

Chapter 33, Region 5

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NORTH TEXAS ROMANCE WRITERS OF AMERICA

HEART TO HEART

December 8th, 2007 General Meeting

Annual Elections, Award Ceremony, and Holiday Gathering

Join us December 8th for our end of the year holiday meeting. We'll be celebrating 2007 by presenting awards to some of our deserving members, holding annual elections, and enjoying a gift exchange. Bring a wrapped gift with a value between \$10-\$15 to participate.

The doors to La Hacienda open at 10 am, and the meeting starts at 10:30 am. We hope to see you there!

Come join us!

Remember to bring your
election ballots.

“Perhaps the best Yuletide decoration is being wreathed in smiles.”

— Unknown

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President's Corner



Dear Chapter Mates,

As this year winds to a close, I'd like to look back. It was a year filled with many highlights and a few challenges...

~ Book sales: We've had a tremendous year of book sales, many 'first sales', but also quite a few subsequent sales, as well. Not to mention the eleven chapter members who will be part of the NT/The Wild Rose Press Anthology. So another hearty *congratulations* to each and every one of you who sold a book this year. I know that many more of our fellow chapter members are on the cusp, so 2008 looks to be just as exciting, if not more so. Keep up the writing everyone.

~ Book in a Year: Getting people writing is one of the chapter's main focuses. To that end, the Book in a Year program was started, and has hopefully been a helpful incentive in getting more of you writing on regular basis. I hope to see even more members get signed up for 2008. And as we wind down toward the end of the first year of BIAY, we need to be thinking ahead to the next, and deciding what kind of incentive we want to have. The charm bracelet was a one-time special deal in honor of our twenty-fifth anniversary. If you have any suggestions, please contact any board member or the new BIAY Coordinator, Wendy Watson.

~ RWA National Conference in Dallas: My first RWA conference was an interesting experience. I'd like to thank Chris Keniston and Marty Tidwell for taking me under their wing - and to

Chris for opening her home to me, as well.

~ Silver Nuggets Contest/The Wild Rose Press Anthology: Being selected for the Silver Nuggets anthology was pretty exciting, I must say. The editor assigned to my story was very complimentary of my writing and her kind words have encouraged me to keep writing.

~ Getting to know fellow chapter members: We had quite the turnover in board members & committee chairs this year. But despite the challenge of refilling positions, it was a great opportunity to get to know even more of you. Many thanks (again) to Regina Richards and Kisha Jordan for taking on vacant board positions. Gina Nelson was given a chance to shine by stepping in and taking on the Writers Roundup, and shine she did. Had she not stepped up, we might not have had a Roundup. I really enjoyed sharing a room with and getting to know both Gina and Wendy Watson a little better. And thank you, Shelley Bradley, for sharing your experience, expertise, and knowledge with me over dinner in regards to e-publishing vs. print. It was also fun to visit with Micqui Miller and Barb Woodward while getting them up to speed on the chapter contest.

~ Chapter growth: Many new friends joined our chapter this year. And the one thing I hear over and over is how warm, welcoming, and helpful our chapter is. But the real challenge is how to get more of our long-standing members to attend more often. I know we're all busy, but we want to put faces with

the names on our membership roster and offer each and every member possible the best encouragement and support we can. If we're not offering the types of workshops you need, please let the board know. Chances are, someone else will be interested in that same thing, too.

~ Chapter status: As most of you know, due to an oversight on my part, our chapter was temporarily dissolved and we were advised to not hold our meeting on October 20, 2007. The Monday (the 22nd) following, Angi Platt, our treasurer, called the Secretary of State's office and we were back in business in less than twenty-four hours. (Thanks again, Angi!) Even the woman on the phone said it happens often and wasn't really that big a deal since we jumped to get it rectified ASAP.

It has been a great opportunity to serve as president this past year.

Here's to a great 2008 with many words and pages written, and many more published authors within our ranks.

A very Merry Christmas to one and all.
God bless ~

Jen



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The Fifth Sense

by Angi Platt

This article first appeared in the 2001 November/December issue of THE DARA NEWS and is reprinted by permission of the author.

This story stinks. Or unfortunately, it doesn't.

We've all heard it. Use the five senses when you write.

Well, **seeing** is easy.

Touching comes naturally (at least when the hero and heroine get together).

Hearing is indicated with every line of dialogue.

Tasting...I happen to take pride in this research.

But **smells**? Good, bad, strong, light, sweet, stinky ... woody, musky, manly. How do you utilize this sense realistically in your writing? Especially when you're allergic to most perfumes.

