



KWA Meeting

April 15

**Rockwell Public Library
5939 E. 9th, Wichita**

1:00—4:00 p.m.

“Cross-Pollinating Horror into Other Genres” presented by Steven E. Wedel

Horror author Steven E. Wedel is a lifelong Okie who lives in Moore, Oklahoma with his wife of twenty years, their four children, two cats and a dog. He has worked as a reporter, columnist and editor for several newspapers and magazines, and taught writing classes. He is a graduate of The University of Oklahoma.

Among his publications are two novellas, a novel, and a collection of thirty-four short stories. One of his books, *Murdered by Human Wolves*, was recognized in *This Year's Best Fantasy and Horror*. Blackridge Entertainment has purchased film rights to his short horror story “Reunion.” His other books include *Shara*, *Darkscapes*, and *Seven Days in Benevolence*.

****NOTE:** There will not be a pre-meeting mini-workshop or a critique session following the program this month.

Critique Group

“Finding Your Voice” critique group: Sara Huter is looking for members who wish to join an online critique group. This group is for anyone trying something new. Maybe you are new to writing, or perhaps you are trying to write in a different genre. Fiction and non-fiction welcome. We'll work out the details. Email Sara.Huter@intrustbank.com if interested.

New & Renewing Members

New

Judy Dean Boredreaux
Elaine Douglas

Renewals

U. Bernell Baldwin	William Brian Johnson
Nancy Breth	Theresanna Manganiello
Arlene Rains Graber	Lois Ruby
Linda Graves	Nancy Swick
Vickie Hermes-Bond	Steven Swanson
C. E. Holden	

Mark Your Calendar

April 5 & 19—GK Brainstormers novel-writing critique group, 7:00 p.m. in the “History” section at Borders East. Contact Gordon at gordon@gordonkessler.com or 316-685-0098.

April 8—Lois Ruby will be at Watermark Books for a book signing, 1:00-3:00 p.m.

April 15—KWA Meeting: 1:00-4:00 p.m. Program presented by Steven Wedel. Rockwell Library.

April 20—Newsletter deadline for May.

April 20—KWA Board Meeting at Criser & Mardis, Chartered, 9415 E. Harry, Ste. 603, 7:00-9:00 p.m.

April 28—Jeff Worley will be at Watermark Books to sign his latest book and do a reading, 7:00-8:00 p.m.

May 3—GK Brainstormers, 7:00 p.m., in the “History” section at Borders East. Contact Gordon Kessler at gordon@gordonkessler.com or 316-685-0098.

Market Place

Market News

Arrow Publications LLC, an online publisher of romance stories in graphic novel form of illustrated stories with accompanying background music, is looking for romantic suspense stories. Payment: \$400-\$500 for all rights. Details at <http://www.arrowpub.com/writers.htm>.

Virtual Tales, an e-publisher of serialized novels/novellas in a variety of fiction genres, is seeking complete novels/novellas that can be serialized. No erotica, x-rated or excessively violent stories or fan fic. They seek stories for 34 installments, each installment 1,000-2,000 words long. Payment is tied to proceeds from subscriptions to the story. Details at <http://www.virtualtales.com>.

Moonlit Romance is a new print-on-demand and e-book publisher seeking historical, contemporary, paranormal and time-travel romances 5,000-60,000 words. Email your query, synopsis, and first three chapters in an rtf file to moonlitromancepub@yahoo.com.

Wild Blue Yonder, the in-flight magazine for Frontier Airlines, is seeking short fiction stories that are family-oriented and up to 2,000 words. Stories set in or around cities to which the airlines flies are preferred. Submit as Word attachments to Doresa at doresabanning@sbcglobal.net.

Contests

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

Flash Fiction: Deadline: April 5. Entry Fee: \$5. Prizes: \$50 first, \$30 second, \$20 third. Submission: A quick

fiction which feels complete in less than a thousand words. These stories often depend on atmosphere, technique, and a sense of immediacy.

Spring Poem: Deadline: April 10. Entry Fee: \$3. Prizes: \$40 first, \$25 second, \$15 third. Submission: Any style or length, connected in some way with the season.

Pet or Wildlife Article: Deadline: April 20. Entry Fee: \$5. Prizes: \$50 first, \$25 second, \$15 third. Submission: Nonfiction about animals or animal-related events. Maximum 1,800 words.

General Poetry: Deadline: April 25. Entry Fee: \$3. Prizes: \$60 first, \$30 second, \$25 third. Submission: Any style, subject or length.

