

KWA

Kansas Writers Association

all genres. all formats. ALL WRITERS.

JANUARY 2010

Storm Chaser Brian Johnson in January

JANUARY WORKSHOP

Saturday, Jan. 16

1:30-4 p.m.

Rockwell Library

5939 E. 9th St.

Wichita

Brian Johnson writes horror/urban fantasy and has an obsession with storms. His photography has been used by the National Weather Service on their website and in presentations. Brian also talks to schools about chasing and storm safety.

Brian learned in December that he's one of 10

finalists in a contest for unpublished horror novels sponsored by Leisure Books/Dorchester Publishing and Chiaroscuro (a horror website). The top 10 will compete for votes a la *American Idol*. Way to go, Brian!

Visit Brian's website at ruminationsofthunder.blogspot.com.

Volume 14, Issue 1

Editor: Erin Perry O'Donnell

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Calendar

- Jan. 14: **Board Meeting**, 6-8 p.m., 401 E. Douglas
- Jan. 16: **Regular Meeting**, 1:30-4 p.m., Rockwell Library
- Jan. 21: **Scene Conference planning meeting**, 7 p.m., Borders East
- Feb. 20: **Regular Meeting** (Topic TBA)
- March 27: **KWA Scene Conference**, all day, Hilton Wichita Airport

Reminder: Memberships now renew on Jan. 1

KWA memberships were changed in 2009 to a Jan. 1 renewal date.

You will no longer receive a bill for your dues. We ask that you send checks directly before the end of the month. Make checks payable to Kansas Writers Association and mail to P.O. Box 2236, Wichita, KS 67201-2236. If you need an additional receipt or a membership card, send a notice with your check. We will send out past-due notices Feb 1.

Adult renewals are \$30 to receive the newsletter by postal mail and \$25 to receive the newsletter by email. Youth

memberships (under 21) are \$15 (newsletter by email only). Memberships are good through Dec. 31, 2010.

If you believe you are prepaid or owe a different amount, contact Jeanette Shepler at membership@kwawriters.org or (316) 838-7599.

Please write the name of the member in the "memo" portion of your check. If you have a change of address, please note that also.

All payments are tax deductible as KWA is a 501(c)3 organization.

The Kansas Writers Association is a not-for-profit 501(c)3 organization. Our mission is to inform, support, encourage, and promote the writer.

Welcome to the new KWA newsletter!

By Erin Perry O'Donnell
KWA Newsletter Editor

New year, new decade — why not a new design? The KWA Board has opted to make a few changes in the newsletter format, which we hope will better meet the needs of our members and their goals as writers. Our priority for the newsletter is this:

to make it as much about and by KWA as possible. That means keeping you posted on what's happening with our organization, shouting our members' news from the rooftops, and sharing tips and support from our board and members.

The biggest change is that we are moving the market and contest listings from the newsletter to the web-

site, www.kwawriters.org, where we can keep this information more up to date. Resources and member websites will also move exclusively online. We'll soon be reviving the KWA blog with regular posts by members; stay tuned for more info.

We're eager to hear what you think, so send your feedback and ideas to newsletter@kwawriters.org.

Member News

Starla Criser, writing as Starla Kaye, sold a Christmas novella, *His Only Wish*, to Blushing Publications for weekly publication during the month of December. The same publisher released a Christmas anthology, *Ranch Christmas*, of three previously published novellas in December. Visit her website, www.starlakayeromance.com, and her blog, starlakayeromance.blogspot.com.

Stephanie A. Mann, author of *Supremacy and Survival: How Catholics Endured the English Reformation*, had a review essay published in the Nov. 16 online edition of *First Things* 'On the Square: "There's Something about Bloody Mary". Her article "In the Shadow of Tyburn Tree: Who were the Martyrs of England and Wales" appears as the cover story of the January/February 2010 issue of *The Catholic Answer* magazine. See www.supremacyandsurvival.com for details.



President's Remarks

By A. Lisette Walker
KWA President

Greetings, fellow writers! I hope you're staying well – and taking full advantage of this miserably cold weather to sit down, snuggle up, and write.

This will be my third year serving on the KWA Board. I'm thrilled to be President, especially as this promises to be an exciting year. We have the Scene conference coming up in March, and my goal (or resolution, since it is that time of the year) is to have something ready to pitch to one of the agents who will be attending. There are almost three months to get ready, so it seems quite achievable – at least it's a *sane* goal (unlike, say, writing 50,000 words in a month).

I'm excited about other changes the Board is making. As you've no doubt noticed, this is a much shorter newsletter than the ones you have previously received. We are taking more content to our website, where it can be updated more frequently – and hopefully provide you more information and inspiration (be sure to check out our blog!). We are also changing our monthly meetings a little bit to include some time for writing, as people seem to enjoy that.

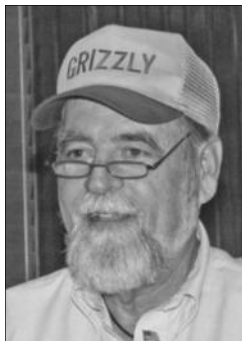
We're always interested in hearing how we're doing, and any thoughts you might have on how KWA could improve. Please feel free to contact me or any of the other Board members. We'll be posting short bios of each Board member on the website so you know who we are. Feel free to email your questions and comments to info@kwawriters.org.

I look forward to seeing you at our monthly meetings.