How do you describe that unique smell your heroine has when the hero snuggles close to her sensitive neck? Do guys--with the exception of those in the perfume industry--ever *think* about how something smells? Is it manly to do so?

And just how does a "man" smell? What exactly is a "woody" scent?

In a recent article, Laron Glover had a wonderful idea for those of us

stumped by the malodorous fifth sense. www.fragrancenet.com declares their site "The largest discount fragrance store." In Laron's article, she uses the website's descriptions of fragrances to describe scents in her writing.

This has to be one of the greatest ideas ever. Not only do you get a recent history regarding a fragrance (i.e. how long it's been around and who developed it), you get a detailed description of the individual scents that are its make-up. They've done the hard work for you, actually writing a description of a smell.

For example: "Launched by the design house of Giorgio Armani in 1998, EMPORIO ARMANI is classified as a sharp, woody, mossy fragrance. This masculine scent possesses a blend of spices, vetiver and low undertones of aromatic woods and musk. It is recommended for daytime wear."

Excellent. Even if I don't know what the heck "vetiver" is, OR care for the smell of moss. But I have a place to start. And a heroine that loves gardening might really love that "mossy" smell.

Now, to put this into romantic vocabulary? *A sharp blend of spices lingered after the door slammed. She took in a deep breath despite her hurt feelings. Unlike the man himself, his musky aroma never disappointed.*

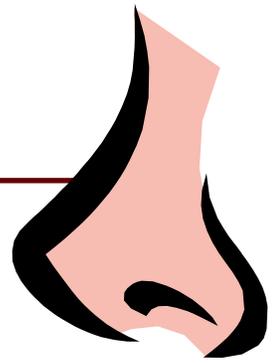
Keep in mind how some smells are perceived as old-fashioned (i.e. lavender), but as a fellow author and friend of mine said, "I intentionally used that scent to help establish that my heroine was a paradox. She claimed to be a modern, non-commitment type woman, but at heart, she wanted a husband and children." So scents can, not only be used as an enticement to hero/heroine, but also as a method of layering the character.

Scents can also trigger memories. The thought of fresh-baked cookies sends some readers back to childhood kitchens. The mention of a skunk may make your readers' eyes water.

Websites for fragrances, furniture, flowers, and other descriptive material might help with research and give the author ideas to enrich their scenes.

*Angi attributes her growing knowledge of writing to the many teachers in RWA. She is currently working on rewrites of a short story for NT's 25th Anniversary Anthology: **Love, Texas Style.***

NOTE: This article was inspired from a short article by Laron Glover of Coeur de Louisiane: Scents...You Say!



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.

Jenna Petersen: "The Great Agent Search"

By Susan Heino

This article first appeared in the October 2007 issue of "Write From The Heart," the newsletter of the Central Ohio Fiction Writers. Permission to reprint, with proper credit, is granted to sister RWA chapters.

Jenna Petersen is a multi-published Avon author (**Seduction is Forever**, available now). You also might know her as Jess Michaels, writing for Avon Red (**Everything Forbidden**, available October 30, 2007). Or maybe you're more familiar with her as the woman who owns and maintains The Passionate Pen, a popular website full of useful information for aspiring authors. One other thing you really should know about her: she's got a fabulous workshop titled "The Great Agent Search." I was fortunate to hear her speak at Central Ohio Fiction Writer's annual conference in September. "There is good news and bad news to having an agent," she says. "The good news is that having an agent definitely can get you a better chance at getting a quicker read with the right editors. The bad news is if you get an agent who has a bad name in the industry, it will hurt you." That's a bit scary. So how do you go about finding the right agent? Ms. Petersen suggests doing your homework. Some great resources for studying up on the subject of agents are:

-  www.aar-online.org - Check with the Association of Author's Representatives (AAR). An agent must follow a certain code of ethics and pay a hefty membership fee in order to belong.
-  RWA - Check RWA's publication, Romance Writer's Report, May issue. This always includes an updated agent listing.
-  www.anotherrealm.com/prededitors - This Preditors and Editors website lists agents and gives recommended (and not recommended!) scores. It's not perfect, but a useful tool.
-  www.passionatepen.com - Another very good website for writers!
-  Google - Try running the agent's name through a search engine and see what you find.
-  Ask your friends and other writers

Now it's time to start querying. She suggests starting out by making three lists. Your "A List" is your "dream" agents; the best of the best. The "B List" is a broader list of agents

you would wish to work with. A third list--the "C List"--are also agents you'd like to have, but perhaps they aren't as well established as the other lists. (Keep in mind, you don't want to bother putting agents you'd never work with on any of your lists!) Rather than conducting a Blitz on the publishing industry, Ms. Petersen suggests making your "A List" your first focus. Aim for the top. When that list is



exhausted, move on down to the "B List" then on to the "C List". Since one of the first questions an agent will ask is how much a manuscript has been "shopped around" to editors, it might be a good idea to query agents thoroughly before starting on editors. Set a time limit. Once that time limit has been reached without obtaining agent representation on a specific manuscript, then it's time to approach an editor.

