

♥ Winner of the 1999 RWA® Mid-Sized Chapter Newsletter Contest ♥

# *The Mid-Michigan Mirror*

## *A Reflection of Romance*



♥ A publication of the Mid-Michigan Chapter (#12) of Romance Writers of America® ♥

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### *Mission Statement:*

The purpose of the Mid-Michigan Chapter of Romance Writers of America® is to promote excellence in romantic fiction, to help writers become published and establish careers in their writing field, and to provide continuing support for writers within the romance publishing industry.

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*Members may access chapter meeting minutes and treasurer's reports at:*  
**[MMRWABUSINESS@yahoo.com](mailto:MMRWABUSINESS@yahoo.com)**.

**APRIL**

**Arlene Hodapp 18 Dickee Six 28 Julie Lea 30**

**Many thanks to the contributors of the April Mid-Michigan Mirror**



**Merline Lovelace**  
**2006 Retreat From Harsh Reality Guest Author**

During her twenty-three year military career, Colonel Merline Lovelace served tours in Taiwan, in Vietnam, and at the Pentagon with the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Her favorite assignment was as commander of Eglin Air Force Base, the biggest and best base in the air force. Her many military awards and decorations include the Defense Meritorious Service Medal, the Air Force Legion of Merit with oak leaf cluster, and the Bronze Star.

When she hung up her uniform for the last time, Colonel Lovelace decided to combine her love of adventure with a flare for storytelling, basing many of her tales on her experiences in the service. Since then, she's produced one action-packed sizzler after another.

We are looking forward to our own little "writer's boot camp" with Merline Lovelace on April 21 to 23.

***Direction to St. Ives on page 10 -11***



## A Note From Wil's Desk

*By Wil Emerson, President*

April...thawing out and hopes of warm days on the horizon. As I write, I'm looking at a sunny sky and thinking about the past few months. For our chapter, the winter has been remarkable with GH and Rita nominees, first sales, awards and finalists. We are a successful and prolific group -- one we can all be proud of whether we are novice writers or seasoned authors.

On the personal front, I'm ready to get outside, dig in the dirt and sow a few seeds. I love to watch seeds sprout, grow into hardy green stems and then flourish with blossoms that turn into luscious tomatoes. Of course, by the time the tomatoes are ripe, I'm tired of all the watering, de-bugging, and nurturing it takes to get them to the table.

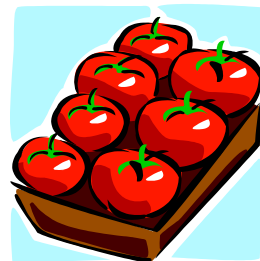
Isn't that a little like writing a novel? An idea turns into a paragraph; you nurture it into a first chapter, tweak out an outline or run full speed ahead until you see leaves emerge. Plot, sub plot, conflict, tension, each branch makes the story stronger. By the time you've resolved the crisis, a chapter away from the end, you're ready to cut it off the vine and let it serve its purpose. You want it on your publisher's or agent's plate to be eaten up or sold to the highest bidder.

However, it takes the habits of a successful author to harvest a crop. Our finalists and first sale authors have developed farmer's perseverance to reap their rewards. Commitment, determination, dedication and perseverance are the key ingredient to success.

So, I'll plant my seeds soon. A big, red tomato will brighten my table in late summer. What will you harvest, a best seller, a Golden Heart finalist, a first sale? If you entered the I Will Write a Book contest, you're well on the road to picking fruit off the vine.

Enjoy the fruits of your labor. See you at retreat!

Cheers, **Wil**



## **Victoria Schab Gives the Scoop on Marketing and Distribution**

### ***A Recap of the March Program by Annette Briggs***

**Victoria Schab**, National Field Service Support Manager for Levy Home Entertainment (and former MMRWA member) describes her employer as the eight hundred pound gorilla of distribution. “We have accounts at Wal-Mart, Target, Kmart, Meijer, Rite Aid, Toys R Us and Best Buy; we have a “finger in every pie;” she told us.

What was destined to become one of the largest book distributors in the United States began over a hundred years ago when founder Charles Levy delivered newspapers with a horse-drawn cart, and later added magazines to his offerings. Levy distributes many other products currently, including music and games as well as paperback and hardcover bestsellers.

Vicki added clarification, “Currently, we don’t have Walden, Barnes and Noble, or Borders because the publisher ships directly to them. But with publishers looking to get out of the distribution business, in the future [more publishers] may be looking to us and other distributors to serve them as well.”

As distributors, Levy buys the books from the publishers and, in turn, sells the books they purchased to the businesses that are their clients. Merchandisers from Levy stock shelves, maintain the inventory, put up displays, and, when books don’t sell, perform the “last rights” of stripping the books of their covers to return to the publishers for a credit.

