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In This Issue:

- © Front page Contents/Meeting Info/Birthdays/Recap/August Meeting Preview
- © Page 2 Recap of June Program
- © Page 5 Recap of July Program
- © Page 7 Member News
- © Page 9 Regency Author Nicola Cornick interview
- © Page 13 **Thanks to Book Basket & Raffle Donors**
- © Page 14 Meeting Schedule/ helpful sites/ workshop
- © Page 15 Contests
- © Page 17 Officers/ Chairs/Policy

Please refer to:

MMRWABUSINESS@yahoo.com for meeting minutes and chapter business information and directions to meetings.

Join us for the August 21 meeting featuring the MMRWA's own Jennifer Armintrout. Her interactive presentation is entitled How To Build a Better Vampire. With a life-long interest in vampires, she'll be drawing from different mythos as well as examining the sub-genre from a reader's perspective. Currently, her vampire series is under serious consideration at LUNA .

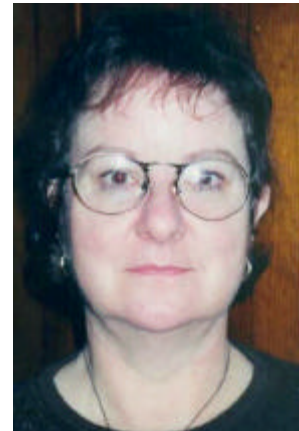
The meeting will be held at Daryl's Downtown in Jackson, at 11:30 Thanks!

Stress

**Our June program given by Dr. Sandra Portko
A Recap by Chris Allen Riley**

Stress -- I don't know a single person that doesn't suffer from it. For some, it might stem from a single situation; for others, it might be a way of life. Sadly, in our world, it's also unavoidable.

Dr. Portko discussed the effects of stress, how to alleviate it and in doing so, how to increase our writing productivity. Her Grand Valley State University courses range from Child Development to Feminine Archetypes to The Hero's Journey - and everything in between.



Dr. Sandra Portko

Article continued on page 2

HAPPY JULY BIRTHDAY

- Patty Gordon 2
- DeAnna Pyle 6
- Doris Lemcke 7
- Jennifer Armintrout 15
- Marsha Ransom 15
- Barbara Wismer 18
- Jeanie Prince 27



HAPPY AUGUST BIRTHDAY

- Jodi Lynn Copeland Lozon 1
- Anne Marie King-Jakubiak 15
- Cheryl Steimel 12
- Gail Martin 28
- Tammy Kearly 29

If your birthday does not appear here, please add it to our records so we can celebrate your special day.

Sorry, no president's message is available this issue.

Continued from the front page:

Stress -- Our June program given by Dr. Sandra Portko

A Recap by Chris Allen Riley

Stress. I don't know a single person that doesn't suffer from it. For some, it might stem from a single situation; for others, it might be a way of life. Sadly, in our world, it's also unavoidable.

Stress, whether it's emotional, psychological or physical can cause a variety of ailments; headaches, digestion trouble, sleep disruption, muscle tension and aches, anxiety, trouble making decisions, confusion, emotional over-response and mood swings. Long term stress can result in high blood pressure, ulcers, increased allergic symptoms, asthma flare-ups, weight changes, suppressed immune system and migraines to name a few.

In addition to physiological illnesses, it can keep us from achieving our goals. When our lives are consumed by stress, we often lack the energy to focus on our dreams. During times of worry and tension, my writing productivity has waned, and sometimes, stopped altogether. However, we can take steps to decrease our response to stress. In controlling our responses, we can lessen the effect it has on us. There are several, easy ways to counteract stress.

Anything that interrupts the physiological stress response can help to short circuit it. Here are some suggestions.

Exercise: Writing is a sedentary activity. Sitting still can exacerbate the effects of stress. Exercise can counteract this. Physical exertion releases the tension our body tries to hold onto. Get up and move at least once an hour. Dance. Do jumping jacks. Stretch. Do yoga. Go for a walk. A caveat - walking to the fridge or pantry is not considered a stress relieving activity. Often, we use food as comfort. It can soothe us when we're stressed. However, it also encourages poor eating habits and transference. Instead of dealing with our stressors in a healthy way, we're stifling them with food. Better to go out and weed your garden than gorge on Twinkies and potato chips.

Changing Bad Habits:

Caffeine. I don't know a writer who doesn't crave it. Research has shown us that heavy caffeine intake actually stimulate the sympathetic portion of the autonomic nervous system, also known as the fight or flight response. When people feel hyped up from caffeine stimulation the body releases adrenaline, which in turn raises the blood pressure, the heart rate and respiration. The body looks for a stressor to fight off or run from, but it isn't able to do either with chemical stimulation. Most modern stressors can't be dealt with the fight or flight response so our bodies live in a chronic state of arousal, and not the good kind! A note – for some people, highly processed and refined foods affect the body in the same way as caffeine. Studies have shown that our bodies metabolize these foods far less efficiently, causing a host of other health related problems.

