

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

The Mid-Michigan Mirror

A Reflection of Romance



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

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Mission Statement

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



As usual, our program featuring Patrick Merrill jump-started our imaginations and provided insider police ops information, but this time, he brought his lovely wife Julie who told us their own beautiful love story.

Please see recap on page 2.

Many thanks to the contributors to the JUNE Mid-Michigan Mirror

Our June 18 meeting will be held at the **Golden Rose** in Mason (Lansing area). Our speaker will be **Rosanne Bittner** with a timely program on “Staying the Course—staying on top during industry change.”

Directions on page 12

Happy JUNE Birthdays

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Dogwood by our own MMRWA member Irene Atkinson

A Note From Wil's Desk

By Wil Emerson, President



June has arrived and wedding bells come to mind. I call June the *For Better or Worse Month*. Do couples still exchange that phrase during their vows? Do blushless brides and unharnessed grooms about to take a matrimonial giant step, wonder if better or worse only

pertains to sickness and health? I'm quite sure it takes a few years or more of marriage to grasp the reality of better or worse. Too often young couples separate before they adjust to the tides in a relationship. It's much easier to leave, they believe, than work on the problems when 'worse' seems to get the 'better' of them.

And there goes romance. Or does it? Does love and all its romantic trimmings last a lifetime? Our stories tell us true love prevails. Something to ponder.

June, weddings or not, is a good time to reflect on the better or worse of daily life. Have we spent enough time on ourselves to keep us feeling bride-like? Eager to face new challenges, excited about the romance of life, interested in our body, mind and spirit?

Granted, it takes a lot of work on body, mind and spirit to promote a sense of well being that carries us above the toil of hum-drum daily commitments. But is it life in general that is so tedious or did we break an inner promise of staying committed to a healthy body, mind and spirit? How can we recapture the feeling of new love or skin-tingling excitement when the path is cluttered with easy ways out? We can embrace the dawn with unbridled energy and reclaim ourselves, our inner beauty, our youthful spirit, our generous mind, our love of life--if we work on it. We can. And the good feelings return twofold when a commitment to be the best you can be--in your personal life and in your professional life--is fulfilled. Are you who you want to be--for better-- not worse?

When it comes to writing, there are a lot of quick fixes for beating the 'worse' side of the business. We can hire a book doctor, join a critique group or tear up the meaningless pages we've written and start all over again. Sometimes a jolt of reality in the form of a rejection letter will startle us into taking a writing class. But the best medicine for all that ails you is to get back on track with a deep desire to succeed at whatever you set out to do. Dig in your heels and get to work. Make your personal life worthwhile, important, happy, successful, and joyous. Whether it's a poor diet, a broken relationship, a dented ego or a fractured foot holding you back, there's no better time to start a program of good health-- body, mind and spirit--than the month of June. Take a deep breath, go for a long walk, and smile at the people who pass by. Just like a novel, the person you want to be is waiting to be released...for better, not for worse. June...a great time of the year to make a lifelong commitment.

Happy writing in June and hope to see you at the monthly meeting. Cheers, *Wil*



A Recap of our May program:

Life as a Policeman's Wife: Patrick and Julie Merrill

By Catherine McClain

Guest speakers for the May MMRWA meeting were Grand Rapids Police Officer Patrick Merrill and his wife Julie. Patrick is a certified explosives expert, a certified emergency medical technician, a certified hazardous materials specialist, and is trained in field investigative work. He has been nominated for officer of the year three times. This is his third time speaking to our group.

Recap continued on page 3

Recap continued from page 2

Patrick does not consider himself “jaded,” but “realistic.” He came to Grand Rapids from military service. Some of the adjustments to police work are the compromises needed between work and home. There is not a lot of control over his duty as an officer, and his schedule is subject to many changes. As an example; today, (the day of our meeting) the city is expecting a visit from President Bush, and it takes priority over family and fun things - like this meeting. As the officer in charge of logistics for the President’s detail, and all of the outer security, Mr. Merrill needed to leave shortly. Things could change fast. There were 200 protesters nearby that authorities need to keep an eye on.

During the Clinton administration, Mr. Merrill was stationed in Arkansas. He worked with Secret Service details while he was there.

