

♥ Winner of the 1999 RWA® Mid-Sized 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 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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June 21 Meeting at Gallagher's in Kalamazoo

Our June speaker is Laurie Kuna AKA Laurie Carroll, author of *A War Of Hearts*. Laurie is leading us through a writing exercise on active/passive voice, so bring your pen/pencil. If you know Laurie, you know that this meeting could be a LOT of fun. <G>

Pat Lazarus, Vice-president

The Write Stuff . . .



I have a deadline devil sitting on my shoulder as I write this month's message.

I promised myself I would have my manuscript completed by a certain date and off to an editor and an agent who expressed interest. I encountered setbacks this past month that slowed the writing—life happens—but I kept plugging away (cheered on by several of my MMRWA sisters). There are a few chapters to go, about two weeks more of work, and then I'll have a completed manuscript to rejoice over and submit (hopefully) for publication. That is a goal worth sacrificing for.

How I would love to escape from my self-imposed imprisonment at my computer desk. Take a boat ride on the lake. Run barefoot through the grass. Plant some spring flowers. Test the strength and endurance of my allergy medication.

I'm probably not alone in yearning for release. Both the published and unpublished among us have deadlines and goals to meet.

Meeting goals and deadlines involves dedication and usually involves the willingness to make sacrifices. Seeing family and friends becomes a sometime thing. A full night's sleep becomes a luxury. Meals come out of a can or package. Laundry gets done when there is nothing left to wear. Favorite TV shows go unwatched. The to-be-read pile of books grows taller. The golf clubs never make it out of the bag. Spring cleaning—oh, forget that.

Spring fever will have to wait as well.

I suppose I could dig out my ancient laptop and sit outside on the deck and write, but I think we all know where that would lead. So, I gaze out my window with longing, and then drag myself back to the task at hand.

Besides, in a few weeks, the flowers won't all be gone. If anything, there will be even more for me to admire and sneeze over. And after a brief frolic, and some time spent catching up on lost sleep, it will be back to the computer to begin work on the next novel.

The writing life can be maddening and satisfying, challenging and exhilarating. It demands devotion, sacrifice and persistence, but isn't that true of any worthwhile endeavor?

And now, back to finishing the "darn" book.

***Lana Miersen,
President***



Second Annual Angel Award



During our April Retreat from Harsh Reality, the Mid-Michigan Chapter of Romance Writers of America® presented the 2003 Angel Award, established in 2002 as recognition of meritorious service. This year's recipient was Nancy Gideon for her long lasting influence and inspiration. Nancy willingly shares her knowledge of the writing business with others. She has served as Vice President of MMRWA, Program Chair, and Retreat Chair. From 1996 to 2002 she held the position of editor-for-life for the chapter newsletter, raising it to award winning status before turning the reigns over to another. She currently serves as the editor for the published author's newsletter that is available industry wide. She has selflessly volunteered her time and energy to up and coming writers by offering valuable critiques and willingly answering questions.

Juli Schuitema



THEY'RE SO HOT!



For our May program, Lori and Toni Karayiannis shared their journey from unpublished dreamers to torrid tale-tellers. An informal discussion followed and the pair gave us some insightful advice based on their experience in the writing business.

The Lazarus Connection, our Mid-Michigan troubadours (Lisa Cardle, Pat Lazarus and Laurie Kuna), summed up the program with a musical tribute, composing and singing these songs in Lori and Toni's honor:

THEY'RE SO HOT! (Tune: He's So Fine)
(Patricia Lazarus, Lisa Cardle)

They're so hot. And we like them a lot.
But it seems such a shame. We can't spell their last name.
Well, they're really Karayiannis. Thought we call them Carrington.
Yeah, they write as Torrid Tori...Blazing pros that they've become.
He's a soft spoken guy. She's real sweet, not so shy.
And their work makes us sigh...so why not give them a try.
Don't know how the two do it, but they really heat things up.
Nominated for two Rita's ...and that ain't all luck.

They're so hot (oh yeah). Giving all they got (oh yeah).
What we're *CONSTANTLY CRAVING* (oh yeah).
Heroes who'll be saving (the day somehow)
Sent *DUSTY CONRAD* on a hunt (oh yeah)
To find out *WHAT A WOMAN WANTS* (oh yeah)
A LICENSE TO THRILL. SECRET SINS that kill
'Cause *YOU ONLY LOVE ONCE.*'

AN UNLIKELY PAIR. RED HOT AND RECKLESS it seems.
They give us books that we love. The kind that fulfill all our dreams.
'Cause they're so hot...(so hot) They're so hot ...(so hot)
They're so hot...(uh huh) They're so hot...(oh yeah)
SSSSSS!



