



Our Next KWA Event

July 16

**Century II, Meeting Room 101 A
225 W. Douglas, Wichita**

8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.

“Meet the Editors” One-on-One!

Tom Colgan

Senior Editor for Berkley Publishing

Marcia Preston

Publisher and Editor for *ByLine Magazine*

An all day event featuring topics such as “What Editors Want,” “Working with Editors from Query to Publication,” and “The Publishing Industry” (Tom Colgan) and “What Editors Want,” “Writing and Marketing Articles that Sell,” and “How to Get Your Manuscript to the Top of the Slush Pile” (Marcia Preston), with “one-on-one” editor consultations/pitch sessions available.

One-on-ones are first come first serve and seating is limited, so register today! See the website (www.kwawriters.org) for a registration form, or email Gordon at gordon@gordonkessler.com.

*There is an on-your-own lunch break from 12:00 noon to 1:00 p.m..

New & Renewing Members

New

John Cleaver
Mike Dickson
Nancy Mehl

Sherrol Parker
William De Armond, Jr.
Kathy Pritchett

Renewals

Robert Beattie
Mathew Curry
Ralph Manganiello

Sheri McGathy
Betty Richards
Marilynn Walkup

Mark Your Calendar

July 6 & 20—GK Brainstormers, 7:00 p.m., contact Gordon Kessler for location, gordon@gordonkessler.com or 316-685-0098.

July 6, Aug. 3—First Wednesday Literary Women, 1 to 4 p.m. at Watermark Books, 4701 E. Douglas.

July 1, 15, 29—Working Women Writers, 10 a.m. Watermark Books, 4701 E. Douglas.

July 16—KWA sponsored “Meet the Editors” Day, 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Century 11, 225 W. Douglas, Room 101A.

July 20—Newsletter deadline for August.

July 21—KWA Board meeting, 7:00 p.m., Criser & Mardis, Chtd, 9415 E. Harry, Ste. 603.

Member News

Starla Criser sold chapter five of her continuing novel, *If You Loved Me*, to Wicked Velvet.

Market Place

Market News

Harlequin Enterprises has announced the closing of their Silhouette Romance and Harlequin Romance lines in August 2006.

Harlequin is launching a new line, EPIC Romance, in September 2006. The line will feature two 75,000 word books a month. The books will follow the life and relationships of one couple, spanning more time than the typical series romance. Stories do not have to be the conventional "happy ending," but must satisfy the reader emotionally and intellectually.

Contests

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

Short Story: Deadline: July 6. Entry Fee: \$5. Prizes: \$70 first, \$35 second, \$20 third. Submission: Fiction on any topic, up to 5,000 words.

Summer Poem: Deadline: July 15. Entry Fee: \$3. Prizes: \$40 first, \$25 second, \$10 third. Submission: Any style poem that captures the heat/essence of summertime.

Short Humor: Deadline: July 20. Entry Fee: \$4. Prizes: \$40 first, \$25 second, \$25 third. Submission: Nonfiction or fiction; original material only. Funny prose, anecdotes, daffynitions, anything goes. Maximum 800 words.

Free Verse: Deadline: July 30. Entry Fee: \$3. Prizes: \$50 first, \$25 second, \$15 third. Submission: Any topic or length, unrhymed.

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.

Pocket Books' Downtown Press
Deadline: July 31. Entry Fee: None. Prizes: Grand prize winner will receive a publishing contract for publication in a future *Downtown Press Anthology*, \$500 and more; ten second prize winners will receive a Downtown Press Collection. Submission: Nonprofessional writers may enter stories up to 7,500 words about smart, savvy, sexy girls of the new millennium. Details at http://www.simonsays.com/content/feature.cfm?sid=804&feature_id=2817

Reading Writers Contest: Query Letter Deadline: July 31. Entry Fee: \$7. Prizes: \$100 Grand prize, one opinion, and three months publication on their website. Submission: Query letter introducing an unpublished piece of work, fiction or nonfiction. Details at <http://www.readingwriters.com/contest.htm>.

Wax Romantic Short Story Contest
Deadline: Aug. 10. Entry Fee: None. Prizes: \$20 Barnes & Noble certificate for first, \$10 B&N certificate for second, t-shirt for third. Submission: 1,000 to 3,000 word fully developed romance, including a "happily-ever-after." Details at <http://www.waxromantic.com/contest.html>.

Conferences

Taos Summer Writers' Conference
Date: July 12-18
Location: University of New Mexico, Taos
Cost: \$525 for week-long workshop and special events, \$250 for weekend course. Lodging available at conference rates.
Program: Workshops on fiction, non-fiction, poetry, memoir, publishing,

travel narrative, screenwriting, craft, dialogue, revision, Yoga and writing, and master classes in poetry and novel. Details at: <http://writing.shawguides.com/TaosWriters>.