His biggest frustration as the “worker bee” sitting on the sidelines is watching how the politicians can mess up a project the ordinary guy has just spent hours and hours preparing. Specific issues within the organization need to be addressed, just as with any other business/working environment.

Co-workers with problems need to be weeded out. 5% of his people seem to be kooks. They mean well, but are really adolescents in adult bodies. They tend to be adult ADD, need extra supervision, and need to be managed.

Patrick works mostly with internet crimes now – cyber-forensics. There is a subculture that most people don’t know exists. Lots of kiddy-porn and abductions. The Internet has given many individuals an opportunity to express their deviant behavior. This subculture communicates with each other; they are organized and scary. Could be the person standing next to you in the grocery store. But, in order to communicate, they need to stick their necks out and expose themselves. That’s where the pedophile sting comes in. There are so many pedophiles, that a sting will generate as many as the officers are able to pick up at any one time. They are very easy to locate and come from all over the mid-west.

One thing that bothers him are officers who commit crimes, even though they are aware of police operations, their wiring and drive are out of whack and they are essentially out of control. Much like an alcoholic or a drug addict, they have very little self-control.

Officers have a high degree of accountability and must explain all their moves to anyone who may question the amount of force that is used--very frustrating. Adrenaline kicks in and it’s hard to stop the use of force when an officer’s own safety may be in question. Good partners are essential to watching each other’s back. Officers must work with people they trust, but sometimes they need to find new partners if the officer’s not comfortable with the assigned partner.

Patrick finds the most satisfying part of the job is being able to help those in need. But it’s frustrating to realize some people are beyond help. You do what you can to put them at ease and let it go.

Patrick believes people have the right to own and carry firearms. But he does not appreciate citizen vigilantes. People with firearms don’t have the kind of training that police receive. This makes them dangerous when they don’t understand the duty to retreat. Police have a duty to act, but the private citizen must retreat unless they are defending themselves. Sooner or later, an innocent person will be hurt. You can use lethal force to defend yourself, but nothing else.

His motivation to join the force was the opportunity to do the good deed, to save people. To pursue the noble course and to be the hero in times of need. A lot of times though, the satisfaction is not there, because so often tragedy is involved.

Patrick wears his gun everywhere, even in church. Concealed weapons laws do not apply to police officers. When traveling with a weapon, it must be in baggage. He cannot carry weapon on a plane.

Recap continued from page 3

Carrying stun guns and heavy duty mace can lead to a misdemeanor charge.

Situation: Possible stalker - can't do much until something happens. Can't arrest people for what they might do - trade off with our country's guaranteed liberties. Do you curtail civil liberties?

Local police handle local matters. FBI takes over with gun crimes involving drugs. Locals would handle initial investigation, but the feds would take over and put the person away. If it were just the drugs, or just the gun, the locals take the case, but put them together and the feds take over.

When there is an Amber alert, the neighborhood canvas goes into effect. Somebody knows or suspects something. Ask everyone.

Patrick knows Julie is in charge at home. He is in charge at work, but she lays down the law at home.

Julie's Point of View

Julie says Patrick is her man in the shadows. He lets everyone else shine and puts them first.

Julie recently received her Master's degree from Aquinas College in Education. Patrick wants her to go back for her PhD so he can be Mr. Doctor Merrill. They have been married 15 years. She was a young single mother when she met Patrick. He didn't know about her son and found out after their first date. She figured she'd never see him again, but he called her back. They dated 6 months before they were engaged.

Patrick joined the Air Force, and comes from a military family. He and Julie were by themselves most of the time and learned to depend on each other. They moved around a lot and life was hard, but it was a good time to learn about each other. They appreciate having things now after scratching and making the best of having very little. After the service, adjusting to civilian life was hard. It was easier though when they met up with other ex-servicemen and their families. Military families tend to be very young where many civilian couples wait until their later years to have kids. Not a lot in common.

Patrick is a romantic. Very devoted. Julie could say she didn't feel she was number one in his life and Patrick would give her flowers. He made surprise visits to her when they were separated by his duty assignments, and he encouraged her to finish college.

