



Heart to Heart

February 17, 2007~ “Aim High and Shoot Straight”

By Tara Waldie

On February 18, 2007, Kara Lennox presents a workshop on goal-setting (and achieving) specifically for writers entitled “Aim High and Shoot Straight.”

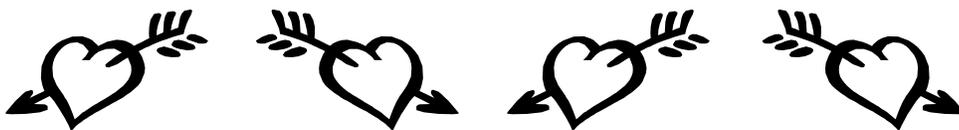
Writing as Kara Lennox or Karen Leabo she has produced over fifty contemporary romance novels. Kara’s books have been nominated for prestigious awards such as The National Readers’ Choice Award

and the Holt Medallion.

She won the Romantic Times Reviewers’ Choice for best Harlequin American Romance in 2003. Her books have been translated into 17 languages and printed in over 20 countries.

Kara live in Texas with her husband and assorted pets.

Please join us on February 18 for what is sure to be an entertaining and informative workshop.



*I am writing a book. I have all the pages numbered.
Steven Wright - Comedian*

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President's Corner

Dear Chapter Mates,

Were you able to attend our January meeting? If not, you missed a very interesting subject. Ann Marks spoke to us about face reading and what things are revealed about a person just by looking at them. For more information, there is a book available called [Amazing Face Reading: An Illustrated Encyclopedia for Reading Faces](#) by Mac Fulfer. Call your local bookstore or visit Amazon.com.

The budget for the year was approved and our chapter should remain in the black all year. A copy of our budget is available to all members.

Attending the RWA National Conference? Don't forget that the RWA National Conference will be happening in Dallas this year. I'd love to see as many members as possible attend the conference. And as we do every year, we are raffling off a National Conference fee. Tickets will be available at every meeting for \$1 each or six for \$5, so bring a couple of extra bucks. The drawing will take place at our June meeting.

Want NT stuff? We now have an online store. You can purchase shirts, hats, mugs, etc... Our selection is small at this point, but we can expand our product line as needed. Visit:
<http://www.cafepress.com/ntstore07>.

Are you writing? I haven't been. But I'm getting the bug again. We have a great workshop on

CD called: Finding Time – The Habit of Writing Daily by Kim Louise. Kim has a lot of great points to make and is very engaging to listen to. Check out RW11-120 at February's meeting and let her help you find time to write every day.

Speaking of writing... There will be lots of incentives to write this year: the short story contest will present many of us an opportunity to try our hand at something new, and the Book In A Year program will offer monthly rewards for achieving your goals. And don't forget, we reward our most prolific members each December. But you gotta write and you gotta attend meetings to report your progress in order to be in the running for those \$25 gift cards. Check out the Member News section for last year's winners.

The short story contest will be open to NT members only (past or present). If you're considering entering, here are the required elements: 25 MS pages, must take place in Texas, must be a romance, and must include three (3) of the following elements: silver spurs, a yellow rose or roses, a book, a cowboy hat, cowboy boots, or twenty-five (25) of something. Entry fee will be \$10 and finalized guidelines will be announced at the February meeting, but this should get you going.

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2007 NTRWA Board Members & Liaisons

◆ President Jen FitzGerald jen@stormsedge.com	◆ Membership Director Carolyn Williamson carolynwilliamson@charter.net	◆ Newsletter Editor Kim Campbell kimpcampbell@aol.com
◆ Vice President/Programs Tara Waldie waldie@flash.net	◆ Recording Secretary Ron Campbell rlc465@aol.com	◆ PAN Liaison Candy Havens tvscoop@sbcglobal.net
◆ Treasurer Angi Platt angiplatte@aol.com	◆ Publicity Director Marty Tidwell manetjt@aol.com	◆ PRO Liaison Sandra Ferguson sandraferguson@sbcglobal.net

Getting an Agent's Attention—The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly

The following article first appeared in the May/June 2006 issue of the LARA Confidential, the newsletter of the Los Angeles Romance Authors chapter of RWA®.

