

The Mid-Michigan Mirror

...A Reflection of Romance

Winner of the 1999 RWA® Mid-size Chapter Newsletter Contest

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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 PUBLISH AND ESTABLISH CAREERS, AND TO PROVIDE CONTINUING SUPPORT FOR WRITERS WITHIN THE ROMANCE PUBLISHING INDUSTRY.



—THE BOARD ROOM—

Member Critique Session Returns to June 19 Meeting

by Margo Hoornstra
Vice President/Publicity Chair

The topic for the June 19, 2010 MMRWA meeting is Member Critique. As requested, Mid Michigan RWA Members and road tested at the February Meeting will be given the opportunity to bring portions of works in progress for evaluation by published members.

Depending on the number who wish to present their work and willing published authors, after lunch we will break into smaller groups, according to genre when we can, for an hour of sharing, discussion and learning. Last time, we had enough member involvement for one on one critique sessions.

To help keep this program running smoothly, please respect the following rules of engagement.

1. Sign up by June 15, 2010 through e-mail to me at mjhoornstra@sbcglobal.net with Member Critique in the subject line – let me know your title and genre.
2. Limit the manuscript length to ten pages.
3. Bring three printed copies to the meeting with you. That way, you'll have any written comments or notations to take home. This also works well if you aren't comfortable reading your work out loud.
4. Designate someone else to read for you if you'd rather not read yourself.

Attention published members, please e-mail me as well, again with Member Critique in the subject line, if you plan to attend the June meeting and are willing to be a critiquer.

Plan to join us, with or without a manuscript or critique assignment, on Saturday, June 19 at Famous Dave's, 4505 Canal Avenue, Grandville, Michigan beginning at 11:30 AM.

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The President's Corner

By Lucy Kubash

I find it interesting that even though we are writers, and we love to write and we want to write, we still often find ourselves putting off writing. We make excuses (the house has to be cleaned first, the dog walked, the laundry done, the electric bill paid, the grocery shopping done). On a larger scale, we think we'll find time to write when the kids are in school, when they're off to college, when we don't have to work outside the home, when summer/winter/whatever comes. I often wonder if there is any other profession that avoids doing the work like writers sometimes do.



I suppose there are as many reasons why we do this as there are excuses to make, but the truth is finding time is never really going to happen, no matter what stage of your life you are in. There are only 24 hours in every day, in everybody's day, and there is no magic trick to make more hours appear (If only!). The only way to find time to write is to make time. Easier said than done, and I am the first to admit it. I can find more reasons not to get the writing done, more excuses why I didn't make my goal for the week, than probably any other writer I know, and it seems the older I get, the easier it is to make excuses. But once I do actually make myself sit down and pick up the story where I left off, I wonder why I didn't do it sooner. Because I really do love to write. Sometimes I just need a swift kick in the pants to get it done.

Luckily, we have a few programs in place to help us get the writing done. There is Write for the Money (write down a writing goal for the month, put in a buck and maybe win lunch money at the next chapter meeting). The Writing 101 loop, where you post your goals (words, pages, queries, submissions) and by making it public you have an incentive to get it done. The critique sessions at several monthly meetings this year (including the June 19 meeting), where you may get immediate feedback from fellow chapter members, and the I Will Write a Book Challenge that is taking place now. You still have until June 30th to sign up to finish a book by November 30th. Five dollars and a book title get you a place in the challenge and, if you turn in that last page by November 30th, a chance to win half the money when we draw the winner's name at the Christmas party in December. If you haven't yet signed up, contact Diane Burton and she'll be happy to take your money and book title. It may be just the kick in the pants you need!

Happy writing!

Lucy

June 26, 2010 Book Signing

Lucy Kubash and Rosanne Bittner are participating in a book signing at a new independent book store in Coloma called Lakeside Books - June 26th from 1:00 - 3:00 pm. Lucy will be signing CHANCE'S RETURN and Rosanne will have a supply of several of her books there, mostly INTO THE PRAIRIE and WALK BY FAITH. Lakeside is a brand new store, and we need to support our independent book stores, so come one, come all! There will be refreshments and some free handouts. Rosanne will be giving away a set of her MYSTIC INDIAN trilogy in hard cover.