It was hard for her to get a job at all when they moved around a lot. So she had a lot of time and had to make her own life. Julie depended on Patrick a lot while she was finishing school. He was in Iraq for several months after the first Iraq war, and she learned to take charge and be the boss. They had to spend some time apart so she could finish college, and their kids stayed with the grandparents. Then when she finished school, and he finished police training, they moved to Grand Rapids.

Julie began teaching and with his police salary, they suddenly had enough money to make life more comfortable. Kids are aware of their dad's job. Tend to be the "kid cops" of the neighborhood. Patrick keeps kids in line. He's really on top of what they're thinking and doing. He checks their rooms etc. He can be a tough dad – he disciplines. He believes that kids don't seem to care about things as much when they are given everything and don't have to work for it. She is sure their daughter will be a cop when she grows up.

Garage break-ins: Patrick tends to leave their garage open at night. The working life is not as exciting for Patrick since he has taken over the computer operations at the station. Julie's fear factor is lower these days since he is not on the street much anymore. Patrick wants to be out on the street, but at 35, Julie is confident he will be staying in the office. He is a fantastic officer and really enjoyed working the street.

Recap continued from page

Patrick always has to be the best. He has a need to catch the bad guys and always liked the late shift because that's when the freaks and geeks come out. She feels he has an unconscious desire to stay in the action and therefore, sometimes "forgets" to close the garage door. They live in a nice neighborhood, but three times, they have been "invaded." Julie has been awakened by Patrick yelling "Grand Rapids police. Get down on the ground. Get down on the ground right now!" Now they have a motion sensor - ups the stakes for Patrick and gives him more of a head start on anyone poking around.

When they go out, they often run into people who are wanted for crimes. This is one of the reasons he carries a gun with him.

At times, Julie fears for his safety, will his partners watch over him? She worries about him because he is a closet smoker and drinks gallons of Mountain Dew. His job is high stress, and his habits could shorten his life.

She doesn't feel he brings his job home. If a relationship is secure, an officer should be able to talk about his job to his spouse. There would be more tension if he were a detective, but as a street cop, and now working with computer crimes, they don't have a problem with communication.

Patrick actually takes his gun off when he plays Santa – he's very good at that. He likes to speak in front of adults, but nervous in front of kids.

Julie doesn't like it when female officers are partnered with male officers. Most of the female officers fall into two categories as she sees it - Lesbian or man-chasers. Again, a relationship that is secure will not be affected, but she has seen problems happen. A woman's perception of a man in uniform is much more appealing than if he were wearing a suit and tie. Power is the key. There is a high divorce rate among police officers.

Julie feels the need to look her best and keep the relationship strong. She keeps lines of communication open. If she has doubts or any problems with his work, she will talk to him about it. He is a rare kind of man, very moral, and trust is essential in their relationship. When approached by the cop groupie type women, he doesn't fall for it and takes a lot of flack from his fellow officers for his stance. Infidelity is everywhere and temptation is a problem for many cops.

Julie knows he tells her only what she can handle about the real dangers he faces. He talks to his mother about some things (she is a deputy at a jail).

Patrick is affected by the emotional aspect of the job. Death and tough circumstances on the job must be dealt with, but can whittle away at who you are. She is very proud of the person he is and that he does his job because he cares. She doesn't think he is jaded just because he is a cop, but by aspects of the job that he can't change. Seeing what people do to each other affects him.

Patrick likes to write and Julie thinks he should take it seriously.





Our June speaker at the Golden Rose is MMRWA past president and mega-published author, Rosanne Bittner.

Rosanne has been writing nearly 25 years, with 57 titles published and approximately 8 million books sold worldwide, with foreign publications in Germany, Russia, Italy, Norway, France and Taiwan.

She recently contracted for the sale of her American Wilderness trilogy in Spain. She has won numerous writing awards over the years and is a member of Women Writing the West, Western Writers of America, Oregon-California Trails Association, Order of Indian Wars, Romance Writers of America, Mid-Michigan RWA and in her home town of Coloma, Michigan, she is an officer in the Lioness Club, a non-profit public service organization.