HEY TONI AND LORI (To the tune of Hey Paula)
Written by Patricia Lazarus for Lori and Tony Karayianni

Hey, hey, Lori I want to write with you
Hey, hey, Lori no one else could ever do
I've waited so long
To make scenes with you
Lori, I can't write this without you
This Romance, this romance

Hey, Tony
I want to write with you
Hey, hey, hey, Tony
Wanna collaborate too
If you think that you
can write with me too,
Our books will be hot and true
Romance, romance

Writing means plotting, and follow-through
Being together, the whole day too
Writing means waiting and hoping that soon
The world will be reading our book
Our romance, our romance

Hey, Hey, Lori I've been writing for you
Hey, hey, Tony I wrote a love scene just for two
Writing means working around the clock
Being together through writer's block

Writing means waiting and hoping that soon
The world will be reading our book
Our romance, our romance.



Happy June Birthdays



Beth Trembley 11

Annette Briggs 17



Maris Soule 19



Member News

Chris Allen-Riley: halfway through a romantic comedy.

Dawn Bartley: still waiting; husband is free to travel!

Lisa Cardle: moving to Georgia ; packing house and still managed to squeeze in revisions on one and a half chapters.

Sue Charnley: had requests for partials from agent Susannah Taylor of Richard Henshaw Group and editor Micki Nuding of Pocket Books.

Jean E. DeSavage, new member: trying to pull my manuscript off my computer that crashed Thursday.

Michele Hickerty: waiting to hear from Silhouette and Avon; working on contemporary.

Aileen Hyne: researching Victorian sports and games.

Pat Lazarus: working on two book covers.

Melissa Lucken: mailed a partial; starting on new (read old unfinished) project.

Tammy Kearly: finished single title contemporary; partial with St. Martins & Avon; a complete with an agent.

Lucy Kubash: working on a query letter.

Laurie Kuna: not much writing; awaiting seniors' last days at school.

Lana Miersen: completed *Falcon's Way*!

Kathleen Nance: *Enchantment* is a finalist in the Prism Contest, fantasy category; Spellbound received 4 and ½ stars, Top Pick from Romantic Times.

DeAnna Talcott Pyle: sold to Silhouette Romance (tentatively titled, *Rainbows, Rings, and Remembered Things*); sent new SR proposal; waiting on synopsis from Luna; did copy edits on November book.

Dickee Six: working on WWII romance.

Connie Smith: moving into new dental office; working on forensic book.

Cheryl Steimel: halfway through romantic comedy.

Eddie Wilson: revising, revising; working; job hunting.

Welcome to our New Members

Sharon Chafin
Highland Indiana

Michelle Celmer
Clawson Michigan

Jean E. DeSavage
Kalamazoo, Michigan



Many Thanks to **Tammy Kearly** our new RWA Pro Liaison.
And
Jodi Copeland and **Cheryl Steimel** our new co-chairs of the Member Recognition Committee.

Thank you to all MMRWA members for their cards and e-mail condolences for the death of my husband. **Dickee Six** Thank you!

The Business of Writing, an Inside View: Part Three From Mid-Michigan's published authors

Jean Drew

What is your idea of the most important rules of etiquette?

I think it's very important to always keep in mind that you can't afford to be a prima donna. Some authors can be very demanding, even new ones. Always be polite and always be courteous. I believe that goes further than anything. It might not get you published immediately, but I'll bet they don't forget you. And then, who knows.



What were you least prepared for?

My UK publisher going belly up. But the CEO had real class. She personally telephoned every author, no matter where in the world they happened to be, to give them the sad news.

What helped you the most with the business of being a writer?

I think having to take care of my own promotion (in the case of e-books). It's a terrific training ground. You also appreciate the value of the promotional dollar.

If you could only give one bit of business advice to a new author, what wisdom would you offer?

It's not exactly business but maybe James Allen can say it for me:
Dream lofty dreams, and as you dream, so shall you become.
Take care, Jean

Dana Nussio

What was your biggest surprise concerning the business end of being a published author?