Publications that Levy mainly distributes are paperback and hardcover bestsellers. The key word is here is: BESTSELLERS -- not from New York Times List or from USA Today bestsellers – rather the books that are the Levy Home Entertainment bestsellers

“Our bestseller list is [built on] initial forecasting,” Vicki explained in her answer to a question from the floor. “We know that Nora Roberts, Stephen King, John Grisham, Vince Flynn—all of those guys--are going to come out strong. So we forecast for those and we buy in bulk. Someone will say, but this [book] is on the New York Times Best Seller List, but if it’s not on our list, we won’t carry it.”

According to Vicki, the New York Times Bestseller List and USA Today Bestseller List are not compiled the way we might assume. “They’re not based just on total sales. They’re based on reviews. Ours [Levy] is based on [actual] sales and on the analysis. The New York Times Best Seller List and the USA Today List each is based on sales for certain markets, not on mass markets.”

Who’s on the Levy List? “You can see our list,” Vicki assured us. “Go to a Meijer store. Our list is right there on the end caps, the hardcover and paperback bestsellers. If you look at the end caps, you know exactly what our list is. If you move over to the expanded, we have sixty bestsellers. If you move over to the inline, you can see, through what’s happening in the stores, where that book is on our bestseller list.”

“The publisher pays the store a premium for each position and how much footage they have on the shelf. Levy has two end-caps at Meijer stores offering paperback best sellers and hardcover best sellers. The publishers and our marketing team determine where those books go on the shelf. The books that have been on the shelf for a while start moving down and then they go into an expanded,” Vicki explained.

“If you’re a one time author or a first time author and your books get out there and in the ranking in regular romance, not series, Levy usually starts your book across the top. Then as more authors come in, they usually move your book down until they move you off.”

**Marketing and Distribution Recap** *continued on page 4*

**Marketing and Distribution Recap** *continued from page 3*

Vicki advised, “The one thing about series romance is that your book has a shelf life of one month. Anything that you can do as an author to promote your book and sell it as fast as you can off those shelves is the best. There’s a lot of self-promotion, a lot of networking. For instance, I know a woman who works in sales promotion [at Levy] who loves authors. She likes to do the bus tours, the book signings and things like that, so that’s always a venue for people, especially RWA members.

“Another thing to remember,” Victoria cautioned, “is to use pens, pencils, book marks, mugs--inexpensive things--for promotion. You don’t want to spend more money promoting than you’ll get in royalties.”

As authors, how do we get on the Levy List? Levy’s biggest seller is romance and Vicki says her company loves romance writers. Levy has a really good partnership with Kensington, Harlequin and St. Martin. [They produce] the paperbacks Levy is interested in. “We have a very strong relationship with Harlequin,” Vicki said. “Harlequin has representatives at all of our meetings. They support our trade shows. Levy has relationships with the account reps from those publishers. The reps communicate with all of our marketing and sales people. We have account executives for each one of the mass markets. They come in with armloads bearing gifts--donuts and books, bags and totes and things like that. And then we have an annual trade show where they’re bringing everything besides the kitchen sink. We were walking out of there with boxes of stuff. Harlequin is our biggest partner and they are in there all the time. Their series are shipped directly to the stores from Harlequin and we set them out for them.”

With series romance, Victoria revealed that they don’t have a choice as to where they put the books. There’s already a grid made up for that. It’s already designated by Harlequin as to where the books are going to go. Sometimes merchandisers can fudge with it, but they’re in a planned format like all Temptation here, all the Desire here, all Intimate Moments here in a planned format.

“We can play with ranking a little bit,” Vicki told us. “For those of you who are writing for Kensington, St. Martin, Avon or Dorchester--all of those publishers--the distributor can move them around on the shelves a little.

“We have direct access to that [all important] point of sale information, (everything that goes over the register) from our accounts at Wal-Mart, Best Buy, Meijer, and Toys-R-Us. We can actually get that information to then send out reports to our publishers [as to] where those sales are. That’s how Levy develops bestseller lists and author’s lists. We do a sales analysis every week and that’s how we determine where every book is going to go from the sales of that book.

“That [report] also tells us how to reorder the books. If your book is doing well and you’re going across the register rapidly, we replenish the book from the number that is sold in that store. So if four books are sold, four books are shipped out again. Also, if no books are sold, books are stripped and returned, the likelihood of being replenished is nil,” she said.

Vicki advised, “Levy does a lot with authors. At every opportunity that you can show up at any sales promo—if there’s anything in Michigan that we’re doing—show up! It’s more than likely there will be a publisher there, a publisher’s representative, or a salesman.

“Right now in April, Levy is doing Authors at Sea (Carnival). You can spend a lot of money at your national meeting. Justifiably so,” Vicki said. “You want to meet an editor, you want to sell your book, and you want to pitch. This isn’t really a conference, but Authors at Sea has all of your top authors sailing. And your publishers. And your editors. I mean big editors, Kensington--Kate Duffy is going. All the Harlequin people, the VP’s of Harlequin, the president of Harlequin, everybody is going on this cruise.