Stress continued on page 3

Stress continued from page 2

Bedtime. It doesn't sound like much, but go to bed fifteen to twenty minutes earlier each night – work up to a half an hour to an hour. Our bodies need a certain amount of time each night to naturally wind down in order to fall asleep. The earlier bedtime will help reprogram your body and give you little more sleep, which will, in turn, help you deal better with stressors. Avoid exercising at least three to four hours before bedtime. You may also want to consider avoiding caffeine and refined sugars at this time, as well. I've never had a problem with caffeine before bed, but our bodies change as we change, often becoming more sensitive to these stimulants.

Aromatherapy: Certain scents can trigger a chemical reaction in the brain that can further relaxation and stress release. What smells good to some people might smell like compost to another. Personally, I find the combination of Sandalwood and Vanilla very soothing. Some traditional scents used for relaxation and stress release are: Apple, Bergamot, Broom, Chamomile, Catnip, Frankincense, Freesia, Gardenia, Jasmine, Lavender, Lemon Balm, Lily, Lily of the Valley, Meadowsweet, Myrrh, Plumeria, Rose, Sandalwood, Spider Lily, Stephanotis, Tuberose, Water Lily, White Ginger, Wood Aloe and Ylang-ylang. This list is by no means exhaustive. Experiment. See what works for you.

Aromatherapy + Warmth = Relaxation: A neck wrap is one of the best tools a writer can have at his or her disposal. The combination of warmth and scent can ease some of the physiological effects of stress. Filled with rice and herbs, these are better than a heating pad to loosen stiff muscles. Warm it in the microwave oven and let the relaxation begin. You can find them at department stores, boutiques, health food stores and gift shops. You can also make your own.

The simplest method is to fill a knee sock with rice and lavender – making sure that it's still flexible enough to drape around your neck and over your shoulders. Stitch the opening shut and you have a neck wrap. You can also make a tube out of fabric and fill that. Or you can cut out a semi-circle – think of it as a large upper case "C." Sew and fill with rice, herbs, buckwheat or whatever other substance feels comfortable draped around your shoulders. Re-warm as needed.

Meditation: The first and easiest path to meditating is focusing on our breathing. Studies have shown that centering on, and adjusting, our breathing can lower blood pressure, heart rate and other physical stress responses. Meditation actually changes the brain's waves from Beta (waking thought and activity) to Alpha (heavily relaxed to light trance) and eventually, Theta (deep relaxation/trance state.)

Breathing: Close your eyes. For a slow count of five, breathe in through your nose. Hold the breath within your lungs for a count of five. And finally, exhale through your mouth for another count of five. Repeat as necessary until the urge to cry, scream or strangle someone has passed.

Stress continued on page 4

Stress continued from page 3

While practicing breathing techniques, it can be helpful to visualize a place or activity that feels peaceful to you. For example, I picture sitting by a stream that runs through a shady forest. I try to capture the sights, (sunlight dappling through the leaves) sounds (the soft brush of branches against leaves in the breeze) and smells (the thick, sweet scent of sap.) I have a friend who loves to go to the park and swing on the playground swing set. She imagines herself flying, back and forth through the air as she practices her breathing.

Music: If visualizing doesn't work for you, find music that soothes you, and listen to it while doing your breathing exercises. It can be helpful to listen to your meditation music while you're writing. After some practice with meditation, the music can act as an aural cue, helping your brain to produce those relaxed alpha waves more easily. This slight shift of consciousness can enhance your writing, muzzling your internal critic and setting your Muse free to do her work.

Guided Imagery: Another helpful meditation technique is the use of guided imagery tapes or CDs. The typical guided imagery will include relaxing, background music as well as a narrator who guides the listener, coaching him or her through the stages meditation process. The narrator's suggestions serve as cues to focus the listener's attention so the mind is doing more than listening to music. Listening to the imagery with closed eyes reduces awareness of the physical surroundings as well as of bodily sensation. This is why guided imagery is often taught to patients as part of a pain management regime.

There are several, wonderful instructor/authors I'd like to recommend. Caroline Myss, Wayne Dyer and Clarissa Pinkola Estes. Their guided imagery tapes and CDs can be purchased at <http://www.soundstrue.com/index.html> and <http://www.drwaynedyer.com/home/index.cfm>

Cognitive Restructuring: Reframing the way we look at things can change how we interpret events and, in turn, how we respond to them. For example, my sister didn't get in to the college of her choice. After feeling disappointed and angry, she chose to look at this experience in a new light. Attending her second choice will afford her different opportunities than the other school – opportunities not available at her first choice. Now, she's looking forward to the new experiences to come. An example from the writing world would be the dreaded "R" word – Rejection. We can look at rejection as the end, or we can view it as a chance to improve our work and make it the best we possibly can. This is not to say that we should take a "Pollyanna" attitude toward disappointment. However, finding the positive aspects in any given situation helps us to better deal with the stressors of those circumstances.

