

KWI: KANSAS WRITER'S INK

Newsletter Vol 15. No. 11

January 2014

Greetings fellow writers,

Another round of holidays has come and gone and I find myself playing catch up, not only at work, but with writing as well. Now that all the shopping for gifts, budgeting, cooking, and entertaining family members is out of the way, I can shift my focus back to developing new goals for 2014.

Last year, I completed a second novel—yay me! I don't mean to toot my own horn, but as you all know that's not an easy task and I might as well boast about it. This year, though, I hope to complete a third novel, which has gone through many changes over the past five years. Not only have I grown as a writer, but I feel more comfortable, which is just as important as actually writing the darn thing. It seems like there are so many projects I want to tackle this year. I hope by the time the end of the year rolls around, I can sit back with a glass of wine and toast to myself for having worked so hard, but only time will tell though. Sometimes I have a tendency to procrastinate or find other things to do, like cleaning or lining the kitchen shelves—bah! Who wants to clean? Write. Write. Write.

What about you, fellow writers? What are your goals? We are currently 20 days into the New Year and have you sat down and typed furiously on your next writing project like me? It's ok if you didn't, there is still plenty of time, right?

Good luck to all you and I hope all your wishes and dreams come true this year.

Romie Chavez

2014 KWI Board Members

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2014: The Year of the Writer

In This Issue

- Online Workshops
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February Online Workshops

By Angela Johnson

Brainstorming to Revision: The Process of Creating an Erotic Romance

Date: February 1–28, 2014

Presenter: Angela Knight. FMI, <http://www.passionateink.org/workshops/>.

Dialogue Punctuation and More

Dates: February 3–14, 2014

Presenter: MM Pollard. FMI, visit <http://crw-rwa.ning.com/page/2014-onlineworkshops>.

Funny Business: Secrets to Writing Funny for Novels and Short Stories

Date: February 3–14, 2014

Presenter: Steve Shrott

FMI, <http://lowcountryrwa.com/workshops/all-workshops/#FEB>.

Create Your Own Book Trailer

Date: February 3–17, 2014

Presenter: Kris Tualla. FMI, <http://www.carolinaromancewriters.com/online-workshop-schedule.html>.

Beyond the Basic Google Search: How to Make the Most of Online Research

Date: February 3–28, 2014

Presenter: Ally Broadfield. FMI, <http://www.carolinaromancewriters.com/online-workshop-schedule.html>.

Crisis, Climax, Resolution: Writing to the End

Date: February 3–28, 2014

Presenter: Robin Matheson. FMI, <http://lowcountryrwa.com/workshops/all-workshops/#FEB>.

Dust Bunnies

Date: February 3–28, 2014

Presenter: Beth Henderson. FMI, <http://lowcountryrwa.com/workshops/all-workshops/#FEB>.

Editing Tips for the Indie Publisher

Date: February 3–28, 2014

Presenter: MM Pollard. FMI, <http://www.marylandromancewriters.com/editing-tips-for-the-indie-publisher/> or for questions contact Robyn Neeley at robyn_neeley@yahoo.com.

Historical Angles: Writing Historical Fiction

Dates: February 3–28, 2014

Presenter: Beth Daniels. FMI, visit <http://crw-rwa.ning.com/page/2014-onlineworkshops>.

Hunting the Elusive Hook

Date: February 3–28, 2014

Presenter: Kat Duncan. FMI, <http://lowcountryrwa.com/workshops/all-workshops/#FEB>.

The Insider Aviation Gauge for Writers

Date: February 3–28, 2013

Presenters: Nancy Parnell & Wendy ‘Piper’ Rome. FMI, <http://www.rwamysterysuspense.org/coffin.php>.

I Used to Hate Writing the Synopsis, but Not Anymore

Date: February 3–28, 2014

Presenter: Susan Palmquist. FMI, <http://www.yosemiteromancewriters.com/workshops>.

Let Conflict Tell Your Story for You

Dates: February 3–28, 2014

Presenter: Susan Meier. FMI, <http://www.starrwa.org> / carolhenry@frontiernet.net.

Microsoft Word for Writers

Dates: February 3–28, 2014

Presenter: Catherine Chant. FMI, visit <http://crw-rwa.ning.com/page/2014-onlineworkshops>.

Show Up Naked: Journey Through the Male Mind

Date: February 3–28, 2013

Presenter: Chris Redding. FMI, <http://www.rwamysterysuspense.org/coffin.php>.

Can This Manuscript Be Saved

Date: February 10–March 9, 2014

Presenter: Susan Meier. FMI, <http://www.occrwa.org/onlineclasses.html>.

Query Pop!

Date: February 11–13, 2014

Presenter: Jamie K. Schmidt. FMI, visit <http://ctrwa.org/ctrwa-college/>.

Write what you know! Have you heard that before? I know I have. However, there are times when I want to tackle the unknown and see what I can come up with. Am I alone in this? Surely there are more people out there that want to take a ride down the road less traveled, right?

Now, you're probably asking yourself—what the heck is Romie babbling about? Well, my opening paragraph has a point that I'm about to get to, so bear with me. The reason I'm circling the airport and not brining this plan in for a landing is because I want to tackle something that I haven't heard too many of my fellow writers talk about. If they have, then there's a good possibility that I probably wasn't listening when the conversation was going on. It happens.

Last week, I began furiously sifting through different projects that I could use for the critique session at the next KWI meeting. I finally settled on the first chapter of my new novel. One of things that struck me as I was reading it out loud (something I learned that from my colleague Morgan Rothenberger!) was whether I was portraying the minority characters correctly.

