

## Our Next KWA Meeting June 19

4 to 7 p.m.

**Pool Party and potluck dinner for all KWA members at Colleen and James Johnston's house, 1459 Homestead.**

**Come and join us. Bring a dish to share and lawn chair(s). KWA will furnish paper products and drinks.**

**Further information, call Colleen 684-7847 or email [KWAcompete@aol.com](mailto:KWAcompete@aol.com).**

## New & Renewing Members

### New

Linda Gebert

### Renewals

Leonard L. Biggs  
Mathew Curry  
F. T. Earley  
Betty Richards

## Mark Your Calendar

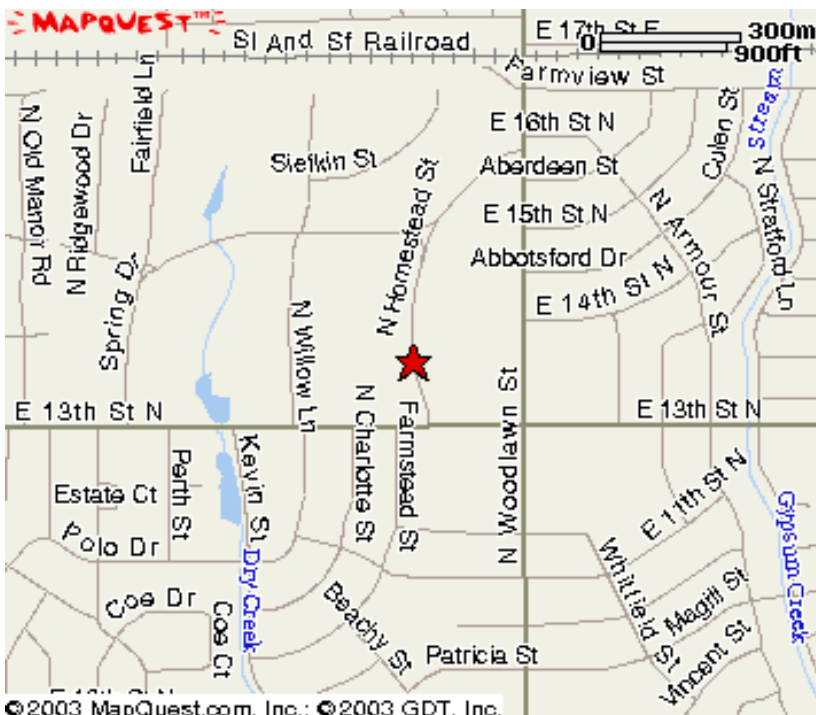
**June 4**— Women Working Writers, 10 a.m. Watermark Books, 4701 E. Douglas.

**June 16 & July 7**—GK Brainstormers, 7:00 p.m., Borders East in the "History" section.

**June 19** — KWA Pool Party and potluck dinner, Colleen and James Johnston's house, 1459 Homestead. 4-7 p.m.

**June 24** — KWA Board meeting, 5:45-8:00 p.m., 1459 Watermark Books, 4701 E. Douglas.

**June 20** — Newsletter deadline for July.



Colleen Johnston's house, 1459 Homestead

## Our Mission Statement

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

# Market Place

## Market News

**Paranormal Romances:** Warner, Harlequin, Dorchester, Pocket and Tor are all looking for paranormal novels with a romantic element.

**Romantic Suspense:** Pocket, Warner, Tor, and Harlequin/Silhouette are all still heavily looking for romantic suspense novels. Dorchester is starting a romantic suspense line as well.

### Harlequin: Bombshell Line

The publisher is seeking new authors for this line of action/adventure novels with a secondary romantic element. Check out the line at [www.eharlequin.com](http://www.eharlequin.com).

### Harlequin/Silhouette: Prime Time

This new line is for novels up to 85,000 words with a romantic element, but they are NOT romance novels. The stories must be about 30 or 40-something women finding contentment in their lives after being widowed, divorced, starting a new career, reentering the work force, etc.

**Steeple Hill** will launch a new romantic suspense series with three titles per month beginning July 2005. The stories are to have an inspirational element, featuring contemporary Christian characters who face challenges to their faith in the context of a suspenseful story. No love scenes or paranormal elements allowed. Manuscripts should be 70,000 to 75,000 words in length.