Keep track of what you send and where you send it. Also, it's important to know how much you sent. Was it a partial or a full? And when did you send it? Remember that things can move very slowly, so set a time limit for how long you'll wait before you move on. It's also a good idea to have more than one project going on at a time so you have more to pitch.

Now, time for the fun stuff! An agent is actually interested in representing me. What do I do? Well, first you jump up and down for joy and drink champagne. Then you need to interview her. Know ahead of time a few questions you'd like to ask; some business, some personal. (Check out www.passionatepen.com/agenqandaarticle.htm for some questions to ask.) Be sure you both lay out your expectations. How often will you contact each other? Phone or email? Etc. Also, double check for warning signs--anything that makes you uncomfortable. Remember to treat the relationship professionally and be businesslike. You are hiring an agent, not finding a best friend.

Kiss and tell! Now is a perfect time to let any other agents who have a manuscript under consideration know that you've got another offer. They might hurry up and make their own offer. Also, it would also be professional courtesy to let any agents with a query or a partial know your manuscript is no longer available. Then, be sure to take a day or two to mull it over. In the end, go with your gut. Most agents have a "contract" of sorts. This is your agent/author agreement. Be sure you read it carefully before you sign and discuss any parts you don't understand or that make you uncomfortable. It would be wise to have a literary attorney look over it before signing. This will likely be the best \$300 you'll spend.

Congratulations! You've hired an agent. Now, what exactly is it an agent can or will do for you? For instance, some will help with editing, some won't. Find out expectations early on. A big part of your agent's job is to pitch to editors. Let your agent pick which editors to approach with your manuscript. Tell her if you have preferences, but trust that she's a professional and might know something you don't. Let her do her job.

Also, let her provide support for your career and be a sounding board. She can guide you along the way. Plus, she'll be the one negotiating and mediating with your editor and publisher. An agent is a buffer so you can focus on writing and can maintain a peaceable, professional relationship with your editor. Be sure to let your agent know how often you need her to touch base with you, and expect her to keep you well informed.

What sorts of things should my agent not be doing? What if I start to feel my agent is not giving me the best representation she or he can? Is it okay to fire my agent? During the course of their career, most authors go through two or more agents. Often this is a perfectly amicable rearrangement. People change careers or leave to have babies. However, there might come a time when you need to consider firing your agent. Here are some instances when this might be necessary.

An agent should not charge reading fees (or any fees) before you sell. Also, be wary of bulk send-outs. An agent should never be sending out your work bundled up with anyone else's just so he/she can say it was submitted. Also, there should be no okay with-

(Continued on page 5)

Jenna Petersen: "The Great Agent Search" (cont'd)

(Continued from page 4)

out your say! The agent needs your approval before agreeing to anything.

There are other reasons you might need to consider firing your agent. For instance, warning lights should go on if your agent stops submitting your work or loses passion for it. Also, if your agent is asking you to write what you really, really don't want to write this could be a sign that things are not going well.

What about your agent's relationship with new editors? Is she/he keeping up with changes in the editorial staff, or has she even lost some existing relationships with editors? There is also the chance that you

may begin to worry your agent's practices have turned questionable. If any of this makes you uncomfortable, talk to your agent. Maybe things can still be worked out. If not, it's probably time to move on. This Great Agent Search might not sound like the easiest thing you've ever done. It's serious business. You might even ask, "Do I have to do this? Can I make a sale without an agent?"

"Yes!" Jenna Petersen says. "It happens every day. However, the industry is tight and so much has to align for everything to work out positively. Why not use all the tools you can?" And a Great Agent is a great tool. They are out there. Check out the websites, go to conferences, enter contests

to get your work in front of them. "Just remember," Jenna adds. "Don't jump blind without a parachute!"