Nephele Tempest is personable and straightforward. A former editorial assistant for Simon & Schuster, she moved to Los Angeles in 2002 as a freelance writer. In January 2005, she opened the west coast office of the prestigious Knight Agency.

"Let's start off with the ugly." Telling a horror story about a submission that grew to 1,000 plus printed pages, she pointed out it wasn't typical. Still, there are common mistakes that a first-time author can easily avoid.

"If you don't have your ducks in a row, you're not ready for an agent," she said. The two things to focus on are your approach to the business of writing, and the

content of your submission. Starting with research, get the sex, title, and city of the agent correct. Little errors of this sort won't add up to a rejection, but they do make an impression.

Get the agency guidelines correct; make sure your source is authentic. If you can't find the information anywhere, phone their office. They'll happily give you their submission guidelines.

As you submit, send exactly what the guidelines ask for. Following directions tells the agent a lot about how easy it'll be to work with you.

Create a list based on agencies acquiring new writers. List agents who might be good for your entire career, not just this one project. Put the names in your order of preference, and then submit.

When asked about self-addressed stamped post cards sent with

submissions, Nephele said, "It's a nice theory" The envelope is the perfect container and she doesn't open it until she reads your work. If an agent has a backlog of work, the package might go unopened for months. If you haven't heard anything within the time frame indicated for a query or even a request, contact the agent via e-mail or snail mail to follow-up.

Ms. Tempest was specific regarding query letters. Greet the agent and tell them why you're targeting them.

Do you have a friend on their client roster? Are you published? Did you meet at a conference? Next, give a two-paragraph blurb, similar to the back of a book. This is not a synopsis, but a summary with a hook. Make the agent think, "Cool. I want to read more." Enthusiasm in a writer goes a long way.

Continued on page 10...

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

By Ron Campbell
January 20, 2007

The general meeting started at 10:40. The guest speaker, Ann Marks, presented "Amazing Face Reading".

At 12:20, the general business meeting was called to order by President Jen FitzGerald.

It was noted that there was no November 2006 meeting, the December 2006 minutes were approved as corrected.

Tara Waldie, Treasurer, gave the information for two potential excursions during the July National meeting.

Choice one was the Bill Bates Dude Ranch: Base price includes a BBQ dinner, service bar with ice tea, coffee and soft drinks, hayride, and campfire with a singing cowboy. The cost is \$29.95 per person or \$44.57 per person including bus to and from hotel. (The excursion would be scheduled for the Tuesday night before conference.)

Second choice is a wine tasting tour at Delaney Vineyards. The cost is \$18.95 per person for 2 hrs. Which includes wine and cheese and a class on wines.

It was determined that there was a preference for Bill Bates Dude

Ranch with the wine tour being used for the November Writers Roundup. Tara is to obtain more information that will be presented at a later date.

Without objection, Tara Waldie gave the Treasurers report. Included in the report were 2006 year end numbers that are subject to audit before they are finalized.

Jen FitzGerald, President, gave the 2007 meeting dates, and 2007 board meeting dates. They will be published in the next newsletter.

Discussion was made on the 2007 November Writers Roundup meeting as to dates (NASCAR is a question as to its potential conflict.) and the direction we want to take. Do we want to make it more expensive like last year or to have it just for chapter members? The smaller Roundup would have more workshops in a smaller closer setting. A planning meeting will be held to determine the direction to present to the general membership for a vote. Angi Platt moved and it was seconded that all Writers Roundup ideas be researched and presented at the February meeting. The motion passed.

Jen FitzGerald, President, reminded everyone that the Web Site/Publicity Director board position was still open and anyone

that was interested should contact a board member.