New-Talent Short Story: Deadline: May 5. Entry Fee: \$5. Prizes: \$60 first, \$35 second, \$25 third. Submission: Open to any writer who never has won a cash prize in any ByLine fiction category. Maximum 5,000 words.

28th Nimrod/Hardman Awards Katherine Ann Porter Prize for Fiction and the Pablo Neruda Prize for Poetry

Deadline: April 30. Entry Fee: \$20 for entry and a one-year subscription. Prizes: \$2,000 and publication first, \$1,000 and publication second. Submission: Poetry: 3-10 pages, one long poem or several short poems. Fiction: 7,500 words maximum. No previously published works. Details at <http://utulsa.edu/nimrod/awards.html>.

SouthWest Writers Contest

Deadline: May 1. Entry Fee: On the entry form. Prizes: \$150 first, \$100 second, \$50 third. Submission Categories: Novels, Short Stories, Short Nonfiction, Other. Details at <http://southwestwriters.com/swwcontestguidelines.php>.

Saint Louis Short Story Contest

Deadline: May 19. Entry Fee: \$10. Prizes: \$5,000 grand prize and published and distributed by Clean State Publications. Submission: Maximum length 3,500 words. Details at <http://www.stlshortstory.com/info.html>.

Conferences/Other

2006 Allen Press Emerging Trends Seminar

Date: April 26

Place: National Press Club, 529 14th St NW, Washington, D.C.

Cost: \$149

Sessions: Deconstructing the Journal, self-archiving, article impact in the age of the internet

Details at <http://seminar.allenpress.com>.

The Midwest National Writers Workshop

Hosted by The Wichita Eagle

Date: April 29-30

Place: Hyatt Regency Wichita

Cost: \$75 before April 14, \$40 students

Workshops: presented by a number of authors and columnists

Details at <http://kansas.com>, and follow the link with the note-taking prairie dog at the lower left.

Summer Literacy Seminars has published its summer 2006 schedule, offering first prize of publication and full tuition to its 2006 SLS-St. Petersburg, Russia seminar as first prize in both poetry and prose. Other prizes and scholarships also. Fiction Judge: Margaret Atwood. Poetry Judge: Robert Hass. Details at www.sumlitsem.org or (888) 882-0949.

New Orleans Public Library Appeal for Books

By Colleen Kelly Johnston

Widely publicized over the Internet, NOPL's March appeal for used books has almost achieved status as an urban legend. As most urban legends, it has also been widely misstated.

True, they have appealed for help in restocking their shelves, virtually ruined by Katrina. True, NOPL will accept donated books, but potential contributors should take into account the enormous staffing problem the NOPL is attempting to cope with. While on the surface it might seem a brilliant plan to ship off all one's unwanted volumes to answer the need for books to replace those lost or hopelessly damaged by the flooding, the public libraries in that beleaguered city haven't the staff to adequately receive, sort through, catalogue, and place on the shelves all of the public's kindhearted offerings. With so many of that area's libraries still physically unfit to be opened to the public, it's fair to say they currently lack even the shelves to put the books on.

Does the library accept book donations? In a nutshell, they ask the public to donate money over books. As the NOPL states: If you are an individual sending your own used books, please consider making a cash donation instead.

Monetary donations are the best way to help the library rebuild. If you can help monetarily and mail your donation, please make your check payable to NOPL Foundation and send it to New Orleans Public Library Foundation, 219 Loyola Avenue, New Orleans, LA 70112.

If you prefer to send used books, be aware that NOPL retains the right to give the books they cannot use to other work groups, such as children's reading circles, etc. Books can be sent more cheaply to New Orleans by sending them via Media Mail, a lower cost rate than parcel post or first class mail.

According to Barbara Mikkelson of the New Orleans Public Library System, "While packaging up your old books and mailing them off might seem the perfect solution to the NOPL's problems, do trust that the library better knows its own needs. Keep in mind that a great many books donated to libraries everywhere prove to be non-useful to those institutions; so if you are moved to help, send money instead. If you want to support the New Orleans libraries with your old books, you can best do so by selling them yourself and giving the proceeds to the NOPL."

Dealing With a First Chapter

By Starla Criser

We've all heard how important it is to have a "magical" first chapter that captures and holds an agent's, an editor's, and a reader's attention. In today's market, those people must be captured and held to your story within the first page, or maybe even the first paragraph. Pressure. Lots of pressure.