Susan Heino has been writing romance for 5 years. She is a member of the Central Ohio Fiction Writers and RWA. Her manuscript, "Mistaken By Moonlight" won the 2007 COFW Ignite the Flame contest and presently is in the hands of an editor. When she's not writing comedies or the occasional musical, Susan leads a dull life wrangling 2 kids, 1 husband, 20 cats, a couple of noisy sheep, a really big dog, and a fuzzy goat who likes car rides.

Reasons I'm Thankful I Write Romance

by Alyssa Goodnight

The following first appeared in the November 2007 issue of In Print! newsletter for the Houston Bay Area, Chapter of Romance Writers of America. Permission to use is granted to other RWA chapters.

1. The community is amazing, within the framework of RWA and without. I am continuously impressed, surprised, and delighted with the commitment of ro-

mance writers to teach, encourage, and support their fellow authors.

2. The competition. While there are times--plenty of them--that we all wish we had less competition in this business, it's the spirited rivalry that pushes each of us to write the most creative, most unique, most memorable book we can.

3. The diversity. With all of us pushing to find our niche in an already crowded

business, the romance industry has become a dynamic, ever-changing explosion of creativity. And we all benefit, both as readers and as authors.

4. The research. Reading romance is actually part of the job!

5. And, ah yes, the Happily Ever Afters.

WANTED!

NEWSLETTER EDITOR

Don't let this newsletter be the last one! Volunteer!

For more information contact Anjalie Glby at anjalie@leapfrognet.com
or Kisha Jordan at tweetybirdkey@yahoo.com

The Synopsis is Your Friend. Yes, Really.

by Colleen Thompson

The following first appeared in the November 2007 issue of In Print!, newsletter for the Houston Bay Area, Chapter of Romance Writers of America. Permission to use is granted to other RWA chapters. Please use with proper credits and let me know if you use this article.

During my quest to become a published author, there were few hurdles so fearful as the completion of a synopsis (known to some as the plot outline). I so badly hated the idea of boiling down my ginormous tome that I put it off until completing the manuscript. Then, sure enough, the boiling-down process was as painful and laborious as I'd imagined.

All that changed in the wake of my first sale, after which my agent told me I didn't have to complete my half-finished second historical romance (the genre I was writing at the time) to sell it. All I had to do was polish up the first three chapters and send them along with a synopsis. This idea (the book being sold before completion) was powerfully tantalizing, but the thought of writing the synopsis ahead of time scared the devil out of me. Since I always thought of myself as a seat-of-the-pants writer, how could I know ahead of time what I would be writing? And later, if it sold, what if I grew bored with the book since I already

knew the outcome? Or what if I changed my mind about it or got a better idea as I was writing?

In spite of these fears, the lure of a second contract (and, let's face it, the advance check) cracked its little whip until I had a workable synopsis. The proposal did indeed sell, and I agreed to a delivery date quite some distance in the future.

Then I continued working on the book. To my surprise, the work went way more quickly because now I had a roadmap to help keep me on target. With the ending envisioned, there was no more writing down fifty or one-hundred-page blind alleys that would later have to be cut. And I was never bored because I'd only mapped out the main plot and main characters, which left me free to do whatever I wanted with the secondaries. In fact, I felt I could be more inventive in these areas because I didn't have to fret over whether or not the main plot would hold together. I do remember freaking out because things changed as I wrote as better ideas did occur. But when I called my editor all in a tizzy, she said something to the effect of, "Relax, that happens to everyone. As long as the main premise (especially the set up) doesn't change, it's no problem."

For the first and only time in my career, I turned in a manuscript six months

before its due date. (Now that I know how to gauge my speed more closely, I usually streak across the finish line with little time to spare.)

Since that time, I've never looked back. Of the fourteen novels I've sold, all except the first have been on proposal. I've learned to look at my synopsis as a handy guide, not only a sales tool but something that helps keep me focused and on track, along with letting me know about how far I am into the story so I can keep the length reasonable. (Left to my own devices, my books would ramble on for seven or eight hundred pages, which would make them too costly to publish.) I think of my synopsis as a road map into alien territory -- but definitely not as holy scripture. In fact, I sometimes jokingly refer to it as "Colleen's Theoretical Idea of How This Story Could Go."

And for me, that is a very freeing thought.

Past RITA nominee Colleen Thompson writes romantic suspense for Dorchester Publishing. Look for The Salt Maiden (Leisure) in December 2007. FMI, please stop by www.colleen-thompson.com or visit her writer's blog at www.boxingoctopus.blogspot.com where this article first appeared.

