

# KWA

Kansas Writers Association

all genres. all formats. ALL WRITERS.

APRIL 2010

## APRIL WORKSHOP

Saturday, April 17

1:30-4 p.m.

Rockwell Library

5939 E. 9th St., Wichita

## April is National Poetry Month

And we're commemorating with a workshop devoted to verse. Don't be afraid or dissuaded — the principles of poetic language can be applied to all kinds of writing. Bring your questions for our panel of poets, and discover how poetry can open up new creative channels for you.

Volume 14, Issue 4

Editor: Erin Perry O'Donnell

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## Name That Poet — a mini-contest!

See if you can match the verses below to the correct poet from the list at right (challenge: try it without Google!). Then, bring your answer sheet to the April meeting. We'll draw from all the correct entries for a prize.

- Is all that we see or  
seem  
But a dream within a  
dream?*
- But O heart! heart!  
heart!  
O the bleeding drops  
of red,  
Where on the deck  
my Captain lies,  
Fallen cold and dead.*
- i carry your heart  
with me(i carry it in  
my heart)i am never  
without it(anywhere  
i go you go,my dear;  
and whatever is done  
by only me is your*
- doing,my darling)*
- Things fall apart; the  
centre cannot hold.*
- The caged bird sings  
with a fearful trill  
Of things unknown  
but longed for still  
And his tune is heard  
on the distant hill for  
The caged bird sings  
of freedom.*
- Visions! omens! hallu-  
cinations! miracles!  
ecstasies!  
gone down the  
American river!*

## POETS

- Maya Angelou
- e.e. cummings
- Allen Ginsburg
- Edgar Allen Poe
- Walt Whitman
- William Butler Yeats

## Calendar

- April 17: **Regular Meeting**, Poetry
- May 15: **Regular Meeting**, Memoirs/Non-Fiction
- June 19: **Regular Meeting**, Creating Characters

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

## Member News

**Starla Criser**, aka Starla Kaye, sold a novel, *Maggie Mine*, and a novella, *Cupid's Mistake*, to Blushing Publications. *Cupid's Mistake* was published in March. *Maggie Mine* began publication as a 12-week serial April 1.

**Bill DeArmond**, professor of mass communications and film at Southwestern College, has published his fifth book, *Mortal Silences, Graveyard Talk*. There will be a book signing on Saturday, April 10, from 10 a.m. to noon at College Hill Coffee in Winfield. The book is a compilation of short stories capturing moments in time. His story "The Wyr of Slater House" won the grand prize in fiction for the 2003 Kansas Voices contest. DeArmond has announced plans for a poetry book to be his next endeavor. He hopes to have that published within the next 16 months. *Mortal Silences, Graveyard Talk* can be purchased online at [www.lulu.com](http://www.lulu.com), or at Moonshadow Book Store and College Hill Coffee in Winfield.

**Conrad Jestmore's** article "The Courage to Walk Through Doors" was published in the spring issue of *The Reiki News Magazine*. It recounts his efforts and successes in giving Reiki treatments to puppy mill survivors at the Kansas Humane Society.

**Erin Perry O'Donnell** wrote three articles for the April issue of *Women's Focus* magazine. One is a guide to summer camps, activities, and volunteer opportunities for kids in Wichita. She also interviewed Denise Brown, who has become an activist against domestic violence since the murder of her sister, Nicole Brown Simpson. And she wrote a companion story about two clients of the Wichita Women's Initiative Network (WIN), which helps women recovering from abusive relationships to complete their education, develop job skills and live independently.

*Congratulations!*

## President's Remarks: Enrich your prose with poetry



By A. Lisette Walker  
KWA President

It's finally Spring! I've been enjoying the warm weather and the ability to take long walks without freezing. I do a lot of good writing during walks while I'm occupied with taking step after step and keeping the dogs from chasing squirrels — I'll find myself thinking of a new story or a different approach to a scene that's stuck.

I was glad to see so many of you at our Scene Conference. I always love the chance to hang out with fellow writers and talk shop! Everyone I spoke with had a great time and was inspired to focus on their writing. Good luck, all! A special thanks to our fabulous Chair, Janet Bahl, and Co-Chair, Erin O'Donnell, for putting the conference together! And thanks also to all the volunteers who helped in the planning and at the event.

April is National Poetry Month, and we will focus on poetry at our monthly meeting. Writers seem to identify themselves as either prose writers or poets. You can be both, and I highly encourage you to try your hand at writing poems. In writing poetry, you have to condense everything; you are trying to elicit emotion, and to do that you must use descriptive, carefully chosen words. Practicing such selection and economy will improve all of your writing by making your prose specific and taut. There are thousands of words to choose from, and writing poetry will help you learn how to efficiently wield them.