### Dorchester: Stepping Out

This new line will be trade-paper chick lit, coming out in August 2004. These are stories about young women trying to negotiate the pitfalls of love and life.

**Whiskey Creek Press**, an ebook publisher, is looking for erotica romance.

## Contests

**ByLine Magazine Contests.** For more information on all of their contests, see [www.bylinemag.com/contests.asp](http://www.bylinemag.com/contests.asp).

**Inspirational Article** Deadline: June 15. Entry Fee: \$5. Prizes: \$40 first, \$25 second, \$15 third. Submission: An uplifting nonfiction piece aimed to motivate or inspire. Includes but not limited to spiritual topics. Limit 1,800 words.

**Sense of Place Poem** Deadline: June 25. Entry Fee: \$3. Prizes: \$40 first, \$25 second, \$15 third. Submission: Lyric or narrative poem, any style or subject, with details that evoke a strong sense of place.

**Juvenile Short Story** Deadline: June 30. Entry Fee: \$4. Prizes: \$40 first, \$30 second, \$15 third. Submission: Fiction for ages 5 to 8; 9 to 12; or 13 to 16. State targeted age group on ms.; length should be appropriate for audience (3,000 words maximum).

**New Millennium Writings Awards** Deadline: June 17. Entry Fee: \$17. Prizes: \$1,000 each for best poem, best fiction, and for best nonfiction; plus publication in 2005 issue of *NMW*. Submission: Fiction or nonfiction up to 6,000 words; up to three poems, not to exceed five pages total. Nonfiction can be essays, profiles, memoirs, interviews, creative nonfiction, travel or humor. Details at [www.mach2.com/books/NewMillenniumWritings/awards.html](http://www.mach2.com/books/NewMillenniumWritings/awards.html).

### Helm Publishing Contest

Deadline: July 1. Entry Fee: \$10. Prizes: \$100 grand prize, \$75 first; with publication in April 2005 Contest Booklet. Submission: Science fiction/fantasy, mystery, drama works up to

2,500 words plus a one-page synopsis. Details at [www.publishersdrive.com/contest.html](http://www.publishersdrive.com/contest.html).

**National Writers Association Short Story Contest** Deadline: July 1. Entry Fee: \$15. Prizes: \$250 first, \$100 second, \$50 third, fourth-tenth places receive a book; first three places will be published in an anthology or the Authorship magazine. Submission: Any genre of short story up to 5,000 words. Details at [www.nationalwriters.com/members/contests/shortstorycontest.html](http://www.nationalwriters.com/members/contests/shortstorycontest.html).

**Ten Ten Fiction Competition** sponsored by Word Smitten international literary e-zine. Deadline: July 1. Entry Fee: \$15. Prizes: \$1010 grant and publication their site and the 2004 autumn edition of Word Smitten's literary e-zine. Submission: A short story of exactly 1,010 words. Details at [www.wordsmitten.com/fiction.html](http://www.wordsmitten.com/fiction.html).

**2004 Barbara Mandigo Kelly Peace Poetry Awards** Deadline: July 1. Entry Fee: \$15 for up to three poems. Prizes: \$1,000 with possible publication by the Nuclear Age Peace Foundation. Submission: Poetry up to 40 lines that explore and illuminate positive visions of peace and the human spirit. Details at [www.wagingpeace.org](http://www.wagingpeace.org).

**The Comstock Review Annual Poetry Contest** Deadline: July 1. Entry Fee: \$3 for each poem. Prizes: \$1,000 first, \$250 second, \$100 third. Submission: Original, unpublished poetry up to 40 lines in length. Details at [www.comstockreview.org/annualcontest.html](http://www.comstockreview.org/annualcontest.html).

## Creativity Booster

By B. D. Tharp

We all need an occasional creativity booster and one of the best is the writers' conference. I had the pleasure of attending "Writers' Quest 2004," the 36th annual OWFI (Oklahoma Writing Federation, Inc) writers' conference this past weekend. I had a thoroughly enjoyable time, great networking opportunities, and an excellent learning experience.

