



KWA Meeting

May 20

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

1:00—4:00 p.m.

**“Writing for Young Adults”
program presented by Mike Klaassen**

The program will include an overview of the Young Adult writing market, a focus on popular YA novels, and the process of writing a story for this market. Mike Klaassen will include examples from his YA novel *The Brute*.

Mike Klaassen is a KWA member and author of action-packed teen novels, *The Brute* (2005) and *Cracks* (coming in 2006). His first novel, *The Brute*, has been submitted to Renaissance Learning, the parent company of Accelerated Reader, for consideration in the program that encourages students to read books.

His website at www.mikeklaassen.com has a first chapter of *The Brute*, a short author bio, a study guide for teachers and students, and links to the publisher Blue Works, booksellers, and writing groups.

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

Thomas Mach
Angela Wilson

Renewals

Alice Fleming
Cynthia Killion
Dr. Marilyn Hope Lake

Mark Your Calendar

May 3 & 17—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.

May 20—KWA Meeting: 1:00-4:00 p.m. Program presented by Mike Klaassen. Rockwell Library.

May 20—Newsletter deadline for June.

June 1—KWA Board Meeting at Criser & Mardis, Chartered, 9415 E. Harry, Ste. 603, 7:00-9:00 p.m.

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

PUT ON YOUR CALENDAR NOW!!!

Scene of the Crime — October 20-22

Market Place

Market News

TOR is actively looking for contemporary paranormal romance and romantic suspense submissions of 70,000-100,000 words, any level of sensuality. See editor Anna Genoese's blog at <http://alg.livejournal.com/81163.html> for links to the submission guidelines.

The Inspired Pen is a new journal devoted to a wide range of new short works. They are accepting works from both established and new authors. See www.inspiredpen.net for details.

A Room of Her Own Foundation

A once in a lifetime opportunity for a \$50,000 Gift of Freedom in Fiction grant. Application and instructions are available for download at http://www.aroomofherown.org/giftfreedom_application.html. Final due date for applications is Feb. 1, 2007.

Chicken Soup for the Stepfamily Soul

part of the Chicken Soup Book Series. The publishers are seeking inspirational or humorous stories. They will pay \$200 for every story chosen and \$50 for poems and cartoons. The publisher is also accepting nominations for Bonus Dad of the Year until May 10. See www.bonusfamilies.com for details.

Contests

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

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.

Stormy or Blue Poem: Deadline: May 10. Entry Fee: \$3. Prizes: \$40 first, \$20 second, \$10 third. Submission: A

poem in any style, strongly tied to the weather—storms, rain, blue skies, etc.

Personal Memoir: Deadline: May 20. Entry Fee: \$5. Prizes: \$60 first, \$30 second, \$20 third. Submission: An incident or reminiscence from your own life that left a lasting impression. Written in first person, 1,000 words maximum.

Humorous Poem: Deadline: May 31. Entry Fee: \$3. Prizes: \$40 first, \$25 second, \$15 third. Submission: Any length or style, the funnier the better.

Short-Short Story: Deadline: June 5. Entry Fee: \$5. Prizes: \$70 first, \$35 second, \$20 third. Submission: General short story up to 2,000 words.

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>.

FenCon III Short Story Contest

Deadline: June 30. Entry Fee: \$10. Prizes: \$50 and a FenCon 2007 membership for first, \$25 and FenCon 2007 memberships for first two runners-up. Submission: Open to all amateur writers who have not sold a story of any length to a professional publication. Sales of poetry and non-fiction do not count. Entries must be either science fiction or fantasy, less than 5,000 words long, and original work. Details at <http://www.fencon.org/story.html>.

Cross Way Publications 10th semi-annual poetry contest

Deadline: June 30. Entry Fee: \$5. Prizes: \$60 first, \$30 second, \$15 third. Submission: Poetry on the theme of "Proclaiming the Name of Jesus." De-

tails at http://www.christianpoetry.org/poetry_contest.shtml.

Conferences/Other

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.

The Tallgrass Writing Workshop

Date: June 24-25

Location: Emporia State University
Fee: \$60

Workshop: Sanctioned by the Western Writers of America. They will discuss specific characteristics of fiction and non-fiction, assist participants with literary style and technique, and discuss strategies and opportunities for publication.

Presenters: Don Coldsmith, Jim Hoy, and Max McCoy.

Email Jim Hoy at jhoy@emporia.edu for details on registration.

Highlights Magazine for Children's 22nd Annual Writers Workshop

Date: July 15-22

Location: Chautauqua, New York
Workshop Programs: Wide range of workshops on advanced techniques, exploring genres, and the publishing business.