Beware, Don't Compare

by Marilyn Puett

The following article appeared in November 2007 issue of The Heart Monitor, the newsletter for the Heart of Dixie Chapter. Permission granted to use or forward with proper credit.

Did you hear about Susie? She began writing only last year and sold her very first book! I've been writing and submitting for five years and haven't even had a request.

I heard that Sally just got a three-book deal with a big New York publisher. She and I used to be critique partners and everyone said my writing was better than hers.

Janie told me she writes 15 to 20 pages a day. Well of course she does! She doesn't have a husband or kids to interrupt her.

When I set goals each month, I'm forced to not only examine past goals and whether I achieved them but I am also tempted to compare myself to others. Did I write as many pages as they did? Submit as many stories? Make as many sales?

Comparisons are by their very nature a recipe for failure. **Desiderata** author Max Ehrman wrote "If you compare yourself with others, you may become vain and bitter, for always there will be greater and lesser persons than yourself.

In the case of the statements above, maybe Susie's really been writing in secret for

years and was afraid - or even ashamed - to admit she wrote romance novels until she'd honed her craft. As for Sally and her critique partner, that's one of the deadliest traps to fall into--comparing your writing to someone else's. Each author has a unique voice and to weigh one against the other is like comparing apples and oranges.

And what about Janie? Did you know her children are grown and live across the country where they can't visit often? And Janie's husband passed away year before last after a long battle with cancer. She wasn't able to write a word during his illness or for a year after he died; the spark just wasn't there.

An old Native American proverb states, "Before you judge another man, first walk a mile in his moccasins." Have you always been willing to tell everyone you're a writer? Have you been through a life-altering or life-threatening family health experience?

As writers, we are taught to read and study our target market. Reading expertly crafted writing hones your own skills. There is also no deadlier trap than quitting because you believe your writing falls short of the work you've read.

Nido Qubein, author, educator and businessman, wrote, "Winners compare their achievements with their goals, while losers

compare their achievements with those of other people."

This doesn't mean I'll stop reading. It does mean that instead of comparing myself to the latest New York Times bestseller, I will compare what I've achieved against the standards I've set for myself. Did I meet my daily page goal? My monthly submission goal? If so, I'm as much a success as that Times bestseller. If not, perhaps I set an unrealistic goal, failed to consider possible obstacles or just didn't do the work necessary to hit the mark.

And what is the solution? It's certainly not to gauge myself against someone else. I must re-evaluate, re-consider and work harder because I can't be someone else; I can only be the best me.

Marilyn Puett loves Susie, Sally and Janie and is happy for their successes and achievements. But she marches to her own drummer--or tries to anyway. She is a wife, mother, grandmother and writer who lives in Alabama. She has sold a dozen and a half stories to the confessions and romance magazines and is a member of Heart of Dixie RWA and The Writing Playground.

Ten More Sentence Structures to Enhance Your Writing Style

by Kat Duncan

This article appeared in the November issue of Imagination in Flight, the newsletter of the New England Chapter. Permission to reprint or forward is granted to sister chapters with proper credit and notification.

Does your mind wander from your own reading when you self-edit? Do your critique partners complain about too much dull narrative? How about a few more sentence patterns to spice up your writing and keep the reader riveted to your pages? Here are ten unusual sentence structures to sprinkle into your writing brew to keep it bubbling and fresh. Remember not to overuse these constructions. They are uncommon and make your reader work a bit harder to understand them. But, they can be useful for keeping the reader focused and alert. They are a great way to slow down the pacing to highlight important information, cluing the reader to pay close attention. Unusual sentence patterns can help guide the reader through a bit of otherwise dry narrative summary or even live a character's internal thoughts or give characters an individual voice. I've provided some examples for each sentence type, so just follow the patterns. Don't use them all in the same paragraph!

1. Start with a **TRANSITIONAL** word, sometimes known as **CONJUNCTIVE ADVERBS** because they can join two independent clauses or sentences.

Examples:

- ✍ For instance, she didn't know anything about how to entice a man into bed.
- ✍ In fact, there were no places on his body she was not intimately familiar with.
- ✍ As a result, he left her with no choice but to pursue him.
- ✍ Again, he had things his way, yet she couldn't help but think his way was rather good.
- ✍ Besides, if he didn't want her then, when would he ever want her?

✍ Finally, he turned his full attention to her, instantly her mind went blank.

2. Use an **ELLIPTICAL CLAUSE** in which some words have been left out. Because there is a pattern or logic to the entire sentence, it is clear to the reader what the missing words are. These sentences typically use a semicolon.

