



Our Next KWA Meeting

August 21

Rockwell Public Library

5939 E. 9th, Wichita

Pre-Meeting Mini-Workshop 1:30-2:30 p.m.

Choosing and Using Point of View

What is point of view? How important is it? When you write, do you have a default point of view, one you always fall into, or do you make a conscious selection based on the type of writing you are doing and the most effective way of conveying your message to your reader? At KWA’s August mini-workshop, we will discuss these questions and others, look at examples of the three basic points of view, and learn the pros and cons of using each of them. Bring your questions, experiences, and paper and pen. After the discussion, we will do an exercise, and there will be a handout for further reading. See you there.

Social Time: 2:30-3:00 p.m.

Meeting: 3:00-4:30 p.m.

Program: Bob Curtwright—Writing Reviews

Bob Curtwright writes arts and movie reviews for the *Wichita Eagle*.

Sad News

KWA sends our condolences to Margaret “Peg” Morrison on the death of her husband, Garrett.

Upon receipt of a card on behalf of KWA, Peg responded with: “Thanks for your beautiful card. My healing is helped beyond measure by the boundless love of wonderful friends. Soon I hope, I shall rejoin the human race and some of its finest people—the kind and helpful members of KWA.”

KWA also sends our condolences to Richard and Marilyn Walkup on the death of their daughter.

New & Renewing Members

New

Emily Bonavia
Donna Scritchfield

Renewals

Robert M. Beattie, Jr. Sondra Langel
Dawna Geiger Shelly Plett
Karen Jimerson Linda Ward
Dorothy M. Jones

Mark Your Calendar

Aug. 4, 18—GK Brainstormers, 7:00 p.m., Borders East in the “History” section.

Aug. 7—First Saturday group, 1 p.m. Sharon Jesik’s house.

Aug. 13, 27— Women Working Writers, 10 a.m. Watermark Books, 4701 E. Douglas.

Aug. 15—Lawrence: Discussion of “The Best of Simple” by Hughes, hosted by the Ninth Street Baptist and St. Luke AME churches in Lawrence. On Nov. 21 the two churches will host a discussion of Hughes’ first autobiography, “The Big Sea.”

Aug. 20—National poetry project workshop with Kalamu ya Salaam, New Orleans, at the Atwater Neighborhood City Hall, 2755 E. 19th St.

Aug. 20—Newsletter deadline for September.

Aug. 21—KWA Pre-Meeting Mini-Workshop, 1:30-2:30 p.m.. Regular meeting, 3:00-4:30 p.m., Rockwell Public Library.

Aug. 26—KWA Board meeting, 6 p.m., Watermark Books & Cafe.

Sept. 10—Michele Battiste Poetry Performance, 6 p.m. Delano Books, 811 W. Douglas.

Market Place

Conference

Cat Writers' Association (CWA) will hold its 11th annual writers' conference in Houston, Texas, November 19-21, 2004. The conference is open to anyone interested in pet writing and will feature two days of professional seminars with nationally known speakers on topics including magazine editor panels, how to write saleable articles and book proposals, self-publishing and radio interview techniques.

In addition the CWA conference includes social gatherings where attendees can network with authors, editors and agents. The annual CWA Awards Banquet, sponsored by Nestle Purina PetCare Co., features more than 50 prestigious MUSE and corporate-funded writing awards. CWA events are in conjunction with the Cat Fanciers' Association International Cat Show, the largest cat show held in the Western Hemisphere, scheduled at the George R. Brown Convention Center.

Full registration for the writing conference is \$100 for non-members prior to August 31, \$125 prior to October 31. Information and registration options will be posted on the CWA web site at <http://www.catwriters.org> after June 1.

CWA, founded in 1992, is dedicated to providing news, information, and education on all aspects of cat care and welfare, as well as improving the quality of writing about cats and other companion animals. Its 200 members include published writers, photographers, illustrators, novelists, editors and broadcasters.

For more information, contact CWA president Fran Pennock Shaw via the CWA web site www.catwriters.org or email franshaw1@juno.com.

