



July 2006 Meeting

NTRWA presents Author Laurie Moore on “Snappy Dialogue: What Is It and How Can I Improve Mine?”

Join us the third Saturday of July when local mystery author, Laurie Moore, presents a workshop on writing snappy dialogue. Laurie will teach NT members what constitutes superior dialogue, how it can be used, and how to fix yours if it isn't great. Laurie will be armed with plenty of examples to illustrate the lesson, so come prepared for

excellent handouts and a lively program.

Laurie is an attorney and a reserve deputy constable for Tarrant County. She worked street patrol and criminal investigations for six years before becoming a sergeant, and later worked as a DA Investigator in Austin and San Antonio. She is the author of the popular Constable mystery series and a board member of the DFW Writers Workshop.

Writers seldom write the things they think.
They simply write the things they think other folks think they think.
Elbert Hubbard

It took me fifteen years to discover I had no talent for writing,
but I couldn't give it up because by that time I was too famous.
Robert Benchley

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- *Writing Myth #5*, page 11

President's Corner

Happy Independence Day!

Hello to everyone and a big NTRWA welcome to our new members! We had a great meeting in June with our Author Round Table Critique. Thank you to all our published authors. I hope everyone who participated received the feedback they were looking for and those who weren't quite ready to be critiqued had an opportunity to engage with our busy, prolific, and generous published authors.

Next up: Mystery Writer Laurie Moore on Dialogue on July 15th at La Hacienda Ranch Restaurant, 10:30 am.

That said, I just finished reading the July RWR, specifically the President's article on volunteering, and thought it was time to spend a few minutes on the subject.

Volunteer--NT Needs YOU!

Our annual Great Expectations Contest kicks off at the end of December. But before we start taking entries, we need volunteers to make sure it runs smoothly. You don't have to be a member for any length of time to help out. Volunteer a little or a lot, it's all appreciated.

The contest is our main moneymaker. It funds the programs you see each month. Great contest = great programs. :)

Andrea Geist has graciously volunteered to become our 2006/2007 Contest Chair. The Chair's job is to oversee the contest and the Category Coordinators. Our contest can only have as many categories as we have coordinators.

Coordinators will be responsible for receiving contest entries, both hard copy and e-copies. They verify and notify the contestants their entry has arrived and get the entries to the first round judges. We have a loop we add to every year, which is set up for soliciting judges for this round.

Coordinators are also responsible for getting the entries back on time from the judges and returning entries to the contestants. They verify scores and report to the Contest Chair who notifies the contestants who final. The Category Coordinators report to the Contest Chair if there's a problem. The Contest Chair reports to the Vice President, who reports to the board.

To date, we have nine categories, which include Historical, Long and Short Contemporary, Mainstream with Romantic Elements, Romantic Suspense, Single Title, Specialized (F/F/TT/P), Steamy Hot, and Young Adult. We'd like to add Inspirational and round it off to ten categories. But to do so, we need volunteers. (Are you catching the theme in all this? :))

The board will be confirming these positions at the August board meeting. It would be great to have a full lineup of category coordinators at that time. Andrea and I hope to come back from National with a healthy list of eager editors and agents willing to judge our final round. So, please volunteer.

Until then . . .

Happy Writing!
Sherry Davis

2006 NTRWA Board Members & Liaisons

◆ President
Sherry Davis
csadavis@swbell.net

◆ Membership Director
Carolyn Williamson
carolynwilliamson@charter.net

◆ Newsletter Editor
Jen FitzGerald
jen@stormsedge.com

◆ Vice President/Programs
Shannon Canard
shannon_canard@hotmail.com

◆ Recording Secretary
Paula Wachter
paula_wachter@comcast.net

◆ PAN Liaison
Juliet Burns
julietburns@comcast.net

◆ Treasurer
Tara Waldie
waldie@flash.net

◆ Publicity Director
Angi Platt
angiplatt@aol.com

◆ PRO Liaison
Sandra Ferguson
sandraferguson@sbcglobal.net

Authors' Contests Are Fun and Can Be Profitable for Both Author and Reader

by Arline Todd

Many authors create contests to boost the sale of their books. Sometimes these contests can be a lot of fun as well as rewarding. I entered one recently and actually won it! The prize is a gift basket of goodies valued at \$50.