Examples:

- ✍ He gave Jane fifteen kisses; Mary, three.
- ✍ His duty was to the king; hers, the children.
- ✍ She wanted to touch firm muscles; he, softer flesh.

3. Start or end with an **ABSOLUTE PHRASE** (or more than one).

Example:

- ✍ His strides rapid, his eyes dark with desire, John crossed the room and clasped her in his arms.
- ✍ We finished the hearty meal quickly, our appetites satisfied, our minds at peace.
- ✍ The longing for him unbearable, the ache too painful, she shouted his name out the window.

4. Start with a **NOUN CLAUSE**. A noun clause takes the place of a noun.

Example:

- ✍ That his love would never be enough for her greedy father was an unbearable thought.
- ✍ Where she was going was as important as who would accompany her.
- ✍ What she bought all these fancy clothes for made no difference to him.

5. Start with a **CONJUNCTION** or an **INTERJECTION**. I know, your grammar teacher probably said never to do this. But it's OK. Really. This construction is especially useful to convey a sense of being in the character's head because we don't often think in complete sentences. A

series of these can work well to convey a stream-of-consciousness. I've put the following examples all in a single paragraph to demonstrate this.

✍ But how could this be? Because he said he loved me. And his words seemed sincere. Or maybe he was simply toying with me. Hey, what about that woman he was with? Oh my, she wasn't his sister after all. Wow, I never thought he'd do that to me. Yet, his kisses were so passionate. Aha, if I caught him red-handed, then I'd know for sure! So, I'm going to follow them to the theater tonight.

6. Write a sentence in inverted word order so that the **PREDICATE** comes before the subject.

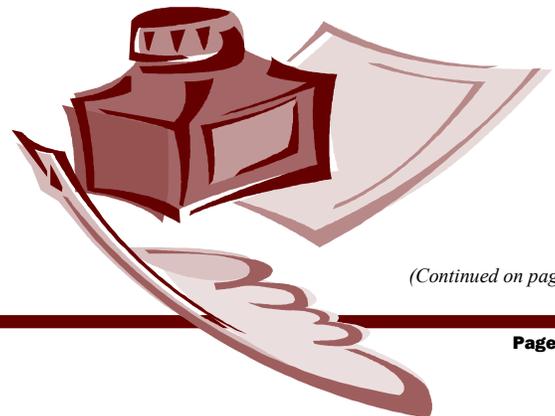
Example:

- ✍ Fierce was the love she bore for her valiant knight.
- ✍ In the early winter came the weary soldiers, home from battle.
- ✍ That old place, no one wanted.
- ✍ A fiery temper she had.

7. Use **EMPHATIC TENSES**. Emphatic tenses do what their name says, they emphasize. They are commonly used with the negative not and with questions when the normal order is inverted and part of the verb comes before the subject. The present emphatic is formed by adding the present form of the verb to the verb 'do' or 'does'. The past emphatic is formed by adding the present form of the verb to the verb 'did'. So emphatic tenses are like getting two verbs in one sentence!

Present emphatic:

- ✍ He does love me.
- ✍ He does not move slowly.



(Continued on page 9)

Member News

 Gail Dayton

THE ETERNAL ROSE, which released in August 2007, has gone into 2nd printing.

 Juliet Burns

Sold another novella to Red Sage Publishing for their Secrets anthologies called **THE PIRATES POSSESSION**.

 Wendy Watson

Writing as Molly Starks, has sold her first novel, a historical titled **MIDSUMMER MAGIC**, to The Wild Rose Press.

Wendy also signed a agent contract with Kim Lionetti of Bookends, LLC. Kim will represent Wendy's mystery series.

NTRWA Silver Nuggets Anthology Winners

The list ranks the top three and the rest of the stories are listed in alphabetical order.

1) **Prickly Heat** by Marty Tidwell

2) **Wallflowers** by Marty Tidwell

3) **The Double-Dog-Dare Dance** by Nancy Connally

Bounty Hunting Texas Style by Arline Todd

A Lady in Deed by Kisha Jordan w/a Nikki Hollaway

The Lost Highway by Laura Martello w/a L.A. Mitchell

My Love Dropped in at the Drop Your Doggie Inn by Gina Nelson
w/a Gina Lee Nelson

The Rancher's Wife by Jen FitzGerald

Reclaiming Tess by Beth Shriver

The Ring by Christine Crocker

Shotgun Seduction by Angi Platt w/a Angi Morgan

Someone to Run To by Mary Duncanson w/a Mary Malcolm

Book In A Year

*Congratulate your fellow North Texas members for completing 25 new
Book In A Year pages for November*

****Remember its never too late to start earning your charms! ****

Contact Gina Nelson at nelsonwriting@yahoo.com for more information.