Rosanne writes romances, family sagas and historical fiction about American history, especially the Old West and Native Americans. Her most recent books are “inspirational” for Steeple Hill Books: WHERE HEAVEN BEGINS, WALK BY FAITH, and FOLLOW YOUR HEART (coming October '05). Currently she is working on expanding into new genres, including contemporary love stories, paranormal, and a World War II story.

Rosanne and her husband, Larry, have two grown sons, three grandsons and four step-grandchildren.



MEMBER NEWS

Chris Allen-Riley: Working on revisions.

Dawn Bartley: Streak of writing interrupted by a quilting weekend. Switching focus again!

Diane Burton: Writing and working in oil and gas industry.

Lisa Childs-Theeuwes: Finaled in Beacon contest with Bridal Reconnaissance, waiting to hear on proposals with senior, gearing up for panels I'm on in Reno.

Wil Emerson: Sent out *All in a Name*, working on a YA and mystery short stories.

Anne Marie King-Jakubiak: Got two rejections and was asked by a third publisher to send in the rest of my manuscript because they are interested.

Shar Koenig: Submitting screenplay version of latest release, working on publishing bonsai book, which I wrote 11 years ago.

Laurie Kuna: Not much writing happening right now as school's winding down, going to Reno.

Loralee Lillibridge: Doing copy edit for *Accidental Hero* (December 2005 Special Edition release) and working on revisions for option book, planning trip to RWA National in Reno.

Jodi Lynn Copeland Lozon: Sent three novella proposals to Kensington, working various projects.

Cathy McClain: Working on revision of *Heart of Alys*—this is the last one, preparing to welcome my daughter home for the summer. She has a great job starting Monday, the heading to California in September. Also still agent searching.

Lana Miersen: Rewriting futuristic, working to update website, planning trip to RWA National.

Dana Corbit Nussio: Working on a new proposal for Steeple Hill.

Maris Soule: Sent one book to book doctor, sent second book (revised) to editor at Hilliard and Harris, judged two contests and working on new suspense.

Cheryl Steimel: Working on Chris Baty's "No Plot, No Problem" challenge of writing 200 pages during the month of May—twenty-five pages to go, received a request from Chris Keesler for a proposal for a sequel to *Naked Elf*.

Approaching JULY Birthdays

Patty Gordon 2 DeAnna Pyle 6 Jennifer Armintrout 15 Marsha Ransom 15 Barbara Wismer 18

Understanding Writers

by Rohn Federbush

Wouldn't that be the greatest...to understand ourselves? After reading *Gifts Differing* by Isabel Briggs Myers with Peter B. Myers and *Speedreading People* by Paul D. Tieger and Barbara Barron-Tieger, there's very little I comprehend about myself; but you might be interested in reading the books to flesh out the personalities of your favorite characters.



According to these authors and their references, personalities can be classified in sixteen different types. Sure, sure. How are you going to remember sixteen types...right? I imposed a left brain (L)/right brain (R) paradigm overview of the literature to gain a more cohesive grip on the subject, which I've noted in parentheses for each term:

Extroverts (L) or Introverts (R); Sensors (L) or Intuitives (R); Thinking (L) or Feeling (R); Judging (L) or Perceivers (R). Intuitives are signified by the letter 'N,' so as not to confuse the term with the introverts.

A further classification is made as noted below:

1. **Traditionalists:** #1 ESTJ (4L), #2 ISTJ (3L/1R), #3 ESFJ (3L/1R), #4 ISFJ (2L/2R).
2. **Experiencers:** #5 ESTP (3L/1R), #6 ISTP (2L/2R), #7 ESFP (2L/2R), #8 ISFP (1L/3R).
3. **Conceptualizers:** #9 ENTJ (3L/1R), #10 and only 2% of the population INTJ (2L/2R), #11 ENTP (2L/2R), #12 INTP (1L/3R)
4. **Idealists:** #13 ENFJ (2L/2R), #14 (2%) INFJ (1L/3R), #15 ENFP (1L/3R), #16 (2%) INFP (4R)

Okay the jigsaw puzzle doesn't disclose a clear picture yet. However, if you read how these 'types' react in the work situation a shadow does appear. For instance: 65% of writers fall in the NF category (Intuitive Feeling types) as well as 76% of counselors are NF's.