Here's what happened:

I saw an article on the Writing Tips loop that I liked very much and went to the author's web site to send her an e-mail. The author is Lois Winston, whose book TALK GERTIE TO ME won Dorchester's American Title contest. (It was originally called RESURRECTING GERTIE, but she ran a contest to rename it for the publisher.)

On her web site, I subscribed to her newsletter and found out Lois was running a contest only for subscribers to her newsletter. The contest was not offered on her web site. (Really good odds for readers.) The contest involved editing and research to find what Lois called a

"glaring error" that had been brought to her attention by a reader within a few days of her book being released.

She pointed out that every author dreads finding a mistake in her book after it's published. Usually, this is a typo or grammar error that was overlooked, but Lois wrote that she "goofed big time." She said her critique partner didn't catch the error. Her agent didn't catch it. Her editor didn't catch it. The copy editor didn't catch it. No one caught the error until the reader sent her an e-mail about the faux pas. She was horrified that the reader was correct because she remembered checking the error in question. I could hardly wait to find it.)

Lois decided to make lemonade martinis out of lemons by running a contest for readers to find the error. "So if you haven't bought your copy of TALK GERTIE TO ME yet, here's incentive to do so," she wrote. The first reader to find the error would win a \$50 gift basket. A good promotion for her, and a nice incentive for the readers.

This was right up my alley. I rushed out and bought the book. I started my literary career as a technical editor for General Electric's Nuclear Energy Division. And, since then, I have both written and edited promotional, technical, and advertising material for a wide variety of high-tech companies dealing with everything from computers to telecommunications to biotechnology. I spent years studying writing and style guides.

I think I was overconfident about my editing skills. I won't tell you how many real but typo-like errors and wrong so-called bigger errors I sent to Lois. Her book is chick lit and some of her characters use hyperbole, whereas I was looking at everything quite literally. For example, the heroine's mom ended up on the David Letterman show and was moaning and groaning about 60 million viewers finding out about her "secret." I jumped right on it and sent Lois an e-mail telling her Letterman had only 4.4 million viewers.

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Administration

PAN (Published Authors Network) is the name given to the discussion group intended to meet the needs of writers published or contracted to publish works in the romance genre.

Heart to Heart is published monthly by NTRWA, a non-profit organization founded in March of 1983 by aspiring and published writers of romance fiction.

Heart to Heart welcomes articles for publication in its monthly issues. Articles should contain fewer than 1000 words and pertain to matters of interest to romance writers.

Heart to Heart reserves the right to edit according to space or clarity, and to refuse articles that its editorial staff deems inappropriate for its readership. Deadline for publication is the 25th of each month.

SISTER CHAPTERS: Feel free to reprint articles from our newsletter as long as proper credit is provided for the chapter and the individual author.

Non-RWA organizations please contact the editor regarding reprints.

Meeting Minutes

June 17, 2006
Meeting Minutes
By Paula M. Wachter

We had a short break to order lunch and then broke into groups for the round table critique.

President Sherry Davis called the meeting to order at 12:07 pm.

Candy Havens made a motion to accept the May business meeting minutes as printed in the newsletter. The motion was seconded by Rosemary Clement-Moore and passed unanimously.

Vice President/Programs Director Shannon Canard announced July's program: Mystery author, Laurie Moore will present "Writing Dialogue". Shannon noted the schedule for the rest of the year is as follows: August - Shelley Bradley, Topic TBD; September - Gayle Dayton, Paranormal Writing: World Building; October - Sandy Blair, Writing Memorable Characters; November - NTRWA Mini-Conference, Keynote: Cherry Adair; December - NTRWA Christmas Party

Membership Secretary Carolyn Williamson announced our visitors: Lee Swift and David Crocker. As of the June meeting, NTRWA has 67 members. Our newest member is Lois Lazarescu.

Treasurer Tara Waldie read the treasurer's report for May. Andrea Geist made a motion to accept the report as read. The motion was seconded by Paula Wachter and passed unanimously.

Newsletter Editor and Tape Librarian Chair Jen FitzGerald requested articles for the newsletter. She'd like for those attending the National Conference to write a blurb for their favorite workshop and submit it for the September Newsletter/Post Conference Edition --deadline: Aug. 25th. CD or tape reviews are always welcome, as are member announcements. She reminded members that the deadline is the 25th of each month. Submissions may be sent to jen@stormsedge.com.

Jen announced that additional tape to CD-ROM conversions have been completed. She also created a portfolio listing the available Tapes

and CDs. This will be available for members to browse through at the monthly general meeting.