I was surprised how hard it was to get published a second time after that first book and how hard it still is to continue publishing books. I had this misconception that it would be smooth sailing after that first "call," and I thought that selling once meant that I kind

of understood what the publisher needed. I was wrong on both counts. My first book after I sold was rejected, and when I did sell again, that book required huge revisions. Now I realize I'm just beginning to get my feet wet in this industry, and it's going to take a lot of hard work to become a career novelist.

Diane Burton

What was your biggest surprise concerning the business end of being a published author?

How important distribution is, especially if you are published by a small/new press. If bookstores do not stock your publisher's books on a regular basis, it is hard for readers to find your book. It is then more difficult to build up a readership.

What were you least prepared for?

How important the first 6 weeks are after your book is released with regard to your sell-through numbers. And how much time and money promotion takes.

What helped you the most with the business of being a writer?

Published authors (both on the chapter and national level) who have been willing to share information. Brenda Hiatt's "Show Me the Money" (national) workshop & handout about First Sales advances & earn-outs was very eye-opening.

If you could only give one bit of business advice to a new author, what wisdom would you offer?

Enjoy the process. Enjoy the writing. And don't quit your day job. <g>

Diane Burton



Wil Emerson

What was your biggest surprise concerning the business end of being a published author?

Biggest surprise: I didn't have a clue about distribution (and still not sure of how that all works)! I imagined my book would be available at any book dealer if a customer requested. Order from the publisher or their distributor and sell it to the customer. My publisher is primarily interested in the library business and, thus so, their distribution is set up for that business. I quickly realized that the distribution business could seriously impact the amount of sells—either negatively or positively. Luckily, Barnes and Noble, Amazon.com and Books-a-Million services promote online sells and BN will order for their customers.

What is your idea of the most important rules of etiquette?

Rules of etiquette: -in the business: Always say thank you even if you receive a rejection or a negative critique. This is entirely a subjective business--you like blue skies and I like foggy mornings. And when Thank You doesn't work, this usually will: "Now isn't that an interesting viewpoint!" (Dog poop on your shoe has interesting facets to someone in this world!)

What were you least prepared for?

Least preparation: The continual need to re-read the work. I trusted the editor's eye and the type setter's skills.... After ten run-throughs, there were still errors and the type setter instilled a few that leaped out like a gross pimple on one's nose! Disheartening, but then you get over it.

What helped you the most with the business of being a writer?

What helped most with the business: I continue to struggle with the work of the business. Writing comes rather easily but getting the material out and accepted is a continuous pain in the A. What I practice religiously is: Submit, submit. My novels are widgets, a product to sell. I create the characters, the story, and the emotions but, after the birth process, it's time to sell it. No one will love it as much as I do. If I don't promote it, sell it like it's a golf ball, box of candy or a pair of shoes, it sits in a box like a lump of mashed potatoes. Who wants old, cold, lumpy potatoes? Your work becomes a product once it gets in the hands of an agent, editor or publisher. A writer should develop a sense of 'product' after the creative process is completed if they intend to sell it.

If you could only give one bit of business advice to a new author, what wisdom would you offer?

Business advice: Don't be afraid of rejection.....No matter what kind of feedback you receive, use it as a tool for learning. Send out a thank you, use the rejection letter as the next intro to another submission; take all written comments to heart. Analyze what critics write and then find a positive clue in their message. A recent agent said: "I'm very interested in your writing. In fact, an agent will pick this up soon, so please submit to others. I do not edit anything. I'm not sure about your prologue and I want only 75,000 words. (mine 86,000)...." She was very specific. I immediately responded, "I can edit, can revise the prologue and cut the word count." Will it work? Maybe. But it will exhibit that I want her representation and I'm willing to work for it. And if she says no again, no big deal. I have another package out to another agent...with her support behind it.

Many thanks to Diane Burton, Jean Drew, Wil Emerson and Dana Nussio for sharing their Inside Views with us this June.

The July issue of the Mid-Michigan Mirror will feature the Inside Views of Peggy Hanchar, Kathleen Nance, Marsha Ransom, and Maris Soule.

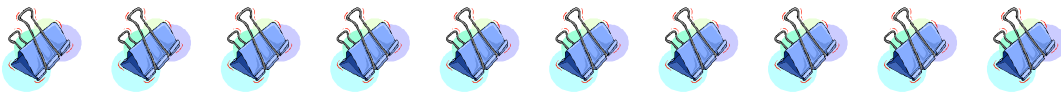


The following article by Elizabeth Sinclair appears in the May/June issue of the FCRW newsletter. Permission granted to share with other RWAR chapters with proper credit to FCRW and author. Cheri Clark, Editor, The Coastal Connection, FCRW's newsletter www.fcrw.net

You know you're a writer if....

