

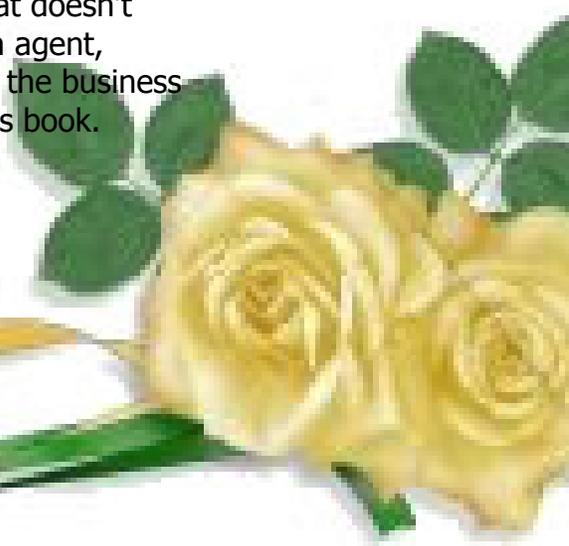
*A note from the 2011 president,
Marsha West*

Our theme this year is “Keeping On.” Judging from some recent posts on one of my loops, the discouragement that comes with this career is not limited to your NT president.

Realizing we’re not alone in the black cloud that comes over us at the most recent rejection or ugly judge’s comments is comforting. Remember, I’m a retired elementary principal. I believe you can take care of almost anything with education. One of the suggestions from our generous fellow romance writers when you hit that brick wall and can’t write or wonder why you’re even trying was to take a class.

While I’m in a different place on this journey than I was six months ago, I took their advice and recently completed a NEORWA class. It was my second one from this group, and I heartily recommend you look at what they have to offer. (If you’re not on the chapter events loop, you need to be. A wealth of educational opportunities awaits.) The first class was about show not tell—something I’m still working on. Lyn Cote taught the one I just finished. She provided steps to take to insure you have enough conflict to sustain your book. She used Kathy Jacobson’s conflict grid from her Novel Approach Course and Tami Cowden’s basic personality types.

If you’ve never done an online course, you should try one. You learn not just from the instructor but also from those in the class, what they submit, and what the teacher says about their work. I worked primarily on my new book 6, which is still in the planning stages. I also did the assignments for my last book, which I’m revising. I didn’t want to keep working on it, if the conflict wasn’t there. I was pleasantly surprised to find it was. Now that doesn’t mean it will win anything or get picked up by an agent, because we all know, or should, how subjective the business is. Still, I was encouraged to “keep on” with this book.





One of the ways to get out of the doldrums is taking a class. Another is to go back and look at those goals we set in January.

The third thing is to be in relationship with other writers. We learn from them. We celebrate with them their good news. Yes, we even console them when that rejection comes. This career path can be a lonely and isolated one. Imagine the folks who had to “keep on” before we had computers and email. Wow. That’s determination. Thank you, NT, for providing me wonderful support, encouragement, and friends.

**Success is getting up one more time than you fall down.
~ Anonymous**