Beth Shriver

Carolyn Williamson

Laura Martello

Shelley Bradley

Candy Havens

Gail Shelton

Nikki Duncan

Marty Tidwell

Member Birthdays ~ December

Teresa Southwick ~ Dec 2

Sheniqua Vialpando ~ Dec 5

Carolyn Williamson ~ Dec 7

Jennifer Malone ~ Dec 18

Rosemary Clement-Moore ~ Dec 22

Regina Richards ~ Dec 25

Andrea Geist ~ Dec 30

Mary Karlik ~ Dec 30

Ten More Sentence Structures to Enhance Your Writing Style

(Continued from page 7)

✍ Doesn't he spend all that money he has?

Past emphatic:

✍ She did make his heart beat fast.

✍ Didn't he say no?

✍ He did not remain at home today.

8. Use REPETITION. It plays a role in focusing your reader's attention. Forms of repetition include using repeated letters, sounds or words, or try using adjectives of COMPARATIVE DEGREE such as fine, finer, finest or good, better, best.

Examples:

✍ Warm and wonderful, he wove a spell of wonder over her.

✍ The slow summer days, the silent summer days slipped by one by one.

✍ It was fine to embrace, finer to kiss, and finest to kiss lying down with him.

✍ She was good at annoying him, better at embarrassing him, best at driving him mad with desire.

9. Ask a RHETORICAL QUESTION. A rhetorical question implies its own answer, or the answer is only mildly important or obvious.

Example:

✍ And if my love were endless and enduring, could he still wish me gone?

✍ What business is it of his if she meets her old boyfriend for lunch?

✍ Does she think she can tell him what to do with his life?

✍ How did she know he liked pineapples?

10. Break sentences up into SENTENCE FRAGMENTS.

Although they will not be proper grammar, they can be used to emphasize a point or draw attention to information. A sentence fragment is a group of words that sounds like a sentence but does not express a complete thought. Sometimes it has a subject

or verb missing. Sometimes it is a phrase or subordinate clause instead of a complete sentence. Sometimes you can take a perfectly good sentence and break it up into a sentence and a fragment for emphasis.

Examples:

✍ The proud beauty that had thus far eluded him.

✍ He the cause of her imprisonment?

✍ Another reason not to go out on a date with him.

✍ Gorgeous, delightful little woman.

✍ Taller than most, and handsomer, too.

✍ We searched the garden for her favorite flowers. Like dahlias, daisies, and nasturtium.

Kat Duncan, a member of the New England and Hearts Through History RWA Chapters, lives in New England with her two teenage daughters and a constant supply of chocolate in all its various forms. She is an educator who works with autistic adolescents and is an aspiring romance author and freelance writer.

“A writer is, after all, only half his book. The other half is the reader and from the reader the writer learns.”

—P.L. Travers

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.org
Phone: 831-717-5200
FAX: 831-717-5201

The Great Expectations Contest

Unpublished & Published RWA members

Deadline is December 29th

Electronic or Paper copies

\$20.00 for NTRWA members

First 25 pages & query letter

Check the website for more details.

Burnout? Who Me?

By Sue Peek

This article was first used in the October 2007 issue of WORDS OF PARADISE, newsletter of the Florida Romance Writers. Permission for RWA chapters to use or forward is granted with proper credit to author and chapter.

Picture it. Sunday, February 25, 2007, 1:30 PM. I literally ran out of the Dadeland Marriott singing, "The conference is over, the conference is over!" I had survived being co-chair and while it would be several weeks before all the bills came in, I knew we hadn't lost a lot of money.

I spent a week doing nothing, and then got down to writing again. In a burst of enthusiasm, I entered several contests, finaling in one of them. I also resumed my WIP for the first time since November. I was liberated and full of confidence. The first cracks appeared in April. I made a major change in my WIP, which rendered the last five chapters useless. I tried to re-plot, but nothing gelled, so I did it by the seat of my pants--a method I don't enjoy. I'd write for four hours and the next day decided I'd written garbage. Hit the delete key, Susan.

I also found it hard to focus. My mind wandered. I frequently paced the living room, my mind leaping from subject to subject with no sense of direction. To make matters worse, comments made by my fellow FRW members--even the most

innocuous--irritated me. I visualized smacking them up along side the head with a two by four. Not a good sign.

