



North Texas Romance Writers of America

HEART to HEART

Founded March 1933

Chapter 33, Region 5

March 2010

Volume 29, Issue 2

WRITTEN WORDS

RISING STAR AWARDS MOST PAGES WRITTEN in February

- Nikki Duncan – 320 pages
- Lee Swift – 210 pages
- Shelley Bradley - 171 pages
- Wendy Watson – 150 pages
- Ron Campbell – 145 pages

STAR AWARDS MOST PAGES EDITED in February

- Shelley Bradley – 372 pages
- Beth Shriver – 350 pages
- Christacarol Jones – 350 pages
- Linda Graves – 300 pages
- Jerrie Alexander – 297 pages
- Marsha West – 282 pages

INSIDE

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- PAN News Page 6

NT will meet on the **SECOND** Saturday this month
Learn how to perfect your pitch on March 13

See page 3 for more information

Join us March 19–21



Featuring

The Storytelling Mastery of

MICHAEL HAUGE

Register at www.ntrwa.org

See page 7 for more information



NTRWA
President
GINA
NELSON
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Spotlight on

Ally Hauldren

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The President's Corner

By Gina Nelson
NTRWA President



I hope you'll take advantage of our speed pitching session during this month's meeting. It's a tried and true way to practice talking about your story in a supportive, friendly environment. Before you know it, you'll be ready to meet a publishing professional at our conference. Believe it or not, they're already looking forward to meeting you!

As we approach our Texas Two Step Conference, I want to recognize our Board members and committee chairs who give of themselves and their writing time to help direct our chapter and keep her on course. Let's play a little game called "Do You Know Your NT Board?" See if you can match the board member/chair with their bit of trivia.

A. Carolyn Williamson - Secretary
B. Gina Nelson - President
C. Clover Autry - PRO
D. Marty Tidwell - Texas Two Step
E. Jean Marie Brown - Communications
F. Angi Platt - Great Expectations
G. Jeannie Guzman - Membership

H. Marsha West - President- Elect
I. Michelle Welch - Web Site
J. Nikki Duncan - BABS, CDs
K. Kym Roberts - Programs
L. Shelley Bradley - PAN
M. Kim Quinton Spotlights
N. Chris Kensington - Treasurer

- ___ I am a retired detective sergeant from the Kansas City, Missouri Police Department.
- ___ I was the youth director on the S. S. Veendam on Holland America Cruise Lines.
- ___ I performed at Casa Mañana as a chorus nun in Sound of Music with Betty Buckley.
- ___ I attended acting school on Broadway in New York City.
- ___ I am the mother of a beautiful daughter who plays professional football.
- ___ I once pulled my grandmother's teeth out (they were dentures).

- ___ As a reporter for the Wall Street Journal I once flew on the jet that was used by then-Vice President Dan Quayle.
- ___ I worked as a teacher in a federal prison; and one of my inmate "students" offered me a job. I said, 'no thanks.' He was a pimp.
- ___ I won first place in pairs roller skating at the Virginia Beach invitational in 1979, is that good?
- ___ I was almost killed on the way to visit Graceland.
- ___ I placed in the Top 20 in Youth Nationals the last year I competed with my horse.
- ___ I listen to one song for each manuscript I write -- one song, and only one song until I'm finished.
- ___ I'm the drummer for my family's Rock Band/Guitar Hero band.
- ___ I spent a month in Kenya studying economic anthropology.

Answers: k, n, h, b, d, i, e, a, g, c, j, f, l, m

Come Out March 13 and Practice Your Pitching

By Kym Roberts
Programs

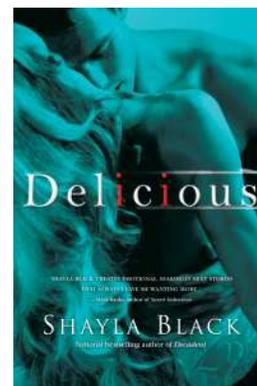
You've heard of Speed Dating where you sit at a table and try to make a date with a total stranger, and when the timer dings you get up and move to the next stranger at the next table. In Speed Pitching, you will move from table to table pitching your manuscript to a small group of friendly, fellow NT members. They will ask questions and give feedback, and when the timer dings you will move to the next table, until you've made your way around the room. This is a great chance to find out what works and what doesn't in a safe, supportive atmosphere.