Next I would like to make judgmental statements about those of us who normally receive rejections letters, not even encouraging rejections letters, instead of THE CALL. Elements of our type might be factors we want to concentrate on changing.

For instance: Extroverts are often impatient with long, slow jobs and like to have people around; whereas Introverts have trouble remembering names and faces. Introverts also like to think a lot before they act, sometimes without acting and have some problems communicating. Nevertheless, Extroverts can count in their favor that they are interested in the results of their job, in getting it done and in how other people do it. And they like variety and action. Introverts tend to be careful with details. They tend not to mind working on one project for a long time without interruptions.

Sensing types aren't patient when things get complicated; but they work steadily with realistic ideas of how long the project will take. They reach conclusions step by step. They seldom make errors of facts. Their opposite, Intuitive types, follow their inspirations, good or bad. Sensing types like solving new problems and enjoy learning a new skill more than using it.

Understanding Writers continued on page 8

Understanding Writers continued from page 7

Thinkers like analysis and putting things into logical order. They can do this without bothering about harmony with others in their environment. They are more analytically oriented and respond more easily to people's thoughts. The other side of the coin is the Feeling Types, whose efficiency may be badly disturbed by family or office feuds. They also need occasional praise to keep working. But they are in touch with other people's feelings.

Here come da' Judge. Judging types work best when they can plan their work and follow the plan. They like to get things settled and finished. They may decide things too quickly. They may not even notice new things that need to be done (like dinner not yet in the oven). Their opposite is called the perceptive type—the type who wants to know all about a new job. Judges tend to be curious and welcome new light on a thing, situation or person.

There you have it. Let me summarize by quoting from *Gifts Differing*: “Introverted Intuitives (IN) require the development of balancing judgment not only for the criticism and evaluation of intuitive understanding but to enable (them) to impart their visions to others and bring their visions to practical usefulness in the world. Sounds like a good goal for writers doesn't it?”

Rohn Alice Federbush is a past secretary for the Mid-Michigan chapter of RWA® as well as a world traveler, an artist, and an RWA Pro. In the past six years, she has completed twelve books and is involved in trying to market them and in writing more. Rohn has had six short stories published in literary journals between 1995 and 2001.

Rohn retired from the University of Michigan where she mothered a group of Applied Physics Graduate Students as Administrative Assistant II. Her marriage to an Emeritus Mathematician from U/M celebrated fifteen years in March. Her husband, Paul, is father to one son (an architect) and one daughter (a harpist). Rohn bore two sons during her first marriage (both are in the computer industry). Paul and Rohn share three granddaughters, Katrina, Maya and Saya, as well as one grandson, Nik.

For further information along this line see:
Fiction Writers Character Chart by Rebecca Sinclair
<http://www.eclectics.com/articles/character.html>

For Hook, Line and Sinker....

An exercise presented by Wil Emerson, President

Rate these anonymous contributions:

"There were four black and whites already at the 7-Eleven when I arrived. Several people had gathered in the parking lot behind the yellow police tape, huddling close for protection against the freezing Chicago rain. ---They weren't there for Slurpees."

How would you rate this opener? What essential information does it reveal?

For Hook, Line and Sinker continued on page 9

For Hook, Line and Sinker continued from page 8

Review: The genre and setting are set up in the first paragraph. The second paragraph reveals the protagonist has official business in the scene. But it takes the third paragraph to establish the female narrator (written in first person). And it is page three before her full name is revealed. She introduces herself to a witness at the crime. Jack (Jacqueline) Daniels.

Did it pique your interest? Does it follow the rules sufficiently to grab an editor/agents attention?

Bottom Line: This opening netted the author a six-figure advance and a three book contract, *Whiskey Sour*, by J.A. Konrath, (Hyperion). *Bloody Mary* is to be released this summer. And so the series goes.... He's one happy writer. By the way, romance does enter the picture. Jack Daniels desperately searches for love but her job often gets the best of her. (This is a male author writing in a female's voice.) A fun read.

Send your comments about this opener to The Mirror for the July/August issue at: afbriggs@hotmail.com or discuss these lines with us at the June meeting. Feel free to contribute some awesome openers you've encountered or written (anonymously if you prefer).