Publicity Director Angi Platt stated that NTRWA's website hosting service has been transferred from Name2Host to GoDaddy.com. She stated there have been no recent updates to the website due to some issues with the transfer. The issues are being worked out, but, unfortunately, our entry in the RWA National Website contest may be affected by the problem.

PAN Liaison Juliet Burns reminded everyone about member book signings. Members with new releases or new sales may submit their news for inclusion in the newsletter and web site. Members who have RWA PAN status may send email to julietburns@comcast.net to join the NTRWA PAN loop. Juliet also reminded members that the Book Club meets the first Thursday of every month.

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Visiting NTRWA

Anyone interested in the romance genre is invited to attend NTRWA meetings and workshops.

Visitors may attend three times before NTRWA requires they become members. All members of NTRWA must be members in good standing of Romance Writers of America (RWA).

Romance Writers of America
16000 Stuebner Airline Drive
Suite 140
Spring, Texas 77379

www.rwanational.com

Phone: 831-717-5200

FAX: 831-717-5201

info@rwanational.com

Making Sense of It All

By Florence Cardinal

We all have five senses. Writers, I believe, sometimes forget that. How much more vivid a scene becomes when we include more than sights and perhaps, sounds.

To illustrate: A forest scene. Green spruce trees reaching up to the sun. A sandy beach and a lake reflecting the blue of the sky. Wild strawberries entwining their vines among the trees. A pretty scene, right?

Let's bring it to life. Listen to the waves lapping the shore. A gentle breeze rattles the leaves of the maple trees and a whippoorwill sings a cheery song. The frogs hiding in the mud blend their voices in a joyful quartet, while across the lake drifts the eerie voice of a loon.

The aroma of rich soil blends with the pungent scent of pine needles you crush beneath your feet. New mown hay from a neighboring farm adds a rich fragrance to the blend.

You walk down to the beach, remove your shoes and feel the warm, soft sand beneath your feet. Walking down to the verge of the lake, you stick a toe into the cool water and perhaps shiver a bit at the contrast.

Back among the trees, you pick a wild strawberry and savor the sharp tang of the juice on your tongue. What a glorious day in Nature's cathedral.

Don't short-change your readers. Give them all there is to see, hear, smell, touch, and taste. Add the scent of cinnamon to the kitchen, the taste of toothpaste on your tongue in the bathroom. Hear distant church bells ring. Feel that silk negligee against your body.

And never forget the sensual effect of his after-shave as he lowers his head to steal a kiss.

The five senses can bring a scene to

life and transport your reader into a whole new world of experience. When you write, close your eyes and picture the scene. What do you see? What sounds disrupt the silence? Does a special aroma permeate the air? Is there anything you can touch or taste? Remember, if you're afraid, even fear has a special taste on the tongue. Bring that scene to life. Make "sense" of it.

Florence Cardinal is a member of the Calgary Association of the RWA (CaRWA).

The following article first appeared in the April 2006 issue of the Writer's Saddle, the Calgary Association of RWA (CaRWA) newsletter. Permission to publish with proper credit is granted to sister chapters.



Many Happy Returns...



Ron Campbell, July 2
Laura Guzman, July 12
Julia Mozingo, July 17
Cheryl Hathaway, July 18
Kaye-Rose Miller, July 19
Gina Nelson, July 31



Atlanta in the Summer: Why a City So Hot Can Be So Cool

By Nicki Salcedo

The following article appeared in the Georgia Romance Writers newsletter. Permission granted for use with author and chapter credits.

If you are coming to Atlanta for the Romance Writers of America Annual National Conference, you may want to come early or stay late. Here's a local's guide for everything that is hot and good places to stop.

Atlanta History

Atlanta has strong ties to all things civil— from the Civil War to the Civil Rights Movement. One of my favorite spots is the lesser known Stone Mountain Village just outside the more widely known Stone Mountain Park. It's not your typical shot glass and keychain tourist experience. When you get ready for more Atlanta history, stop by one of these spots:

Atlanta that was...
Stone Mountain Park
www.stonemountainpark.com
Margaret Mitchell House & Museum
<http://gwtw.org>
Atlanta History Center
www.atlantahistorycenter.com
Historic Oakland Cemetery
www.oaklandcemetery.com
The Atlanta Cyclorama
www.bcaatlanta.com/index.php?pid=81

Kings and Presidents...
Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.
<http://thekingcenter.com>

Jimmy Carter Library and Museum
www.jimmycarterlibrary.gov

New ATL

No one calls it Hotlanta anymore. ATL is the home of quaint in-town neighborhoods, night spots, shopping, and eateries galore.