Details at <http://www.highlightsfoundation.org>.

Motivation

By Angela Wilson

In my decade of writing for daily newspapers, I didn't have time to be distracted.

Like a cook whipping through lunch rush orders, I raced around town, frantically conducted phone interviews and typed until my fingers were permanently curled into the keyboard to meet frantic deadlines —and that didn't include extra interviews and additional writing to fulfill my editor's every whim.

Of course, by the time I got home after a 10-12 hour shift, I thought I'd lose my last grasp on sanity if I even *looked* at a computer, let alone tried to piece together an intricate plot that would keep readers guessing until the final page of my novel.

Now, life's not quite so hectic. As a public relations executive at a state college in Missouri, I have deadlines, but nothing compared to my previous occupation. I still have a lot of face time with a monitor, but I do more design work and editing (now *I* get to be the Grim Reaper for all those poor souls who send me their work for publication).

Still, it's tough to be motivated to work on my novel or that short story idea that I woke up in the middle of the night to write down on the notepad next to my bed after a long day at the office — especially now that spring is here.

But be motivated I must, or my characters will languish in that motionless purgatory I confine them to when I don't follow through with my writing schedule.

So my job is to find a way to get motivated — get back on track with that manuscript that I'm using as a coffee cup holder in the living room. I got on the phone to chat with some friends to share what I've done in the past to get motivated and got some great ideas for ways to get myself out of the non-writing rut.

- Write a bit at a time. Children's author Veda Boyd Jones once told me she wrote a book a few sentences at a time between high priority projects. That's two sentences a *day*. No it's not a lot, but after two years, she had several thousand words and a strong manuscript. That just proves a little *can* go a long way.
- Get some books. It's easy to buy books on writing that you never crack open. But one that I've found useful and fun for the times my fellow writers and I need to brainstorm is *The Writer's Book of Matches* from Writer's Digest Publishing. This little ditty fits in your purse ladies (guys, you'll just have to suck it up and carry it) and has 1,001 prompts to get your brain going.
- Brainstorm with people you trust. Grab a cuppa and hang out with your writing buddies and see where the conversation takes you. I can't tell you how many

times I've written an idea down on a napkin just from something someone said during innocuous conversation.

- Make an appointment. Author Jen Lancaster told *Writer's Digest* that she works from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. each day or until she satisfies her word count goal. Creating a *reasonable* schedule that works for *you* can make staying on track easier.
- Observe. People watching is fun. Go somewhere with a notebook (and lots of pens or pencils) and just see what people are doing. You'll not only get ideas, but you may also see something that sparks the idea of your next best-seller.
- Join a critique group. One of my best motivators is my critique group. Before I moved six months ago, we met every two weeks at Borders cafe in Springfield, Mo. We would, of course, gorge ourselves on chai, coffee and scones while we went over everyone's work. I always used that two weeks as a deadline — and nothing motivates me more than thinking someone just might show me up with more pages or more ingenious copy. I don't have that now and I know that's a reason I'm struggling. It's just too easy to play games on Yahoo! or get on Instant Messenger to chat with friends instead of writing.
- Start a blog. Freelance writer Kimberly Stephens in Nashville says having a blog forces her to write. "If I go out there and haven't posted something in a week, I feel like an idiot," she says. "Although the blog isn't the novel I hope one day to write, it is a great way to practice telling a story or organizing my thoughts, kind of like drawing lines and circles to warm up in art class."
- Journal. I use my journal as more of a personal item that I write in when I need to vent or just need some space to think through life. Some writers use it as a way to work out story ideas. If you have a personal journal, start one on your novel. Or better yet, start one for each character on the highest priority project you have and see what they tell you.
- Subscribe to an e-letter that gives helpful hints to writers. Be careful to choose only the ones that apply to your genre or freelance work. Don't flood your Inbox with too many, or you could eventually get frustrated and send them all to the spam folder without a passing glance.
- Read magazines on writing. Find a magazine that suits your genre. And don't forget glossies that cover all the bases. For example, in each edition of *Writer's Digest Magazine*, there is a section called, "Highly Successful Habits of Debut Authors." See if this sparks some ideas that will work for *you*.

Show Don't Tell

By Louise Pelzl

I have heard that phrase so many times and thought I understood show don't tell until the next time.

Well, I finally got it. I understand it and wanted to share my newfound knowledge.

The following are sentences from my recently finished manuscript *Rightful*. Each telling sentence will be followed by a showing sentence. I think you will agree the change is for the better. That's not to say that there aren't times when telling phrases are okay, but be sure to use them sparingly.

1. He watched (telling) as they floated out to the white water and disappeared from sight.

Slowly they floated out to the white water and disappeared from sight.