**Marketing and Distribution Recap** *continued on page 5*

**Marketing and Distribution Recap** *continued from page 4*

“You don’t have to pitch a book, but you can certainly get your face out there. You can save money on the coupon available. You can network like crazy. You can meet your favorite authors. You can talk shop and have a great time on a cruise because they have all kinds of great activities. I would highly recommend that for next year.

“In the next summer, keep your ear to the ground for the author signings, especially in our genre to go out there and network.”

Vicki concluded by taking questions from our members.

**Question:** From the distributor’s vantage point, what does the future look like for romance authors?

**Answer:** “There are two cycles for Harlequin series romances. One cycle is like Special Edition, Inspiration, and Intimate Moments. Two weeks after that they do another series: Temptation, Desire, and Blaze. And then they have their novels that are kind of independent—a western or historical or a contemporary. They’re always bringing up new lines. Next is the most recent line they brought up.

“Harlequin is always looking to modify and bring on new types of stories. If you’re writing something you think doesn’t fit a niche, don’t get discouraged. “Back in May, when a rep asked me what I write, I told him paranormal and I knew Harlequin wasn’t interested in that. But the rep said, ‘Oh no, don’t say that because we may be bringing it on.’ So don’t give up. Harlequin, for example, will eventually find that niche.

“The publishers are more sensitive to our other lines or other areas like African American and Latinos. We’re building a big readership for that and we don’t have enough people writing for those lines. “

**Question:** What about author websites?

**Answer:** “I think they’re great. I think if you’re an author you should have one. And especially for the publishers so you can say, I have this website, www.xyz. They can look it up and there you are. Definitely.”

**Question:** If I’m a first-time published author, what can you do for me?

**Answer:** “What can we do for you? You know, that’s a very good question. You know, it’s your publisher that has to do all the work. We put all the stuff out there. We make sure you’re replenished. We make sure that you’re presented well. We’ll do sales promotion for you. But basically the publisher says, ‘I really believe in this person. I want to see this author sell.’ So it’s really your publisher that needs to put you up in front.”

**Question:** If your publisher won’t do that and you know you’ve got the book, is there somebody in your organization who can do it?

**Answer:** “No. I would love to say yes. Let’s put Lana’s book right here, right in front of everybody, but we have pre-planned marketing plans with grids and we have bestseller lists and they have to do that.”

**Question:** Does the royalty have anything to do with what you give to the publisher?

**Answer:** “What actually is given to the publisher is what we call POS, point of sale.”

**Question:** I have a question regarding price. For example: a book is twenty-six dollars but it gets to the store it’s eighteen dollars, do you have anything to do with that?

**Marketing and Distribution Recap** *continued from page 5*

**Answer:** “Our marketing department and our sales department work with the publishers as far as pricing, but it’s pretty much predetermined by the publisher and the account that its going to be selling in. Like Wal-Mart dictates all of the prices. There is no negotiation.”

**Question:** Are there other book distributors?

**Answer:** “Yes, we have Anderson News. There’s Hudson News.”

**Question:** In category, once that shelf sells out, you’re not going to order more of those, right?

**Answer:** “Yes, once that shelf sells out, we don’t. Once that book sells out, it’s done, but it’s a very good indicator for the publisher that this is an author that they want to keep on board. That they want to buy more of their stuff because it sells so well.”

**Question:** And what number would they need to sell?

**Answer:** “I don’t have that number. But I might be able to find out.”

**Question:** You said that for series romance authors, self promotion and networking were important. Have you seen any examples that have made you think, “Wow, that was such a great idea.”

**Answer:** “I can’t think of an extreme example. What do you have to do? You just have to be tenacious. You have to be like Lorelee. You have to be tenacious and you have to keep getting out there. There’s no one technique or promotion because each editor is a person with individual personality and characteristics and likes and dislikes so you might be rubbing someone wrong and the other person might think it’s good. Once you get published, it’s about talking to your agent or publisher about where’s the next author signing or maybe getting on the phone and calling some of these places yourself.”

**Question:** Is there a set number of categories sent to each store, like this store will have this number of Special Edition, does it vary store to store?

**Answer:** “It varies store to store. It depends on the foot traffic. We know what type of traffic is going through the stores. We know what historically has been selling quite a bit and we will ship more of that product to that store than, say, [one that doesn’t have that kind of traffic].”

**Question:** Have you noticed any kind of trend, like is the chick lit trend kind of dieing out?

**Answer:** Vicki deferred to Lucy Kubash who also works for Levy. Lucy said, “Chick lit is still pretty big and we’re getting a lot of titles in.”

Vicki added, “Trade is slower. I think NEXT is trending down.”

**Question:** I don’t see African-American romances on the shelves like at Meijer’s or Wal-Mart. I have to go to the mall to see it.