Everyone will have a chance to pitch and also a chance to listen and react. This is great practice for the next conference you attend. For some of you that means the NT Two Step. If you don't have anything to pitch right now, please join us and play the part of agent or editor. We expect to have a lot of fun, and we might even learn something while we're at it.

Member News

DELICIOUS, the third in **Shayla Black's** Wicked Lovers series was released March 2 by Berkley. Shayla's paranormal romance, POSSESS ME AT MIDNIGHT, has been nominated for a PEARL award as the best magical/fantasy romance of the year.

Shayla will also be doing a book signing from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday, March 6, at Borders - Arlington Highlands.



Carolyn Williamson will be speaking at the Silken Sands Conference in Pensacola, Fl. on March 19, 20 and 21.

Her topic is Lure Readers into Living Your Story Using Deep Viewpoint.

Congratulations to NT Members who finaled in the Great Expectations 2010 contest

ChristaCarol Jones: Mythic - Young Adult

Tracy Ward: Guypolar - Mainstream with Romantic Elements

Roni Griffin: Wanderlust - Contemporary Series

Please note: At our last board meeting, held on February 20, we filled the remainder of our open positions. Michelle Welsh will now serve as Web Site Director.

Jean Marie Brown will serve as Communications Director and Newsletter Editor.

Gina Nelson, NTRWA president

Baskets! Baskets! We Need Baskets!

We've got to have more than the 4 baskets I know about, so the folks who are coming to the Conference can enjoy trying to win them.

Please, please. Chocolate, books, bath care products, a gift card to Starbucks in a cup. Come on, you guys. You're super creative. I know times are tough, but you don't have to spend a lot, and if you work with some buddies, you can still have a nice basket, without the cost.

Remember to use the plastic wrap on the basket and post on the outside the contents and approximate value. Email me mwest7012@sbcglobal.net so I don't worry myself sick about whether we're going to have any other baskets.

Bring them with you Friday night if you're coming to the conference, and we certainly hope a large number of you are. If not, bring them to the March 13th general meeting or call me 817-738-4987 to arrange for a pick up.

Thank you, thank you, thank you for your support of the 2010 Texas Two-Step Conference.
Marsha R. West, President-Elect.

All About Marketing and Promotion

by Carolyn Williamson

"Getting the call is just the beginning," according to Misa Ramirez. She and Nikki Duncan filled NTRWA members heads with information. Misa spoke about marketing, that is putting your name out there and developing a brand. Nikki discussed ways to promote your book after it's published.

Misa's Killer Marketing Plan begins with knowing your audience. Figure out the type of readers likely to buy your book, and aim your efforts in that direction. Next identify your goals, big and small. Sure, you'd like to hit the NYT bestseller list, but have an easier goal lined up to work toward on the way. As Parris Afton Bonds, one of RWA's founders said, "If you aim for a star, you might hit the moon." Making a smaller best seller list could be awesome.

Next, make a plan. Like diets, your efforts won't be successful without a plan. What can you do to promote yourself before you sell? Explore Twitter, Facebook, blogging, websites, loops, and speaking engagements.

After you sell, you need to get into action. Six months before your book comes out, if you have that long, is a good time to start, especially a web site. You'll want to develop a budget. Consider costs of postage for mailing review copies, postcards, bookmarks, and ads. While some print publishers will send out ARCs (review copies) or postcards, most publishers do very little publicizing. Don't spend all your advance. Check out what's free. Also, figure out how much time you are willing to spend. Decide which things you are going to do and when, but don't forget to keep writing that next book. Make a list of radio programs where you might arrange an interview and newspapers to send press releases before booksignings. (Small town papers often print every word.)

Marketing and Promotion

What to do	When to do it
Create a website	6 mo. before
Create a press kit (include cover and your pic-	4 mo.
Target bookstores to send mailings to	4 mo.
Send out press kits	3 mo.
Set up blog tours	3 mo.
Contact local bookstores to set up signings	2 mo.
Look to see you forgot anything or need to do	1 mo.

Nikki presented tips for using the Internet. Blogs should be interesting and not just about your daily life. Include useful information and update frequently. A website can highlight you as a writer and show your marketability. It should be easy to navigate and have a visible link to your e-mail address. Don't make it all about your book. Do include your bio and picture, blurbs and excerpts from your book, copies of known author quotes and reviews, blogs by you and other authors. Adding interesting tips and articles will interest readers. Update it weekly so viewers will come back. Offering prizes helps too.