There were more than a dozen agents and editors who met "one-on-one" with those of us lucky enough to sign up early for a meeting. The conference Sold Out for the first time ever with over four-hundred attendees, so appointment times filled up fast. During the agent/editor appointment you have ten minutes to summarize your story, genre, and convince them it's the next best seller. Practice your spiel. Anxiety is a common problem in these situations and you don't have time to be unsure or tongue tied.

The workshop subjects were diverse and timely, ranging from presentations for beginners to the publishing process. They dealt with fiction, non-fiction, confessions, memoir, poetry, and freelancing to fill your purse while you wait for the book deal.

Romance writer Jodi Thomas, spoke about "Making Characters Come Alive" and closed the conference with "Surviving: How Not To Get Kicked Off The Publishing Island." Her presentations were both humorous, informative, and touched on the true struggles we writers share.

Editors from large and small publishing houses gave us tips on publishing basics, digital publishing, the author/editor relationship, and making every word count. The agents gave us tips on pitching our work. The keys here are being prepared with your reader demographics, make sure the agency represents your genre, follow agent submission guidelines to the letter, and all of them stressed that the author/agent relationship is a close partnership.

Keynote Speaker, Dr. Eric Maisel, Ph.D., was both dynamic and inspiring. America's foremost creativity coach is a psychotherapist and author of more than twenty books, *The Van Gogh Blues*, *Fearless Creating*, *Deep Writing*, *Write Mind*, *Sleep Thinking* to name a few. He writes for popular writing and arts magazines and presents creativity workshops.

Over a hundred OWFI contest winners were recognized at the Awards Banquet Saturday night. If you're interested in attending the OWFI conference next year check their web site <http://www.owfi.org/>. Several KWA members participated. The conference fees are reasonable and Oklahoma City is an easy drive from Wichita. With the cost of gasoline exploding perhaps we can do some carpooling next year.

A good writers conference is an excellent opportunity to share ideas, learn, sell our work, and zap our writers block out of existence. I left this conference feeling energized, with new ideas bouncing around my brain, and the undeniable urge to write. That's what we're all about, creating unforgettable stories with words.

## Change in Membership Dues

After discussion by the KWA Board, it was decided that we will NOT be changing to a set date for membership renewals. However, due to increased costs of our newsletter, programs and seminars our dues will increase to \$25.00 beginning immediately. This is a terrific bargain for a one-year membership.

Anyone having previously received a letter saying that their memberships would be due in June from now on should ignore the notice.

## Novel and Fiction Writing Workshop

**"Writing Commercial Fiction"**

**Sat., July 24**

**9:00 a.m.—4:00 p.m.**

J. Madison Davis, award winning mystery writer and head of the Professional Writing Program at the University of Oklahoma will present an all day workshop, "Writing Commercial Fiction," on July 24 at Century II. Sponsored by the Kansas Writers Association, the workshop will feature sessions on "the Structure of the Story," "Making Characters Come Alive," and "Making Stories for the Screen."

For years, Davis has been the director and creative force for OU's annual Creative Writing for Professionals series and is adept at presenting his excellent ideas to his students.

Cost: \$35 for members, \$65 for non-members. The cost includes a box lunch. Registration will begin at 8:30.

Look for full information in the July newsletter. Call Gordon at 685-0098 for information.

## Plot

Borrowed from Gordon A. Kessler's *Novel Writing Made Simple*

Four different plot elements work simultaneously in any story. Working together, they help to provide realism and drama. The amount of each depends greatly upon genre.

The **internal plot** is shown mostly through the POV characters' internalizations. It is the thinking plot. These thoughts are the inner workings of the main characters of the story and might follow a number of different courses due to the number of POV characters. The internal plot is important in making three-dimensional, fleshed-out and believable characters.

The **emotional plot** has to do with the love interests, relationships or emotional ties between the main characters. This not only includes spouses and significant others, but also parents, children, siblings and close friends. It is the dominant plot in romance stories but can even be found in at least a small degree in male action/adventure novels, which normally lack emotional depth.