- ...you use a banker's clip to hold back your unwashed, uncombed hair.
- ...there's more food scraps on your workspace than on your kitchen counters.
- ...when your husband comes home to find you dressed and coifed, he asks who you are and what you did with his wife.
- ...your neighbor's car accident spurs a plot rather than sympathy.
- ...you find yourself buying birthday gifts for the pizza delivery man, the UPS man, the FedEx man and the mailman.
- ...your idea of fun is smelling the paper in a brand new notebook.
- ...your kids have to start calling you by your pseudonym to get your attention.
- ...your pajamas and nightgowns are wearing out faster than your other clothes.
- ...the coffee rings on your workspace outnumber the money in your checking account.
- ...you get as excited over holding your first book as you did over holding your first child.
- ...your family begins talking about your characters as if they were long-lost relatives.
- ...providing clean underwear for your family is less important than providing clean copy for your editor.
- ...you spend more time and money in Office Depot than in the grocery store.
- ...your to-be-read pile is head-to-head with your dirty laundry pile.
- ...the \$10,000 addition on the house is to store your books and not your elderly mother-in-law.
- ...you name your new baby Hewlett Packard.
- ...your hips are getting wider than your shoulders.

Elizabeth Sinclair is the best-selling author of several romances including A QUESTION OF LOVE and THE PREGNANCY CLAUSE, Harlequin American, and THE DREADED SYNOPSIS. She's a founding member of First Coast Romance Writers. Her children know to use her pseudonym to get her attention<g>.



Contests

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

2003 Backwaters Prize

Sponsored by Backwaters Press

Postmark Deadline June 4, 2003

Original Poetry - complete manuscript 60-85 pages.

<http://www.thebackwaterspress.homestead.com/bwprize.html>

Lone Star Writing Competition
Northwest Houston RWA
Postmarked by June 13, 2003
Prologue/First Chapter (25 pages max)
<http://www.nwhrwa.freesevers.com/contest03.htm>

2003 Gold Leaf Contest (Published Writers)
New Jersey Romance Writers
Register Deadline: June 13, 2003
Romance novels with a first copyright date or first North American printing date of August 2002 through July 2003
<http://www.geocities.com/SoHo/Gallery/7019/2003GLguidelines.html>

Touched by Love Contest
Faith, Hope & Love Chapter
Received by June 15, 2003
Synopsis - 10 pages max. Beginning of Manuscript (total 50 pages max-including Synopsis)
<http://www.robinleehatcher.com/FHL/contests.htm#tbl>

Writer's Weekend 2003 Contest
Deadline June 15, 2003
Query, 2 page Synopsis, up to 25 pages of manuscript
<http://www.writersweekend.com/page0007.html>

L. Ron Hubbard's Writers of the Future
Received Deadlines: June 30th
<http://www.writersofthefuture.com/index1.htm>

Romancing the Novel Contest
Northeast Ohio RWA
Received Deadline - July 1, 2003
Enter first 25 pgs of manuscript
<http://members.aol.com/hfur/rwa3.html>

2003 Award of Excellence Contest
Outreach International Romance Writers
For both published and unpublished authors.
Received by July 1, 2003
Synopsis (10 pages max) and First TWO chapters, including prologue, if applicable (40 pages max).
<http://www.oirw.org/contest/index.html>

Sixth Annual Melody of Love Contest
Music City Romance Writers
Postmark Deadline: July 1, 2003
Entries limited to 30 pages each, including prologues.
<http://www.mcrw.com/contest.htm>

2003 Put Your Heart in a Book Contest
New Jersey Romance Writers
Postmarked by July 7, 2003
Synopsis and first chapter, each copy not to exceed 30 pages combined.
<http://www.geocities.com/SoHo/Gallery/7019/2003pyhiabrules.html>

Where the Magic Begins
Romance Writers Ink
Postmark Deadline: August 2, 2003
First 25 pages of manuscript
<http://www.ipcsolutions.com/rwi/contest.shtml>

Ozark Creative Writers Postmark by August 26, 2003
Check out the different categories...entrants must register for conference
Page down for details...
http://www.ozarkcreativewriters.org/annual_conference.htm

Share The Dream
Scriptscene Chapter
Postmark Deadline Extended to June 16, 2003, received no later than June 23rd.
First 15 pages of your screenplay (Final Judges are Film Industry Professionals)
<http://www.geocities.com/rewrit2002/entryform.html>