I hope to see you at our April meeting.

Keep writing!

# Newbie at the Conference: My Experience at Scene

By H.B. Berlow

Having never been to a writers' conference before, I wasn't sure what to expect from the 2010 KWA Scene Conference.

ROLL FANTASY SEQUENCE: An agent takes to me, finds me to be a brilliant writer, and insists we get my work published. OR: A small press, looking to make a splash, finds me to be a brilliant writer, and insists we get my work published.



**Wichita-area freelance writer Tony Woodlief spoke on "Developing a Vision, Voice, and Niche for your Non-Fiction."**

It is Sunday night and I am making dinner and planning to go to work tomorrow. And probably for a long time to come. However, there is hope.

Seminars on "Writing in Third-Person Intimate Point of View," "Revising Fiction: Making Sense of the Madness," "How to Make a Liv-

Find more photos from the 2010 Scene Conference & other program details at [www.kwawriters.org/sceneofthecrime.htm](http://www.kwawriters.org/sceneofthecrime.htm)



**H.B. Berlow discusses his writing with freelance writer and author Charles Salzberg of New York City at the 2010 Scene Conference.**

ing Writing Non-Fiction," and "Publishing Short Fiction" were presented by published authors, freelance writers, and educators. They offered a well-rounded variety of subjects that most certainly appealed to the attendees, whatever their genre might have been or their degree of skill as writers, or their publication history.

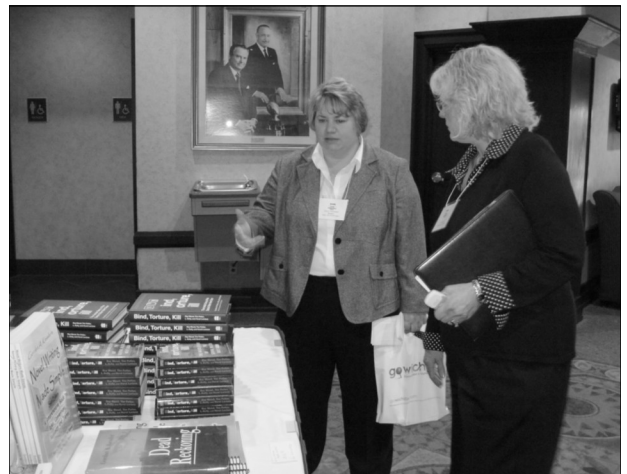
I had two 10-minute consultations regarding issues specific to my needs. With Charles Salzberg, I discussed whether to continue to pursue an agent for a dark comedy novel or seek out a small press that might be more inclined to publish something offbeat. With Kirt Hickman, I discussed the labels of HERO and ANTAGONIST in another novel in which moral am-

biguity is shaded. These gentlemen were as specific as they could be given the fact that they did not have the manuscript in hand. They were courteous and encouraging.

More than anything there was the chance to see old friends and acquaintances and make new ones. The process of writing, in and of itself, is rather solitary in nature. The task of finding an agent/editor/publisher is arduous and daunting. But networking to me means communicating with those who understand your plight and encourage you to carry on.

In that regard, the day was an utter success.

*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. Visit his blog at [tikiman1962.wordpress.com](http://tikiman1962.wordpress.com).*



**Scene Conference Chair Janet Bahl, right, chats with Sherry Chisenhall, editor of the *Wichita Eagle* newspaper, before Chisenhall's presentation with *Eagle* reporter Roy Wenzl.**

## 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](mailto: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

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

## Jog your creativity in a flash with a writing prompt generator

At our February meeting, we talked about online resources available to writers. A great way to take advantage of the Web's interactivity is through automatic writing prompt generators. One of our favorites is **WritingFix.com**.

It's geared toward teachers and K-12 students, but there's plenty here for writers of all ages. The tools are a blast — it's a little like *Mad Libs*. Just click on "Writing Prompts" in the menu to find tools that randomly generate sentences, settings, names, dialogue



Inspiration is but a click away

starters — you name it — with the push of a button, or two or three. If the first suggestion doesn't strike your fancy, press the buttons again for something different.

Here are some samples of prompts we generated. Why not take the next five minutes and experiment with one?

**Dialogue:** "A little girl and a stranger speak at a theater."

**Plot Prompt:** Combine an office building, a cowboy, and a character

who suddenly can't see.

**Dueling Haikus:** Select two opposite topics, then create a 17-syllable "snapshot" of each. Use the 5-7-5 haiku structure. Some of the idea prompts include "something frightening," "a family member," or "a memory that makes you think." Then select an opposite of your choice for the second poem.

**Start & Stop Poem or Paragraph:** The generator supplies a word or phrase that must be used in both your first and last sentences. Try "negotiate," "rude," "because of you," or "since it ended."