The **thematic plot** is the purpose plot. This is the meaning of the story and may not be apparent until studying the work after reading it in its entirety. The **theme** itself can be as simple as *don't count your chickens before they hatch*, or *the good guys aren't always the ones wearing the white hats*. It should be consistent throughout the story. The other plots are dependent on it as the thematic aspects of the story bond the work together. Theme to story can be thought of as light to a light bulb. It can be found as a driving force in a great many well-done novels and is dominant in mainstream and literary works by the likes of Hemingway, Lee and Steinbeck to name a few.

(Cont'd pg. 5)

## Plot Tips

By Starla Criser

- Open the story with something to grab the reader.
- Start at the place where the protagonist's problem starts.
- Know how the story will end before you start writing it.
- The pacing should speed up as the plot advances.
- The steps of a relationship between a hero and heroine must be revealed to the reader as the plot develops.
- Each step in the plot advancement must have a causative event and one or more possible effects.
- Give the reader peaks and valleys along with the action and emotion.
- Intensify the plot with complications which make the main characters' situations darker.
- Complicate the protagonist's story path by giving him/her a goal, then taking it away and forcing new choices and actions.
- Avoid coincidental complications.
- Each complication should be more difficult than the previous one.
- The changing events of the story should cause a change in the protagonist's inner life.
- Try to surprise the reader, but the surprise must be believable.
- Foreshadow major events subtly.
- Only tell the reader what he needs to know, and only when he needs to know it.
- The heroine and/or hero must win the final battle.
- End the story in a strong, conclusive manner that reinforces the theme of the book and the progress of the main characters.
- For a romantic story, the relationship problem must be solved after the external conflict is resolved.
- Be careful not to layer in too many conflicts, complications, and motivations.
- Watch having too many secondary characters and viewpoints.
- Use the strongest and most dramatic plausible events in every scene.
- Make sure the characters' reactions under stress or while pursuing their goals follow along with what fits their personalities and needs.
- Be careful not to let a character inexplicably lose his personal drive, desire or need.
- Do not tell too much backstory too soon.
- Instead of having a *sagging middle*, make sure there is a rise in conflict where the characters are tested in some way.
- Watch out for meandering setups, misrepresented conflict, hurried climaxes, and story incoherence.
- Make sure the main characters are not passive or undermotivated.
- Know your characters and their opposing goals, internal and external conflicts.
- Subplots must hinge on an essential character to the main story.

## Member News

**Arlene Graber** was awarded with the article of the year for East Wichita News for the year 2003. The article was a profile on Bill Wedekind, a local potter who lost his sight and hands during the Vietnam War.

**Micki Hansen** won an honorable mention in poetry from *Used Ink*, a new Kansas literary magazine, for her poem "To Jack, My Dog."

**Hazel Hart** received an honorable mention in The Wichita Eagle's Best Story Contest. Winning entries, including honorable mentions, were published in the May 9, 2004 issue in the Eagle's Arts & Leisure section under the heading, Tell-All Tales.

**Conrad Jestmore** won two Honorable Mentions in poetry from *Used Ink* for his poems "Sudden Loss" and "Hollywood Blvd Circa 1971."

**Colleen Kelly Johnston** won second place in poetry from *Used Ink* for her poem "Children Hunting Bugs and an honorable mention for "Recreating Salem." She also won first place in the Kansas Authors Club 5th district competition for her novel, *The Judas Goat*, first place in a poetry category for her poem "Prusing," and two honorable mentions for "Early Winter" and "Children Hunting Bugs."

**Gordon Kessler's** *Novel Writing Made Simple* won second place for a nonfiction book at OWFI's 2004 conference.

## Plot

(Cont'd from pg. 4)

The **external plot** is the **action** plot. It is closely related to the storyline itself since it is based on visual, physical action or *what happens*. This plot is heavy in action/adventure and thrillers.

## KWA Help Wanted!

Help! We still need a secretary. This is not a difficult position, nor does it take a lot of time. But it is an important job within a group. Please, please think seriously about offering some time to the organization.

## 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.

**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

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**KANSAS WRITERS ASSOCIATION**

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ADDRESS CORRECTION  
REQUESTED

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