**Interesting and helpful articles for writers:**

The Industry's New Challenge by Ethan Ellenberg <http://www.ethanellenberg.com/industrychallenge.htm>

Writer's Cheatsheets: <http://www.inkalicious.com/cheatsheets.php>

How to Avoid the Top Ten Mistakes in Writing Synopses by Pam McCutcheon
<http://home.pcisys.net/~pammc/Synopsis.htm>



The following article appeared in the April 2005 issue of The Petal Press, the newsletter of the Yellow Rose Romance Writers.

Serenade Your Muse by Caroline Clemmons

According to Don Campbell, author of *THE MOZART EFFECT*, music really does have the power to soothe the savage beast—at least the beast inside each of us. Campbell believes particular sounds, tones and rhythms can strengthen the mind, unlock the creative spirit and—miraculously—even heal the body. The benefit that appeals to writers is Don Campbell's claim that classical music boosts creativity. Who's not looking for ways to do give our muse a jump start? Campbell says, "The nervous system is like a symphony orchestra with different rhythms, melodies and instrumentations. . . Music mysteriously reaches the depths of our brain and body that call many unconscious systems into expression." Music CD's available in support of Campbell's theory range from "Smart Babies" to those that accompany his book, "Music for the Mozart Effect."

In an effort to explore Campbell's theory in my own unscientific method, I asked numerous writers whether or not they use music to influence their writing. Several directly contradict Campbell's theory. Evelyn Rogers, Meredith Bond, Rosemary Laurey, and Linda Thomas-Sundstrom prefer total silence—except that a rainstorm can spark a flurry of writing for Linda. Alice Duncan/Anne Robins sometimes uses music until she gets her muse whipped into shape, and then switches to silence.

Serenade Your Muse continued on page 10

Serenade Your Muse continued from page 9

Most authors I queried listen to music while they work. In fact, many authors believe their writing picks up the rhythm of the music to which they're listening as they type.

Robert Vaughn, prolific writer of more than 300 novels, writes while tuned to his local classical radio station. Alice Valdai also listens to a classical music station when writing. Alice says the music is non-intrusive and blocks out the extraneous distracting household noises. This is why—living in a noisy household and neighborhood—I started listening to classical music as a study aid in junior high.

JoAnne Fluke, who says there is no such thing as silence in her household or her neighborhood, confirms that music drowns out background noises. So does prolific author JoAnne Ferguson, who usually sets her CD jukebox to random shuffle. That is, unless she needs a boost for a particular scene, such as using soundtracks from “Robin Hood” and “Dragonheart” for a medieval mood with heroic tones. Flo Fitzpatrick listens to Cat Stevens, cranked to the max. When I've tired familiar pop tunes, the lyrics distract me. Not so for Laura Drewry, who chooses an artist whose lyrics personify the qualities of her hero/heroine, such as Martina McBride or Toby Keith.

Victoria Hinshaw was traveling and couldn't find a radio station with classical music, but she found one with 24-hours a day of Gregorian chants and that kept her writing. When she returned home, she had to buy a few Gregorian chant CDs to finish the book. Historical author Ashley Kath-Bilsky uses Celtic music or period music from the time period she's writing. Glenda Garland also uses Celtic music, but for later in her writing process after beginning with classical. For the editing process, she usually switches to rock. Jessica Trapp likes the energy of being around people and hearing upbeat music, which is fortuitous since she works mostly at a Starbucks. But when she's at home, she prefers silence unless she's feeling emotional. Then, she listens to Alanis Morissette.

An interesting variation is to make up a CD/CDs for your specific work in progress. Joan Reeves recently finished a manuscript using all Josh Groban songs as background. Cynthia Clement also makes up a CD for each novel. Her selection is eclectic from classical to rock to country, whatever seems to have the right message or mood for the plot and romance she is creating. In fact, movie sound tracks were popular as background music for authors. Kate Rothwell works with sound tracks and her current favorite is from “House of the Flying Daggers.” She prefers using the scores from movies she has not seen, so that no visual movie images interfere with her writing process.