**Answer:** “Like I said, our distribution is based on the type of foot traffic we have in certain area. We do have AA markets. We have some in Benton Harbor. We have them where it’s predominantly African American or Latino. We try to keep those books in those areas. In other areas, they’ll just sit on the shelf. We want the books to work for you. So we want them to move.

“The one thing is that we don’t have enough African-American authors. We need more and more of those authors to come forward and we’ll have more of those books on the shelves.”

**Marketing and Distribution Recap** *continued on page 7*

**Marketing and Distribution Recap** *continued from page 6*

**Question:** What's the best way to get yourself out there and be promoted?

**Answer:** "First of All, Be Tenacious. The second thing is, keep writing and keep writing good stuff. As your publisher and editor keep liking your books, they will promote you more and more. The publisher will get your name out more and do more for you. First time out, not to expect a whole lot. Just keep writing the good stuff. And then they'll keep buying the good stuff and then your name gets out there."

*Congratulations to Victoria Schab for her new promotion to Walgreens and Costco stores to account executive for Levy Books and Levy Merchandising Services.*

**More about Levy Home Entertainment at the website:** <http://www.levybooks.com/>

**Distributor Anderson News website:** <http://www.andersonnews.com/anderson/aboutframeset2.jsp>

**Distributor Hudson News website:** <http://www.hudsongroup.com/HudsonBooksellers.html>

**Distributor Baker and Taylor website:** <http://www.btol.com/history.cfm>

**Distributor Ingram Book website:** <http://www.ingrambook.com/start/default.asp>

**This site is a virtual bottomless pit of information on distributors from Publisher's Weekly:**  
<http://www.publishersweekly.com/community/792/Distribution/22087>



## MEMBER NEWS

**Dawn Bartley:** Judging a published author contest and judging for the HEA contest.

**Annette Briggs:** Judging HEA entries and looking forward to the retreat.

**Flavia Crowner:** Working on WIP. Jenna and Flavia got recertified for PAWs.

**Lynette Curtis:** Working on my romantic suspense and entering several contests.

**Wil A. Emerson:** Writing reviews for *Crime & Suspense*, submitting romantic suspense. Entered short story to a MWA anthology.

**Rohn Federbush:** Been to Whidley Island to meet Elizabeth George and two agents, judging HEA and blundering through coordinator duties for HEA; and heading for Phoenix on my eternal stalking travels for agents while you all are retreating.

**Nancy Gideon:** Sold two more books to Silhouette IM. First will be out in December 06. Working with editor on proposal for *Nocturne*.

**Aileen Hyne:** I've got a new old book, published in England, 1860, about flowers in gardens and ponds—good reference book.

**Shar Koenig:** Working on WIP, has a full year of publishing scheduled and is planning a Japanese garden.

**Lucy Kubash:** "SOLD" to Triskelion Publishing for their new inspirational romance line! She doesn't know any particulars yet. Judging for HEA contest; working on chapter 9 of WIP.

**Julie Lea:** New member and soon to be HEA judge.

**Member News** *continued on page 8*

**Member News** *continued from page 7*

**Laurie Kuna:** 2 book signing in Feb--one at the Romeo Library with Wil, Lorelee, Michelle Celmer and Dorien Kelley; trying to get back to working on 4th novel, which is due July 1.

**Lorelee Lillibridge:** signed with an agent. Did a book-signing in San Antonio, Texas, in January with Patricia Kay. Shared a panel with other romance writers at the Romeo District Library in February. Working on two mini-series: one contemporary and one mystery. In the glossy, very nifty publication of Harlequin WORLDBEAT News - Winter 2005/2006 issue that just arrived in my mailbox - the picture of me and my grandkids at my debut book-signing garnered a nice spot on the HQ Author, Author! page. I think this newsletter goes out to all HQ authors everywhere.

**Gail Martin:** Has recently sold her thirty-sixth novel to Barbour Publishing which is to be the first in a three book series. Her novel, *Finding Christmas*, is a finalist in the Gayle Wilson Award of Excellence, sponsored by Southern Magic Chapter of RWA. Gail was contacted recently by The Detroit News for a feature article about her and her writing career, because she had a piece in one of the latest Chicken Soup books, *Chicken Soup for the Soul II*. Gail has recuperated well from her knee revision and is back to writing and speaking. She spoke at the Macomb Book Fair and was the keynote speaker for a women's retreat at St. John Lutheran Church in Fraser. She will speak at the end of April at a Salad Smorgasbord event in Rochester Hills.

**Cathy McClain:** Drove to California and got Katie settled in Los Angeles. Got past the sticky point in my WIP. Yeah! Now polishing it for the Retreat Critique.

**Lana Miersen:** Critique group started up again, had first meeting and brainstormed a romantic suspense; was quoted in March RWR PANache column; judging HEA contest..

**Maris Soule:** Still waiting to hear on the ms that 2 publishers are looking at, still waiting to hear on the two short stories I submitted, still working on rewrites of WIP, and did enter a couple of contests.