Contests

ByLine Magazine Contests. For more information on all of their contests, see www.bylinemag.com/contests.asp.

1st Chapter of a Novel Deadline: Aug. 5. Entry Fee: \$5. Prizes: \$70 first, \$40 second, \$25 third. Submission: Opening chapter of an unpublished novel. Mainstream or genre; adult or YA audience. Maximum 25 pages.

New-Talent Poetry Deadline: Aug. 10. Entry Fee: \$3. Prizes: \$40 first, \$30 second, \$20 third. Submission: Open to any writer who's never won a cash prize in a ByLine poetry contest.

Creative Nonfiction Deadline: Aug. 20. Entry Fee: \$4. Prizes: \$40 first, \$25 second, \$15 third. Submission: Nonfiction (either essay or article) that reads like a story, using fiction techniques to present factual information or events. Maximum 2,000 words.

Children's Poem Deadline: Aug. 30. Entry Fee: \$3. Prizes: \$40 first, \$25 second, \$10 third. Submission: Poem for children or about children.

Genre Fiction Deadline: Sept. 10. Entry Fee: \$5. Prizes: \$50 first, \$30 second, \$15 third. Submission: Short story that fits a particular category: romance, sci-fi, confession, mystery, western, etc. No children's stories. Maximum 5,000 words.

Seven Hills Contest for Writers (Tallahassee Writers Association) Deadline: Aug. 31. Entry Fee: \$15 non-TWA members, \$10 TWA members. Prizes: \$100 first; certificates for first, second and third. Selected submissions will be published in the *Seven Hills Review*. Submission: Short stories up to 2,500 words. Details at www.tallahasseeewriter.org.

Writers Notes Annual Writing Awards

Deadline: Aug. 31. Entry Fee: \$15. Prizes: \$150 first, \$50 1st runner up; publication in *Writers Notes Magazine*. Submission: Original and unpublished fiction and nonfiction up to 5,000 words. Details at <http://hopepubs.home.comcast.net/wawards.html>.

Summer Poetry Writing Contest

Deadline: Aug. 31. Entry Fee: \$10. Prizes: \$500 grand prize, \$100 first; also publication on the OnceWritten.com web site and in the monthly newsletter. Submission: Original, unpublished poetry. Details at www.oncewritten.com/Contests/PoetryContest.htm.

In the Midnight Hour Halloween Fiction Contest

Deadline: Aug. 31. Entry Fee: \$10. Prizes: \$500 grand prize, \$100 first; publication on the OnceWritten.com web site and in the monthly newsletter. Submission: Stories up to 4,000 words that are scary, depressing, inspiring...anything that tells a great story about what happens in The Midnight Hour.

HSA Bernard Lionel Einbond Renku Competition

Deadline: Sept. 15. Entry Fee: \$15. Prizes: Grand prize up to \$150 and publication in *Frogpond* and on the HSA web site. Submission: Renkus of 36, 20, or 12 stanzas (kasen, nijuin, or junicho forms) written by two or more persons; not previously published. Details at www.hsa-haiku.org/res-hsa-contests.htm.

Poetry and Fiction Workshops Planned

By Conrad Jestmore

Come one, come all, to the September KWA workshop on Saturday the 18th!

We have something for just about everyone and it will be your choice, either a poetry workshop or a fiction workshop. Two exciting and prominent writers will conduct each session.

The poetry portion will be conducted by **Jeff Worley**, a former Wichitan who is now editor of *Odyssey Magazine* at the University of Kentucky. His impressive credits include four published books of poetry, with poems appearing in over 350 magazines. He was also the winner of the Atlanta Review 2002 International Prize for Poetry.

Gaylord Dold, whose fourteen published novels have made him well-known to all of us in Wichita, will conduct the fiction workshop. In addition to his novels, he is also widely published as a travel writer. Three of his works have received starred *Publishers Weekly* reviews, denoting works of unusual interest or merit.

Each of them will conduct a two and a half hour workshop in their area (you will have to choose which one to attend), then both groups will come together as the two authors will discuss what the fiction writer and the poet can learn from each other. There will be Q and A time as well as some readings from their work.