To me, the greatest pleasure of writing is not what it's about, but the inner music that words make.

- Truman Capote

HAPPY BIRTHDAY! June

17 Annette Briggs
19 Maris Soule



2010 Officers

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MMRWA 2010 MEETING SCHEDULE

- January** – No chapter meeting.
- February 20**
Grand Rapids – Member critique
- March 20**
Lansing – Tax Strategies for Writers
Speaker: Bruce Meyers
Hantz Financial Group
- April 16 – 18**
Kalamazoo – Retreat from Harsh Reality
Speaker: Jo Ann Ferguson
- May 15**
Jackson – A Writer's 7 steps to Positivity
Speaker: Connie Smith
- June 19**
Grand Rapids – Member critique
Sign up by June 15!
- July** – No Meeting
- August 21**
Lansing – Query Letter Idol
- September 18**
Kalamazoo – How to Access the Internet
- October 16**
Jackson – Rebounding Panel
- November 20**
Grand Rapids – Member critique
- December 11**
Lansing – Christmas Party

June Meeting Directions

Directions to:

Famous Dave's
4505 Canal Avenue
Grandville, MI 49418
(616) 301-7711

Directions from Kalamazoo and southwest:

Merge onto US-131 N. (35.5 mi)
Take the M-6 W exit, EXIT 77 (2.0 mi)
Merge onto MI-6 W /
PAUL B HENRY FWY. (6.8 mi)
Merge onto I-196 E toward
GD RAPIDS. (2.6 mi)
Take the 44TH ST exit, EXIT 67,
toward RIVERTOWN PKWY. (0.4 mi)
Turn RIGHT onto 44TH ST SW. (0.1 mi)
Turn RIGHT onto CANAL AVE SW. (0.1 mi)
End at Famous Dave's, 4505 Canal Ave,
Grandville, MI

Directions from Lansing and points east:

Take I-96 W toward GD RAPIDS. (44.4 mi)
Merge onto MI-6 W/PAUL B HENRY FWY via
EXIT 46 toward M-6 W/HOLLAND. (19.3 mi)
Merge on I-196 E toward GD RAPIDS. (2.6 mi)
Take the 44TH ST exit, EXIT 67,
toward RIVERTOWN PKWY. (0.4 mi)
Turn RIGHT onto 44TH ST SW. (0.1 mi)
Turn RIGHT onto CANAL AVE SW. (0.1 mi)
End at Famous Dave's, 4505 Canal Ave,
Grandville, MI

Directions from Grand Rapids:

I-196 W toward HOLLAND. (5.5 mi)
Take the 44TH ST exit, EXIT 67,
toward RIVERTOWN PKWY. (0.4 mi)
Turn LEFT onto 44TH ST SW. (0.4 mi)
Turn RIGHT onto CANAL AVE SW. (0.1 mi)
End at Famous Dave's, 4505 Canal Ave,
Grandville, MI

Editor's Note: MMRWA Member Constance Smith presented *A Writer's 7 Steps to Positivity* at the MMRWA May chapter meeting. She has generously agreed to allow each of the seven steps to be reprinted in the Mid-Michigan Mirror in a seven part series extending from June, 2010 through February, 2011. Thank you Connie!

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A Writer's 7 Steps to Positivity

By Constance Smith

In January, Nancy Gideon volunteered me to speak on positivity at the MMRWA May meeting. I wrote back and said yes, and promptly clicked send on my email. After my message was speeding into the far reaches of cyberspace, confirming that I would be there, hopefully to say something meaningful and inspiring, I wondered what had I gotten myself into. Just what exactly was I going to say? I started to think about positivity. How could it help writers who dutifully sat at their computers each day, maintain their energy and creativity and get what they want out of their writing craft?