It's a sure bet that none of us will ever be stress free. But, using these techniques, we can lessen the effects of stress in our lives. A decrease in stress can help increase our writing productivity, something most of us would like to see happen



Querying, Pitching and Living to Tell the Tale

A Recap of Melissa Ford Lucken's July Program by Chris Allen Riley, Vice President

If you're like most aspiring authors - or even veteran authors - Query Letters and Editor/Agent Pitches are enough to cause flu-like symptoms in even the heartiest of souls. Let's face it, most writers are introverts. If we weren't, why would most of our quality time be spent with our computer and our imaginary friends . . . I mean, characters? Now, factor in a face-to-face meeting with an editor or agent or the necessity of sending out a query letter and we want to assume the fetal position and comfort ourselves with vast quantities of chocolate. Even those of us who enjoy the hustle and bustle of writing conferences and networking are glad to get back to our more solitary publishing-professional-free environment. But, the sad fact remains. In order to move ahead in the publishing business, we have to make peace with both the query and the pitch. Here are some tips to help.

Approach the meeting or letter as an equal to the agent or editor. Yes, this person is in a position of power, but so are you. You have something worthwhile to offer. Something that has the potential to help further this person's career as well as your own.

I know you've all likely heard this before, but it's worth repeating. Do your homework! Know what authors the agent represents. How might you fit into that group? Know what the editor/publishing house is looking for. Be ready to tell him or her how your manuscript fits into their vision. This establishes a connection with the agent or editor.

It's important to know the market. Know what's out there. Know how your work differs, or doesn't, and use that knowledge to your benefit. Figure out exactly what you're selling, and present it with confidence. Know where it would fit in the bookstore.

Confidence is key. While agents and editors are human and certainly understand a bout of nervousness, no one wants to interact with a zombie-author. What if you're not naturally a confident person, you ask? Fake it! If pressed, I'm sure all of us can think of someone we know (or even know of) who exudes self-assurance. Perhaps, it's your aunt or your best friend from high school or even Catherine Zeta-Jones. Think about how this person would deal with this situation and do your best to emulate their attitude. After all, we're writers - we make stuff up all the time. This is no different.

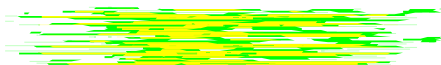
Querying continued on page 6

Querying continued from page 5

Here are some key points to remember when pitching or querying.

- 1.) Keep it simple. Too much information all at once is overwhelming. It's likely that the most important information will be lost in the deluge.
- 2.) Using questions in a pitch can be an effective tool that encourages the brain to continue reading whether it wants to or not. For example, "Is it possible to alter reality with a blender and a crowbar?" Obviously, this isn't part of a real pitch – but hopefully, it got your attention and made you want to read on. This is exactly what we're trying to accomplish with an editor or agent.
- 3.) Write your queries when you feel strong and confident about your writing. That strength will be evident in the words you choose and the general tone of the letter.
- 4.) If possible, try to keep your query letter to one page. Make sure the tone of your letter matches the tone of your manuscript. If, for example, you have a dark, gothic tale of suspense, don't use humor in your letter. It makes you appear inconsistent.
- 5.) Make your tagline enticing enough for the editor to turn to the synopsis or manuscript.
- 6.) List items (first three chapters, synopsis) that arrive with the query in case they get separated.
- 7.) Always have a second or third project ready to pitch if, for whatever reason, the editor/agent doesn't want your first.
- 8.) In a face-to-face appointment, take the emphasis off yourself and turn it toward the editor/agent. I'm not suggesting you ask about her cat, but rather ask thoughtful questions about the business end of writing. You could ask how s/he feels about authors who write in more than one genre.
- 9.) If time or space allows, mention other completed manuscripts. Both editors and agents like to know that they're not dealing with a one-book-wonder. Also, mention any contest wins.

The most important thing to remember when dealing with any aspect of the publishing business is that you have control of only one thing – what you put on the paper. You can't control the fact that the editor may have just bought a book with a similar plotline and therefore doesn't want yours. Nor can you control the fact that the agent has a phobia of clowns and your story happens to take place at a circus. The only things you have direct power over are the words you put on the page. Make sure that you write the very best story you can. Don't shortchange yourself or potential readers. Ultimately, you and the editor/agent have the same goal – seeing great fiction in print and in the hands of the reading public.



