in company, rather than sitting all by yourself at your desk. Last month I handed out several prompts for people to choose from (most people picked one, but a few couldn't resist and picked all three); the brave among us read what they'd come up with in 15 minutes. (It's also great fun to hear what others have written using the same starting point.)

The Board has also discussed hosting a "critique" meeting, where people would bring in two or three pages of a story and split off in small groups to discuss their writing. We probably will wait to do this until we know if there is sufficient interest.

We have also changed our conference to include all genres, not just crime writing. Don't forget to register for the new "Scene"! It should be great fun, and Janet Bahl and Erin O'Donnell have done a lot of work to put it together.

What do you expect from your membership in KWA? We would like to know. We are preparing a questionnaire, but would love to hear your feedback at any time. You can find our contact information at www.kwawriters.org, or even leave us a post on Facebook — just search for Kansas Writers Association.

I look forward to seeing you at the February meeting. In the meantime, stay warm and keep writing!

Record Keeping and Tax Deductions for the Writer

By Starla Criser
KWA Vice President & Secretary

The business of writing isn't easy. But it IS a business and requires some kind of good record keeping that will make your annual tax preparation not a nightmare.

Unpublished vs. Published. If you're unpublished and don't think you need to consider record keeping and tax deductions yet, think again. The IRS states that you can claim a tax loss for business expenses even if you haven't published anything yet.

Hobby vs. Business: Must show a profit after 3-5 years? This is incorrect. The IRS states "as long as you can prove you are actively pursuing a career in writing" and as long as your expenses are considered "necessary business expenses," they are deductible.

Schedule C Sole Proprietor vs. S-Corporation. This can be a complicated decision once you are at the point of making serious income as a writer. Most writers only need to add the Schedule C form to your individual tax return, which lets you show both income and expenses for your writing business and helps lessen your tax

burden.

Proving Pursuit of a Writing Career. Even if you are not published, you can prove your determination to be taken seriously as a writer by sending and keeping copies of letters to agents, editors, or publishers. Keep copies of all emails, including responses. If you aren't ready to submit or query on a particular work yet, send letters to prospective publishers requesting submission guidelines, and keep copies for your records.

Keeping Track of Financial Records. You can keep track of your income and expenses in a notebook, on a spreadsheet, or in a program like Quicken. I'm a spreadsheet nut normally, but I recommend using Quicken. At the end of the year you can print out some nice, simple reports that will make your tax preparation easier.

For more information visit the IRS website at www.irs.gov. You also might want to get copies of publications #334 Tax Guide for Small Businesses and Individuals who use Schedule C or C-EZ and #535 Business Expense (which tells you what you can and cannot deduct), and #552 Record Keeping for Individuals.

Can I Deduct It?

Here are expenses to consider. Keep all receipts and any logs:

- Postage, including return postage on your SASE, and shipping fees for books you send out
- Writing-related books and magazines
- Office supplies
- Marketing materials such as business cards, bookmarks, postcards, brochures, press kits, etc.
- Long distance phone calls related to your writing
- Internet service fees, if you use the Internet to develop your craft and/or to promote yourself
- Writers group membership dues, mileage to meetings, meals that are related to the meeting; and conference fees, hotel expenses, mileage and meals
- Website fees
- Your published works donated to libraries or given away for promotional purposes (sent to reviewers, contests, fund raisers, etc.) may be deducted at retail value
- Dry cleaning of clothes for book signings or other author appearances
- Agent fees and commissions
- Books purchased by self-published and e-published authors for resale
- Other business items such as a personal computer, printer, and office furniture may be deducted based on a portion of the costs between business and personal use
- Office rental space for your writing business

Kansas Writers Association

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Wichita, KS 67201

Newsletter Submissions

Submit articles and member news by the 20th of the month to Erin Perry O'Donnell at newsletter@kwawriters.org. Put "KWA" in the subject line for emails, and please send information in the body of the email, not as an attachment.

Join KWA

Get a one-year membership, our monthly newsletter, and a membership card good for discounts on our programs and seminars. Dues are \$30, or \$25 if you opt to get the newsletter by email. Youth memberships are \$15. Send your check to:

KWA, P.O. Box 2236, Wichita, KS 67201

*The Kansas Writers Association is a not-for-profit
501(c)(3) organization.*

[<http://www.kwawriters.org>]

Introducing Your KWA Board Members for 2010

We have a fantastically diverse group of members who make up the 2010 KWA Board. Here's a little about who we are and what we write. Look for extended bios coming soon on our website. You can get in touch with us and share your ideas via email at info@kwawriters.org, or talk to us at any meeting.

PRESIDENT: SETI WALKER—I mainly work on novels, but I also write short stories and poetry. I mostly write speculative fiction, with my main themes being exploration of gender constructs and revision of cultural mythologies. My current project is a revision of the Rapunsel story with the witch as the main character.

VICE PRESIDENT/SECRETARY: STARLA CRISER—I write most sub-genres of romance (contemporary, historical, paranormal, sci-fi, suspense), mainly novels. But I also write novellas and short stories.

TREASURER: MIKELLE FRAIZER—Novels.

PROMOTIONS: HEATHER DELLINGER—General fiction and poetry.

NEWSLETTER EDITOR/WEBSITE COORDINATOR: ERIN O'DONNELL—Articles for *Women's Focus* and other magazines, and fiction.

MEMBER AT LARGE: SONNY COLLINS—I write fiction—my last book was a fantasy, the one before that was a collection of short stories, two books of poetry, one published play, a Christmas fable and a Western. My new-

est is a supernatural tale set in the American southwest.

MEMBER AT LARGE/CONTEST CHAIR: RAY "GRIZZLY" RACOBS—Young adult fiction novel series about Oro, a telepathic dog; freelance light humor columnist, including "Grizzly's This 'N That" for *Kansas Senior Times*.

MEMBERSHIP CHAIR: JEANETTE SHEPLER—Short stories, devotionals, and fiction.

SCENE CONFERENCE CHAIR: JANET BAHL—Fiction, non-fiction, short stories, magazine articles.

ADVISOR (Past President): COURTNEY RUTHVEN—Memoirs, suspense with character development, poetry for my own amusement.

AMBASSADOR: GORDON KESSLER—I write thriller novels: *Jezebel* and *Dead Reckoning*. I also have written nonfiction: *Novel Writing Made Simple*.

HISTORIAN: OPEN (Interested? Write to info@kwawriters.org)