Jen FitzGerald, President, announced the names of the awards presented at the end of the year for most new pages written and most pages edited. The names are as follows: Most new pages for a pre-published author: The Rising Star Award. Most new pages for a published author: The Shinning Star Award. Most edited pages by a pre-published author: The Silver Spur Award. Most edited pages by a published author: The Golden Spur Award. Each winner would, upon approval of the budget, receive a \$25 gift card to the retailer of their choice.

It was noted that the prizes for the GE contest and the Writing awards are in the budget for 2007 to include current contest and 2006 and 2007 writing awards. Gina Nelson moved to accept the names as presented and the awards as stipulated. The motion was seconded by Ron Campbell. The motion passed.

It was noted that as a chapter we want to encourage members to write and have the rewards as an incentive.

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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).

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President's Corner, Continued

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Book In A Year Program guidelines, NT National Conference Excursion ideas, and Writers Roundup ideas will also be announced in February.

Is there some type of program you'd like to see at NT this year? Please don't hesitate to contact Tara Waldie, our VP/Program Director, and let her know – or any of our board members, for that matter.

Our board meetings have been scheduled as follows:

March 17, 2007, 8:30 am at La Madeleine in Grapevine

May 18, 2007, 8:30 am at La Madeleine in Grapevine

August 18, 2007, 8:30 am at La Madeleine in Grapevine

October 2007, date, time, and location to be determined later.

All general members are welcome to attend.

Have you visited our web site lately? Don't forget that our web address is now

www.ntrwa.ORG. Please update your bookmarks as necessary. The NT web site "dot com" issue is

high on my priority list this year. I will be researching the matter over the next couple of weeks and will report at the February meeting on where we're at.

I'm looking forward to seeing you at the next meeting. Come on up and say hi.

Sincerely,
Jen FitzGerald

Tex-Critiquers Coordinator Gina Nelson says...

Howdy! If you would like one of our NTRWA PAN or PRO members to critique some of your writing, join the Tex Critiquers loop and she'll fix you up. If you are a PRO or PAN member who would be available to critique one submission of 5-10 pages let her know and she'll coordinate. This is a great opportunity to help new writers and new members gain some valuable feedback. For more information, contact Gina at ginan@usrisk.com.

In the Loop is back!

Look for Karen Whiddon at the beginning of March and Gail Dayton at the beginning of May.

Many Happy Returns...



Delores Shaffer, February 18
Victoria Chancellor, February 21
Jackye Plummer, February 22
Mindy Obenhaus, February 24
Juliet Burns, February 27



Presently PRO

By Sandra Ferguson/PRO Liaison

NTRWA PRO Members:

Ron Campbell
Shannon Canard
Burna Cole
Sherry Davis
Nikki Duncan
Sandra Ferguson
Willie Ferguson
Andrea Geist
Mary Ann Gruhlke
Cheryl Hathaway
Mary Karlik
Christine Keniston
Diana Loftin
Laura Martello
Mindy Obenhaus
Angi Platt
Jackye Plummer
Beth Shriver
Arline Todd
Tara Waldie
Carolyn Williamson

Um . . . is your name on this list?

Why not?

What are you waiting for? This is a new year, a new month, filled with new opportunities.

Finished your manuscript, didn't you? It's terrible or wonderful. It needs tweaking or a major overhaul. It's there, lurking in your computer, staring at you, calling to you from your list of 'My Documents'. What are you waiting for? Not sure?

My critique partners and I play a game of 'What if?' when we're plotting. Try that for your finished manuscript.

What if you send your manuscript to the editor you sorta, kinda mentioned it to last year? At your last conference? Last mini-conference?

What if you send it to that agent who is taking on new clients? What about the associate editor who was recently promoted and is actively looking for new authors?