**Lisa Childs Theeuwes:** Very busy as my one book for Signature has become a 3 book contract for Harlequin's new paranormal line, Nocturne. Also working on line edits for my August NEXT.

**Lorelee Lillibridge** brought to our attention these member milestones:

Also noted in the Author Milestones list, our own **Dana Corbit Nussio** and **Lisa Childs Theeuwes** have both hit the 5-book number, and **Jennifer Greene** is on the 50-book list. **Merline Lovelace**, our Retreat speaker, is on the 55-book list. Wow! Ladies, mega-congratulations!

Scheduled to sign and sell at the April 21-32, 2006 Retreat from Harsh Reality are: **Diane Burton, Michelle Celmer, Sue Charnley, Lisa Childs, Flavia Crowner, Wil Emerson, Nancy Gideon, Sharolett Koenig, Laurie Kuna, Lorelee Lillibridge**, and of course, **Merline Lovelace!**

It's a great opportunity to stock up if you don't have these ladies' latest books.

**Welcome to a New Member--****Julie Lea**

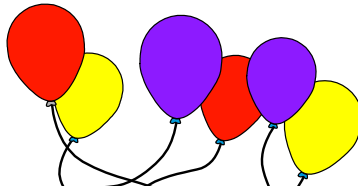
I've been writing on and off for ten years. I have about seven or eight books begun, but have real trouble finishing the ones I've started. I tend to write romantic suspense and have submitted to (and been rejected by) Harlequin.

I also work as a librarian and excel at research and would be happy to help if anyone needs it. Outside of work and writing, I enjoy traveling, movies, and making jewelry. Does this sound too much like a personal ad? I do like long walks on the beach....

More New Member News coming up in May.

Member News *continued from page 8*

**The Post-Retreat (May) issue of Mid-Michigan Mirror will feature a wonderfully long list of our members' many recent accomplishments and awards.**



### **Happy Approaching MAY Birthdays**

Alice Weidner 1 Leila Davis 21 Kathleen Nance 21 Rohn Federbush 27 Nancy Gideon 27

Susan Crouse 28 Lorelee Lillibridge 30



*First appeared in the March 2006 issue of CONNections, newsletter of the Connecticut Romance Writers. USED WITH PERMISSION.*

### **Through a Judge's Eyes: Contest Clichés**

**By Linda Ingmanson**

Editors always say they want "fresh, original voices," but how do you know which elements in your story are stale and overused? What makes a manuscript or entry stand out above the rest? I judge many romance contests every year, so I thought I would share some of the elements I see over and over again.

I think when we write we tend to fall back on what feels comfortable and familiar. We've probably all come across these elements in favorite books, so perhaps we unconsciously slip them into our own. I'm not at all saying you can't successfully include these elements in your story and make them fresh, but be aware that they appear to be cropping up with great regularity and predictability.

- The Stumbling Heroine: Our heroine trips and the hero catches her, frequently "against the hard wall of his chest," as a contrived excuse for them to feel that first attraction.
- Variation on the Stumbling Heroine: Heroine twists her ankle, providing convenient excuse for the hero to pick her up and carry her.
- The Electric Handshake: Hero and heroine shake hands and feel a bolt or tingle of electricity shoot up his/her arm.
- Variation on the Electric Handshake: Hero or heroine hands something to the other and their fingers brush, resulting in the tingle/electricity.
- The Wayward Lock: Heroine sees a strand of hair fall across the hero's forehead and her fingers itch to brush it back (an impulse she, of course, barely restrains).
- Done-to-Death Descriptions: Flame red hair and emerald eyes; eyes so dark they were nearly black; rippling muscles.

**Through a Judge's Eyes** *continued on page 10*

**Through a Judge's Eyes** *continued from page 9*

- Done-to-Death Descriptions: Flame red hair and emerald eyes; eyes so dark they were nearly black; rippling muscles.
- The Argument in the Rain: Cliché of the hero and heroine having a fight with rain and thunder in the background.
- Saved from the Clutches: Hero rides in just as heroine is about to be sexually assaulted by bad guys, who usually have bad breath, missing teeth, wet lips and stilted accents.
- The Big Misunderstanding: Hero/heroine sees heroine/hero kissing somebody else and storms off without ever thinking there might be something else going on.
- The Horrendous Ex: Ex-girlfriend/boyfriend/wife/husband who is so catty or mean that hero or heroine ends up looking stupid for ever having gotten involved with them. Ex-girlfriends or wives are usually high-maintenance money-grubbers. Ex-boyfriends or husbands are usually abusive.
- "Oh, my Gosh, He's My New Boss!" Hero and heroine have a chance encounter, sometimes sexual, frequently temperamental, where for whatever reason names and details are not exchanged. The next day heroine comes to her new job/new apartment/etc. and finds that the guy she had sex with/argued with/etc. is her new boss/doctor/neighbor/etc.
- "No Marriage, No Money": Relative dies and leave heroine with money, house, etc., on the condition that she finds someone to marry within a short period of time.
- The Whacky Family: Heroine/Hero has eccentric family she/he loves but knows is an embarrassment. Frequently includes a grandfather named Ezekiel or Jethro or some other countrified name and a crazy but well-meaning aunt who wears loud clothing/big hats, etc.
- The Big Shoot-Out: Hero or Heroine gets shot (or stabbed) trying to save the other one. The problem here is that you know they're both going to live (it is a romance after all), so is it really suspenseful?