Day Play

You don't have to wait for the sun to go down to have fun in Atlanta.

- Chocolate—The Exhibit. Fernbank Science Center through August 31, 2006. www.fernbank.edu/museum/specialexhibitions/chocolate/abouttheexhibition.aspx
- Bodies - The Exhibition. Atlanta Civic Center through September 4, 2006. www.bodiestheexhibition.com
- World of Coca-Cola www.woccatlanta.com
- Underground Atlanta www.underground-atlanta.com
- Georgia Aquarium www.georgiaaquarium.org
- Stroll through Piedmont Park www.piedmontpark.org or Centennial Olympic Park www.centennialpark.com

Shopping Paradise

You know Southern ladies like to shop. It's okay to buy a pair of shoes while you're here.

- Atlantic Station. New outdoor shopping complex with movie theater at 17th Street. www.atlanticstation.com
- Where would I eat? During the day Copeland's Cheesecake Bistro. At night? The Grape (a wine bar).
- Lenox Square Mall for Neiman Marcus, The Gap, Ann Taylor. Eat at Prime.

www.simon.com/mall/default.aspx?ID=207

·Phipps Plaza for Gucci, Tiffany, Versace, Nordstrom, Saks. Eat at Twist Restaurant & Tapas Bar. www.simon.com/mall/default.aspx?ID=210

Keeping it Real

Every time you go on vacation, you wonder where the locals are. I'll tell where to see real Atlanta. If you have a few hours to shop, stroll, and eat, then check out these in-town neighborhoods not found on a tourist map.

- Virginia Highlands, also known as "The Highlands." This neighborhood's epicenter is located at the corner of Virginia Avenue and North Highland Avenue. There are some unique boutiques and eateries. Several of my favorite bars and restaurants are found along this strip. Hungry? Try Surin (810 N Highland Ave) for Thai, Murphy's (997 Virginia Ave) for American, and Sotto Sotto (313 North Highland Ave) for Italian.

- Little Five Points. Atlanta's answer to San Francisco's Haight-Ashbury district. Wouldn't it be cool if you and your critique partners got matching tattoos that said "RWA 2006?" If not, then take a stroll with the crunchy, granola, tattooed, pierced, and avant-garde. I would recommend shopping at Junkman's Daughter (464 Euclid Ave) or Abbadabba's (421-B Moreland Ave) and having fish and chips at the Brewhouse (401 Moreland Ave).

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2006 Board Meetings

To be held in conjunction with the general meetings in August and October.

All general members are welcome and encouraged to attend.

Spotlight On... Anjalie Gilby

By Gina Lee Nelson

Good morning, Anjalie. When did you join NTRWA? How did you hear about us, and what nudged you to join us?

I walked into the NTRWA chapter meeting in January of 2006 and joined, almost literally, on the spot. I linked to several local chapters through the RWA website hoping to find a group that I could establish a rapport with. Since La Hacienda Ranch sits less than a mile from my house, NTRWA seemed a logical first stop. I slipped into the banquet room imagining that I could find a nice inconspicuous corner to absorb Karen Whiddon's advice on "plodding" and scout out the group. I hadn't counted on Carolyn and company. I got exactly one step inside the door before they whisked me off to meet and greet. It was too loud and too fast to recall those introductions in detail, but, without exception, you all greeted me warmly and welcomed me as a colleague. The air vibrated with such a wonderful sense of purposeful creative energy that I forgot all about finding a corner. I tossed my list of local chapters and wrote my membership check before signing in, buying a raffle ticket or even sitting down.

How long have you been writing?

I have been writing fiction for a little over two years.

What have you written? What is your work in progress?

I completed my first manuscript, *Magus Guardian*, this past fall. The urge to write it grew out of my long love affair with both the fantasy and romance genres and the desire to blend them in a way that yields a fast-paced story that is satisfying

for the heart. I plan to continue writing in the sword and sorcery subgenre and hope someday to produce for publication a fantasy series exploring my own mythical world of magic wielders. Each novel will, of course, be a romance in nature. You can get a taste of *Magus Guardian* at "<http://www.warriorsofthemagus.com>".

I understand you recently earned your PRO status. To whom did you submit *Magus Guardian*?