Don't miss this unique opportunity, to be held at the Collegiate Upper School, 1221 North Webb Road. Registration starts at 12:30 p.m. on September 18th. Registration fees are \$15 for students, \$20 for members, and \$45 for non-members.

A registration form is included in the newsletter along with a schedule and contact information if you have questions.

Update on "Scene of the Crime"

Saturday, October 16 the Kansas Writers Association will present its 7th annual Scene of the Crime Conference in Century II's Convention Center Meeting Room 101. This highly informative and entertaining conference is open to the public and recommended to fellow criminologists and students of criminology, writers and readers of true crime and crime fiction, as well as the interested general public. It's a unique day-long program that will bring together authors, crime scene investigators, and law enforcement professionals for a fascinating look at the criminal sciences.

Dr. Mary Dudley, Sedgwick County Medical Examiner, and Captain Darrel Hanes, WPD Special Operations, will join the lineup of experts mentioned in last month's newsletter.

Watch for additional news in the September newsletter and on the web site.

Web Sites of Interest

www.allexperts.com

AllExperts claims to be the oldest and largest free Q&A service on the Internet. There are lots of categories to choose from if you need to get answers to questions.

www.aldaily.com

Arts & Letters Daily is a site with articles of note on various subjects, discussions about new books, essays and opinions, and links to media and newspapers all over the world.

www.onlineconversion.com

This is a wonderful site if you need to know how to convert just about anything to anything else: length/distance, temperature, weight/mass, date/time, cooking, etc.

www.critters.org

Critters Workshop is an on-line workshop and critique group for science fiction, fantasy, and horror writers.

www.anotherealm.com/prededitors

Preditors & Editors is a guide to publishers and writing services, including chats, contests, conventions, definitions, promotional, warnings, and more.

www.spiritledwriter.com

Spirit Led Writer is a web site for Christian writers, with articles, columns and news.

www.ewritersplace.com

This is a site with columns, e-mail workshops and courses, and articles for all writers.

www.writergazette.com

The Writer Gazette has writer-related articles, a place to promote eBook/POD books, and much, much more.

www.writemovies.com

This is an international portal for writers of screenplays.

Query Letter Tips

By Starla Criser

Just the thought of having to write a query letter and/or synopsis can sometimes bring the most stalwart writer to the state of panic. What do you include? How should it look? So many panic-filled questions can come to mind if you really set your mind to it.

Don't panic! Manuscripts have been purchased from poorly written, disorganized query letters. Sure, you should do your very best in writing a good selling tool for your beloved manuscript. But if an editor/agent can see even a hint of good story line, intriguing characters, or unique presentation of a non-fiction work, he/she will probably request to see the manuscript.

To give your work its best chance, though, here are some hints on writing a good query letter:

- Research the publisher/agent you want to query. Know what types of books, articles, or stories they publish or represent.
- Find out the correct editor's name and spelling at a publishing house. You can even call to check out this information, as well as to verify the mailing address.
- The lead paragraph should present your project's idea in a manner that will pull the reader in. For either articles or books, give the proposed number of words. Clearly identify which section of a magazine your article fits, or which genre line your book fits at the publishing house.
- The middle paragraph should be specific about the project. If the work is an article, state exactly what will be included and excluded. If the work is a fictional work, very, very briefly hint at the unique story line and conflict involved.

(Cont'd pg. 5)

How A First Time Author Got His Book on Managing Fear Published

By Stan Popovich

Wondering how to get your writing ideas published? I am a first time author who recently got his self help book on managing fear published. The title of the book is *A Layman's Guide to Managing Fear Using Psychology, Christianity and Non Resistant Methods* and is available at <http://www.trebleheartbooks.com/mvStanPopovich.html>.