Colleen Thompson/Gwyneth Atlee feels that each book requires a different soundtrack. If she really needs to focus, she likes ethereal music with indistinguishable words. When she was writing Civil War-set historicals, for instance, she listened to music from that period to help her get into the heads of people who lived at that time. Now that she's focusing on romantic suspense, she listens to rock because, subconsciously, it works its way into the high-energy pacing and character attitude for which she strives. She uses music to fuel her writing. That's the point I set out to make. Music can propel us into the world we want readers to see.

Barbara Zukowski will be teaching a workshop at RWA National in Reno, “Finding Your Musical Muse.” She will discuss how music affects us physically and stimulates us emotionally. Barbara says, “I've always been fascinated by the power of music, the way it can shape our moods, recapture a memory, or create a whole new world in our minds. It's amazing how the same piece of music can affect different people in different ways, based on their innermost dreams and life experiences.”

Writer's block? Try a little music to perk up your muse. Visit Caroline's website at www.carolineclemmons.com to enter her contest, read excerpts, or to find recipes. USED WITH PERMISSION



CONTESTS

Compiled by Donna Caubarreaux

American Title II
Dorchester/Romantic Times Contest
Received Deadline: June 15, 2005
Book must be complete. Send first 3 chapters, max of 50 pages, with a cover letter and a two - seven page synopsis:
http://www.romantictimes.com/index.html?e_news/amtiterules.shtml

8th Annual Melody of Love
Music City Romance Writers
Deadline: Received by July 1, 2005
Prologue/first chapter (25 page max)
<http://www.mcrw.com/contest.htm>

Romancing the Novel
Northeast Ohio RWA
Received by July 1, 2005
First pages up to 25 max.
<http://www.neorwa.com/Contest.html>

Labor of Love Contest HeartLA
Postmarked by July 1, 2005
First fifty pages.
<http://www.heartla.com/Contest.htm>

Write Hook Query Contest
Pocono/Leigh RWA
Received by August 2, 2005
Query Letter
<http://www.plrw.org/>

7th Annual Picture This Contest
Inland Empire
Received by August 1, 2005
Send us the best scene from your book, 5-12 pages.
<http://geocities.com/SoHo/Studios/2936/contest.htm>

Golden Rose
Rose City Romance Writers
Received by August 8, 2005
Synopsis + First three chapters (55 pg max)
<http://www.rosecityromancewriters.com/grpage/index.html>

On the Far Side (Pubbed & Unpubbed)
FF&P RWA Chapter
Received by August 8, 2005
First 15 pages of your manuscript and an un-judged

Check out all the contests on: <http://www.geocities.com/divaswithtiaras/ContestDiva.index.html>
Contest Alert-All the news on upcoming contests, plus Finalist & Winner listings, questions, etc. Sign up now!
ContestAlert-subscribe@yahoo.com Announcement only list: ContestDeadlines-subscribe@yahoo.com For Published Authors ContestAlertPublished-subscribe@yahoo.com
If you're a Contest Judge, join ContestsJudges-subscribe@yahoo.com

Donna Caubarreaux is a member of Coeur de Louisiane, Scriptscene Chapter, NOLA Stars, Heart of Louisiana, Kiss of Death, and ChickLitWriters of RWA. She received an RWA® Service Award in 1997. USED WITH PERMISSION

synopsis of up to 2 pages, single-spaced.
http://www.romance-ftp.com/otfs_contest/otfs_rules_2005.htm
Hot Prospects
Valley of the Sun
Received by August 10, 2005
Synopsis + beginning not to exceed 25 pg max.
<http://www.valleyofthesunrw.com/vos-hot-prospects.htm>

Put Your Heart In A Book, New Jersey Romance Writers
Postmarked by July 6, 2005
Synopsis + first chapter not to exceed 30 pages
<http://www.njromancewriters.org/pyhiab.html>

The Golden Pen
The Golden Network
Email Deadline August 10, 2005
Synopsis + beginning, not to exceed 55 pg max.
<http://www.thegoldennetwork.com/>

Magic Moment
Heart and Scroll RWA
Deadline: Postmarked by August 15, 2005
First ten pages.
<http://www.heartandscroll.com>