I submitted to the Vivian Beck Agency. In a very kind rejection letter, Ms. Beck, a fellow RWA member, passed. It was very cool to be able to morph rejection into something as positive as my PRO pin.

Tell us a little bit about yourself, your family, where you grew up.

I am the youngest of 4 daughters. My mother was a grade school teacher and my father a geophysicist. Both parents were the first in their families to complete college. Read into my dad's occupation the certainty that I moved constantly growing up. I remember one almost yearlong stretch where we moved about every 6 weeks from one oil field to the next. I have visited every continent but one and had been around the world twice before my eighth birthday. No wonder I feel comfortable world building in the fantasy genre.

For the past fifteen years, I have lived in Euless (my husband's hometown) and have no plans to move if I can help it.

What's your greatest accomplishment?

I am proud of a decision I made about a decade ago to turn my back on the corporate world, giving up a fat paycheck as a Systems Analyst for Dr. Pepper to be a poor, but happy, stay-at-home mom. It took years of saving and then years of spending the savings; but it was all worth it to be there for my kids whenever they needed their mom. I can honestly say I treasured every single day.

Now that my children are older, I have decided to begin my professional life again. In August, you can find me at Austin Middle School in Irving ISD teaching 7th grade Math. About 35 percent of my students are limited English speakers and 88 percent are economically

disadvantaged, but despite their circumstances, these kids are hungry to learn and get a quality education. What a privilege and at the same time what an awesome responsibility it will be to make sure they get it.

What do you struggle with in your writing?

Setting a goal of becoming a master writer is a tall order.

Continued on page 9...

I tossed my list of local chapters and wrote my membership check before signing in, buying a raffle ticket, or even sitting down.



Newsletters are now available in electronic format.

If you are interested in receiving your newsletter via email, please contact Jen FitzGerald at jen@stormsedge.com or 817-457-6414.

Member News

Some of our National Conference goers are: Angi Platt, Juliet Burns, Christine Crocker, Mindy Obenhaus, Candy Havens, Beth Shriver, Michella Chappell, Yvonne Jocks, Shelley Bradley, Ron and Kim Campbell, Shannon Canard, Gail Dayton, Rosemary Clement-Moore, GERALYN Dawson, Sherry Davis, and Andrea Geist.

Angi Platt finaled in the Lake Country RWA's Barclay Sterling Contest in the Long Contemporary category. Winners will be announced in August.

Britta Coleman's Making the Most of Your Conference Experience, featured in our June 'In the Loop' was forwarded to the Maine RWA loop, the Gothic Romance Writers loop, the Alaska RWA loop, the Wisconsin RWA loop, used in the Monthly Muse, online newsletter of the Spacecoast Authors of Romance chapter, and the July 2006 issue of Inklings, a publication of the Romance Writers Ink of Tulsa, OK.

Sandra Ferguson's Get Out of the Way of Your Writing was used in From the Heart RWA's newsletter, Words From the Heart.

Gail Dayton's The Novelist's Secret Weapon used in From the Heart RWA's newsletter, Words From the Heart.

Wow, you all were a prolific bunch this past month... Kudos to all of you who wrote and edited and proudly listed your totals, but due to space considerations, only the top five producers will be listed...

So many people have been writing and adding their name to the list and that's a very good thing. Everyone keep up the good work!

NEW PAGES ~ Top 5

Shelley Bradley, 112
Christine Crocker, 93
Paula Wachter, 75
Ron Campbell, 52
Jen FitzGerald, 50

EDITED PAGES ~ Top 5

Shelley Bradley, 650
Yvonne Jocks, 360
Candy Havens, 356
Angela Cavener, 234
Mindy Obenhaus, 223

Way to go everyone. Keep those fannies in the chair and the fingers on the keyboard!



Many thanks to our published authors who graciously critiqued their chapter mates' work. Your time, thoughts, and suggestions were greatly appreciated.

**Vickie Taylor, Juliet Burns, Judi McCoy, Cathy Spangler,
Rosemary Clement-Moore, Candy Havens, & Yvonne Jocks**

Authors' Contests Are Fun and Can Be Profitable for Both Author and Reader Continued

Continued from page 3...

She kindly pointed out that the character was deliberately exaggerating.