With the wealth of information and tips for promoting themselves and their next books presented by Nikki and Misa, NTRWA members now have a head start on promoting their next books.

Author, Carolyn Williamson, has spoken at conferences and to various organizations, made press kits, written press releases, done booksignings, done cooking demonstrations, and appeared on TV to promote her book, *There IS Life After Lettuce*. Her next challenge is to develop websites for Cookitwithcarolyn.com and Carolynrae.com. She hopes to have them ready before selling her next cookbook or novel.

Great Expectations 2010

Thanks and congratulations to those of you who entered and judged in the Great Expectations 2010 contest. We hope to have the results back to announce at the NT Two Step conference.

~~Angi Platt, Great Expectation Chair

Looking for a Few Good Women and Men!

By **Marsha West**
NTRWA President-Elect

This is something for you to put in the back of your mind, letting it perk, until I ask you bring it out later in the year to think more seriously about.

Have you ever considered serving on the NTRWA board? Of course, many of you have done this in the past, but every year we're looking for a few good women and men to step forward to fill one of the leadership roles in our chapter.

You're probably wondering why I'm bringing this up now. I mean we just started this year. Yes, but if your first two months have flown by as fast as mine have, you'll understand. The NT Texas Two-Step is almost upon us. Before we know it, we'll be talking about the National Conference in Nashville, which takes place the end of July. On one of the loops I'm on, people already have been talking about what to wear. Ye, gods! I'm not ready for that. I don't even know which size clothes I'll be wearing then. (Guys, you may not personally understand this, but the women know what I'm talking about, because most of us keep several sizes of pants and shirts...well I digress.)

The point is it's not too soon to begin to let the idea roll around inside about serving on the board. (This early, I don't even know who will want to continue in their present role for another year. Current board members, you need to chew on that a bit.)

Okay, enough for now. I just wanted to tickle your fancy a bit. I'll get into what your volunteer service might entail in terms of time and difficulty of the various jobs in later issues. I'm excited, because I can just begin to make out those little perking noises coming from all across the Metroplex.

NTRWA Published Authors

At the April meeting, we'll have our first PAN meeting in many years. The topic? Achieving your writing goals. If you've thought, I have a career and I have goals, but how do I get from point A to point B or would like to hear how others have achieved theirs, please join us.

This time is just for YOU! We'll also be discussing what you'd like from our next PAN meeting, currently scheduled for September.

For this special opportunity to talk about matters relating to published authors, please join the regularly scheduled meeting at 10:30.

We will order lunch. Just before the general program begins, we'll step into the adjoining room and spend that time in our meeting, then join everyone else for lunch, social time, and the business meeting. Looking forward to seeing everyone there!

—Shelley Bradley, PAN Liaison

DON'T MISS THE NORTH TEXAS TWO STEP

Conference Schedule

Friday Night

5:00 p.m.: Meet & Greet
(light snacks and beverages provided)
Dinner is not provided, but we will be going to a nearby restaurant and everyone is welcome to join us (everyone pays for his or her own meal).

Saturday

7:30 AM: Check-in
8:30 AM: Welcome and Agent Q & A.
9:00 AM: Michael Hauge workshop.
12:00-1:00PM: Lunch is provided.
1:00-4:30 PM: Workshop continues.
4:30-4:45 PM: Announcement of the winners of our Silent Auction!
4:30-5:00 PM: Saturday session ends.

Sunday

9:00 AM: Michael Hauge discusses *Lars and the Real Girl*.

If you signed up for an agent appointment, you will be given your time when you

Register at www.ntrwa.org

The cost is \$215 and Paypal is accepted. Please put transaction e-mail & ID on your registration form. Please download, fill out, and e-mail to conference coordinator Marty Tidwell, manetjt@aol.com

Hotel

The North Texas Two Step will be held at the Embassy Suites DFW Airport South. Please mention NTRWA when booking your rooms. Room rates are \$95 per night. Each room will sleep five to six people.

MICHAEL HAUGE'S STORY MASTERY

During this special, all-day seminar, Hollywood script and story consultant Michael Hauge, best-selling author of "Writing Screenplays That Sell" and "Selling Your Story in 60 Seconds: The Guaranteed Way to Get Your Screenplay or Novel Read", will present his unique approach to creating compelling fiction, and to eliciting emotion in your readers. Using clips from recent blockbuster love stories and romantic comedies, along with hands on exercises, Michael will help you strengthen your story concepts, plot structure, love stories, character development and themes.