July Member News

Chris Allen-Riley: Submitted revisions to Silhouette; working on SIM; submitted two new essays to Viva Voce Press.

Jennifer Armintrout: Read in RTR that the senior editor that has my vampire novel isn't looking for paranormal; received call from same editor who is reading the ms. She says she has "concerns." No answer in July. That's not sadistic, is it?

Dawn Bartley: Making progress on *Regan's Promise*; leaving my job June 30th.

Rosanne Bittner: Currently working on 3rd Inspirational, *Ingrid's Choice*. Attended Christian Women's Ministries Association Conference in Nashville at publisher's expense; they sponsored a book signing there. Very successful! My newest book, *Into the Prairie*, is now hitting the stores; two signings at two Wal-Marts July 24 and signing in Lansing July 10.

Annette Briggs: plugging away at new WIP; learning more about online publishing.

Flavia Crowner: Working still with WIP.

Karen Duquette: Starting a couple of new businesses: Primarily Romance Bookstore – new/used/rare and Well Used 'n' Worn – antiques/ art/"writerly" things.

Patty Gordon: Finished writing report cards; researching for historical; wrote a short article for the Mirror. (Yeah, I'm published! ☺)

Peggy Hanchar: Got material ready – in an envelope to send out to an agent.

Michele Hickerty: Started and finished new story.

Aileen Hyne: Getting ready for National; I'd like to think I'd have something to pitch.

Anne Marie King-Jakubiak: Finished revisions; got a book out that was requested; getting my husband back to work since he's been off since April and ill. He ended up with four surgeries.

Tammy Kearly: Editing completed manuscript.

Dorien Kelly: New MMRWA member whom Melissa is nagging to complete ms due at the end of the month.

Shar Koenig: Working on screenplay of next mystery release, *INK ON HER NOSE*.

Lucy Kubash: Wrote two Pet Corner columns for Mailmax Newspaper; did rewriting on inspirational. My goal is to send out a proposal to Steeple Hill in one month.

Pat Lazarus: Submitted *Storm Master* for to contests; using my Alphasmart daily.

Melissa Ford Lucken: Agent will pitch Christian Chick Lit at CBA and two proposals pitched at LA Film Festival.

Kate McAuliffe: I entered a short story personal experience piece to a magazine. I am currently working on a contemporary. I sent out my National membership a few days ago. I plan to look through my short stories and send more out.

Lana Miersen: Going to National in Dallas to attend DBC and the Daphne du Maurier Awards; have an editor appointment; submitted my partial to Aileen for the Warner Forever editor, re: book basket auction bid. Riting like crazy to finish WIP before National.

Member News continued from page 7

Marsha Ransom: Interviewed on syndicated radio “Home Education This Week,” Oklahoma City OK; editing work in progress as suggested by Kathleen Nance in her critique; article published in Home Ed. Magazine.

Juli Schuitema: Working on two fantasies; wrapped up in filming on documentary; starting filming on screenplay.

Maris Soule: Waiting to hear from two publishing houses; waiting to hear from several agents; starting new suspense.

Dickee Six: Sending out proposals for historical.

Cheryl Steimel: Finished edits for *Naked Elf* and sent them to Dorchester two weeks early.

August Member News

Chris Allen Riley: Halfway through paranormal; waiting to hear on two SIMs; Waiting to hear on two essays for Vive Voce Press.

Jen Armintrout: Wrote over 100 pages. Go meeeeeee!!

Dawn Bartley: Finished judging a published author contest.

Diane Burton: Participated in “Art in the Park” (A Lansing Event) in June; guest of honor at daughter’s book club in Indianapolis; waiting to hear from Warner and Dorchester.

Jackie Braun: Under contract for a novella in a Signature Series anthology due out in September 2005. Also under contract for three more Harlequin Romances. Still freelancing for Flint Journal and now doing reviews for Book Page.

Patty Gordon: Entered Steeple Hill’s “Reflect, Recharge, and Rejoice contest. Working on essays for an e-magazine.

Peggy Hanchar: Sent material off to several agents. Hard at work finishing up a book. Thinking on a new one.

Michele Hickerty: Started up two new projects; judging Lone Star contest.

Lucy Kubash: Still rewriting, hope to get query letter out by the end of July.

Melissa Ford Lucken: Four Weeks comes out this month; working and waiting.