New Voice in Romance Contest (Futuristic - Time-Travel - Paranormal)
Send the first 50 pages, a 2- to 7-page synopsis and cover letter by June 16, 2003 to:
New Voice in Romance Contest
Dorchester Publishing Co.
276 Fifth Avenue, Suite 1008
New York, NY 10001
<http://www.romantictimes.com/>

Obadiah Press
Enter before December 31, 2003
Write a 1,000 to 2,000 word original article or essay based on the theme "Hope" and you could win \$5000*.
http://www.obadiahpress.com/contest_writers.htm

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

Directions to Gallagher's:**From the Southeast:**

- * Take I-94 W via the exit- on the left- toward CHICAGO.
- *Merge onto I-94 BR E/US-131 N via exit number 74B toward GRAND RAPIDS. 2.18 miles
- *Take the I-94-BUS/US-131-BUS exit- exit number 36A- toward KALAMAZOO. 0.40 miles
- *Turn SLIGHT RIGHT onto STADIUM DR/I-94 BR E/US-131 BR N. 0.49 miles

From the Southeast:

- * Take I-94 W via the exit- on the left- toward CHICAGO.
- *Merge onto I-94 BR E/US-131 N via exit number 74B toward GRAND RAPIDS. 2.18 miles
- *Take the I-94-BUS/US-131-BUS exit- exit number 36A- toward KALAMAZOO. 0.40 miles
- *Turn SLIGHT RIGHT onto STADIUM DR/I-94 BR E/US-131 BR N. 0.49 miles

From Lansing:

- *From W. St Joseph, Merge onto I-496 W via the ramp- on the left. 4.87 miles
- *Merge onto I-69 S via the exit- on the left- toward FT WAYNE/DETROIT. 37.09 miles
- *Merge onto I-94 W via exit number 38 toward CHICAGO. 34.48 miles
- *Merge onto I-94 BR E/US-131 N via exit number 74B toward GRAND RAPIDS. 2.18 miles
- *Take the I-94-BUS/US-131-BUS exit- exit number 36A- toward KALAMAZOO. 0.40 miles
- *Turn SLIGHT RIGHT onto STADIUM DR/I-94 BR E/US-131 BR N. 0.49 miles

From the Southwest:

- *Merge onto I-94 E
- *Merge onto I-94 BR E/US-131 N via exit number 74B toward KALAMAZOO/GRAND RAPIDS. 2.83 miles
- * Take the I-94-BUS/US-131-BUS exit- exit number 36A- toward KALAMAZOO. 0.40 miles
- *Turn SLIGHT RIGHT onto STADIUM DR/I-94 BR E/US-131 BR N.

From Grand Rapids and points North:

- *Merge onto US-131 S toward KALAMAZOO. 48.86 miles
- *Take the STADIUM DR E exit- exit number 36A. 0.24 miles
- *Turn SLIGHT RIGHT onto STADIUM DR/I-94 BR E/US-131 BR N. 0.70 miles

[Click here: Yahoo! Photos - View Photo](#) <link to Gallagher's map

Patricia Lazarus

**Deadline for submissions to the July issue of Mid-Michigan Mirror is July 15.
Your input and submissions are welcome.**



Revised MMRWA Meeting and Speaker Schedule 2003

Month/Day	Restaurant, City	Speaker/Program
June 21	Gallagher's, Kalamazoo	Laurie Kuna: Active/Passive Voice
July 12	Golden Rose, Lansing	TBA
August 16	Damon's, Grand Rapids	FBI Guy?
September 20	Gilbert's, Jackson	Tony Englund
October 11	Gallagher's, Kalamazoo	Nancy Gideon/Laurie Kuna
November 15	Golden Rose, Lansing	Gail Gaymer Martin
December	Christmas Party, TBA	Santa Claus

2003 Mid-Michigan Romance Writers of America Officers

President: Lana Miersen
j.l.miersen@cablespeed.com
 Secretary: Rohn Federbush
rohn@comcast.net

Vice-president: Pat Lazarus
LazArt2000@cs.com
 Treasurer: Diane Burton
Dburton72@aol.com

2003 Mid-Michigan Romance Writers of America Committee Chairs

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 PAN Liaison: Dana Nussio nussio@earthlink.net
 Retreat: Pam Trombley ptrombley@voyager.net
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