

KWA

Kansas Writers Association

all genres. all formats. ALL WRITERS.

JULY 2010

JULY WORKSHOP

Saturday, July 17

1:30-4 p.m.

Rockwell Library

5939 E. 9th St.

Wichita

Entering Contests

A great way to get feedback on your manuscript is to give it a little competition. Enter your work in a writing contest, and many times you'll receive a critique on your entry from judges with some experience in the industry. Who knows — you may even win some cash! Books and stories that place in contests also catch the eye of agents and publishers. At this month's meeting, we'll cover some of the basics of entering contests, what to expect, and how to

capitalize on whatever accolades you might receive. **Turn to Page 2** of the newsletter for current contest opportunities. Hope to see you in the winner's circle!

Want to Get More Involved in KWA?

The KWA Board is looking for members who would like to take a more active role in our organization! We have openings for treasurer, promotions chairman, and historian. Here are some quick descriptions of the job duties:

Treasurer: Responsible for maintaining the group's cash flow and financial records.

Promotions Chair: Sends notices of upcoming meetings and events to the media and other interested parties. Helps with promotional materials for the annual Scene conference.

Historian: Keeps photos, news clippings, and other records of KWA activities archived.

The time commitment of a KWA board member is minimal. We meet about six times a year — sometimes less, sometimes more. Terms end in December.

These jobs are vital to helping KWA in its mission to support, encourage, and promote the writer. You don't need to be an expert, a published writer, or even a longtime member. You just need a willingness to serve and a desire to see KWA succeed and grow in its service to writers.

Please get in touch if you're interested! Email info@kwawriters.org to volunteer or just to ask for more information. Or talk to a board member at our next meeting.

Volume 14, Issue 7

Editor: Erin Perry O'Donnell

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Calendar

- July 17: **Regular Meeting.** Entering Contests
- March 19, 2011: **Scene Conference**

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

President's Remarks: Writing Contests Have a Lot to Teach Us

By A. Lisette Walker
KWA President



It's hard to believe that 2010 is already halfway over. The first half has not gone quite the way I'd intended; I'm hoping the second half gets back on track.

Our discussion at this month's meeting is going to be on entering contests. Not only are we going to discuss do's and don'ts, but we'll get feedback from some of the judges of our own annual KWA contest. I hope you can attend.

Contests are a valuable learning tool. They provide a deadline (always good for those of us who tend to procrastinate) and structure (typically genre and length). Deciding to enter contests can help you buckle down to complete some of your works in progress.

We'll also chat about our annual KWA contest. Some of you have been wondering where the anthologies from the 2009 contest are. One of the editors has been ill, which has delayed the publication progress.

One of the benefits of our contest is that we do give feedback (provided

you send us a SASE). We've been contemplating having a meeting where members could bring in two or three pages of a work in progress (novel, short story, play, poem, etc.) and receive feedback from others. Let us know what you think of the idea; is this — or some variant — something you'd be interested in doing?

We're always trying to think up topics for our monthly meetings. If you have something you'd like to learn — or would like to talk about — let us know! Drop an email to info@kwawriters.org or talk to a board member at any meeting.

Stay cool, and keep writing!

Writing Contests: Open Now and Upcoming Opportunities

Contests are listed chronologically by deadline. Look for this list and ongoing updates at www.kwawriters.org — we'll also link to the websites so you don't have to struggle with typing in long addresses.

"Scare The Dickens Out of Us" Ghost Story Contest:

The second annual contest offers \$1,000 first place, \$500 second place and \$250 third place prize money this year for a new, original ghost story up to 5,000 words. Any genre is welcome. This literary contest is a fundraiser for the Friends of the Dr. Eugene Clark Library in Lockhart, Texas, the oldest continuously in-use library in



Texas. A Junior contest for ages 12-18 offers a \$250 first prize. Entry fee: \$20 (\$5 for Junior contest).

Deadline: Oct. 1. Website: www.clarklibraryfriends.com

The Tommy Award for Excellence in Writing: Given by WritersNewsWeekly for novels and short stories. No entry fee and no prize money. The first place short story will be published in WritersNewsWeekly; the first place novel will be reviewed on the website. Deadline: Aug. 15. Complete submission guidelines are online at writersnewsweekly.com/tommy.html.

The Gulf Coast Writers Association Anthology: Submissions are being accepted for the third annual anthology. Theme and location must be U.S. Southern.