On Sunday Michael will do an indepth analysis of the film LARS AND THE REAL GIRL, to illustrate the essential principles of story structure, character arc, love stories and romantic comedies.

Topics will include:

- The primary goal of all story
- The power of desire, need, longing and destiny
- The essential conflict all characters must face
- Turning plot structure from a complicated concept into a simple, powerful tool you can easily apply to every story
- The single key to creating character arc and theme
- Creating unique, believable and fulfilling love stories
- The unique rules of romantic comedy: fantasy, duality, deceit
- Adapting your novel to film

Spotlight on Ally Hauldren

Written by Kim Quinton

Ally Hauldren has been hooked on Science Fiction and Fantasy since writing her first story in the 5th grade. This self-proclaimed science geek has published poetry, short stories and articles and is working on novels that combine her interest in Speculative Fiction and Romance.

First off, for myself and other new members, is your name Alley or Pat and which do you prefer to be called?

I go by Alley, but I write as Pat Hauldren. People started calling me Alley when I made my email addy "alleypat@...". I chose to write as Pat because I write science fiction and fantasy, and the name is sort of gender-generic. This way, I'm thinking, I won't immediately warn off the male readers (they might think I'm male and so give me a chance) or the female readers (who really don't usually care whether the author is male or female, and who says women aren't more intelligent? LOL).

When did you decide you wanted to be a writer? What did you do in your pre-writer life?

I've written since I could write. Perhaps it was my human paternal units who infested me with stories, reading to me all the time, especially before bedtime. But, I decided I would be a "writer" when I ran out of books to read at my school library. I panicked. I thought, OK, I'll learn all the other languages of the planet, and read all their books, and then what? I'd better start writing. And so I did. And my 5th grade teacher (we just had one teacher for 3 grades, that's how they did it in Dime Box, Texas) said I was "ungodly" because I wrote about germs descending to Earth to devour all the humans. (Gee, I thought it was kinda cool J.)

I'm a retired Quality Assurance Manager. I worked 30 years in QA, mostly in electronics. I sort of fell into it. Being a science-type geek (yes, I was one of the kids with a slide rule hanging off her belt loop when I wasn't tooting a tuba or squinting through a telescope) but unable to fathom human mathematics (I'm allergic, it's quite deadly), I studied technology and science.

I'm also a Mom of 2 grown kids (they never grow up, the instructional manual NEVER revealed that tidbit, nor how to return them for a refund), and 4 grandkids, ages 18 – 4, (one of which is a girl, poor thing. What will she ever do with herself? Besides being a genius, discovering the cure for stupidity, running the world, and avoiding war?)

(Continued on p. 9)

What are you working on now?

Besides the articles, (I also contribute sporadically to the North Texas e-News and occasional book reviews for SFReader), I write short stories and novels. Currently, I'm writing the first draft of an urban fantasy tentatively called *The Angel Project*.

In *The Angel Project*, Zeba just wants to be left alone to hustle pool games and drink and ride her Buel. But Zeba doesn't realize that she's special. She's a descendent of the Nephilim and she's the only one left.

She was being watched and tracked, but Zeba's gone off the grid. Someone wants her. And wants her very badly, because he wants what she has, so he can be special too.

Zeba doesn't know who she is, but when the bad guys try to capture her, they trigger her fight-or-flight response and she transform into a Nephilim, or at least, what they think is a Nephilim.

Once I have the rough draft finished, I'll set it back for a bit and edit my previous novel, *The Winged Warrior*, and get that sent out, then return to *The Angel Project* to edit. (I have an agent request.)

I have another novel, *Resonant Frequency* that needs one last edit, then is heading out to Cyberwizard Productions. It's more science fiction than fantasy about dimension travel.

Are you published? Do you have anything due for publication this year?

Not in novels. I'm published in poetry, short stories, and articles. At this moment, nothing is pending, short story-wise. I have a few I'm tinkering with, and I got invited into an anthology, so we'll see.

I am working on an anthology, editing it myself, for Cyberwizard Productions, called *The 28th Dimension: Tales of the Texas Zone*. It's all specific with a Texas theme. Fun stuff J.

What advice would you give to new writers joining the group?

New writers.... Don't get critiqued right away. There should be a staging process for writers. Not just PRO and PAN, but those are great processes, RWA really helps writers as a career (and about time someone took us writers seriously as professionals, eh?), but groups should understand that a newbie needs nurturing. Not Pablem-fed, but a little kindness goes a long way.