Contest a success! Now, on to the anthology

By Ray "Grizzly" Racobs
KWA Contest Chair

For those of you who were not at the awards dinner for the 2009 Prose and Poetry Contest, the following short (surprisingly so, for Griz) comes from the introduction to the writing awards presentation at the annual holiday party and awards banquet held at Terradyne Country Club on Dec. 6, 2009:



"Those of you who are to be awarded for your achievement in writing for this contest should be proud of yourself for the hard work and dedication you have put forth to excel in the literary field of your choosing.

"The same goes for those of you ... who have been awardees in the past. But it seems to me that no matter how well we write – and I think I write PRETTY DARNED GOOD, at times – the ole cliché of 'don't quit your day job' follows most of us around like a sticker in a dog's tail.

"Many of you have achieved what I

have not ... you are an award-winning writer. I've even judged some of my own entries and have never placed ..."

But now, a few more words ...

The work continues for KWA's 2009 contest, as we push into 2010 producing this anthology, due out in April. I've experienced countless headaches and challenges while serving as contest chair, but those Tylenol-treated pains and frustrations were often countered and surpassed by the pleasure that I've had from reading many of the entries that came before me as chair, and particularly as the judge of the youth prose category.

Earlier I said "we" were working on the anthology. I have had the pleasure of an early Christmas present in the form of Mr. Dennis E. Smirl, a multiple awardee this year and in years past, who volunteered to assist. After a number of discussions with Dennis, via email, I would have nothing to do with his being just a helper and promoted him to Anthology Editor.

The look will be new and refreshing, and we hope you like it as much as we do. I honestly look forward to being KWA's Contest Chair in 2010. I can only hope that Dennis follows along with me.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED TO PLAN SCENE CONFERENCE

The KWA Scene Conference is set for **Saturday, March 27**, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the Hilton Wichita Airport. The lineup includes 14 workshops in fiction and non-fiction, a

keynote speaker, editor/agent consultations, and the popular Crime Scene Writing Contest.

We need your help! The planning committee will

meet at 7 p.m. on Thursday, Jan. 21, at Borders, 1715 N. Rock Road. Contact Janet Bahl, conference chair, at janetksgal@att.net to find out how you can help.

THE WINNERS

Adult Division

First Chapter of a Novel

Ist: Tracy Koretsky, *The Body Of Helen*
2nd: Gordon Kessler, *The Master Plan*
3rd: Dennis Smirl, *Spittin' Image*
HM: Starla Criser, *Cowboy Of Her Heart*

Short Fiction

Ist: Patrick Hughes, "Hole"
2nd: Colleen Kelly Johnston, "Something Wicked"
3rd: Lauren King, "Mother, Nevertheless"

Creative Non-Fiction

Ist: Carol Feierabend, "What Grows Up Must Come Down"
2nd: Patrick Hughes, "You Ask Me How The Kids Are Doing"
3rd: Patrick Hughes, "Buffalo Breath"

Memoirs

Ist: Dennis E. Smirl, "Get The Guns!"
2nd: Chuck Scott, "Kite Flying"
3rd: Vicky Bennett, "Asylum"

Poetry

Ist: Storme Maynard, "With Grandpa On The Spanish Coast"
2nd: Patrick M. Latta, "Dying Thunder"
3rd: Colleen Kelly Johnston, "Snapshot - South Texas - 1948"
HM: Storme Maynard, "Gondwanaland Dreams"

Youth Division (18 years & under)

Prose – fiction/non-fiction, any subject

Ist (tie): Anna Collins, "Oliver," and Taylor Hausfeld, "Around The Alley's Corner"
2nd (tie): Emily Jensen, "Delayed Devotion," and May Le, "A Single Thread"
3rd (tie) Hari Ramanan, "The Silver Lining," and Haris Vrahliotis, "The Final Escape"
Honorable Mentions: Sarah Hagerty, "A Day At The Movies," and Anna Vasquez, "So"

Poetry, rhymed or free verse

Ist: Heather Yates, "The Nonexistent Perfect Girl"
2nd: Samanvitha Sridhar, "The Unity Of Irresolution"
3rd: Heather Yates, "The Real World"

Kansas Writers Association

P.O. Box 2236
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, or by mail to 1121 Murray St., Wichita, KS, 67212. 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

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501(c)3 organization.*

<http://www.kwawriters.org>



A Writing Tip: Consistent Point of View

By BD Tharp

I just found out that another member of my family is writing, and I'm very excited for her. She's just starting out, so she is filled with questions — some that feel like roadblocks. We talked about point of view because that was one

of the things she struggles with. I assured her that we all do, especially when we're writing something as complex as a novel.

It's very important to be consistent in your point of view. Make sure the one you choose, whether it's first person or third person or omniscient, works best for the story. I wrote a short story from a young woman's point of view, and I found it very limiting. There were things that couldn't be described because she couldn't have seen them. So, I

rewrote it in third person, and it seemed to work better. The story was much more in depth, and I didn't struggle with sharing only what the main character could see or experience.

Another writing buddy of mine wrote her most recent book in both first and third person. The main character is always in first person for the whole chapter. And the other characters are written in third for the remaining chapters. It seemed to work fine for the story, and it didn't confuse me as a reader at all.

The main thing about point of view is consistency. Be sure that you don't jump around within the scene or chapter, or it will cause confusion. Make sure what your character is experiencing or feeling is possible. Reading your work out loud can sometimes help you identify slips in your point of view. And whatever you do, keep writing! There are many stories to be told, and we have an obligation to get them told (besides, it's fun). Write on, my friends.