What's the worst that could happen? They'll say no. Your much slaved-over, hard-to-birth baby will be turned down. Your great American novel doesn't fit their line; they bought one just like it a month ago; it's not marketable enough in its present state; it's not what they were looking for; it's not dark enough, light enough, humorous enough, long enough.

However the agent/editor rejects your manuscript, bottom line, they reject it. Did you notice I said they reject your manuscript? It's not you rejected—no matter how personal it feels. This piece of work you created would not exist but for your imagination and sheer will. A rejection, any rejection can't take away your success of completing a novel. Don't read more into the rejection than what exists. The rejection is of the work--not you.

No one and nothing can take your power unless you willingly, by choice, give it away. STOP! Think about that for a moment. Roll it around in your head. Taste it. The power is yours. A rejection means no--this one time and absolutely, positively, NOTHING more.

Believe you won't survive a rejection? You will. When it comes in, read it—DO NOT destroy it. Put the letter in a file, a drawer, a place where you can find it again. Call your critique partners, tell them how misunderstood you are, how that agent/editor missed signing the perfect new author. Have a glass of wine, root beer, bottled water and CELEBRATE.

Why? Because you are one of the chosen. You, fellow writer, have created words with meaning that allowed a reader to travel into a new world and find happiness, completeness, satisfaction. You accomplished that miracle, then you were gutsy enough to put your work on the line and let someone, hopefully impartial, judge what you created. Celebration is indeed the order of business for the day.

That's the worst that can happen. Does that seem so bad? So scary?

What's the best that could happen? The agent calls and asks for a partial or the entire manuscript. The editor calls and says she'd like to send the full on to the senior editor. The publisher calls and offers you a three book, six-figure deal. Think big.

Believe you won't survive? You will. Have a glass of wine, root beer, bottled water and CELEBRATE. However, if you get the three book, six-figure deal, do not call your critique partners. Rent a limo, pick them all up and go out to dinner.

The power is yours, future PROs. What are you waiting for? Opportunities abound—one day at a time, one chance at a time. Mail your manuscript and apply for PRO.

Sandra Ferguson, a Romantic Suspense author, is pleased to announce the release of HARM'S WAY, a March 2007 digital release and a May 2007 print release by The Wild Rose Press ~ www.wildrosespress.com. Also check out Sandra's blog at <http://lone-starmeanderings.blogspot.com/>

Spotlight On... Mindy Obenhaus

By Gina Lee Nelson

When did you start writing fiction? Why?

I wrote my first work of fiction, complete with Polaroid photos, when I was in the fourth grade. Entitled *Cindy's Dream*, it chronicled the adventures of a young girl who went over the rainbow in a doll cradle, accompanied by dolls and toys that had come to life. Now it sounds like some bizarre B-movie. But at the time, it earned me an A.

About three years ago, I did what many writers have done. I put down a book and thought, "I can do that." I'd had stories rolling around in my head for years. I'd just never considered putting them down on paper.

Writing quickly became my passion, but also a spiritual journey. I didn't plan to write inspirational or Christian fiction until God called me to it. And I have to admit, I was rather reluctant. I worried that I would be held to a standard I couldn't live up to. But you know what? Christians aren't perfect people, and that's what I try to convey in my writing. God loves us in spite of our shortcomings.

Tell us a little about yourself, and your family.

My husband, Richard, is my biggest fan. He's also my harshest critic. There have been times when I've had to remind him to say something nice [about my writing] so I don't smother him in his sleep. I shouldn't complain. I'm thrilled to have his support. We have five great kids ranging in age

from 23 to 8--three girls, two boys--as well as two grandsons and a beautiful new granddaughter.

How long have you lived in Texas? What brought you here?

Moved to Texas from Michigan in 1982. I had no desire to go to college, and while the job market had bottomed out in Michigan, things were flourishing here. I married shortly thereafter, and in 1984 the military took us to Germany for 3 years then South Dakota, and finally Iceland. I've been back in Texas since 1991. I love Texas and, thanks to my husband, whose several times great-uncle was Davy Crockett, am firmly grounded in its history. As far as I'm concerned, I'm a Texan.