After all, when a writer selects his/her characters and begins developing them throughout the story, they tend to stick with what they know, which is sound advice. Caucasian writers primarily use Caucasian characters, African-American writers use their own ethnicity as a basis for their characters, and ditto for Hispanics. The problem is when one writer decides to go outside of their norm. It seems like something fickle, but the more I thought about it, the more I had to find out what others writers were saying on the topic.

Low and behold, I stumbled onto the *7 Offensive Mistakes Well-Intentioned Writers Make*, which can be found at www.springhole.net/writing/offensivemistakes.htm. In this article it gives some sound advice on how to portray minority characters in a well-rounded light. However, the bottom line that we, as writers, have to understand is that we're not always going to please everyone. But it's still a good idea to see what not to do.

I won't give away the entire article, but some of the highlights that are worth mentioning is using food as a basis for colored skin. How many times have you seen a character with a dark complexion attributed to chocolate? What about names? Seems harmless, right? Yet, new writers fall into this pit fall of cultural appropriation all the time by searching for unique names to fit their white characters. There is so much emphasis on the name and not the memorable personality or story. Another mistake is the idea of 'harmless' stereotypes. The article gives examples of: The Japanese plant-lover. The wise Native American. The sexy Latina. They sound ridiculous, but I'm glad I read them. We see minority characters being portrayed inaccurately all the time in other media. For instance, there is a film that was made several years ago that uses stereotypes as a basis for the entire movie. It was called *Not Another Teen Movie*. Go to YouTube and check out the trailer. It's horrible! I literally almost walked out of the theater. Not because I was offended, but it was due to the fact that it was one of the stupidest parody movies I had ever seen. They have characters known as the token black guy, who is primarily used to for jokes. The mean cheerleader. The horny virgin and so on and so forth. Ridiculously awful, but a good example of what the article is trying to convey.

Of course, people will read my article and think— "Did Romie really just bring the topic of race into the writing world?" Yeah, I did. I turned into That guy! We all tip-toe around the issue and that's fine. I'm sure I'm not the only one that's wondered about this or maybe I am? Who knows? Nonetheless, it's good to educate ourselves. Perhaps it will get the gears turning and you'll take a closer look at your characters. Maybe it will generate discussion? Either way, check it out, even if it's just something to read while you're bored at work.

Until next time,

Romie

Articles for Further Reading

KENSINGTON PUBLISHING CORP.

AQUIRES DIGITAL PUBLISHING COMPANY LYRICAL PRESS

NEW YORK, NY - Kensington Publishing Corp., one of the foremost commercial independent publishing houses in the United States, announced today that it has acquired the eBook publishing company Lyrical Press. Beginning in January 2014, Lyrical Press will operate under its current name as a digital-first imprint at Kensington Publishing.

Steven Zacharius, President and CEO, Kensington Publishing Corp., says, "This deal delivers on Kensington's mission to publish the books that America wants to read and to be the house that talented authors want to call home. The ability to have a digital imprint that works efficiently like a small independent press is what first attracted me to Lyrical. With Renee Rocco's cutting-edge expertise in running a small independent press and Kensington's team of talented professionals, we look forward to building new and existing authors while expanding the titles published under the Lyrical Press imprint."

The imprint will be overseen by Adam Zacharius, Kensington's Director of Special Projects and Alternative Media. Renee Rocco, who founded Lyrical Press in 2007, will be Managing Director of the imprint.

"When I first founded Lyrical Press, I strove to emulate Kensington's standard of quality and the company's dynamic atmosphere," states Renee Rocco, Managing Director. "As the publishing business evolved, we sought strategies to expand the reach of Lyrical Press and strengthen its foothold in the industry. The opportunity to now join forces with Kensington, a company I have deeply admired, and become a member of the Kensington team is both an exciting adventure and the realization of a lifelong dream."

The acquisition includes approximately 250 romance, YA and genre fiction titles in the Lyrical Press backlist. Kensington will immediately begin acquiring new titles for Lyrical Press, as well as expanding its publicity, marketing and editorial departments in order to dedicate the resources necessary to support and growing the new imprint. All eBooks published under the Lyrical Press imprint will be DRM-free and books over 60,000 words will be available as print-on-demand editions.

Submitted by Shayne Sawyer and taken from www.kensingtonbooks.com/pages.aspx/LYRICALPRESS.

Ten Bold Predictions for Ebooks and Digital Publishing in 2014, written by Jeremy Greenfield, December 20th, 2013. Found on: www.digitalworld.com/2013/ten-bold-predictions-for-ebooks-and-digital-publishing-in-2014/. Submitted by Shayne Sawyer.

The article discusses the end of 2013 and ebook prices plummeting as well as the tapering off of revenue growth. Now find out what a team of experts is predicting will happen in 2014 for the publishing world. Prepared to be mind boggled.

KWI Next Meeting:

January 25th, 2014

Where:

First Congregational Church

1701 SW Collins

Time:

10:00 AM Critique session

12:30 Business Meeting

1:00 Critique session

[Community Writing Events](#)

2014 Community Novel Organizational Meeting and Kickoff Event

Topeka Shawnee County Public Library: Marvin Auditorium Room 101B

Saturday Feb. 1, 2014
1:00 p.m. -2:00 p.m.

Financials

Beginning balance: 2,945.30

Income: 267.00

Expenses: 80.00

Ending balance: 3,132.30

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