Another "error" I found involved miracles happening in the last few millennia. Much to my chagrin, there was another error I reported about the kind of credit card being used at a salon in Bergdorf Goodman's. When I finally found the right faux pas and emailed Lois, she commented that my persistence

had paid off. It sure did. And Lois's patience with all my false starts was much appreciated.

By the way, she's running another contest to rename her next book, LOVE, LIES & A MOCHA LATTE. Apparently, there's a book out with a similar title. Details are available on her web site—www.loiswinston.com. Yes, I've sent in close to a dozen titles already. The publisher will be selecting the winner.

Arline Todd has an M.S. degree in mass communications with a concentration in creative writing and a B.S. in technical journalism. She also has a medical and engineering background which helped her successfully run a high-tech advertising agency for twelve years in the Silicon Valley, California area. Her last corporate position was Director of Marketing Communications for a telecommunications company. Now, she is switching from nonfiction to fiction writing.

Meeting Minutes Continued

Continued from page 4...

Ways and Means Committee Co-Chair Mindy Obenhaus requested gift cards or monetary donations for NTRWA's basket for the raffle at the National Conference. She mentioned that published authors may donate an

autographed book for the basket as well. The July meeting will be the last opportunity to donate for the basket.

Critique Advisor Chair Gina Nelson announced that participation in the Tex-Critiquers Yahoo! group has increased considerably this month.

She reminded everyone to take advantage of the valuable feedback, motivation, and support of your fellow writers.

Candy made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 12:42 pm. The motion was seconded by Mindy Obenhaus and passed unanimously.

Spotlight On... Anjalie Gilby Continued

Continued from page 7...

As a novice writer, I struggle with being overwhelmed. I know just enough to be truly alarmed by what I don't know about writing. Luckily, the only thing I don't struggle with is the conviction that I *will* do it someday.

Finally, who are your favorite authors? Who is your favorite fantasy/romance author?

J.R.R. Tolkien is my favorite author. I believe fantasy writers are indebted to him. Not only did he resurrect the grand themes of our rich oral tradition, but he

breathed new life into them creating a genre that resonates powerfully with a growing modern audience.

Fantasy evokes images of heroism and epic clashes of good and evil in magical, faraway lands. I believe it is this dreamy nostalgic feel that lends Fantasy so beautifully to romance. For me, the complicated but enduring devotion of lovers like Diana Gabaldon's Claire and Jamie Fraser (Outlander series) and Jennifer Roberson's Del and Tiger (Sword series) are especially moving examples of this blend.

Gina, like several of our NTRWA members, I am also a member of FF&P, our special interest sister chapter for Fantasy, Futuristic and Paranormal writers in the RWA.

New to romance writing, Gina Lee Nelson is *still* working to complete her first manuscript, a tender romance set in NYC, her stomping ground for seven exhilarating years.

Atlanta in the Summer Continued

Continued from page 6...

·Decatur. Atlanta's first suburb is now considered "intown." If you make it this far out of the city you should try the Watershed Restaurant (406 W Ponce De Leon Ave) or have coffee at Java Monkey (205 E Ponce De Leon Ave). My favorite place just outside of Decatur is the DeKalb Farmer's Market (3000 E Ponce De Leon Ave). This is the best place in Atlanta to see food and people from 100 countries. If you want to try the public transportation, take MARTA on the east line to Decatur, and you'll end up in the City of Decatur Square.

Nightlife in ATL

Appletini Girls: So, you will never live like those women in Sex in the City, but you can pretend. Strap on your stilettos and push-up bras and find other pretty people like you!

·B.E.D. Atlanta

<http://atl.bedrestaurants.com>

·Leopard Lounge

www.leopardlounge.biz

·Sutra Lounge Atlanta

www.sutraloungeatl.com

The Place to See and Be Seen: From Bobby Brown to Big Boi, Atlanta has more than its fair share of entertainment professionals. Wanna know where the

cool kids go?

·Vision

www.visionatlanta.com/main.html

·Club 112 (also known as "One-Tweezy") www.club112atl.com

·Justin's (2200 Peachtree Rd) is another wonderful place to catch a hip hop star

·Dugan's Bar & Restaurant (777 Ponce de Leon Avenue)

The Devil went Down to Georgia: If you know who Gretchen Wilson is, try one of these country and blues hot spots.

·Blind Willie's Blues Club

www.blindwilliesblues.com

·Wild Bill Gentry's Saloon

www.wildbillsatlanta.com

Where Things go Bump in the Atlanta night: Goth girls, bondage, and vampires haunt these places.