Why set your stories in Texas?

First of all, write what you know, and I believe I have the best of both worlds. While I live in the burbs of DFW, we have a ranch near Columbus, Texas, about 70 miles west of Houston, on I-10. It's a working cattle ranch and our retreat from the chaos of city life. I've had adventures out there I never would have imagined. Things like being stung by a scorpion and stepping on a Copperhead. Yes, he was alive. Things like putting on our own fireworks display or loading Thanksgiving dinner onto the back of a tractor to take it my mother-in-law's because the flood water's were too deep for anyone to make it into our place.

The land itself is a huge inspiration for me. In my first book, *Stolen Dreams*, the heroine lives in the city, but her

heart is in the country. In particular, a place on her family's ranch called Willow Springs. Walnut Hill, an area of our ranch, was where it all started. Very serene.

I've also met some charming and interesting characters in that area. People who make a party out of butchering a pig. In the fall, life comes to a grinding halt on Friday nights so the entire family can head to the high school football game to watch their son play, or their daughter march with the band. They work hard, they play hard, but their priorities are in order.

I know you recently attended the Citizen's Police Academy. Tell us about it.

I highly recommend it. You come away with a better understanding of your community and a huge appreciation for the officers. We covered all aspects of the police department, from routine traffic stops to jail procedures to criminal investigations to SWAT.

We even had firearms training where we shot everything from pistols to a machine gun. Pretty cool. I discovered I was a really good shot.

What do you like to read? Who are your favorite authors?

Hmm . . . well, obviously I like to read romance, or at least something with romance in it. It's just got to have a happily-ever-after. I like straight romance as well as romantic suspense and women's fiction.

Continued on page 11...

Newsletters are now available in electronic format.

**If you are interested in receiving your newsletter via email,
please contact Kim Campbell at kimpcampbell@aol.com.**

Member News

Dreams and Desires: A Collection of Romance and Erotic Tales released on February 1, 2007

The authors of this anthology are (in alphabetical order of last name):

Jenna Bayley-Burke, Faith Bicknell-Brown, Amanda Brice, Sela Carsen, Rachelle Chase, Gemma Halliday, Candace Havens, Zinnia Hope, Jackie Kessler, Susan Lyons, Richelle Mead, Debbie Mumford, Rhonda Stapleton, Bebe Thomas, Emily Veinglory, Sasha White, Lois Winston, Shaunna Wolf, and Kit Wylde.

Seduction's Spell by Barb Woodward will be released in September by AVON RED.

Congratulations to Laura Martello.

Her manuscript, Chasing Midnight, won 1st place in the Southern Heat Contest

Congratulations to Carolyn Williamson who was chosen to speak at Austin RWA in August.

Congratulations to these NT Members for their 2006 writing accomplishments:

Shining Star Award: Candy Havens, 580 new pages reported

Rising Star Award: Ron Campbell, 893 new pages reported

Golden Spur Award: Carolyn Williamson, 1840 edited pages reported

Silver Spur Award: Nikki Duncan, 2270 edited pages reported



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

Sherry Davis, 132 pages
Shelley Bradley, 113 pages
Shannon Canard, 70 pages
Laura Martello, 50 pages
Ron Campbell, 50 pages

EDITED PAGES ~ Top 5

Sherry Davis, 421 pages
Shelley Bradley, 353 pages
Gina Nelson, 340 pages
Nikki Duncan, 245 pages
Carolyn Williamson, 109 pages

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

Tape Talk

By Nikki Duncan

If you haven't taken advantage of the NT audio library, this month is a great time to start. How else could you best squeeze in moments for yourself and your writing when life gets in the way? Slip a CD in your car while you're stuck in traffic. Bring your headphones during the upcoming soccer season.