I was able to get my book published even though I didn't have any experience in the publishing field. Let me explain:

Over the years, I collected much information on how to manage fear and anxiety. Although I didn't have a background in the religious or psychology fields, I did a lot of research including discussions with various professionals—in both fields—on how to manage fear and anxiety. One day I was wondering if I could develop a small book from these notes. I went to the bookstores to read various books on how to submit a book idea to some of the publishing companies. I learned that a writer must first develop a query letter to send to the various publishers and then submit a manuscript. After a good deal of research, I organized my notes into a small manuscript and did much editing to get my manuscript ready to send to the various publishers. I then wrote up a query letter and explained the benefits of how my book was unique to what was on the market. I mentioned that my book would be complete and cover all the ways to manage fear, unlike a lot of other books in the market today. My book would also be easy to read and results oriented, and it would be non technical. I explained that my book provided an important need to people who needed to manage their fear and anxiety.

I then went to some of the writing sites on the Internet that contained a listing of various publishers; publishers that might be interest in my self help book. I then submitted a query letter to these publishers and was eventually asked to submit my manuscript. I followed this process for a little less than a year.

During this time, I talked to various writers on the Internet and asked them how I could increase my chances of getting published. A writer told me that if I focused on the small niche publishing companies, that I would increase my chances of getting my book published. He was right. It took a lot of work and persistence; however I found it much easier to market my book idea to the small Print On Demand Publishing companies. I eventually found a small publishing company who really liked my book idea. I then briefly worked with the publisher to turn my manuscript into a small easy to read book.

I was able to get my book published by explaining the need, and the importance of my book in my query letter, developing a well written manuscript, and focusing on small publishing companies. It is not easy to get your work published, however with a lot of research, persistence and a willingness to continuously improve it is possible.

(Cont'd pg. 7)

An Inspiration to Write

By Richard R. Walkup

In 1965 my passion was sky diving. I enjoyed it so much I wanted everyone to try it, or at least understand what I experienced. At the time, I worked for The US National Bank in Omaha, Nebraska and the bank published a monthly newsletter for the staff. The editor invited employees to submit short articles for publication, so I thought this was my chance to spread the Gospel of sky diving. My article was titled “The First Time I Fell a Mile.” I wrote it and rewrote it, struggled to shorten it and then polished it.

It never came to print. As writers, we all know this experience and today would think of it as “just another rejection,” but at that time I was devastated. Later I submitted a picture of me in freefall and it was published. This took away some of the sting of the earlier rejection, but from that experience I learned just how hard it is to write, no matter how strong the inspiration.

In 1980, I realized how much family history would be lost if my mother died or my wife’s folks died and someone failed to caption family photographs and commit childhood experiences to writing. I decided to put together a few typewritten pages of my early memories and asked my mother and my wife’s folks to do the same. To my delight my mother filled a steno pad full of her early life experiences—a treasure trove of personal history—most of which I had never known. Of course, those few early pages grew into a book of a hundred or so pages and included genealogies and photographs. There was even a chapter on beloved pets. Today, addendums continue to be added to that history. Also, whenever I encounter a family crisis I also write a separate historical journal of the events and problems that are encountered until the crisis is resolved.

After writing my family history, my inspiration to write continued to grow. I began by writing memoirs of early childhood and teen years, of role models and beloved relatives, and in the late 1980’s I wanted to write a novel. I have struggled with this endeavor ever since. Some manuscripts have been completed and some lay unfinished. Those that are gathering dust include such titles as: *Dark Dreams*, *Beyond the Trees*, *Home Invasion*, *The Well* and today I am rewriting an earlier effort called *Tower of Fear*.

Dark Dreams is a story about a man who is an upstanding citizen, but has an evil identical twin that he is unaware of. The unknown twin is a sadistic serial killer and whenever he does his nasty work, the good twin sees the murders committed in his dreams through his brother’s eyes. I have learned since putting this

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Query Letter Tips

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- The third paragraph should present any credentials or awards you have to show that you are qualified to write on this particular subject. This is also the spot to list other works you have had published, briefly.
- The final paragraph should end with something positively suggestive, such as: “I look forward to hearing from you.” And definitely thank the person in advance for looking at and considering your project.
- If the publishing house/agent allows for seeing simultaneous queries, let them know if you are sending queries to other agents or editors at the same time.