**DIRECTIONS TO ST IVES**

The St. Ives Resort is located in Stanwood, MI, just thirty miles southwest of Mount Pleasant. It's very easy to find. Here are the directions, courtesy of the St. Ives Resort brochure, which, along with the map graphics and printable map, are used with their permission.

Driving directions are continued on page 11



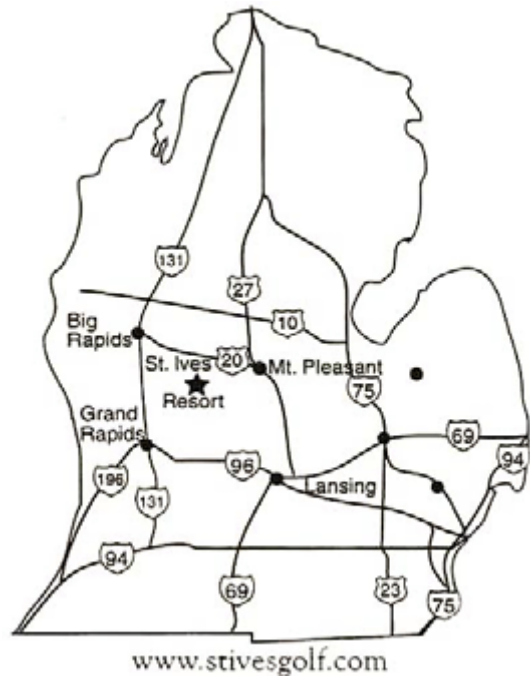
**DIRECTIONS TO ST IVES** *continued from page 10*

**From South/West:**

Exit US 131 at Exit #131 (Approx. 8.5 miles).  
Turn right (east), go 5.5 miles.  
Turn left (north) at 155th Avenue.  
Go 1/2 mile to Buchanan Road  
Turn right (east) and following paving 5 miles to  
Country Corner Plaza.  
Turn left at C21/White House Realty (105th Avenue).  
Follow signs for approximately 1.5 miles.

**From East--29 miles from Mt. Pleasant:**

Take M-20 west from Mt. Pleasant to Remus (20 miles).  
Continue west on M-20 through Remus for 4 miles.  
Exit at 9 Mile Road (Signs: Hansul Marine)  
Continue west for 3 miles.  
Turn left, following blacktop west for 1/2 mile.  
Turn right, follow road for 1.5 miles.  
At Country Corner 4-way stop, go 400 feet to C-121/White House Realty.  
Turn right.  
Follow signs for 1.5 miles.



## CONTESTS

*Compiled by Donna Caubarreaux*

E = Electronic Format Available      EO = Electronic Only  
 MO = Members Only                      U = Unpublished  
 P = Published                              P/3 = Not published in three years  
 Pnr = Published, but not by RWA standards  
 PC = Not published in category selected

### Swept Away

Celtic Heart Romance Writers (U)(E)  
 Received Deadline May 1st, 2006  
 The first 30 pgs of ms+5 pg max synopsis, not to exceed 35 pages.  
<http://www.celtichearts.org/SA2006.htm>

### The Jasmine

Lowcountry Romance Writers  
 Postmarked by May 1st, 2006  
 First 45 pages, plus up to 5-page synopsis  
<http://www.lowcountryrwa.com/>

### 2006 Published Maggie Award (P-Reg. 3 Only)

Georgia Romance Writers  
 Received by 5/2/2006  
 Copyright of 2005  
<http://www.georgiaromancewriters.org/Maggies/06pubrules.php>

### Ignite the Flame (U - P/3)

Central Ohio Fiction Writers  
 Postmarked by May 6, 2006  
 Your hero and heroine's first meeting (up to 15 pages)  
<http://www.cofw.org/>

### Aspen Gold (P)

Heart of Denver  
 Received by May 15, 2006  
 Copyright of 2006  
<http://www.hodrw.com/>

### The Molly (U)

Heart of Denver  
 Received by May 15, 2006  
 First thirty pages max; synopsis- 5 pages max.  
<http://www.hodrw.com/molly.htm>

### The Scarlet

Writer's Weekend  
 Received by May 15, 2006  
 First 5 pages; Query letter; Synopsis 2 pg single spaced.  
<http://www.writersweekend.com/contest.php>