Each month, you'll find workshop reviews along with a code system to best select the workshop that meets you at your level of writing experience. (B) most beneficial to the beginning writer; (PRO) great for writers with some experience behind them looking ahead to publication; (P) published and (A) beneficial to all writers. Of course, not every workshop will fall

clearly in these categories—these are only suggested guidelines to help you make your selection.

The NT website contains a complete listing of all available titles. For a one-time \$10 deposit, you may check out up to three titles per month. If you have any questions, contact Nikki Duncan at nikki@nikkiduncan.com.

Tape Review: RW10-110 ~ Conflict Ahead: A Roadmap for Writers

By Laura Martello

Cleverly embedded in a metaphorical journey/map, author Christy Ridgeway explores three conflict basics: external conflict, internal conflict, and what she refers to as the “between conflict—that added dynamic between the hero and heroine that infuse every situation they encounter in the story.

Utilizing references to

Deb Dixon's Goal, Motivation and Conflict and Jack Bickham's Scene and Structure, Christy discusses each type of conflict and how to select ones that work together organically for the most impact in a story. Recommended Level: (B)

GEM: The “between characters” concept—not necessarily why the hero and heroine can't be together, but that added something to get the

conflict going until they fall in love and must conquer the deeper romantic conflict. (Example: the heroine is by-the book, the hero makes his own rules.)

L.A. Mitchell (aka Laura Martello) writes romantic suspense within the dark folds of time-travel. Visit her blog at: la-mitchell.blogspot.com.

Book Club News

NTRWA Book Club meets at the Barnes & Noble in North Richland Hills the first Thursday of each month at 7:30. All NTRWA members are welcome to join the discussion.

Join us March 1st to discuss Evelyn Vaughn's Seventh Key, a Silhouette Bombshell book. Von will be joining us at the meeting.

Karen Whiddon will be

joining us on April 5th to discuss her Silhouette Nocturne, Touch of the Wolf.

For more information contact Juliet Burns at julietburns@gmail.com

Getting an Agents Attention, Continued

Continued from page 3...

Publishing is a highly competitive industry, so write the very best book you can. If you're writing in different genres, submit your favorite manuscript and say in your cover letter that you write other genres.

If you have any particular expertise relating to your project, any places on the internet to read your writing, publishing history (if any), even membership in a writing group. Don't apologize for not being published, or anything else.

Check the submission before you send it. Are all the pages there? Are any blank? Is the font readable? Times New Roman and Courier New are the fonts most preferred.

If they still haven't acted, thank them for their time. But remember, the door isn't necessarily shut on the submission, only on the exclusivity. When asked what makes a writer stand out, Nephele said, "Great writing is always the answer." Strong voice and storytelling are a must. Avoid what she called 'Chapter Four letdown,' where the first three chapters are polished but the fourth chapter onward, not so much. Common distractions are unreadable fonts, bad grammar, poor spelling, and weak mechanics. Keep honing your craft

Other things that help you stand out are a willingness to promote yourself; blogging that's current, a professional attitude, and knowing what you want out of the relationship with your agent.

Remember, she's not your mom, therapist, or best friend. She's an advocate for you in the publishing world.

An author website, even if it only has an excerpt and contact information, is now expected in the industry. After "the call", use your gut. If you feel you mesh with the agent and she'll be good for your career, say yes. But don't be afraid to say no if the deal feels fair, but the person doesn't seem like a fit with you.

LARA member Sandra Richards lives in Downey with one husband, one best friend, two rats, nine cats, and one completed paranormal manuscript. You can visit her website at www.readsandrarichards.com.



January Program Recap: Amazing Face Reading

By Kim Campbell

At our January meeting, Ann Marks presented Amazing Face reading based on the book of the same name by attorney Mac Fulfer.

While face reading goes back thousands of years to China, the father of face reading is a Swiss monk.

It is only in the last half of the twentieth century that face reading became popular especially in law enforcement and in jury selection.