·Vortex www.thevortexbarandgrill.com

·Masquerade www.masq.com

·Everything in Little Five Points

Drop the Drama: You want to go out at night, but without loud music, skeezy men, and alcohol.

·Café Intermezzo for coffee and people watching www.cafeintermezzo.com

·Go to Turner Field, also know as "The Ted," and catch a Braves game. July 25-30 the Braves are at home. On Tuesday July 25 (vs. Florida) and Friday July 28

(vs. NY Mets), the night games start at 7:35pm.

<http://atlanta.braves.mlb.com>

·The High Museum of Art Atlanta for Friday Jazz <http://high.org>

·A local favorite is Martinis and IMAX at Fernbank Science Center Friday nights. Get dressed up, sip martinis under the world's largest dinosaur, and then watch a flick about Antarctica or Mount Everest. Educational fun for grown ups! www.fernbank.edu/museum/martinis.html

·Fox Theater "Mamma Mia" July 25-30, 2006 <http://foxtheatre.org>

A Southern Blessing

I hope you have a wonderful time at RWA. May your pitch be succinct and successful. May your friends comfort you in your triumphs. May you learn and network and remember why you love to write. May your days in Atlanta be tempered with cool breezes and good memories of Southern fun. See you in ATL.

Nicki Salcedo is the Recording Secretary for Georgia Romance Writers and an Atlanta native. She writes women's fiction and romance. For more ATL secrets, tips, and restaurants see Nicki's website <http://8headedhydra.com>.

Jen's Journal

I really enjoyed Britta's 'In the Loop' topic about attending conference. It's along the lines of what I'd thought myself. After hearing stories of authors who totally botch their agent or editor appointment and the stress the whole issue generates, I decided that when I was finally able to attend, it would all be for fun. Attend workshops, meet other authors, hang out with fellow NT members, etc. But another thing I might add to that is this: get your name known. Participate in something that's going to benefit someone other than yourself. Our own Angi Platt has worked on the Literacy Signing event for many years.

She does a great job. People know her. Lots of people. Agents, editors, pubbed authors. In the end, only outstanding writing and a little luck will get your name on the cover of a book, but I believe that even if you never reach that particular destination, the journey will still have been worth it—if you've taken the time to make friends along the way. I'm sure there are many areas where volunteers are needed in a conference this size. And I'm sure Angi could hook you up. But have you ever considered giving a workshop? "*Who me? I'm not a published author.*" Well, guess what? You don't necessarily have to be pubbed

to give a workshop. RWR will have details in a few months. What about when the National Conference comes to Dallas? In 2004, our chapter sponsored a couple of excursions. They were a big hit. Not to mention, in 2007, NT will be celebrating 25 years. How much fun and recognition can we generate at the conference next year? Out of the 9000 or so members of RWA, only 2000 can attend the conference. That's less than a 1/4. Did you also know that 17 NT members will be attending this year in Atlanta? That's just less than a 1/4, too.

Hope to see you all there next year!

The Truth About Publishing Myths ~ Myth #5

By Shelley Bradley

6. Your book will get quality editing and distribution.

I'll preface this by saying that no publisher buys a book with the intent to provide shoddy editing. But the reality can be that if you turn your book in on time or early and another author turns hers in late...you get moved up a month. This can be good, don't get me wrong. But this can also mean that your book doesn't get as thoroughly edited in the rush for time.

Some publishers are notorious about rushing books to production. Where Publisher A might leave themselves 12-18 months from the day the book is turned in until publication, Publisher B might only allow themselves 6-9 months. The result can be a frustrating lack of quality for you and the reader.

This is exacerbated when typesetting of the book occurs. Usually, when you turn in a manuscript to your publisher (I'm talking print here), they want a copy or two of the manuscript and some soft copy (like on disc or CD). If they don't use the soft copy you provided and hire someone to retype it instead, watch out! With some publishers, you reading the copyedited version of the manuscript is optional, and you have to ask to read that. At that stage, you can comment on their changes, make additional changes--whatever is needed--at no penalty. If you don't get to read the copyedited version and are forced to wait for galleys...well, if you don't like their changes, getting things STETed (or put back the way they were) may cost you money. That's because at galley stage, the book has already been typeset and getting changes forces them to have the typesetter redo things. Typos are exempt from this--they won't charge you to fix their mistakes, but I have this theory that changes of any variety at the galley stage are less likely to happen because it costs the publisher money, typo or not.