Southern Heat Writing Contest
East Texas Chapter
Received by August 15, 2005 First 10 pages + Synopsis - 5 pg max
<http://home.earthlink.net/~ralsobrook/contests.htm>

Harlequin Blaze Contest (Open to Published & Unpublished)
Postmark: August 31, 2005
first chapter (maximum 25 pages) and a synopsis (maximum 5 pages)
<http://www.eharlequin.com/cms/learntowrite/ltwArticle.jhtml?pageID=050501wz02001>

Best Laurie for Published Authors
Deadline: September 15, 2005, **Any romance novel published between August 1, 2004 and July 31, 2005.**
<http://www.smrw.org/contests/pubbedlaurie/publaurie.htm>

MMRWA 2005 Meetings

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

June 18: Mason/Lansing, The Golden Rose, Rosanne Bittner will speak on "Staying The Course," staying on top during industry turmoil and change (hanging in there through all the ups and downs of writing - and yes, even multi-published writers worry about their next sale!).

July: No meeting due to RWA Nationals in Reno, Nevada.

August 20: Jackson, Daryl's Downtown, Gail Martin will speak on "Shoring Up The Sagging Middle."

September 17: Grand Rapids; Damon's (tentative), Dawn Bartley will speak on "The Skimpy Writer," how to skimp by and still afford to be a writer.

October 15: Mason/Lansing; Hall (tentative), Don McGaffey will present a workshop on firearms.

November 19: Jackson; Damon's, The MMRWA Board will speak on "The Submission Process," what makes a good query, opening, etc.

Directions to June meeting at The Golden Rose

3056 Okemos Road, Mason, MI 48854

Phone: (517) 349-9500

From the North (Mt. Pleasant): Follow US-127 South. Merge onto I-96 East via the Exit on the Left toward Detroit. Take Exit #110 toward Mason/Okemos. Turn right/South onto Okemos Road. Follow for 0.5 miles. Golden Rose is on the left hand side of road.

From the South (Jackson): Follow I-94 West/US-127 North. Take the US-127/M-50 Exit #138 toward Lansing/Jackson. Take the ramp toward Lansing/Charlotte. Merge onto US-127 North; follow for 25.5 miles to Hold Road Exit. Turn Right onto Holt Road; go 2.1 miles. Turn Left onto Okemos Road; go 2.1 miles. Golden Rose is on the right hand side of road.

From the South (Kalamazoo): Follow I-94 East. Take the I-69 North/US-27 North Exit #108 toward Lansing. Go 1 mile *Keep Left at the fork in the ramp.* Go 0.5 miles. Merge onto I-69 North; go 34 miles. Merge onto I-96 East via Exit #72 toward Detroit; go 13 miles. Take Exit #110 toward Mason/Okemos. Turn right/South onto Okemos Road. Follow for 0.5 miles. Golden Rose is on the left hand side of road.

From the East (Brighton): Follow I-96 West toward Lansing. Take Exit #110. Turn Left/South toward Mason/Okemos. Follow for 0.5 miles. Golden Rose is on the left hand side of road.

From the West (Holland): Follow I-196 East. I-196 East becomes I-96 East; go 72 miles. Take Exit #110 toward Mason/Okemos. Turn right/South onto Okemos Road. Follow for 0.5 miles. Golden Rose is on the left hand side of road.

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Because there will be no July meeting, the next Mid-Michigan Mirror will be the JULY/AUGUST issue.

The Mirror is in need of "how to" articles, reviews of writing books and writing related websites, member bios and photographs, member book news and activities. Please send all contributions for the Mirror to: brainchilde@websurfers.biz or afbriggs@hotmail.com. If you do not have access to e-mail, please send by regular mail to Annette Briggs, Box 374, Three Rivers, MI 49093. **DEADLINE TO BE INCLUDED IN THE JULY/AUGUST 2005 MIRROR is JUNE 20.** Guidelines are available at the above address or e-address. Looking forward to your contributions, Annette Briggs, Editor.



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Non-members seeking information about Mid-Michigan, meetings, and joining our group may contact: Dawn Bartley bartleyd@chartermi.net, or visit the chapter's website: www.midmichiganrwa.org.