Gail Martin: In May, presented three workshops and sat on two panels in Estes Park, CO Writers Conference; visited Colorado Springs to check out the setting of my July release, *Adam’s Promise*. *Adam’s Promise* (received 4 and 5 star ratings) is the first book in the Faith on the Line Series; mid-June Lake Tahoe family reunion; then to Writer’s retreat and Christian Booksellers Assoc. in Atlanta – signed hundreds of copies *Adam’s Promise* and an unedited copy of *That Christmas Feeling* for booksellers. The Christmas Kite is long inspirational finalist for Holt Medallion. Loving Ways is Golden Quill and Booksellers Best Award finalist. Loving Hearts is Inspirational Readers Choice Award finalist. Sold a surprise novel Christmas 2005 romantic suspense, Finding Christmas, single title for Steeple Hill.

Member News continued on page 9

Member News continued from page 8

Lana Miersen: Working on comic contemporary suspense; sent the partial to Warner Forever editor for critique (from book basket auction); still waiting to hear from Chris Keeslar on futuristic; sent new release to Kalamazoo Gazette about book basket auction and check presentation to the Y's DSA program director.

Dickee Six: Waiting for word from editors about latest historical; plotting contemporary.

Cheryl Steimel: I am halfway through the sequel to my soon to be published fantasy. I also started a new novel and am three chapters into it.

Approaching

September Birthdays

Michele Hickerty 11 * Wil Emerson 15 * Marjorie Sandoval 16 * Patty Hall 28



Nicola Cornick

Getting to know Regency author Nicola Cornick

By Tereasa Bellew

While searching through in the Harlequin historical section of the store, I came across a book titled "The Wayward Widow" by Regency author Nicola Cornick. The heroine, Lady Juliana, was serving herself on top a silver tray, nude no less!

That was enough to captivate me, as well as the other gentlemen of the 'ton.' Of course, there was one gentleman who would not be stirred, 'thank you, ma'am, but I have never liked desert.'

I was instantly drawn in, eager to read more on the exploits of Lady Juliana. After quickly devouring the book, I decided to let Ms. Cornick know how much I enjoyed her story. What came to pass has been a wonderful, and very informative, tête-à-tête.

Nicola Cornick interview continued on page 10

Nicola Cornick interview continued from page 9

Tereasa: Your web sight states you were born in Yorkshire, England. Your book list is quite impressive with stories like *“The Notorious Marriage”* *“Lady Allerton’s Wager”* and *“The Rake’s Bride”* along with many other regency titles. As a reader of regencies, who were some of your inspirations?

Nicola: Almost everyone quotes Georgette Heyer as an early influence and I’m afraid

I’m no different! I loved the witty dialogue and romance of her writing. I still do! *“Devil’s Cub”* is one of my all time favorite books. Alice Chetwynd Ley and Sheila Walsh’s Regencies were also very influential on me. I love the subtle way in which they can portray intense emotion. Then I discovered Harlequin Mills and Boon Historicals in my local library and I was in Regency heaven!

Tereasa: You’ve received the rating of four ½ stars from Romantic Times magazine which is reserved for Phenomenal on “The Earl’s Prize.” And four stars for *“The Chaperon Bride”* and *“Wayward Widow,”* which was also voted Best Short Historical in RWA’s Rita 2004. Does all this success take your breath away?

Nicola: It’s fantastic that people seem to enjoy my books so much and I still can’t quite believe it! It’s lovely when people bother to take the time to tell you that they like your books. Getting the RITA nomination was particularly amazing and enabled me to go to the RWA National Conference in Dallas, which was an awesome experience!

Tereasa: Can you tell us when you first got the desire to write, and were your first attempts romantic fiction? How long before you became published? And who or what helped you to persevere toward your goal?

Nicola: I started writing when I was at school. I used to contribute articles to the school magazine on subjects like “what I did on my holiday” or “my favorite pet”! I still have one of my school reports in which my English teacher warned me that my writing was getting too elaborate and I should keep it clear and concise. I’ve tried to follow that advice to this day. I started to write romantic fiction when I was about 18 and wrote my first book on and off for the following 12 years. Mills and Boon turned it down twice and I rewrote it, and it was finally published 15 years after I had started it! I think that the two things that helped me to persevere with the rewriting were firstly my innate obstinacy – I didn’t want to get that far and then give up – and secondly my husband, who has been the most supportive and encouraging partner that a writer could wish for.

Nicola Cornick interview continued on page 11

Nicola Cornick interview continued from page 10

Tereasa: Can you remember when you got ‘the call’ that your manuscript had been accepted? How did you celebrate your first sale?

Nicola: When I first got “the call” it was in a letter from the Senior Editor at Mills and Boon, and it arrived just before I had to go to work that morning. I was in a trance for about 3 days and I don’t think anyone got much sense out of me at all. I couldn’t quite believe it. It felt such a huge jump from all the waiting and hoping – 15 years of it – to suddenly being accepted. We celebrated by buying 2 bicycles and riding around the countryside!

Tereasa: How has becoming a published author changed your life? Are there things that you wish you would have known earlier on that might have helped you become published sooner?