### We Dare You

Saskatchewan Romance Writers  
 Postmarked May 15, 2006  
 First twelve pages  
<http://www.saskromancewriters.4t.com/>

### Share the Dream

Scriptscene RWA  
 Postmarked by May 15, 2006  
 First fifteen pages of screenplay.  
<http://www.geocities.com/rewrit2002/contestrules.html>

### 75th Annual Writer's Digest Competition

Deadline: May 15, 2006  
 There are ten categories  
<http://www.writersdigest.com/contests/annual/75th/>

### Share the Dream

Scriptscene Chapter RWA  
 Postmarked by May 15, 2006  
 First fifteen pages of your screenplay (judged by industry professionals)  
<http://www.geocities.com/rewrit2002/contestrules.html>

*Contests continued on page 13*

**Contests** *continued from page 12*

Original Golden Opportunity  
Toronto Romance Writers  
Postmarked by May 17, 2006  
Synopsis, first chapter & prologue (if applicable)  
to 30 pages, maximum.  
<http://www.torontoromancewriters.com/goldenop.html>

Haunted Hearts (U - P/5 - Pnr)  
Gothic Romance Writers  
Received by May 31, 2006  
First chapter + one page synopsis not to exceed  
26 pages.  
<http://www.gothrom.org/hhguidelines.html>

2006 Unpublished Maggies  
Georgia Romance Writers  
Received by June 1, 2006  
Synopsis and beginning of manuscript, 35 pages  
total  
<http://www.georgiaromancewriters.org/>

Touch of Magic (U)  
Central Florida Romance Writers  
Received by June 1, 2006  
First 25 pages plus 3 pg unjudged synopsis  
<http://www.cfrwa.org/contest.htm>

The Writer's Voice (U - P/3)  
Calgary RWA  
Received by June 1, 2006  
2 pg. unjudged synopsis; first chapter to 23  
pages.  
<http://www.calgaryrwa.com/contest.html>

Emerald City Opener (U)  
Greater Seattle Romance Writers  
Postmarked by June 1, 2006  
First seven pages  
[http://gsrwa.org/emerald\\_city\\_con/ec\\_opener/EmeraldCityOpener\\_2006.htm](http://gsrwa.org/emerald_city_con/ec_opener/EmeraldCityOpener_2006.htm)

The Anne Bonney Readers' Choice Award (P)  
Ancient City Romance Authors  
Postmarked by June 1, 2006  
Copyright of 2005  
<http://acrarwa.com/contest.htm>

Book of Your Heart (U - P)  
PASIC  
Postmarked by June 1, 2006  
First chapter up to 25 pgs + 3-10 pg synopsis  
<http://www.pasic.net/contest.html>

Colorado Gold (U)  
Rocky Mountain Fiction Writers  
Postmarked by June 1, 2006  
First 20 pages plus synopsis up to 8 pages.  
<http://www.rmfw.org/>

Reveal Your Inner Vixen (U - P)  
Maryland Romance Writers  
Postmarked by June 1, 2006  
One scene that showcases the sexual tension  
between the hero and heroine, not to exceed  
twenty (20) pages.  
<http://www.marylandromancewriters.org/contest.html>

Lone Star Writing Competition (U - P)  
Northwest Houston RWA  
Postmarked by June 5, 2006  
First chapter up to 25 pages.  
<http://www.nwhrwa.freesevers.com/contest06.html>

Heart to Heart (U)  
San Francisco Area RWA  
Received by June 6, 2006  
Scene where the Hero & Heroine meet, up to  
fifteen pages.  
[http://www.sfarwa.com/contests/h2h\\_info.asp](http://www.sfarwa.com/contests/h2h_info.asp)

Golden Leaf (P) Region 1 & NJRW ONLY  
New Jersey Romance Writers  
Register by June 10, 2006  
Copyright between 8/05 - 7/06  
[http://www.njromancewriters.org/golden\\_leaf.html](http://www.njromancewriters.org/golden_leaf.html)

Enter Laughing Contest (U - P/5)  
Grand Rapids Region RWA  
Received by July 1, 2006  
2 pg synopsis (unjudged) + first chapter up to 25  
pages.  
<http://www.grrrwa.org/contest.html>

**Contests** *continued on page 14*

**Contests** *continued from page 13*

Indiana's Golden Opportunity (U - Pnr)  
 Received by 7/1/2006, 2006  
 Total entry (manuscript + synopsis) not to exceed 55 pages.  
<http://home.insightbb.com/~irwa/contest/contest.htm>

Melody of Love (U)  
 Music city Romance Writers  
 Received by 7/1/2006  
 Prologue/first chapter, up to 25 pages.  
<http://www.mcrw.com/>

Write, Hook, Query Contest (U - P/3)  
 Pocono Lehigh Romance Writers  
 Postmarked by July 10, 2006  
 Submit a Query Letter  
<http://www.plrw.org/>