Deal with the pressure; it's part of the writing world. Okay, it is a part of the real world, too. To deal with the pressure of commitments and deadlines in the real world, we sometimes break those things down into pieces that we can focus on until we can complete the whole thing. Take the often very stressful Christmas time as an example. If it is part of your life to celebrate it and share it with many people, the whole season can be almost overwhelming. Which parties can you fit into your schedule? When do you find time to decorate your home? How can you get holiday baking done? Who do you need to buy presents for, and when can you manage to do it, and on what money? Somehow most of us manage to survive the season...only to face it again a year later.

If you're a writer of more than one completed manuscript, you face this stressful situation over and over. I'm not going to list all of the elements of a manuscript that must be dealt with, or all of the facets of completion and marketing your work. But each of those are also pieces of the project to be broken down into manageable, workable parts so you can finish the project and stay somewhat sane.

Instead let us concentrate on the beginning of this writing project. The following are some of the pieces you can break your first chapter into, tasks that must all be accomplished before you can go forward with confidence:

- Introduce at least one of the main characters in such a manner that the reader will recognize him/her as they read further.
- Introduce at least one of the external conflicts for your character(s). Let the reader know how your character feels about that conflict, possibly revealing his/her internal conflict(s) as well.
- Hint at a character's overall goal in relation to your story, and hint at his/her strong commitment toward reaching that goal.
- Show the inciting incident that thrusts your character(s) out of his/her ordinary world and on toward meeting the goal.
- For whatever genre (romance, horror, thriller, etc.), introduce an element that fits the genre.
- Create a hook that pulls your reader on to the next chapter.

Finding Your Voice

By Sara Huter

People think I'm funny. I know because they spontaneously laugh when I talk, most of the time in all the right places. On paper, though, I'm a complete bore. I read others' work and wonder how they can write with such flare.

As most writers do, I carry a notebook to capture those random moments of inspiration. Until recently, it was mostly blank. Well, it did contain an old shopping list and running to-do list. And anyway, it was never around when I needed it. One day, I said something particularly clever, and people laughed. My notebook happened to be within reach, so I wrote it down. The next morning, in no time at all, I typed a 1,000 word essay based on that sentence. I felt like Ralphie writing his "What I Want for Christmas" essay. That was my "ah-ha" moment. I'd found my voice. Like Ralphie's, it may not have been great writing, but it was better than before, and the next thing I wrote was better than that.

"Finding your voice" is a phrase I see so often in various writing periodicals. But until recently, it was a phrase I'd considered elusive and exaggerated, like "letting characters write their own story and channeling it through the author's pen." So it got me to thinking: how exactly does one go about finding one's voice? Here's what I've learned:

1. Keep a notebook close at all times, whether watching a football game, cooking dinner, or grocery shopping. This is the hardest habit to develop and the easiest habit to break. Yes, it does get a little awkward pulling out a notebook during a romantic dinner with your spouse or at a social gathering. However, I do admit to having a little fun with this, making a show of writing something down while surreptitiously glancing at my husband.

2. Take inventory of your individuality: your passions, interests, and expertise:

- a. Passions: In which areas do you experience the gamut of emotions? If you're a parent, you've probably experienced joy, heart-break, and fury all in one day with your child(ren). Other passions may be your pet(s), your faith, or your marriage.
- b. Interests: What occupies your mind most of the time? Expand the list above to whitewater rafting? Mutual hatred for your boss?
- c. Expertise: When are you in your best "EF Hutton" mode? In other words, when does the following phrase apply to you? "When (insert your name here) talks, people listen." Whether it's because you possess unique knowledge about a subject, or because people just enjoy listening to you about a particular subject, chances are this same subject would be just as captivating in print. Perhaps you know everything there is to know about credit card fraud. Or, maybe people tend to tune in when you contemplate the endless supply of lint in your navel.

3. Practice, practice, and practice some more. Most writers will tell you that good writing comes from writing a lot. Commit a block of time every day to writing. Join a critique group that will keep you productive and provide valuable feedback.

You'll know you have found your voice when someone you know reads your material and says, "Isn't that just like (insert your name here)?"

"Finding Your Voice" critique group: Sara Huter is looking for members who wish to join an online critique group. Fiction and non-fiction welcome. Interested? Email Sara Huter at Sara.Huter@intrustbank.com.