The short lesson here: Ask to read the

copy edits. Read them thoroughly. It's really your LAST chance to change the book. When your galleys come, concentrate on typos.

Another point I should emphasize is that copy edits are usually freelanced out. These are not actual employees of your publisher, but people they have hired to read, check, grammarize, etc. the manuscript. Some are wonderful with light, deft touches and small margin notes that make you go 'Doh! Why didn't I think of that?' They can save your butt from time to time if you've done something less than bright and they are on the ball. Then...you can get the frustrated writers. I have a friend who did a mystery trilogy. All through the first manuscript, the copy editor made snide comments about my friend's heroine. The worst came toward the end of that first book, however, when the copy editor made all kind of suggestions for scenes to cut and **REWROTE THE LAST CHAPTER**. Why? She said if the author would have stopped wasting space on this sniveling heroine, she could have solved the murder at the end of the book instead of leaving the reader hanging. Okay, discounting the fact it wasn't the copy editor's book, the other issues were that there were 2 more books in the series and the real killer hadn't even been introduced yet. He'd been discussed in passing. Period. The copy editor rewrote that book so that one of my friend's future heroes was set up as the killer in some rage over another man touching his woman. Um, in the next book, you learned that "killer" was the woman's brother. So he wasn't touching her like that. My friend was horrified, and the publisher agreed to make it right, but even when that book came out there was all sorts of errors left over from this copy editor's attempt to "fix the book."

Distribution is a whole topic in itself. A frustrating one. It's one of the best kept secrets in publishing. You've probably guessed that the farther up the food chain an author is, the better distribution he or she gets. That means not only more copies per store, but in more stores

in general: airports, grocery stores, drug stores--and Mecca: Wal-Mart. Wal-Mart sells a TON of books, but they sell mainly category and lead titles. If you're starting out, it's hard to get into Wal-Mart. Distribution at Waldens and B&N, BAMM, etc. will all be decided by chain store buyers you've probably never heard of. The Waldens/Borders buyer is one of the more accessible. B&N, BAMM and the other guys... no.

Amazon is another sore subject. It's tempting to try to determine the success of a book by looking at the ranking. But Amazon is about 2-3% of overall book sales, so it's not that relevant. B&N.com ranking is at least a combination of online and brick/mortar store sales, so it's more relevant. But in terms of affecting overall distribution... It's hard to do. Sending promo items with the publisher's sales force or buying gifts for them, reaching out to chain buyers or local stores--it's all been tried. At the end of the day, as trite as it sounds, your best bet is to write the best damn book possible, pray for a good cover, and hope for publisher support. Sometimes you'll get it...sometimes you won't.

The author of sizzling contemporary, erotic and historical romances, Shelley Bradley lives in the southwest with her husband and daughter, juggling the many roles in her life: writer, mother, wife and all around laundress. In her "free" time, she is a reality TV junkie, enjoys reading, obsessively studying all things Harry Potter, doing step aerobics and weightlifting, and listening to an eclectic blend of music.



Jen FitzGerald
Newsletter Editor
7000 Robinhood Lane
Fort Worth, Texas 76112

www.NTRWA.com

NTRWA
2100 W. Northwest Hwy
Suite 114-1081
Grapevine, TX 76051

Meeting Information

July 15, 2006

NTRWA Monthly Meeting

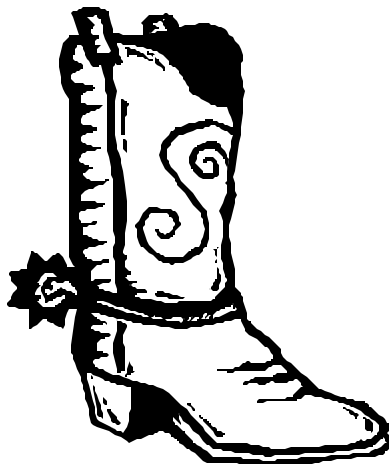
La Hacienda Ranch

5250 Highway 121 South

Colleyville, TX

10:00 ~ 10:30 Meet & Greet
10:30 ~ 10:45 Welcome & Announcements
10:45 ~ 11:45 Workshop
11:45 ~ 12:00 Break/Order Lunch
12:00 ~ 1:00 Business Meeting

Visitors Welcome



Laurie Moore
**“Snappy Dialogue: What Is It and
How Can I Improve Mine?”**