Sixteenth Annual Mendocino Coast Writers Conference

Date: August 11-13
Location: College of the Redwoods, Fort Bragg, CA
Cost: \$330 for Friday and Saturday, \$395 for Thursday-Saturday
Program: Workshops and contests
Details at: <http://mcwc.org/registration.htm>

Yosemite Writers Conference

Date: August 26-29
Location: Tenaya Lodge, Yosemite National Park, CA
Cost: \$350. Lodging is \$189/night.
Program: Top book and magazine editors from *Writer's Digest*, *Atlantic Monthly*, *Hyperion*, *Simon & Schuster*, *HarperCollins*, literary agents, variety of workshops, and a writing competition.
Details at: <http://writing.shawguides.com/YosemiteWritersConference>

Saturday Writers Workshop

Date: August 27
Location: St. Peters, Missouri; sponsored by Chapter of the Missouri Writers' Guild
Cost: \$50 non-members, lunch \$8
Program: Children's, fiction, horror, humor, marketing, mystery, nonfiction, autobiography/memoir, publishing, romance, science fiction/fantasy, young adult
Details at: <http://shawguides.com/SaturdayWriters>

Novel Market

Howard Publishing, a Christian publisher, publishes 44 books a year, including fiction and romantic fiction. They look at work from agented and unagented authors. See their website at <http://www.howardpublishing.com>.

Midnight Ink publishes a variety of mystery trade paper books, including cozies, historical mysteries, hard-boiled suspense, and amateur sleuths. They are also interested in seeing comedy and chick lit mystery. Both agented and unagented submissions are accepted. See their website at <http://www.midnightinkbooks.com>.

WestBow Press, an imprint from Thomas Nelson Publishers (Christian publishing), publishes a variety of genres, including romance, mystery, suspense, science fiction, fantasy, southern novels, and chick lit. They are open to submissions from new and published authors, but they only accept agented submissions. See their website at <http://www.WestBowPress.com>.

Nancy Mehl's Column

The Wichita Eagle has reduced her column about Kansas authors and their books that appeared in the Sunday editions down to one column each month. She was also informed that she would no longer be able to review self-pubbed books. The decision was pushed through by one editor who doesn't like self-pubbed books, nor does he have much interest in Kansas authors.

Nancy hopes that it might be possible for *The Wichita Eagle* to change this policy if enough letters are written in about the situation. She encourages you to write to the Senior Editor of *The Eagle*, Sherri Chisenhall at either 825 E. Douglas, Wichita, KS 67202 or email SChisenhall@wichitaeagle.com. You could also write to the "Letters to the Editor" feature and/or the Opinion Line.

President's Letter

By Suzann Robinson

KWA has many talented writers. That fact was demonstrated at our June meeting when nearly everyone read his or her works. In spite of the podium being too tall for some, and the obnoxious timekeeper, the afternoon was a grand time for all. The ice cream bars were a great touch to the memorable event. Thanks to all you brave ones who read pieces from your books and stories. It takes a lot of courage to put yourself out there in front of other writers.

The July 16 meeting will be filled with practical information, as we will have the opportunity to meet two editors, hear them give us their expertise, and ask them our questions. This is a rare opportunity to talk with editors personally and pick their brains.

In August we will hear Beccy Tanner, from *The Wichita Eagle*, give us ideas about writing stories of Wichita. At our pre-meeting workshop we will discuss how to combine history and fiction in our writing.

What would you like to see at KWA? Is there a program or speaker you would like to have? You will get a chance to voice your opinion at the September meeting. There will be plenty of food and lots of talk.

October is our annual "Scene of the Crime" and November will be our first "Grabbers" meeting. There are many events to look forward to. See you at Century II July 16.

Upcoming Meetings

August 20

"Stories of Wichita" with Beccy Tanner and Mr. Dudley. There will be a pre-meeting mini-workshop about combining history and fiction.

September 17

KWA planning retreat

October 15

"Scene of the Crime" workshop

November 19

Writing exercises concerning righting "grabbers" (opening hooks). There will be a pre-meeting mini-workshop.

December 10

KWA Annual Awards Banquet at Kababji's. Watch for more details later on.

Dialogue: He said, She said, and why

By Starla Criser

For many writers, dialogue can be one of the most difficult elements of writing fiction. The truth is that writing dialogue isn't as hard as we try to make it. The following are some helpful considerations and suggestions for creating worthy dialogue.

Tips From Real Life

- Most people talk in a kind of code, not saying what they really mean.
- Everyone talks a little differently from everyone else.
- People talk in sentence fragments, leave out words, or compress phrases into single words.
- People have habitual phrases they repeat.
- People interrupt each other in conversations.
- In a typical conversation, people do not say the other person's name over and over—if at all.
- Some people speak in clear, well-formed sentences and use perfect grammar.
- Some people make constant grammatical errors and stumble over words.
- Some people have bright and lively personalities, and their word choices and tone reflect that.
- Some people speak slowly and thoughtfully.

Defining Characters With Dialogue

- Each character must have his own sound, and his own idiosyncrasies.
- Occasionally intersperse dialogue with the character interacting with the environment around him through narrative descriptions or gestures.
- Dialogue can suggest how the speaker feels about others, a situation, or himself.
- Diction can be a key element in the shaping of a character's voice.