2. Gunter Ritter leaned against the side window in the back seat of the car, his face sternly composed, watching (telling) the smoke from the cigarette in his hand curl toward the open window on the other side of the car.

Gunter Ritter leaned against the side window in the back seat of the car, his face sternly composed, as the smoke from the cigarette in his hand curled toward the open window on the other side of the car.

3. They heard (telling) an explosion, and then pounding on the inside tunnel door.

The explosion was quickly followed by pounding on the inside tunnel door.

4. The men standing in the front of the house could hear (telling) the glass breaking.

The brief moment of silence was followed by the breaking of glass.

5. He hurried back into the house, listening (telling) to the sound of the gravel crunching beneath the car tires as Hans drove away.

He hurried back into the house, taking comfort in the sound of the ravel crunching beneath the car tires as Hans drove away.

6. She felt (telling) his warmth, his sincere concern, and his comfort suddenly she didn't feel so alone.

Nestled in his warmth, his sincere concern, and his comfort suddenly she didn't feel so alone.

7. He watched (telling) Levy nod his head in agreement.

Levy nodded his head in agreement.

8. When the green light flashed and he heard (telling) the familiar click, he pushed the door open.

When the green light flashed followed by the familiar click, he pushed open the door.

9. The trio saw (telling) the muzzle flash seconds before they heard (telling) the rapid rifle fire.

The muzzle flashed seconds before the rapid rifle fire.

10. "But won't that scare them away?" she asked as she felt (telling) Raymo's arm wrap around her shoulders.

"But won't that scare them away?" she asked as Raymo's arm wrapped around her shoulders.

11. She heard (telling) a tap, tap and looked out the north dining room window.

Tap, tap pulled her attention to the north dining room window.

12. I felt (telling) a lump in my throat and tears.

A lump formed in my throat followed by tears.

13. As they approached the TV room they heard (telling) whispered voices.

As they approached the TV room voices waved down the hallway.

14. She turned and noticed (telling) Blackie was nowhere to be found.

She turned. Blackie was nowhere to be found.

15. She could see (telling) shadows move but that was all.

Shadows moved but that was all.

I think that by removing telling phrases the flow of the sentence is improved. Try it. You'll like it.

The Poetry Corner

Line Breaks: Where and When?

By Colleen Kelly Johnston

The great poets seem to have an instinct for where a line of verse should end. To the average reader, it seems such a simple thing. Yet, as a KWA poet told me recently, laughing at my effrontery in saying she seemed to have a gift for easily composing verse, it is never simple. Does the poet end a line at the punctuation mark, or let it flow on without a break into the next line? Is the last word in a line the most important or the first? Can you cast a new or unexpected implication on the meaning of a word by breaking a line *here* instead of *there*?

Traditional lines of poetry — principally rhymed verse — in which each line breaks at the end rhyme or a punctuation mark are said to be end-stopped. A perfect example is Joyce Kilmer's "Trees."

Poems are made by fools like me,
But only God can make a tree.

In free verse, and some untraditional rhymed verse (read some of Conrad Jestmore's rhymed verse in one of our past anthologies) the poet wants to create the effect of constant, breathless anticipation of the next line by refusing to end a line at the breath break and making the reader hesitate on first reading. Does the thought end here? Or should I go on down to the next line? Lines of poetry which cause this effect are called enjambed (the process of enjambment).

What difference does it make where the line of poetry ends? Look at one of Walt Whitman's great poems.

Others may praise what they like;
But I, from the banks of the running Missouri, praise nothing in art or aught else,
Till it has well inhaled the atmosphere of this river, also the western prairie-scent,
and exudes it all again.

To some, it might seem to make little difference whether or not the lines end as Whitman wants. What if he sent them out to his publisher like this:

Others may praise what they like;
But I, from the banks of the running Missouri,
praise nothing in art or aught else,
Till it has well inhaled the atmosphere of this river,
Also the western prairie-scent,
and exudes it all again.

Lines in free verse often make strong entrances and offhand exits — crescendo-diminuendo. Whitman writes in praise of the mighty Missouri. He wants to stand out from the average person by refusing to recognize "art or aught else" that denies the river's importance. In the lines of this short quote the most important thoughts are what "others" (his version, line 1) praise as compared to what "I" (his version, line 2) praise and to state why. Therefore, end-stopping the lines, as in the reformed version, makes no sense and diminishes the importance of lines regarding the "atmosphere of this river" and its "western prairie-scent" that it has absorbed during the river's travels down the land.