The cracks widened into chasms. I hit rock bottom in early August and seriously considered throwing in the towel on writing. Even a contest win didn't raise my spirits. I refused to submit. I was afraid if a contract was waved under my nose, I'd have to decline because I didn't want to deal with revisions or the responsibilities of being published.

Then a friend said, "Honey, you're burned out!" Huh? Burned out? No, no, that's for workaholic executives who worked eighteen hour days and had trouble remembering their spouse's names. Not me!

But the more I thought about it, the more I realized my friend was right. Somehow, it had sneaked up on me. I had no idea how to say "Get out!" Rather than wal-

low in self-pity, (OK, I did at the August meeting and apologize to everybody who had to listen to me air my problems) I decided to meet the beast head on. I registered for Super Saturday, an event I hadn't planned on attending, concentrated on finishing the WIP, and then beginning a new work in a different genre. I also decided to help more with the 2009 conference. But the best feeling in the world was enjoying the post-Super Saturday get-together in the bar. I actually laughed and had fun. I still can't plot worth a darn and have spells of wondering why I'm bothering, but am determined not to let it win. When I have trouble concentrating, I do something else. I try to keep my writing routine the same--walk a mile in the morning and then write for 3-4 hours. I used to do a chapter a day. Now I'm thrilled with a scene. I'm entering contests again and considering submitting.

Have I survived burnout? I don't know. I guess what I'm trying to say is don't give up. Things are never as bad as they seem and with a little luck, this too shall pass.

Susan Peek has been a member of FRW for four years and was the 2007 Fun In The Sun Conference co-chair. She lives in Ft. Lauderdale with her husband, Bruce, and is currently working on a mystery, an exciting move taking her into a different genre. She is also a member of River City Romance Writers in her hometown of Memphis.



Tape Talk

By Nikki Duncan



This year's conference CDs are in. If you know of a workshop you'd like to check out, let me know and I'll get it

ready for you by the next meeting. The workshops include everything from publisher spotlights, career, research, craft, and so much more. I'll get a list together that I can email you until

I get it combined with the current list—it's quite extensive. Email me at nikki@nikkiduncan.com with questions or requests. ☺

Book Club News

Come join us for books and fun...

The Romance Book club meets every first Thursday of the month at the

North Richland Hills Barnes and Noble

at 7:30 pm

January: The Boyfriend League by Rachel Hawthorne, (aka Lorraine Heath)

February: Elvis Takes a Back Seat by Leanna Ellis, Release date Jan 1, 08

March: Natural Born Charmer (Mass market paperback) by Susan Elizabeth Phillips, Release date Jan 1, 08



All Writers Have Great Expectations

By Angi Platt

Former Great Expectations Coordinator

This article first appeared in NTRWA Heart to Heart November 2007 issue.

A favorite author and friend of mine, Catherine Spangler, is so encouraging to me it's almost embarrassing. She always says, you're sending yourself out there, entering contests, getting better. Good things are going to come back to you.

Entering contests is one way to get honest unbiased opinions on your work. Getting honest opinions -- from people not your friends -- helps you look at your work from a different viewpoint. Most of the time judges have a definite feel for what's wrong with a chapter -- in their humble opinion. But judging has come a long way and can also point

out what people like about your writing. Which in turn, helps your writing get better. The better your writing, the more likely you'll sell.

The Great Expectations team designed a score sheet to encourage the good points of an entrant's writing as well as things that needed work. For \$20.00 NT, DARA & YELLOW ROSE members can enter the Great Expectations contest and receive really good feedback. Questions on each score sheet help the judge look for category specific points, which help writers know if they're achieving the marketing side of their writing.

Do yourself a favor.
Enter YOUR great expectations.

It's YOUR contest.

Twenty bucks... Lots of feedback... Lots of opportunity...

Everyone in our chapter should take advantage of getting their first chapter looked at.

Who knows. You may just end up with a requested manuscript and a sale. *Great expectations* are what keeps writers writing.

GREAT EXPECTATIONS

Details are available on the website
www.NTRWA.org

Score Sheets, Contest Rules, Entry Form are available to download.

Final round judges will be announced as they are confirmed.

Want to judge? Have a question?

Contact Marty at Manetjt@aol.com.

Newsletters are now available in color in electronic format.

**If you are interested in receiving your newsletter via email,
please contact Kisha Jordan at tweetybirdkey@yahoo.com**



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Meeting Information ~ December 8th, 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



**Annual Elections, Award
Ceremony, and Holiday
Gathering**