First, I considered the opposite of positivity: NEGATIVITY. When it's present we can feel it in the air, thick, dark, and oppressive. Our bodies feel weighted down; our thoughts become angst-ridden and desperate. Negativity is fear, blame, dissatisfaction and jealousy. It's the belief that the Universe is against us and we've been singled out to carry life's hardest burdens. Negativity puts us in a place where we don't function well creatively, and don't attract the people and circumstances we need to support our writing desires and dreams.

In my search for answers, I also realized that positivity isn't the opposite of negativity. Assuming the role of Perpetual Miss Sunshine, gritting her teeth, forcing a smile, and frenetically spitting out optimistic messages isn't being positive either.

Positivity is discovering your quiet center and inner strengths. It's having an awareness of who you are and what you want, and taking definitive steps towards getting it. But, at the same time, it's also accepting uncertainty, and surrendering to the flow of life. Anais Nin, the French writer, said, "And the day came when the risk to remain in a bud was more painful than the risk it took to blossom." When we give up the reigns of safety and control, positivity becomes possibilities and creative freedom. And positivity is simply more fun.

Step 1 to positivity is: Get rid of negative thoughts and beliefs that are holding you back and learn complete self-acceptance.

As writers, we understand that our hero and heroine's thoughts and beliefs create their point of view. Negative thoughts and beliefs are the scars of our characters' past experience, or their back story. In the romance genre, negative past experiences often prevent our characters from finding love (love is

Positivity is discovering your quiet center and inner strengths. It's having an awareness of who you are and what you want, and taking definitive steps towards getting it. But, at the same time, it's also accepting uncertainty, and surrendering to the flow of life.



also self-love or self acceptance). When the book ends, our characters are transformed, their conflicts resolved, and they find the love they deserve.

It's so easy to see our characters' struggles on the page, but in our personal lives, sometimes, we writers can't see our own struggles, or that certain negative thoughts are standing the way of our happiness.

If we look at our past, we've each had toxic experiences where we've been humiliated or badly hurt and, from these painful experiences, we derive a certain message about ourselves. We all know what these messages sound like: "I'm lazy; I'm not good enough; I'm not smart enough; I'm not lovable; I'm bad." Oftentimes we can't move beyond these "false" messages and grow as an individual. Some of us end up recreating these negative dramas over and over in our lives.

There are two aspects to self-acceptance. Sometimes we take on too much (like in the example above). Other times, we are not accountable at all for our actions and behaviors. We want to see ourselves as perfect, so we claim only our positive traits and then assign our negative traits to others (like the family pet, our spouse, friends and coworkers, but most of all, to our enemies). We all know what this sounds like: "He won't listen; she's a power tripper; he's only out for himself; they've got it all wrong."

Complete self-acceptance is assimilating the shadow side of our personality, or unflattering traits that include our weaknesses, shortcomings and primal instincts.

COMPLETE SELF-ACCEPTANCE is assimilating the shadow side of our personality, or unflattering traits that include our weaknesses, shortcomings and primal instincts. As we assimilate these negative traits and accept them, we become less judgmental of others. By recognizing our human reality, we suddenly become aware that our behavior and actions are OUR CHOICE. We can unshackle ourselves from the notion that we continually have to be right, and always have the right answers, and instead, work to develop our compassion and respect for others and find understanding in times of conflict and suffering.

Complete Self Acceptance sounds like this: "Yes, I can be lazy at times and that's okay. I didn't get the job I wanted or the job that makes use of my full potential, but I do have a job and I'm going to do my best. I've had failed relationships, but I'm not a failure at relationships. His/her leaving me had to do with them not being able to give love at that particular time. I am loveable. I have always been loveable. In the past, I've hurt some people and made some bad decisions, but I've learned from my experiences. I've been down some bumpy roads, been scraped up a bit, but I can be myself, speak my truth and share my story. My heart is open and I'm ready to connect with others and hear their story, too. I see all the positive and negative traits about myself AND, I love myself unconditionally."

Constance Smith is a dentist, writer and care giver to her husband who has Parkinson's disease. She believes that through adversity we can find transformation and reinvent our lives. Positivity is learning to trust your personal creative process.