Query Letter Don’ts

- Do not use odd sized or brightly colored paper. Keep things clean and professional.
- Do not write a query letter longer than one page, two at the very most.
- Do not address the editor/agent by his/her first name. Using the full name shows respect and professionalism.
- Do not forget to include your name, postal address, email address, and phone number.
- Do not mention previous rejections.
- Do not tell the editor/agent that the project still needs work.
- Do not include inappropriate or off-subject information about yourself.
- Do not discuss the rights you wish to sell.
- Do not discuss the price.
- Do not give your social security number.
- Do not discuss copyright information.
- Do not query several different articles or books in the same letter.
- Do not use obscenities or inappropriate content to get attention.
- Do not fail to respond promptly when a query is accepted and a manuscript requested.

NOTE: For more discussion on this subject, refer to Gordon Kessler’s book, *Novel Writing Made Simple*.

Eight Tips For More Effective Writing

By Bonnie Eaton

Do you ever wonder if your writing will leave the reader begging for more of your ‘page-turning’ stories? Are you bogged down with dull, listless writing, wondering how to create fresh, spine-tingling material that seems to have a life of its own? Do you understand the principles of plotting? And are you discouraged, fighting writer’s block while you wait for the muse to return? If you answered yes to even one of the above questions, you may find the answer lies in one or more of the tips below to help you create more effective writing.

1. Know the beginning and the end of your story, and discover the rest as you write.
2. It is also helpful to write a one or two sentence outline for each chapter as a guide. Writing is hard but it should be fun as well. Don’t feel you need to adhere to the guide—it is just that, a guide. Titling your chapters will trigger ideas for your sentence outline. Include secrets, betrayal, love scenes, the darkest moment, an unexpected event or visitor, fear, a lot of action, plus introducing a “time bomb” that complicates the plot that your protagonist must resolve within a certain period of time. I have given a few examples of chapter titles and sentences from my latest paranormal suspense.
 - (1) **Chapter 1: Carnie Man** — Beth Morris, aspiring writer, attends a local carnival with childhood sweetheart, Jack Milton, where she finds herself attracted to a dark-eyed half-breed, Mickey Youngtree, who is running a carnie stand.
 - (2) **Chapter 2: A Date With Destiny** — The carnival moves on but Mickey hangs around, determined to melt the heart of Beth, despite the difference in their social class positions.
 - (3) **Chapter 3: October and Forbidden Love** — Jack is heart-broken but ready to stand by to pick up the pieces when Beth falls hopelessly in love with Mickey during the months that follow — until she confides to Jack she is pregnant with Mickey’s child and Mickey has abandoned her.
 - (4) **Chapter 4: An Unexpected Visitor** — Beth’s mother arrives for an unexpected visit and disowns her daughter when she discovers the pregnancy. To make matters worse, the TV station features the top news story of the day—
 - an attempted robbery that failed — with the critically wounded suspect, Mickey Youngtree, in a coma at the local hospital.
3. End each chapter with a dynamic story question that propels the reader into the next chapter. To build tension, always worsen the condition for your character and keep the hero/heroine from reaching their goal until the final resolution.
4. Sustain reader interest by strong characterization. If your characters seem weak, try interviewing them to understand the physical, emotional and spiritual side of their nature. Sample character forms and interview questions can be found at <http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Forum/1497/biosketch.html>. or you can do a web search for other sites.
5. Find photos that resemble your idea of what your characters look like, what their house looks like, their town, their environment, their friends and enemies, and tape the pictures to your monitor when you write. You will find it is an immense help in creating your story world. Use music that fits the scene you are trying to write — scary, romantic, angry, etc.
6. Check the newspaper for ads you think your main character might apply for and have them write a resume, outlining their experience, personal characteristics, and what skills they possess for the job. Using that same information from the resume, try writing an obituary for your character. Sample obituaries from obituaries from newspapers are a great aid to help you write the death notice.
7. Writing is like brushing your teeth. You have to do it every day to get that sparkle! So write, write, write!
8. Last, but not least, join a local critique group. Writing groups offer invaluable suggestions that help you hone your craft, in addition to giving you a ‘sense of identity’ as a writer. Critical insights into your work can be gained from the critiques of your fellow members. And don’t forget to read, read, read!