Nicola: Becoming a published author has been wonderful and becoming a full time author even better because for the first time I am doing a job I enjoy 100 percent. One of the things I wish I had known about sooner was the UK Romantic Novelists Association, the sister organization to the RWA, because like the RWA it is such a wonderful and supportive group of people. The RNA runs a scheme to help aspiring authors achieve publication and I am sure I would have benefited from joining this.

Tereasa: Did you have an agent to make that first sale?

Nicola: No, I didn’t have an agent at first. UK agents aren’t that keen to represent romance authors. It’s a niche market in this country. So when I was writing series books for Harlequin Mills and Boon I did all the contract negotiations myself. Now that I am writing single title historicals for HQN I have got an agent and she is based in the US, which is great for me since she has all the market experience to give me the help I need.

Tereasa: The techniques of writing are something many beginning authors struggle with; things like POV, vivid description, and fully developed characters. Was there any such portion that was more difficult for you to get a handle on?

Nicola: When I look back on my early manuscripts I realize how much the POV jumped about and how confusing this must have been for the reader! My biggest problem, however, was with plotting. I still find it difficult sometimes to integrate a strong and relevant plot into my books and make sure that I tie up all the loose ends. I get so engrossed in my characters that for me they always come first.

Tereasa: Is there a certain reference book you simply would not be without? With all of your books being historical, where do you go first to research?

Nicola Cornick interview continued on page 12

Nicola Cornick interview continued from page 11

Nicola: I have a bookcase full of historical reference books that I've picked up over the years but I would say that one of my most useful reference books is the Dictionary of Slang by Jonathon Green because I can check whether I am using anachronistic language or not. There's always some phrase or other that catches me out! I also use the internet a lot to research specific subjects. There are some wonderful Regency sites. And my big general research book is "The English" by Christopher Hibbert.

Tereasa: Your next book is due out in October by Harlequin Historicals. It is titled, "*The Penniless Bride*." Can you tell us a little about this book?

Nicola: "*The Penniless Bride*" is a fairytale, rags to riches story. It tells the tale of Jemima Jewell, the daughter of a Master Sweep, who makes a marriage of convenience with the impoverished Earl of Selborne. The Earl is forbidden by the terms of his

Nicola Cornick interview continued from page 11

grandmother's will to consummate his marriage and so he and Jemima have a difficult time resisting their mutual attraction! After "*Wayward Widow*" I was looking to write something a little more lighthearted but "*The Penniless Bride*" still has its darker and more emotional side.

Thank you very much for inviting me to chat with you, Tereasa. It has been a real pleasure to do the interview.

It has been a pleasure to learn more about Nicola. We can look forward to "*The Bluestocking Trilogy*" due out in 2005. For additional interesting news on this wonderful regency author, visit her at her web sight www.nicolacornick.co.uk. She loves to hear from her readers, and can be contacted by e-mail at ncornick@madasafish.com

Tereasa Bellew has been writing romance for four years. She started with children's stories, but as a devoted reader of romance, it was only natural she try her hand at writing one. She has completed two manuscripts and is working on a third.

Non-members seeking information about Mid-Michigan meetings and joining our group may contact: Dawn Bartley bartleyd@chartermi.net

**The following authors, editors, bookstores and friends
contributed to the Book Basket Raffle and Auction with all
proceeds going to the Kalamazoo YWCA Domestic Assault
Program:**

MANY THANKS MANY THANKS MANY THANKS

Nancy Arnold	Linda Kichline, ImaJinn	Lisa Plumley
Elizabeth Bevarly - 75 books!	Sharolett Koenig, Koenisha Publications	POWER PROMOTIONS (www.powerontheweb.com)
Rosanne Bittner	Linda Kollatz, THE WRITER Magazine	Tara Taylor Quinn
Elizabeth Boyle	Laurie Kuna	Nina Rainold, Penguin Group Inc, USA
Jackie Braun	Rosemary Laurey	Marsha Ransom
Laurie Bright	Patricia Lazarus	Julia Ross aka Jean Ross Ewing
Beverly Brandt	Donna Liptrot, Waldenbooks, Crossroads Mall	Patricia Frances Rowell
Diane Burton	Cait London	Suzanne Simmons (Suzanne Simms)
Bethany Campbell	Melissa Ford Lucken	Maureen Stead,
Sue Charnley	Julianne MacLean	Harlequin Enterprises LTD - 75 books!
Tanisha Christie, Warner Book Group	Gail Gaymer Martin	Denise Swanson
Michelle Cunnah	Felicia Mason	Pam Trombley
Claire Delacroix	Susan McBride	Patricia Waddell
Wil Emerson	Bella McFarland	Alice Weidner
Christine Flynn - 50 books!	Julie McMullen	Karen Wiesner
Deborah Hale	Isabel Mercado, ROMANTIC TIMES	Lori Wilde - 75 books!
Blythe Gifford	Jess Michaels	Sharon Wildwind
Nancy Herkness	Cindi Myers	Laurin Wittig
Emma Holly	Dana Corbit Nussio	Alice Wootson
Aileen Hyne	Jennifer O'Connell	
Eloisa James	Carly Phillips	
Sylvia Karpowich	Judi Phillips	