Please look for Step 2 in the August, 2010 Mid-Michigan Mirror.

The following article appeared in the June 2010 issue of romANTICS, the newsletter of the Toronto Romance Writers, Susan Haire, editor. It may be reused by RWA chapters with appropriate credit to the author and chapter.

Creating a Vivid, Realistic Setting For Your Novel

By Margaret Moore

One of the most important things you have to do when you write a novel is to establish a sense of the time and place in which your novel takes place, and do it quickly. This is one way to draw your reader into the world of your characters, and to engage their imagination.

You can always take the most easy way out — say so right in the beginning, as a heading before the story begins. *England, 1066*, for instance. This tells the reader right away where they are and what sort of things to expect.



But it takes more than that to really establish a sense of time and place. Think details — the buildings, the furnishings, the clothes, the vehicles. You should have the details as correct as you possibly can for the era in which you're writing, including the present. If you're writing about a mall, just saying "the mall" isn't enough. Large? Small? Well kept? A mess? Ditto a castle, or a manor house.

To add another layer to your setting, think of the five senses: sight, sound, smell, taste and touch. Don't think just about what your characters can see, but how else they experience their world.

Be on the look-out for the "telling detail," something that immediately tells your reader they're not in Kansas anymore (unless, of course, they are <G>). It can be a simple, everyday thing, like a utensil, or something really unique to a time period, like a uniform or a hat. Sometimes one item like this can be worth paragraphs of general description.

Ultimately, the amount of space you devote to setting is a matter of style — there is no "right" or "wrong" here. Some readers like to feel totally immersed in the setting; others prefer a faster-paced story, or one that concentrates more on the conflict between the characters. Think of the books you've enjoyed the most, and ask yourself how much the setting, and the descriptions, contributed to that experience.

Recommended Reading:

"Word Painting: A Guide To Writing More Descriptively" by Rebecca McClanahan.

USA Today bestselling author and past president of Toronto Romance Writers, Margaret Moore has written over forty historical romance novels and novellas for Harlequin, Avon and HarperCollins Childrens Books. Her latest release is THE WELSH LORD'S MISTRESS, a Harlequin Historical Undone available at eHarlequin. Visit Margaret at www.margaretmoore.com or her blog at <http://margaretmoore.blogspot.com>.

The following was re-published in the May issue of Midwest Muse, newsletter of Midwest Fiction Writers (MFW). It first appeared in the December 1991, Midwest Fiction Writers, All the "Write" Stuff newsletter. It may be used or forwarded by RWA chapters with proper attribution to Coral and MFW.

A Month's Worth of What To Do Next

By Coral Smith Saxe

Like most of you, I have a very busy life. I have a set number of hours each week during which I can sit down to write with no (okay, with minimal) interruptions. I'm always looking for ways to get the creative fires going quickly, so that I don't spend those few hours gnashing my teeth at a blank computer screen. What follows is some of what I've been calling my What to Do Next List. You could say it's a resource for plotting, or you could call it a brainstorming technique, or it could serve as an aid for those dreadful middle of the book blues. It also helps me to break out of that linear, rigid mindset that says I have to write the whole book in exact, chronological order, scene after scene, beginning through ending. Using this list, I can write what it really know, or really feel at the time, and so I always have something to show for the few precious hours I have to write. So here goes:

- 1) Okay, let's get right down to it: write a love scene. How far will your characters go? What emotions do they bring to the scene? How does it change them?
- 2) Write an argument or confrontation. Who is it between? What is the main issue? Are they saying what they really want to say? What is at stake for each character if they win or lose the argument?
- 3) Describe a location. What are your characters doing there? What does it mean to them? Is it old, new, familiar, strange? Why are they there?
- 4) Go Shopping! (I love this one.) What kind of things would your characters buy? Can they afford them? Will they buy gifts for other people? Is there one, small, precious thing that they must have? Do they shop at Saks or Salvation Army?
- 5) Go to a wedding. Whose wedding? Who's there? Where is it held? Does it go smoothly? Are some of the guests wearing tuxedos and light-up noses? What hopes and fears do the characters have? What rituals have the most meaning for them? Will someone step in and refuse to forever hold his peace?
- 6) Take your characters on a picnic.
- 7) Give them a moment of fear for their lives.
- 8) Show them giving or receiving something unexpected.
- 9) Invited some children or small animals. Rodents, perhaps?
- 10) Introduce a rival.
- 11) Stage a rebellion. Does someone want to kick over the traces and run free? Does this rebellion have a cause? Is it personal or political?
- 12) Let them betray one another. Or seem to.
- 13) Write the ending. It's nice to know where you're going to arrive at the end of your journey. It's like getting a Christmas gift in July.
- 14) Create a home for your characters. Where do they live? Is it messy or neat? Opulent or shabby? In the city or the country? Castle or cabin? Full of precious memories or stark and new? Crowded or empty? Dark or sunny?



- 15) Write a scene around a costume. Go ahead, write up what you have always wanted to see someone wearing, or better yet, what you yearn to wear yourself. Where and when would they wear this outfit? A ball gown in a swamp -- lots of possibilities there. How will people react? Is it a disguise? Will it entice or repel?
- 16) Write a scene set in a famous place or go where you always wanted to go. (Do your homework, of course! Research the place thoroughly.) Take your characters walking in the Tuilleries, riding on Pall Mall, dancing at Almack's, swimming in Lake Geneva, rock-climbing in Yosemite, strolling on Boston Common, driving over the Rockies, going over Niagra Falls in a VW bug -- and find out how it feels to be there for your characters.
- 17) Write a scene around an object or props. Two engagement rings. A family bible. A bottle of cheap champagne, a bird cage, three umbrellas, fresh fruit, a treasure chest, a stolen letter, a bouquet of ragweed, a coffin, a stereopticon slide, a chunk of fool's gold, burnt biscuits, a photograph, and a partridge in a pear tree. Who has this object? Who wants it? Who want to get rid of it? Did someone make it by hand? Does it have magical properties? Sentimental value?
- 18) Show your characters in the hands of their enemies.
- 19) Show them in the bosom of their families.
- 20) Find a secret place where your heroine/hero goes to get away.
- 21) Order Chinese food -- would they get plain chowmein or shark's fin soup?
- 22) Recall their first kiss.
- 23) Take your characters out for the evening -- to a restaurant, a brothel, a formal dinner, a stuffy political ceremony, a lynching, a square dance, an auction, an orgy. Do they mingle, yawn, make a scene, spill the soup, create a sensation, make an impassioned speech, rile an enemy, break a few hearts, steal the silver, make love in the coat closet, get lost in the garden, go into labor, or challenge someone to a duel? Special occasions often bring out the unexpected.
- 24) Work is so important. Put your characters to work. What tools do they use? Is it physical or mental labor? Who do they work with? Do they love their job? Who's the boss? Is it creative, menial, public, solitary, artistic, dangerous, boring, meaningful, dishonorable, or death-defying? Show their daily routine. What would happen if the routine were disrupted? What was their first day like?
- 25) Introduce somebody famous.
- 26) Make them sick. Or wounded. Are they passive and accepting, ornery or stubborn, optimistic or pessimistic? Will a miracle be necessary? Is there a doctor in the house/woods/galaxy?
- 27) Sue somebody. Arrest them. Take them all to court. What happens there?
- 28) Or, take them all to court. Who is the monarch? What happens at the palace?
- 29) Spend the holidays with your characters. Christmas, Ground Hog's Day, Frodo Baggin's Birthday. Does it bring up conflicts, heal old wounds, bore your characters silly? Do they eat or drink too much? Does it mark a rite of passage?
- 30) When all else fails, kill somebody off.
- 31) When all else fails, have a baby.

And that's it. One for every day of the month. The act of writing requires a leap of faith. I hope I've given you some good jumping-off spots.