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A Modern Writer's Life: Let's Get Together Sometime

By H.B. Berlow
KWA Member



Over 15 years ago when I was living on the East Coast I was amazed to find that there was a poetry reading that I could attend nearly every night of the week either in Boston or Cambridge. Afterward many of us would gather in a restaurant or a coffee shop, buy what we could afford, and talk about anything and everything. THAT was social networking.

Of course, in a city as infused with the arts as Boston there were a vast number of independent periodicals that focused on events and happenings throughout the region, for those fortunate enough to actually own cars and not rely solely on the subway or the bus. These periodicals had articles from entrusted writers and occasionally a guest writer. THAT was blogging.

There was a publishing house called Vantage Press years ago that is still in existence today. (I even have some info from them from over 25 years ago. Wow!) They were known as a vanity press. You could submit your manuscript for publication with the idea that you would purchase a set amount and sell and market them yourself. This was before publishing on demand.

Today's technology has made it easier for us to communicate, share ideas, and see our work in print. Those of us who have Facebook accounts can stay in touch with friends from a far-reaching geographical area. If you blog, you have a readily available and free access to express ideas. Sites like Lulu.com afford the opportunity to allow your elderly parents to finally see your work (as was my case).

But I wonder if that same technology has dehumanized us at all. Isn't a handshake or a look into someone's eyes more tangible than a friend request or seeing someone's static photo? Don't get me wrong; I can do more in my office with a computer today than I ever had the opportunity to before.

And this is why I am realizing that a monthly KWA meeting and seminar or a writer's conference is still the best way to absorb the sense of humanity that is so vital to being a writer. From the Roman playwright Terence: *Homo sum, humani nihil me alienum puto* (I am a man, I consider nothing that is human alien to me).

Always hold on to your humanity. And, hey, let's get together sometime.

H.B. Berlow is a crime and mystery writer who pretends to be a full-time employee at AT&T. He's been a KWA member since 2007. His blog is tikiman1962.wordpress.com.

Member News

Bernell Baldwin's story, "The Man From Ohio, a dust storm and the measles," was published in the April issue of *Active Aging*.

Starla Criser, aka Starla Kaye, has sold two medieval romance novels. *Great Scottish Devil* is currently being published as a weekly serialized novel with Blushing Books. *Their Lady Gloriana* will be published by Black Velvet Seductions, release date TBA.

Erin Perry O'Donnell wrote three articles for the June issue of *Women's Focus*, including the cover story, "Meet the Jake Legs: Wichita's own 'Rat Pack'."

B.D. Tharp appeared on the KSCW-TV morning show this month to talk about her novel, *Feisty Family Values*. On July 18, she will be the guest blogger at SavvyAuthors.com on the topic of interviewing. On July 22, she'll give a talk at 7 p.m. at the Sedgwick Senior Center in Sedgwick.

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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 to our address above. 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 membership through Dec. 31, our monthly newsletter, and a discount on our programs and seminars. Dues are \$20 for a mailed newsletter, \$17 for emailed newsletter, and \$10 for a youth membership (under 21). Membership forms are online at www.kwawriters.org. Renewals are due Jan. 1. 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> **]**

CONTESTS: Lots of Opportunities to Enter Your Work

(Continued from page 2)

Previously published stories accepted. Length of 2,500 words or less. Limit 2 entries per author. A few poems may be selected as well. Authors of accepted stories are paid \$25. Deadline is Sept. 1. No entry fee. Website: www.gcwriters.org/anthology.htm

Writers Matrix Grabber 1250 Contest: KWA co-founder Gordon Kessler is running a contest for best opening hook of a book. All genres welcome. The top three finalists will be judged by an established

editor at a major New York publishing house. 1st place, \$100; 2nd place, \$50; 3rd place, \$25. The first 50 entries will be line-edited and critiqued. Entry fee: \$10. Deadline: Nov. 1. Website: www.writersmatrix.com.

Writer's Digest Competitions: The magazine runs several contests a year. The 11th Annual Short Short Story Competition is now open. Maximum length is 1,500 words. First place is \$3,000 and a trip to the Writer's Digest Conference in New York City. Cash prizes up to \$1,500 also given through 10th

place. Winners will appear in the June 2011 issue. Deadline: Dec. 1. Website: www.writersdigest.com/competitions

The Amazon Breakthrough Novel Award: Each year Amazon.com looks for new voices in fiction. The 2010 competition awarded two grand prizes, for general fiction and for young adult fiction. Each winner received a publishing contract with Penguin, including a \$15,000 advance. Details of the 2011 contest will be announced soon. Website: www.amazon.com