MORE SITES HELPFUL TO AUTHORS:

Heroines & Beauty with Rebecca Sinclair
<http://www.likesbooks.com/beauty.html>

How To Break Into Print Publishing by Michael LaRocca
http://www.wordweaving.com/articlefeb08_02.html

Its Never Too Late to Begin...by Connie Mason
<http://www.romantictimes.com/index.html?/data/tips/227.html>

"Dreams are attainable if one seizes them with both hands and refuses to let go." ~ Connie Mason <http://www.conniemason.com/>

Avoiding Writing Scams: Advice From Those Who Know by J.A. Hitchcock
<http://www.writing-world.com/rights/scams.shtml>

2004 Meeting Schedule

August 21st, Jackson, Jennifer Armintrout/Building a Better Vampire
Sept. 18th, Plainwell, Golden Heart Preparation
Oct. 1-3, Autumn Authors, Lisle, IL
Oct 16th, Lansing, Merry Zylstra/Psychic
November 20th, Grand Rapids, Bounty Hunter-Private Investigator
December 11th, Laurie Kuna's house, Holiday part

FREE WORKSHOP

The Toledo-Lucas County Public Library and the Maumee Valley Chapter of the Romance Writers of America (MVRWA) will co-sponsor **a free writing workshop** on mystery/suspense. Lunch will be available during the keynote speech for \$5.00.

DATE: Saturday, October 23, 2004

TIME: 10 a.m. until 3:30 p.m., followed by a book signing event

LOCATION: Sanger Branch Library, 3030 W. Central Avenue, Toledo, OH 43606. Reservations are required, 419-259-5295

Speakers:

Keynote speaker, NYT Bestseller Lori Foster, "Elements of Romantic Suspense"

Multi-pubbed author Patricia Rasey, "Suspense Pacing"

Multi-pubbed author LaVerne St. George, "Techniques of Plotting"

Q & A Crime panel: Coroner, Forensics Investigator, Police Detective, Attorney

Thanks for your assistance.

Sincerely, Rita Shake President MVRWA "The little chapter that could"

Thanks to the contributors of the JULY/AUGUST issue of Mid-Michigan Mirror. The Mirror is accepting submissions via e-mail. Please send to: brainchilde@websurfers.biz with a brief bio to include with your article.

Contests

Updated and all sites tested...Compiled by Donna Caubarreaux....Used with permission.

Oak Leaf Award of Excellence 2004, Charter Oak Romance Writers

Participation is open to all authors of novel length romance fiction unpublished by an RWA recognized publisher.

Deadline: Received by September 7, 2004

Beginning of your manuscript (maximum 25 pages) + Synopsis that will NOT be judged (only for judge's reference), max. 5 pages.

<http://www.geocities.com/charteroakrwa/Contest/contest.html>

Sweet, Spicy & Spooky, Smokey Mountain Romance Writers

Entries are unpublished/ uncontracted work of any RWA® member. Yes, this means you can be published and enter.

Received by September 8, 2004

Send your Sweet, Spicy or Spooky scene up to ten (10) pages with a required , but not judged, one (1) page-set up.

<http://www.smrw.org/contests/ssscontest/sss.htm>

Hold Me, Thrill Me Contest, Southwest Florida

Open to unpublished in book-length RWA members only.

Deadline: Postmarked by September 15, 2004

Enter prologue and/or first chapter of novel, not to exceed fifteen pages.

<http://swfrw.org/contest2004info.html>

Opening Gambit, Northeast Indiana Romance Authors

Received by: September 15, 2004

Synopsis (5 page max) and first pages of manuscript/prologue for a total entry of no more than 30 pages.

<http://www.niraonline.com/gambit.htm#finalists>

Launching a Star 2004, SpacecoasT Authors of Romance

Postmark Deadline: September 25, 2004

Enter your best chapter. (20 pages max.), 2-page Unjudged Set-up

<http://www.authorsofromance.com/contest.htm>

Duel on the Delta, River City Romance Writers

Open to any author unpublished in book length fiction within the last 5 years.

Deadline: Received by October 1, 2004

Send an industry standard 1st chapter (may include a prologue, not exceeding 30 pages).