Ms. Marks reminded us that face reading is NOT mind reading and while we all can read faces, it is only through real life experience that we learn to read them very well.

From birth, part of our brains are devoted to recognition and ten million neurons are devoted to logic.

The face is divided in two halves. The right side is devoted to your external, personal self while the left side is devoted to your non-linear, creative side.

Meeting Minutes, Continued

Continued from page 4...

Jen FitzGerald, President, announced the names of the 2006 committee chairs as approved by the board. The Audit Committee is short one member, but the committee will perform the audit just prior to the February's meeting.

Marty Tidwell volunteered to be added as the third member of the audit committee.

It was noted that the 2008 contest coordinator will be appointed by June 1, 2007.

Jen FitzGerald, President, gave a short report on the .com situation and she will continue to report on her progress in reacquiring the .com domain. She also mentioned that an amount had been included in the proposed budget to aid in resolving the issue.

Angi Platt, Treasurer, presented the proposed budget for

2007. She discussed that the new prize amounts were in the budget. After some discussion Ron Campbell moved that the budget be approved except for the amounts for the National Excursion and the Writers Roundup as additional information is required on these items and that they are to be presented at a later date for approval. The motion was seconded by Carolyn Williamson. The motion passed.

Membership Director, Carolyn Williamson, gave her membership report.

Secretary, Ron Campbell, did not give a report.

Kim Campbell, Newsletter Editor, gave the report on the newsletter. She is looking for articles. The newsletter will be sent out via email to all members with an email address unless they contact her to specifically have it mailed.

Angi Platt reported on the

GE contest, currently there are 193 entries as compared to 203 for last year. The contest still needs two judges, one of which needs to be a published author.

Nikki Duncan, Audio Librarian, reported that anyone interested in checking out a workshop should see her after the meeting.

Mindy Obenhaus, Ways and Means Chair, announced that it is not too soon to be thinking about the raffle basket for the National Conference. She also asked please do not donate any books older than 2003 for any of the giveaways. We need only current publications. We also have tons of historicals.

The writing award winners for 2006 were announced along with the people who reported the pages written and edited for January.

The meeting adjourned at 1:20 pm.

Spotlight On... Mindy Obenhaus, Continued

Continued from page 7...

As for favorite authors I absolutely love Karen Kingsbury. That woman can suck you in and make you feel every emotion her characters are feeling. And I can never read her without a box of tissues nearby. When I grow up, I want to write just like her. I also like Colleen Coble, Debra Clopton, and Sharon Mignerey, to name a few.

What do you struggle with as a writer?

I tend to be a perfectionist, and as we all know, perfection is never achieved. Therefore, I only succeed in driving myself crazy. I'm a pantsner. While I may have an entire story mapped out

in my head, I couldn't lay it out on a storyboard to save my life.

Finally, what do you consider your greatest achievement? Personally, and as a writer?

Without a doubt, my greatest achievement personally is my family. I'm an only child, but I always wanted a large family. Maybe I watched too many episodes of *The Waltons* and *Eight is Enough* when I was growing up.

All kidding aside, it's humbling to see my legacy, especially now that I have grandkids. It makes me feel good when my older children call me for advice or want to know how to make whatever it is they're fondly remembering at the moment. This past Christmas it

seemed that each of the kids asked me about one tradition or another. When are we going to do this? When are you going to make that? That was pretty cool.

As a writer, I think I'd have to say just the fact that I finished a book. Published or not, anyone who has written a book should be proud. There are lots of people in this world who say they are going to write a book, few actually do. Anything after that is just icing on the cake.

Gina Lee Nelson recently completed her first tender romance, [Play It Loud](#). She's currently working on a Young Adult Fantasy.



Kim Campbell
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Meeting Information

February 17, 2007

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 Program or Workshop
11:45 ~ 12:00 Break/Order Lunch
12:00 ~ 1:30 Business Meeting

Visitors Welcome



Kara Lennox
presents
"Aim High and Shoot Straight"