The following article appeared in the June 2010 issue of Love Notes, official newsletter of the Music City Romance Writers. Permission granted to reprint or forward with proper credit given to chapter and author.

10 Things Every Writer Needs to Know

by C.J. Redwine



1. Finish a book.

Stop starting every shiny new idea and find the discipline to type one idea all the way through to The End. It won't be perfect. It probably won't ever be published. But what you'll learn about yourself and the process will be invaluable and every subsequent lesson on craft will make a lot more sense.

2. Don't be so eager to share your work with others.

It's important to protect the creative process. Staying away from too much outside input until you're sure of the story and the characters is a good idea. Write until you're sure of the story and THEN invite critiques from CPs. And if you're posting chapters of your work willy-nilly online, stop. Editors are leery about selling a book when much of it has already been offered for free.

3. Less talk, more typing.

There are many ways to network with other writers. I agree that can be an important resource. However, many newer writers spend more time talking about writing than actually writing. Write more. Talk about it less.

4. Read.

Reading within your genre gives you a firm grasp of the genre and what's already been done. Reading outside your genre gives you inspiration for new ideas you could bring to the table. Read.

5. Linger.

Set the scene. Explore the emotions. Record the sensory detail. Don't be in such a hurry to get from point A to point B that you neglect to deliver the entire scope of the scene to your reader. If you don't know how to linger without filling your pages with exposition--fill your pages with exposition. You can revise later.



6. Understand that writing is largely about revising.

Revising is often harder than writing the first draft. Your novel won't be perfect the first time around. It doesn't matter. What you didn't learn about craft by finishing your first draft, you'll learn by revising.

7. No book is ever perfect.

There's always something you can change. There are no perfect books, but there are excellent books and the trick is knowing when you've hit that level and can let it rest.

8. Some books won't ever be published but you should write them anyway.

I know you think the book you're writing NOW is the one. You may be right. Then again, you may be wrong. It doesn't matter. What matters is pushing yourself to write the very best book you can and then surprising yourself with how much better you can make it through revising. No finished draft is ever a wasted endeavor.

9. Self-doubt comes with the territory.

All of us share one thing in common--we worry that we won't measure up. We worry that we will. We worry that no agent/editor/reader will snatch up our book and when they do, we worry they won't like it. When they do, we worry our next one will bomb instead. You can't get rid of every shred of doubt and you don't need to. The trick is to answer the doubt with action. Keep your head down and write. Take praise and criticism with as much humility and wisdom as you can and then write some more.

10. Interest and inspiration start books. Determination, perseverance, and stubbornness finish them.

If you're waiting for your "Muse" to return before you discipline yourself to write, you won't finish your book. If you want life to slow down, your schedule to clear, or the people around you to suddenly come to their senses and support your passion before you make the commitment to finish your book, you won't finish. Finishing a book takes giving up sleep, turning down invitations, and refusing to watch tv so you can write instead. Finishing a book means writing a scene that refuses to go smoothly even though you'd rather do just about anything else. If you want to turn your writing from hobby to career, find the determination, perseverance and stubbornness to finish a book.

About the Author:

C.J. Redwine is repped by Holly Root of Waxman Literary Agency and teaches online writing workshops. For more info, go to <http://queryworkshop.blogspot.com>



—CHAPTER CHATTER—



MEMBER NEWS

Nancy Gideon: *MASKED BY MOONLIGHT* is out and has been getting great reviews. My former Avon editor, who is now editor-in-chief at the Literary Guild, put together a special package for me (it's who you know!) for their Rhapsody Book Club (romance) with the first three books coming out in one soft cover edition called *BY MOONLIGHT*. It will be available in August! A Hollywood producer has also expressed interest after seeing my PW review (but you know how those things go...). Still, a pretty dangd exciting month! Now, back to Book 4 revisions...

Lucy Kubash: My book was an "Editor's Pick of the Week" on the White Rose website. I also had a review of my book and an author interview up at Clare Revell, a fellow White Rose author's website, <http://telscha.blogspot.com> Lucy and Rosanne Bittner will be doing a book signing at Lakeside Books in Coloma on June 26. Working on the book entered in I Will Write a Book and playing with my new little dog!