<http://www.rivercityrw.com/contest.html>

The Emily, West Houston RWA

Received: October 1, 2004

First 35 pages

<http://www.geocities.com/whrwa/TheEmily.html>

The Suzannah, North Louisiana StoryTellers and Authors of Romance

Received by October 1, 2004

Opening of manuscript (30 pages max) one page unjudged synopsis.

<http://www.shreve.net/~nola/page-contest.html>

TICKET TO WRITE, Red River Romance Writers

Must be unpublished since 1999.

Postmark deadline October 4, 2004

First 30 pages of your manuscript, 12 pt. Courier, along with a two page, double-spaced synopsis (not to be judged.)

<http://www.rrrw.org/>

Valentine Over Vegas, Cactus Rose Chapter - Las Vegas

Entrant must be a member of Romance Writers of America® also known as RWA® and a member in good standing. RWA® Membership Number must be included on entry form.

Entry Postmark Deadline: October 8, 2004 received by October 14, 2004.

Synopsis, and the beginning of an unpublished manuscript not to exceed 25 pages.

<http://cactusroserwa.home.att.net/contest.htm>

St. Martin's Press/**MALICE DOMESTIC CONTEST**

Received by October 15, 2004

The complete manuscript...read the rules, winner gets a book contract with \$10,000 advance.

<http://www.minotaurbooks.com/minotaur/malice.html>

Heart of the West, Utah RWA

Deadline: October 15, 2004 postmark; received by Oct. 22nd.

First twenty pages.

<http://www.utahrwa.com/howcontest.html>

Hook, Line & Sinker Contest, Hudson Valley RWA

Deadline: Received by November 1, 2004

First three pages of your novel.

<http://www.hvrwa.com/hvrwacontest.htm>

Dreaded Synopsis, First Coast Romance Writers

Deadline: November 1, 2004

Synopsis not to exceed ten pages.

<http://www.geocities.com/fcrwrwa/dsynop.html>

Gotcha Contest, Silicon Valley

You are eligible to enter any category in which you are NOT PUBLISHED.

Received by November 8, 2004

First 15 pages of your manuscript.

<http://home.earthlink.net/~svrwa/2004gotcha/2004gotcha.htm>

2005 Laurie Contest, Smokey Mountain Romance Writers

Entrants must be members in good standing with RWA® and cannot be published in novel length romantic fiction (40,000 words or more) nor contracted at the contest deadline.

Received by November 10, 2004

the complete first chapter -- not to exceed twenty-five (25) pages and synopsis not to exceed five (5) pages.

The total number of submitted pages for chapter and synopsis is not to exceed 30 pages.

<http://www.smrw.org/contests/laurie/laurie.html>

Delacorte Press Contest for Young Adult Novels

Postmark deadlines: After October 1, 2004 - Before December 31, 2004

Submissions should consist of a book-length manuscript with a contemporary setting that will be suitable for readers ages 12 to 18.

The prize is a book contract...

<http://www.randomhouse.com/kids/games/delacorte.html>

Donna Caubarreaux is a member of Coeur de Louisiane, NOLA Stars, Heart of Louisiana, Kiss of Death, and Scriptscene Chapters of RWA. She received a RWA Service Award in 1997. She sponsors several writing lists...

<http://www.geocities.com/donnacaubarreaux/Main.html>

2004 Mid-Michigan Romance Writers of America Officers

President: Michele Hickerty chelery1@yahoo.com

Vice-president: Chris Allen-Riley matt@wmis.net

Secretary: Tammy Kearly tammyk@voyager.net

Treasurer: Jennifer Armintrout WhoTom@aol.com

2004 Mid-Michigan Romance Writers of America Committee Chairs

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Happily Ever After Contest: Michele Hickerty chelery1@yahoo.com

Library: Maris Soule SOULEM@aol.com and Lucy Kubash lucykubash@parrett.net

Membership/Historian: Dawn Bartley bartleyd@chartermi.net

Member Recognition: Jodi Lynn Copeland jodi.copeland@ttmps.com

and Cheryl Steimel wiseprez@yahoo.com

MMRWA Angel Award: Maris Soule SOULEM@aol.com

Mystery Gifts: Chris Allen-Riley matt@wmis.net

Newsletter Editor; online distribution: Annette Briggs brainchilde@websurfers.biz

Newsletter printing & distribution: Laurie Kuna lauriecarroll55@worldnet.att.net

PAN Liaison: Dana Nussio nussio@earthlink.net

Perseverance Fund: Jennifer Armintrout WhoTom@aol.com

Policy: currently unfilled

Chris Allen-Riley matt@wmis.net

Publicity: Juli Schuitema jl_schuitema@yahoo.com

Retreat: Pam Trombley ptrombley@voyager.net

RWA® Pro Liaison: Tammy Kearly tammyk@voyager.net

Web mistress: Michelle Crean mecrean@crean.com

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