Help Wanted!

Pianist Needed for The Awards Party in December.

Background music for two hours, December 12, from 6 p.m. — 8 p.m. Please contact Arlene Graber at argrab@cox.net if interested, or know of someone that might be able to help.

Writing Class

Gordon Kessler will again be teaching the class “Novel Writing Made Simple” for Butler County Community College, Andover Campus. The class will be six sessions long, starting on Wednesday evenings September 15, 6:30-9:00 p.m. The fee will be \$45. For more info call Gordon at 685-0098, or email gordon@gordonkessler.com.

How A First Time Author...

(Cont'd from pg. 4)

BIOGRAPHY:

Stanley Popovich endured his share of fear and anxiety over the years. Unable to find the help he needed, the author decided to undertake his own research. The result is *A Layman's Guide to Managing Fear Using Psychology, Christianity and Non Resistant Methods*—an easy to read book based on a combination of research and personal experience. For additional information go to <http://www.trebleheartbooks.com/mvStanPopovich.html>.

An Inspiration to Write

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project aside that Dean Koontz had written a novel based on a similar premise, called *Hideaway*.

The Well could be characterized as a children's story if it weren't so horribly adult scary.

Tower of Fear is about a young woman who wakes up in the middle of the night from a drug induced coma and finds herself on top of a high vertical mesa in the Utah desert. She has food and water enough for only a few days. She soon learns that she has been kidnapped and is being held for ransom. She has many hardships to face including acrophobia, her abnormal fear of height.

I have many favorite authors, among them, Dean Koontz, Stephen Coonts (no relation), and Patricia Cornwell, and oh yes, Gordon Kessler. If I would attempt to emulate any of them it would be the master story teller, Dean Koontz.

KWA Members' Web Sites

<http://www.doncoldsmith.com/>

Don Coldsmith, author of many historical Westerns available as books and audios.

<http://www.sktc.net/~beaton>

Bonnie Eaton, aka **B. J. Myrick**, author of *Dark Side of the Rainbow*, a short story collection of dark fiction, available as an e-book. Her site features book reviews and interviews of KWA members, writing articles, poetry, and excerpts from her book.

<http://www.flightfromdallas.com>

James P. Johnston & Jon Roe, author of *Flight from Dallas* from 1st Books Library.

<http://www.gordonkessler.com>

Gordon A. Kessler, author of *JEZEBEL*, *DEAD RECKONING* and *Novel Writing Made Simple*.

<http://www.LeapDontSleep.com>

John Madden, author of numerous seminars and new book *LEAP, DON'T SLEEP!*

<http://www.sherilmcgathy.com>

Sheri L. McGathy, author of *ELFEN GOLD*, a fantasy available as an e-book or paperback.

<http://www.loisruby.com>

Lois Ruby, author of literature for children and young adults.

<http://scheerdelightpub.com>

Ruth Scheer, author of literature for children: *Hippopotamus*, *My Friend*, *Giraffe at the Zoo*, *Elephant's Trunk*, and *The Mouse and the Angel*.

<http://members.cox.net/bdtharp/>

Bonnie Tharp, has authored several short stories, articles, and the novel, *Feisty Fossils*. She's currently scouring the US for an agent and has begun work on her second novel, *Grace*.

<http://www.yoderbooks.com>

James D. Yoder, author of *The Yoder Outsiders*, *Song In a Nazi Night*, *Lucy of the Trail of Tears*, *A Branson Love*, *Sarah of the Border Wards*, *Barbara: Sarah's Legacy*, and *Simone: A Saint for Outsiders*.

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Newsletter

Please send all newsletter submissions of articles, member news, or encouraging quotes by the 20th of each month prior to publication to starlakaye@earthlink.net or by snail mail to Starla Criser, 9415 E. Harry, Ste. 603, Wichita, KS 67207. All email attachments should have "KWA" in the subject line and can be submitted in Word, WordPerfect, Works, or rtf format.

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Our Mission Statement

To inform, support, encourage, and promote the writer.

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ADDRESS CORRECTION
REQUESTED

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