Lana Miersen: Travelled to NYC for my aunt's 100th birthday party and did some sightseeing. Doing battle with Windows 7, trying to get my HP All-In-One (5 years old) to work with it. Making additional changes to plot of futuristic.

Alyssa Marble: STILL working on major plot modifications on my historical. Will I ever get it done? I hope so, because I haven't even started my "I Will Write A Book" entry yet. Guess I bit off more than I can chew...er, write! Looking forward to National in July.

Aileen Hyne: I'm doing very little, but the dogs and cats are happy.

Julie McMullen: I've gotten into a steady writing schedule (at long last!!) I entered 3 contests. I got 2 agent rejections last month and I will be sending queries to 5 agents this weekend. I'm keeping my fingers crossed! I'm busy with revisions on two of my stories (a historical and a fantasy). And now that my kids will soon be out of school, I'm wondering if it's possible to maintain my current writing habits.

Melissa Ford Lucken: Reworking "old" manuscript and almost half done with MFA degree.

Tracy Roper: Back from Scotland full of story ideas (but no title yet for the "I will write a book" contest!) My contemporary manuscript is currently being reviewed by one editor and two agents. I have also submitted chapters to a couple more contests. I'm looking forward to the National Conference and hoping to get lots of writing done before that.

Margo Hoornstra: Had a book signing at a Fine Arts day in our town. I judged a contest for them and they invited me to sign. Working on a number of projects (5 stories) for a new line for Wild Rose Press.

Laurie Kuna: Did final in Hearts Through History but haven't bothered to look at the scores either. Going to RWA and planning to network like crazy and enjoy the Magic!

Loralee Lillibridge: Had one rejection from SSE; sent another completed to editor. Going to Orlando RWA. Also working on a new project in a different direction.



Katharine Ashe: My debut historical romance, *Swept Away by a Kiss*, is a July 27, 2010, release.

Dana Corbit Nussio: Finishing new proposal for *Steeple Hill*, also working on YA family drama proposal.

Roger Nelson: Wrote four short stories since retiring in January. These short stories will probably appear in similar form as a chapter in my next novel. They are: 1. *Winter Olympics*; 2. *Hating Valentine's Day*; 3. *All the Way Down in my Shoes*; 4. *Gullible People*.

Connie Smith: Working on the "Caregiver's Survival Guide," working full time private practice dentistry. Son will join my practice next year. My husband had experimental brain surgery last summer and had a device implanted into his brain for his Parkinson's disease. He's doing much better after hardly being able to walk.

Florence Price: Not much accomplished on my WIP, other than a little more definitive plotting and outlining. I finished up the workshop on *Fairies and Other Magic Folk*. I'm looking forward to national with eager anticipation, and I'll also be a judge in the YA category for the Golden Pen Contest.

Ami Weaver: I gave up on my Maggie-winning ms. It can't be written. Interesting because it's actually done, it's just not right. I can't make it work in a cohesive manner--it's like I'm trying to force them into the wrong story. So I've dusted off an old ms that I entered in this year's Maggie that's about half-revised. I'm also starting a paranormal for *I Will Write A Book*. School gets out soon, then I'll be home with all 4 kids. I'll need to settle into a new writing routine for the summer.

Rosanne Bittner: Submitted her final, edited version of her newest book, *PARADISE VALLEY*, to her agent June 1st. It's a new western romance set in 1800's Wyoming, mostly along the Outlaw Trail. Rosanne and Lucy Kubash will be doing a book signing at Lakeside Books in Coloma on June 26. Rosanne is keeping her fingers crossed that she will finally be "on the shelves" again in a few months. She and hubby are planning another big trip west in August. Rosanne says her Jeep refuses to go in any other direction when it comes to long trips. "Some day I will head for the mountains and just disappear." Hmmmm. Sounds like a good plot!

Annette Briggs: Finally inching forward with scenes for my current WIP. Added a third POV to my current story. I think it's what I needed to do and so far it's working.