Where and when to stop lines of poetry is not an instinct that some inherit with their genes. The arrangement of text alone — line breaks, line-length, and so on — cannot, ever, make a poem where there would be none anyway. Some poets (Myrre Roe is an excellent example) have a gift — a feeling — for exactly the correct place to end a line in order to achieve the wanted effect. Most of us struggle, change and rearrange words constantly.

(Cont'd pg. 6)

Line Breaks: Where and When?

(Cont'd from pg. 5)

David Carroll, in "Trout Reflections" writes,

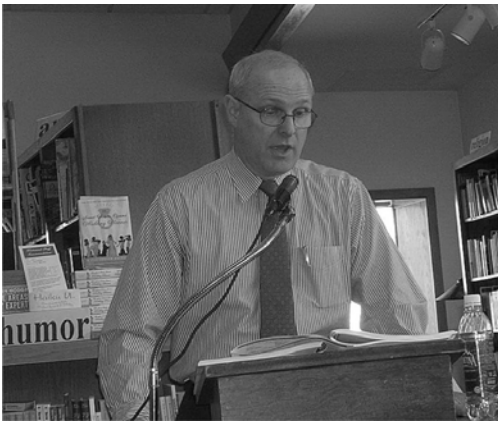
Fishing for natives, I travel
far to the north, where wild brooks
and their wild trout are.

Nervous red-winged blackbirds cluck
to one another with worried, raspy whispers,
as I wade past their nests

There is the ancient anxiousness
as I approach open water;
The desire for stealth

that makes stealth almost impossible,
as I fumble with rod
reel and line.

Try taking Carroll's lines and rearranging them to end-stopped lines. Can you make them more meaningful? Does your new rewrite better illustrate the feelings and thoughts of getting away into the backcountry to catch the elusive wild trout?



Conrad Jestmore



KWA 2006 Anthology
Booksigning at Watermark
Books and Cafe



Rose James

President's Letter

By Conrad Jestmore

We were all horrified by the April meeting. Horror writer Steven E. Wedel gave us the lowdown, not just about writing horror and incorporating horror into other genres, but he also gave us some great ideas on mixing all genres to infuse our writing with new energy.

Wedel's writing exercise asked us to try our hand at taking one of three story lines that mixed such genres as Romance and Fantasy, and crank out as much as we could in fifteen minutes. The story lines were as diverse as putting plot elements of Agatha Christie with those of Jack London, or better yet, imagine Scarlett O'Hara with Conan the Barbarian. Then we read the results of our efforts to each other. The prose ranged from pretty to purple and from the hilarious to the sublimely rich and descriptive. We thank Mr. Wedel for both an entertaining and instructive afternoon.

Please join us for our May meeting when local author Mike Klaassen will talk to us about writing for the Young Adult market, and his success with his novel *The Brute*. I hope to see you there.

Motivation

(Cont'd from pg. 3)

- Volunteer to write for a newsletter. This opportunity puts me in the hot seat. I have a deadline. I *have* to be in front of the computer and while I'm here, might as well check out how my characters are doing, right?
- And now for the dreaded final bullet point: discipline. It's tough for creative types to get organized at home. I'm efficiently organized at work to the point that people run when they see me. But at home, when the hair's down I'm ready to run free. That's a really great stress reliever, but doesn't help me get where I want to be in my novel.

There's no one right answer to get motivated. It's different for every person. For me, it depends on the season. But I know I can't let the excuses build until I forget who my characters are or what they want to accomplish through my words.

I think African-American activist and author Toni Bambara said it best: "The most effective way to do it is to *do* it."

Member News

Dr. Marilyn Lake of Hutchinson recently was chosen to judge the annual writing contest sponsored by the Boonlick Writers Group, a unit of the Missouri Writers Guild. The group's 2006 Poetry Writing Contest garnered entries from several states. Lake also judged the 2005 Humor Writing Contest.

Dr. Lake has a Phd in English, creative writing, from the University of Missouri-Columbia. Her most recent work is a dramatic reading, Susanna and the Preachers: Susanna Wesley, Mother of John and Charles Wesley, which was performed for United Methodist Women's Day at the Nickerson United Methodist Church, May 1, 2005.

Share your member news with the organization. Email your booksigning dates, your contest news, your publication dates, or other writing-related news to starla@criser.com.

KWA: 2006 Events

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

July 15 Mini-workshop on query letters by Starla Criser. The main program will be a round table discussion on synopses.

August 19 Mini-workshop will be a romance industry update report by Starla Criser. The main program will be on Maximizing Your Chances to Win a Writing Competition by Colleen Kelly Johnston.

September 16 Undetermined as yet.

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

P.O. Box 2236
Wichita, KS 67201

ADDRESS CORRECTION
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