Help Your Editor

As your newsletter editor for the past five years, I'm seriously asking for help now. This is a wonderful organization for writers all over Kansas (and beyond its borders), with many talented writers. We have writers from many genres and with lots of knowledge and interests. Please, please some of you take advantage of this opportunity to share your thoughts, wisdom, and experiences about anything related to writing. I'm sure you've all noticed that many months the newsletters have been made up mainly or completely of articles that I've written. I haven't minded doing this in the past, but my life has taken a lot of turns recently and I have more commitments than ever before. I cannot continue to do this basically on my own. Okay, not completely on my own...your hardworking board members have contributed articles too. But this organization, the website, and this newsletter belong to more than just the Board. Please offer your support to KWA by submitting articles, offering suggestions for the group, and volunteering in the many areas we need you.

President's Letter

By Conrad Jestmore

April will be a busy month with three KWA events occurring. First, on Sunday April 2nd, Watermark Books will host the KWA Anthology signing party from 1 to 4 p.m.

Then, on Sunday April 15th at our regular meeting, nationally known horror writer Steven Wedel will conduct a workshop from 1 to 4 p.m. at Rockwell Library. Don't write horror? Never fear. The thrust of his presentation is how to cross-pollinate genres and incorporate some horror into romance, westerns, thrillers or whatever it is you write.

Finally, on Friday 28th, nationally honored poet Jeff Worley from Kentucky will be giving a reading and signing books at Watermark, courtesy of our KWA sponsored event. This is still in the planning stages, so stay tuned for further details. I hope to see you at all the events.

KWA's March meeting had a little madness about it (our own version of March Madness—how about those Shockers?) in that it had something of everything for everybody. Gordon Kessler got us started with a mini-workshop on MS Word for writers. What we found was, there is a strong need for the basics for many writers out there. As a consequence, we will probably be offering more workshops on the subject in the future. It seemed we barely had time to scratch the surface. Thanks, Gordon, for getting the ball rolling, and we will explore more ways to answer questions that all of you have on a topic many of us need help with.

The main meeting of members (notice my exquisite triple alliteration) readings was brief, as only six members read from their work, but it was certainly enjoyable, as we listened to everything from poetry to mystery to humor to thriller to horror. Thanks to all of those who read and entertained us.

Finally, the critique session examined two poems and a short story satire. Members seem to be reaping results from the sessions (one has been published because of it), so feel free to get involved in the critiquing.

"His mother should have thrown him away and kept the stork." — Mae West

Member News

Jodi Wilson's poem, "Missing You," has been accepted for inclusion in the new anthology *Immortal Verses*.

Sara Huter's article, "Prioritizing, Actually," was accepted for publication in the April issue of SimpleJoy.org an online magazine.

Dr. Bill DeArmond, Professor of Mass Communications and Film at Southwestern College in Winfield, has had four poems accepted by *The Journal of Asinine Poetry*. The first poem, "Lord of the rings Dance," was posted on their website (www.asininepoetry.com) in March.

Starla Criser has sold her e-book novella, *Her Personal Trainer*, to her publisher.

Margaret (Peg) Morrison won an honorable mention from ByLine Magazine for her Children's Story and Picture Book, *Come See the Sea*.

Arlene Rains Graber won an honorable mention from ByLine Magazine for her Personal Essay, "Irish Lessons."

KWA: 2006 Events

May 20 Mini-workshop on basic computer skills by Brian Johnson. Main program on Writing for Young Adults by Mike Klaassen. Critique session to follow.

June 17 Workshop on Unlocking More Mysteries of MS Word by Gordon Kessler. Critique session to follow.

July 15 Undetermined as yet.

August 19 Mini-workshop will be a romance industry update report by Starla Criser. Main program on entering contests by Colleen Kelly Johnston.

September 16 Possible performance contest, more on this at a later date.

October 20-22 Scene of the Crime conference.

November 18 Undetermined as yet.

December 9 KWA Writing Competition Awards Banquet.

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Newsletter

Please send all newsletter submissions of articles, member news, or encouraging quotes by the 25th 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.

Join KWA For Only \$25.00

This will give you a one-year membership, our monthly newsletter, and a membership card which entitles you to discounts to our various programs and seminars. Send your check to KWA, P.O. Box 2236, Wichita, KS 67201

Visit our Web Site at: www.kwawriters.org

Our Mission Statement

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

KANSAS WRITERS ASSOCIATION

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ADDRESS CORRECTION
REQUESTED

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