Please list your websites and contact information.

My main website is www.alleypat.com, and you can find me just about anywhere as "alleypat". From there, you can access my editing biz, EditAlley.com, or my personal website, PatHauldren.com, that also has my blog embedded or you can link to me via alleypat.livejournal.com. I also have one for my book, assuming my potential editor will keep the title, <http://theangelprojectfantasybook.com/>.

Minutes from the February 20, 2010 Business Meeting

Compiled by Carolyn Williamson, Secretary

CALL TO ORDER:

A regular meeting for the North Texas Romance Writers of America (NTRWA) was held on February 20, 2010 at La Hacienda Restaurant in Colleyville, Texas. The president and secretary were present. The meeting was called to order at 12:41 P.M. As there were no corrections presented, the minutes of the previous meeting were approved as posted in the January newsletter.

Record Board Absences:

Chris Keniston was present; but had to leave before the business meeting was held.

OFFICER REPORTS:

President Gina Nelson reported:

The March meeting will be on March 13, the second Saturday, because the Texas Two Step Conference will be on the third Saturday.

Gina Nelson reported for the Treasurer:

The Treasurer's report was handed out and read aloud. It will be filed for audit.

Program Director Kym Roberts reported:

Next month's workshop will be speed pitching in preparation for the Texas Two Step Conference.

Membership Director Jeannie Guzman reported:

As of today, we have 53 members. In attendance today we had 33 members and 2 visitors, Michelle Copra and Heather Long, who both joined at the meeting. Christacarol Jones has also joined. All members (including previous members) are requested to fill out the application form online. Members who do not pay dues this month will be dropped from the roster and the loops. Jeannie will send a reminder e-mail to last year's members who haven't renewed.

Gina Nelson reported for the Newsletter Editor:

The deadline for newsletter articles is Friday, February 26, the first Friday after the meeting.

COMMITTEE COORDINATOR REPORTS:

Writing Incentives Chair Nikki Duncan:

She presented beads to those who had written 20 pages or edited 50 pages.

Audio Librarian Nikki Duncan reported:

CDs of national conference talks are available. Please let her know which ones you wish to borrow so she can bring them to the next meeting.

(con't on p. 11)

February Minutes

PRO Liaison Clover Autrey reported:

Jeannette Kathleen Cheney and Linda Graves are new RWA PRO members.

PAN Liaison Shelley Bradley reported:

She will hold a book signing on March 6 at Borders in Arlington; and encouraged members to come to keep bookstore competition alive.

The Amazon versus Macmillan controversy has been settled; so Macmillan books will now be available on Amazon.

Great Expectations Chair Angi Platt reported:

NTRWA members Roni Griffith, Christacarol Jones, and Tracy Ward are finalists in the Great Expectations contest.

Michelle Welsh reported for Conference Chair Marty Tidwell:

She needs volunteers for the conference.

The deadline for the general registration price is February 28. We need more attendees to break even. Members are encouraged to publicize it on their loops.

Marsha West asked for more basket donations for the conference. At meeting time, she had only two. She asked members to email her what they were donating, and who was working with them.

Nikki Duncan invited members to watch the movie [Lars and the Real Girl](#) at her home after the March 13 meeting. Watching the movie prior to the Texas Two Step Conference is recommended by conference speaker Michael Hauge.

NEW BUSINESS, Announcements:

Alley Hauldren announced online the upcoming bookfair to benefit North Texas RWA. She encouraged members who will participate to send news to her; and she will announce it in the Fort Worth Examiner, her online writing column.

Angi Platt announced the Harlequin versus RWA controversy has been settled. Harlequin authors will again be eligible for PAN, and Harlequin will now be approved by Harlequin to participate in the national conference.

Kim Quinlan moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed.

The business meeting was adjourned at 1:29 P.M.

Submitted electronically by Carolyn Williamson

Date Approved: _____

Date Corrected: _____



newsletter@ntwra.org

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

NTRWA Monthly Meeting
Third Saturday of the month
Doors Open 10 a.m.
La Hacienda Ranch
5250 Highway 121 South*
Colleyville, TX

Board of Directors

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President@ntwra.org

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Program Director, Kym Roberts
Programs@ntwra.org

Secretary, Carolyn Williamson
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Membership Director, Jeannie Guzman
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