Maris Soule: Will be on a panel June 2nd at Kazoo Books II, attending Midwest Writers Workshop in Muncie the end of July, giving an on-line workshop in August, attending Bouchercon in October, moving in August and trying to find time to work on Alaskan story.



Members' Current and Upcoming Releases Fall/Winter 2010 and Spring 2011

Jackie Braun: *A Dinner, A Date and a Desert Sheikh*, Harlequin Romance, June 2010, and *Inconveniently Wed*, the third book in the *Girls Weekend in Vegas* continuity, Harlequin, August 2010. Coming in October 2010 is *Star-Crossed Sweethearts*, the seventh book in the *Brides of Bella Rosa* continuity from Harlequin Romance. www.jackiebraun.com

Arianna Skye/Sidney Ayers: *Wings of Desire* is available in e-book and at Amazon.com through Eternal Press. www.ariannaskye.com *Beauty School Demon* will be available in Spring, 2011 from Sourcebooks Casablanca. www.sidneyayers.com

Nancy Gideon: The first three books in a shape shifter series from Pocket Books: *Masked by Moonlight*, June 2010, *Chased by Moonlight*, July 2010 *Captured by Moonlight*, August 2010. nancy.gideon.com

Melissa Ford Lucken w/a Isabelle Drake: *Roughneck by Request*, from Ellora's Cave (Quickie), available January 19, 2010 www.isabelledrake.com

Alison Hart/Jennifer Greene: New releases by Jennifer Greene from Silhouette Romantic Suspense: *Secretive Stranger*, April 2010, *Mesmerizing Stranger*, September 2010, *Irresistible Stranger*, December 2010. Also coming in November, 2010 is a Special Edition, *The Billionaire's Handler*, by Jennifer Greene. www.jennifergreene.com

Maris Soule: *As The Crow Flies*, another P.J. Benson Mystery, published by Five Star, a subdivision of Cengage Learning, will be released in March 2011. www.MarisSoule.com

Katharine Ashe: *Swept Away by a Kiss*, Katharine's debut historical romance, will be available on July 27, 2010 from Avon. *Captured by a Rogue Lord* will be available from Avon in April 2011. www.katharineashe.com



—THE FINAL REFLECTION—

My First National Conference

By Alyssa Marble
Editor, Mid-Michigan Mirror

The June meeting is the last meeting until August. Similarly, there is no July newsletter. This is due to the fact that the RWA National Conference is July 28-31.

I find myself watching the approach of the National Conference with mixed elation and anxiety. Mostly elation. I'm ready to bounce right out of my shoes, I'm that excited. It's my very first National Conference. The important questions surface first, of course. What am I going to wear? Then I start thinking about my chance to rub elbows with agents and editors and authors that—to little unpublished me—are celebrities.

And here comes the anxiety. *I'm so out of my league!* That thought keeps screaming through my brain. What do I know of galleys (isn't this a kitchen on a ship or something?) and line edits, pacing and sequels? I've only completed one book—and it's bad. Really bad.

Then the light bulb goes on. That's why I'm going to the National Conference. To learn from those who have been there, done that and are willing to share their knowledge. I'm ready to soak up every drop of information that trickles my way. I just hope I don't have a repeat of the one and only time I met Nora Roberts.

Nora: Hi.

Me:

Nothing. Not 'hi,' not 'I love your books,' not 'I want to be you when I grow up.' I just stare at her, mouth hanging open so that lucky Nora can count my fillings. Oh, the horror!

Alyssa Marble - Editor

Submission Guidelines

Topics: writing-related—business/marketing, craft, how-to, interviews with industry professionals, book reviews, member news, member bios, members' latest releases, and program recaps, etc.

Manuscripts: single-spaced, readable 12 pt. black font, no special formatting or colors, one-inch margins, saved in rich text format.

Deadline: the 2nd Saturday of the month, unless otherwise stated. Member News deadline is the 3rd Saturday (meeting day).

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Chapter Information

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