Picture This Contest  
 Inland Empire Chapter  
 Postmarked by August 1, 2006  
 Send us the best scene from your book, 5-12 pages.  
<http://geocities.com/SoHo/Studios/2936/contest.htm>

Barclay Gold (P)  
 Lowcountry Romance Writers  
 Received by 9/11/2006  
 Copyright of 2005  
<http://www.lcrw.org/contests.html#gold>

Check out all the contests on:  
<http://www.geocities.com/divaswithtiaras/ContestDiva.index.html>  
 Contest Alert-All the news on upcoming contests, plus Finalist & Winner listings, questions, etc. Sign up now!  
[ContestAlert-subscribe@yahoogroups.com](mailto:ContestAlert-subscribe@yahoogroups.com)

*Check out Contest Alert-All the news on upcoming contests, plus Finalist & Winner listings, questions, etc. Sign up now! [ContestAlert-subscribe@yahoogroups.com](mailto:ContestAlert-subscribe@yahoogroups.com). Donna Caubarreaux is a member of Coeur de Louisiane, Scriptscene Chapter, NOLA Stars, Heart of Louisiana, Kiss of Death, and ChickLitWriters of RWA. She received a RWA Service Award in 1997. USED WITH PERMISSION.*

### MMRWA 2006 Meetings

Unless otherwise noted, meetings are held the third Saturday of each month on a rotating basis at area restaurants and meeting centers in Mid-Michigan. The usual meeting agenda is as follows: 11:30 a.m., lunch (optional) ♥ 1:00 p.m. (approximate time), program/speaker ♥ 2:00 p.m. (approximate time), business meeting.

#### 2006 MMRWA MEETING SCHEDULE (Tentative)

APRIL 21-23	Retreat From Harsh Reality at St. Ives
MAY 20	Kalamazoo
JUNE 17	Jackson
JULY	NO MEETING
AUGUST 19	Lansing
SEPTEMBER 16	Grand Rapids
OCTOBER 21	Portage Library
NOVEMBER 18	Jackson
DECEMBER	Christmas party in Lansing

**2006 Mid-Michigan Romance Writers of America Officers**

**President:** Wil Emerson  
**Vice-president:** Laurie Kuna  
**Secretary:** Cathy McClain, info@midmichiganrwa.org  
**Treasurer:** Lisa Childs Theeuwes, treasurer@midmichiganrwa.org

**2006 Mid-Michigan Romance Writers of America Committee Chairs**

**Cover-to-Cover:** Nancy Gideon, covertocover@midmichiganrwa.org  
**I Will Write a Book/Write For the Money:** Flavia Crowner  
**Happily Ever After Contest:** Jodi Lozon, contest@midmichiganrwa.org  
**Library:** Maris Soule and Lucy Kubash  
**Membership/Historian:** Dawn Bartley, members@midmichiganrwa.org  
**Member Recognition:** Pat Lazarus and Lorelee Lillibridge  
**MMRWA Angel Award:** Lorelee Lillibridge  
**Mystery Gifts:** Shar Koenig  
**Newsletter Editor:** Annette Briggs, mirror@midmichiganrwa.org  
**Newsletter Editorial Consultant:** Lana Miersen  
**PAN Liaison:**  
**Perseverance Fund:** Lisa Childs Theeuwes, treasurer@midmichiganrwa.org  
**Policy:** Cathy McClain and appointed committee  
**Programs/Meetings:** Laurie Kuna, meetings@midmichiganrwa.org  
**Publicity:** Jackie Braun  
**Retreat Chair:** Pam Trombley, retreat@midmichiganrwa.org  
**Retreat Speaker Chair:** Laurie Kuna  
**RWA® Pro Liaison:** Tammy Kearly  
**Website Liaison:** Lana Miersen, info@midmichiganrwa.org  
**Webmistress:** Michelle Crean, design@crean.com

**Non-members seeking information about Mid-Michigan RWA, our meetings, and joining our chapter, may email our membership chair at members@midmichiganrwa.org, or write to MMRWA, P.O. Box 2725, Kalamazoo, MI 49003-2725. Be sure to visit our chapter online at www.midmichiganrwa.org and learn all about us.**

*The Mid-Michigan Mirror* is in need of “how to” articles, reviews of writing books and writing related websites, member bios and photographs, current book news and activities from chapter members. Please send all contributions for the *Mirror* to: [mirror@midmichiganrwa.org](mailto:mirror@midmichiganrwa.org). DEADLINE TO BE INCLUDED IN THE MAY 2006 *MIRROR* IS APRIL 28. Guidelines are available at the web mail address above. Thanks for your contributions, *Annette Briggs, Editor*.

*The Mid-Michigan Mirror's* policy is to offer our original MMRWA articles to other RWA chapters and loops to use with all credits given unless the author specifies restrictions. The *Mirror* staff reserves the right to edit submissions for such things as typos, punctuation, grammar, size requirements, and content with author's approval, etc., in the rare case that it is needed.

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