

# The Horror Writers Association Announces Recipients Of Its Specialty Awards

*Thunderstorm Books, Brian Mathews, Lila Denning, Lisa Wood to be honored with HWA's Specialty and Service Awards.*

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/EINPresswire.com/ -- The Horror Writers Association (HWA) is pleased to announce the recipients of its Specialty Awards. These will be presented on June 1st, 2024, during the Bram Stoker Awards® Presentation at StokerCon®2024 in San Diego, CA.

## Specialty Press Award

The recipient of the Specialty Press Award is Thunderstorm Books.

The HWA Specialty Press Award is presented periodically to a specialty publisher whose work has substantially contributed to the horror genre, whose publications display general excellence, and whose dealings with writers have been fair and exemplary.

The award was instituted in 1997, largely due to the efforts of long-time HWA member and specialty press aficionado Peter Crowther.

Paul Goblirsch established Thunderstorm Books in 2008. Specializing in collectible signed limited edition hardcover books, our goal is to showcase authors' works in beautiful, limited editions. From both new, up-and-coming authors to veterans of the genre, we publish some of the best in the field including Brian Keene, Joe Lansdale, Christopher Golden, Philip Fracassi, Tyler Jones, Ross Jeffery, Chad Lutzke, Cynthia Pelayo, Jeff Strand, Hailey Piper, Paul Tremblay, Edward Lee, Kealan Patrick Burke, Jonathan Janz, Samantha Kolesnik, Gabino Iglesias, Adam Cesare, Kristopher Triana, Richard Chizmar, Gwendolyn Kiste, Wrath James White, and Ronald Kelly. With approximately 40 titles released per year, we fulfill the desires of both hardcore book collectors and those who want to pick up the occasional special edition.

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## The Richard Laymon President's Award

The recipient of the Richard Laymon President's Award for Service is Brian W. Matthews.



The Richard Laymon President's Award for Service was instituted in 2001 and is named in honor of Richard Laymon, who died in 2001 while serving as HWA's President. As its name implies, it is given by HWA's sitting President.

The award is presented to a volunteer who has served the HWA in an especially exemplary manner and has shown extraordinary dedication to the organization.

Brian W. Matthews is the author of several books, including the popular Forever Man series. He's also authored numerous short stories, the most recent of which have appeared in *Weird Tales* and *Space & Time* magazines. He has been a member of the Horror Writers Association since 2012 and has served as a trustee of the organization since 2020. Among his duties as a trustee, Brian has co-chaired three StokerCon® conventions, acts as the Bram Stoker Award® Show Coordinator, and organizes the Pitch Sessions for StokerCon. He has previously been awarded the Silver Hammer Award, now renamed the Karen Lansdale Silver Hammer Award.

Brian holds a graduate degree in clinical psychology and worked for twenty years as a therapist, primarily for children and adolescents. He currently works as a financial planner. He lives with his wife, Sue, in southeast Michigan.

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#### The Karen Lansdale Silver Hammer Award

The recipient of the Karen Lansdale Silver Hammer Award is Lila Denning.

In 2022, the Horror Writers Association renamed the Silver Hammer Award to the Karen Lansdale Silver Hammer Award in honor of the tremendous amount of work Karen did starting the HWA.

Our physical award has also been updated. Instead of a hammer, a new stylized sculpture has been designed and cast by the same company that mints our Bram Stoker Award statues.

The HWA periodically gives the Karen Lansdale Silver Hammer Award to an HWA volunteer who has done a truly massive amount of work for the organization, often unsung and behind the scenes. It was instituted in 1996 and is decided by a vote of HWA's Board of Trustees.

The award is so named because it represents the careful, steady, continuous work of building HWA's "house"—the many institutional systems that keep the organization functioning on a day-to-day basis.

Lila Denning is the acquisitions coordinator for the seven libraries of the St. Petersburg (FL) Library System. Lila has worked in circulation and reference and has done programming for children, teens, and adults. Beyond her current role in her library, she trains librarians nationwide on passive reader advisory. Her long, rambling road to the library included stops as a

manager of a comic book store, a manager at Barnes and Noble, and a stint at a brokerage firm, among other adventures. In addition to her MLIS, Lila has an MA in Religious Studies with a focus on Holocaust Studies.

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## Mentor of the Year Award

The recipient of the Mentor of the Year Award is Lisa Wood.

The HWA's Mentor Program is available to all members of the organization. This popular program pairs newer writers with established professionals for an intensive four-month-long partnership. For new writers, the Program offers mentees a personal, one-on-one experience with a seasoned writer, tailor-made to help them grow in their writing and better market their work. For experienced writers, it is an opportunity to pay forward the assistance and encouragement other writers gave them when they were starting out. In addition, there is the added benefit of growing as a writer oneself through the act of teaching others. In short, the Program benefits all who participate, regardless of their roles.

Established in 2014, the Mentor of the Year Award recognizes one mentor in the Program who has done an outstanding job of helping new writers. The award is chosen by the current manager of the Program.

L. Marie Wood is the recipient of the Golden Stake Award for her novel, *The Promise Keeper*, a MICO Award-winning screenwriter, a two-time Bram Stoker Award® Finalist, a Rhysling nominated poet, and an accomplished essayist. Wood has won over 50 national and international screenplay and film awards. She has penned short fiction that has been published in groundbreaking works, including the anthologies *Sycorax's Daughters* and *Slay: Stories of the Vampire Noire*. She is also part of the 2022 Bookfest Book Award winning poetry anthology, *Under Her Skin*. Her nonfiction has been published in *Nightmare Magazine* and academic textbooks such as the cross-curricular, *Conjuring Worlds: An Afrofuturist Textbook*. Her papers are archived as part of University of Pittsburgh's Horror Studies Collection. Wood is the Vice President of the Horror Writers Association, the founder of the Speculative Fiction Academy, an English and Creative Writing professor, a horror scholar with a Ph.D. in Creative Writing and an MFA in Speculative Fiction, and a frequent contributor to the conversation around the evolution of genre fiction. Learn more about L. Marie Wood at [www.lmariewood.com](http://www.lmariewood.com).

## About the Horror Writers Association

The Horror Writers Association (HWA) is a nonprofit organization of writers and publishing professionals around the world, dedicated to promoting dark literature and the interests of those who write it. Founded in the late 1980s, it now has close to 2000 members around the world and is the oldest and most respected professional organization for creators of horror fiction. The HWA encourages public interest in and appreciation of horror and dark fantasy literature and hosts an annual professional conference, StokerCon. HWA is also dedicated to

recognizing and promoting diversity in the horror genre and practices a strict anti-harassment policy at all of its events. Please direct any questions regarding these awards to the Vice President of HWA. For more information about the Horror Writers Association, please visit <https://horror.org/>. For more information about the Bram Stoker Awards® and our other awards, please visit <http://www.thebramstokerawards.com>.

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