- Speech patterns, vocabulary, region-, class-, group-, or profession-specific language can help define a character.

The Purposes of Dialogue

- Each exchange of dialogue should advance the plot.
- The words should bear the tension of the scene, evoke whatever emotion is felt at the moment.
- It should add some kind of new information about the plot, characterization, setting, motivation, tone, or other aspects of the story.

Creating Worthy Dialogue

- Keep it short, approximately 3-4 lines between quotation marks.
- Make it snappy by demanding reply.
- Keep it interactive by using conversational cues like interruptions, repeated words, question-and-answer, or provocation-response.
- If possible, it should change the plot in some way.
- Use contractions.
- Dialogue tags should show who is speaking either through speaker attribution tags by using a form of the word "said," or through action tags that make the reader assume the character performing the action is also doing the speaking.

Things to Avoid

- Mundane dialogue, basic chit-chat, empty pleasantries.
- Lengthy dialogue that meanders.
- Conversational repetition.
- Sounding too stilted.
- Phonetic spelling when using dialect, non-standard grammar or individual pronunciation.
- Overuse of apostrophes and odd spellings.
- Overuse of slang.
- Too many dialogue modifiers such as *shouted*, *exclaimed*, *cried*, *whispered*, *stammered*, *hedged*, and others.
- Overuse of "he said" and "she

said" even though they can appear almost invisible as speech tags to a reader.

- Overuse of direct address.
- Overdoing dialect. It is best to choose one or two words/phrases that will give a taste of what the person is like to others.
- Unclear pronoun references.
- Characters telling each other things they already know.
- Characters talking about things they wouldn't normally discuss.
- Characters explaining the plot or repeating information for the benefit of the audience.

Punctuation to Convey Meaning

- Ellipses: ...indicates a pause, faltering speech, or the voice is trailing off
- em dash: --indicates a break, change in thought, setting off a phrase, or interruption

Dialogue Tags

- Basically *tell* instead of *show*.
- Disrupt the reader's flow and make him interpret the tag, deciding if the dialogue agrees with the tag.
- Strong dialogue should stand alone as much as possible without a tag.
- Must be used if the reader would have trouble knowing who is speaking.
- If a tag is used, a comma should separate the dialogue from the tag.
- If there is action only and no speech tag, it is considered a separate sentence and should be punctuated as such.
- If a dialogue sentence is interrupted, use a tag and action, thus allowing a comma instead of a period. ("Just go away," she said, her voice quivering. "Go away.")
- An action (smiled, laughed, frowned) can never be a tag.
- It is not necessary to use a question mark and the tag *asked*, although many writers prefer to do so.

Using Dialect

By Starla Criser

Where it once was more acceptable and common to see large uses of writing in manners that evoked a sense of dialect, today it is less preferred. If a reader must constantly be forced to stop the flow of reading to interpret strange phonetic spellings or snippets of a foreign language, his enjoyment of a work can be drastically diminished.

Some simple ways to hint at a character's dialect include:

- Giving a narrative indication of the accent. *The man's Scottish brogue made the word sound like....*
- Playing with the wording and syntax by leaving out words to hint at a non-native speaker. *Pardon. Please to show, how to go....*
- Using key words and phrases to imply the dialect. *"Best be putting your hands up, pardner."*

There are also many nonverbal forms of dialogue, such as gestures, signs, and body language cues.

Helpful Websites for Writing Dialogue/Dialect

The Nonverbal Dictionary of Gestures, Signs & Body Language Cues

<http://members.aol.com/nonverbal2/diction1.htm>

This is a wonderful source of human communication from a scientific point of view, with pictures, definitions, meanings, and interpretations.

Dialect Map of American English

<http://www.geocities.com/Broadway/1906/dialects.html>

This is a site for learning the difference between *dialect*, *accent*, and *idiolect*. It has a map of the United States which is divided into the dialect regions and explanations of the types of dialects spoken.

Australian Slang Dictionary

<http://www.koalanet.com.au/australian-slang.html>

This is a site that has uniquely Australian slang only.

English English

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/English_English

This is a site that explains the English language spoken in England.

Scottish English

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Scottish_English

This is a site that discusses what is known as Scottish Standard English, what is used in formal written texts.

A Dictionary of Slang

<http://www.peevish.co.uk/slang/links.htm>

Dialogue Tags

Inconspicuous Tags

said
acknowledged
added
admitted
agreed
answered
asked
began
commented
concluded
hinted
inquired
interrupted
observed
promised
questioned
remembered
replied
requested
retorted
suggested
wondered

Emotional Tags

argued	rasped
barked	roared
begged	sang
bellowed	screamed
bit out	screeched
blustered	shouted
bragged	sighed
burst out	snarled
complained	sobbed
confessed	threatened
cried	wailed
demanded	warned
denied	whimpered
ground out	whined
hissed	whispered
howled	wondered
lied	yelled
mumbled	
muttered	
nagged	
ordered	
pleaded	

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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.

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.com

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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