



North Texas Romance Writers of America

HEART to HEART

Founded March 1933

Chapter 33, Region 5

June 2010

Volume 29, Issue 5

WRITTEN WORDS

**RIISING STAR AWARDS
MOST PAGES WRITTEN
in May**

Candace Havens - 325
Ron Campbell - 169
Linda Graves - 123
Kris Cook - 120

**STAR AWARDS
MOST PAGES EDITED
in May**

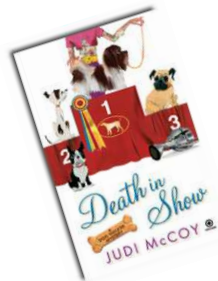
Candace Havens - 675
Shelley Bradley - 271
Linda Graves - 238
Marty Tidwell - 200

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Join us June 19th
When NT's Judi McCoy presents:
Five Easy Steps to Self-Editing



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Creating a Vivid, Realistic Setting



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GINA
NELSON
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J. Kathleen Cheney**

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The President's Corner

Very early, I knew that the only object in life was to grow. ~ Margaret Fuller

It is not true that people stop pursuing dreams because they grow old, they grow old because they stop pursuing dreams. ~ Gabriel Garcia Marquez

Did you seize the opportunity to participate in our Critique Round Table event last month? I certainly hope so!



At one point, I had to smile as I looked around the room and observed so many writers discussing writing with passionate intensity, published members sharing craft and life experience with others who courageously put their work on the line to become more skilled and a step closer to publication. That willingness to help each other, to focus on encouragement instead of competition, is one of the reasons why I love being a member of North Texas Romance Writers.

Huge hugs and thanks to our published writers for giving so generously of their precious time and talent to make this year's event truly sensational.

During the May meeting I announced the resignation of our NT Treasurer, Christine Keniston, who elected to step down due to increasing professional and personal demands on her time. I would like to thank Christine for the year and a half she served as our Treasurer. We could not have kept the chapter running without her hard work and dedication. Christine, we wish you the best of luck in your future endeavors and hope to see you at upcoming meetings.

Ron Campbell has graciously agreed to serve as NT Treasurer for the remainder of 2010. Thanks, Ron, for stepping up to the plate.

Don't forget, folks: Judi McCoy will join us in June to present *5 Easy Steps to Self-Editing*, followed in July by *Everything You Ever Wanted to Know about Book Sellers* presented by Georgette Radford of Barnes and Noble, and in August Shelley Kaehr presents *Website Building*.

I hope you'll use what you learned at the Critique Round Table to improve your writing, finish your manuscript, or submit your work to an editor or agent. Next year it could be you, a published author, reaching out to help someone else on their journey to publication!

Gina Nelson, President

If you have built castles in the air, your work need not be lost; that is where they should be. Now put the foundations under them.

~ Henry David Thoreau

May Minutes

CALL TO ORDER: A regular meeting for the North Texas Romance Writers of America (NTRWA) was held on May 15, 2010 at the La Hacienda Restaurant in Colleyville, Texas. The president and secretary were present. The meeting was called to order at 10:37 a.m., recessed at 10:50 a.m., and reconvened at 11:45 a.m.

Record Board Absences: Chris Keniston, Jeanie Guzman, Jean Marie Brown

OFFICER REPORTS:

President Gina Nelson reported: Chris Keniston has resigned as treasurer. Ron Campbell has been appointed and approved by the NTRWA Board. Following the audit report, Gina announced that since there were no objections, the audit report will be filed.

Program Director Kym Roberts reported: Next month's workshop will be presented by Judi McCoy, *5 Easy Steps to Self Editing*. Coming in July, Georgette Radford from Hurst Barnes & Noble will be speaking about bookstore sales; and Shelley Kaehr will speak on website building in August.

For Membership Director Jeannie Guzman, Gina Nelson reported: We had 2 visitors, Gloria Richard and Sherry Connaway, who will be joining soon.

COMMITTEE COORDINATOR REPORTS:

PRO Liaison Clover Autrey reported: Three members have recently attained PRO status, Tish Sanders, Jill Wilson, and Roni Griffin. Clover presented a program on writing bios to members who were not participating in the published author critique sessions. Clover also reminded PRO members going to national to sign up early for editor and agent appointments.

Great Expectations Chair Angi Platt reported: Last year's contest activities are all wrapped up. Also, Angi has had requests from other chapters' contest chairs to teach them how to run a contest like ours.

Audit Committee Chair Ron Campbell reported: An audit of the books showed NTRWA lost money last year. (Most of the over-budget spending was due to the conference. Members were aware there would be an over-budget expense to benefit the members.) The audit committee recommended that future audit committees should meet in January to facilitate a smooth transition between officers, and also recommended keeping a minimum balance in the checking account as determined by the Board. Other members of the audit committee were Wendy Watson and Regina Richards.

NEW BUSINESS:

The membership voted to change the Bylaws regarding membership in NTRWA PAN, as printed in the NTRWA Newsletter. The bylaw approved by RWA, the Board, and the membership shall read as follows: "Membership in this chapter's PAN shall be open to any general member who has attained the status of PAN as defined by RWA." The NT Policies and Procedures will use the term *Published Author Group* to encompass all of the chapter's published authors.

The business meeting was adjourned at 12:08 p.m.

Submitted electronically by Carolyn Williamson

Don't Miss Judi McCoy's Tips on Self-Editing!

Judi McCoy lives with her husband and two pocket pooches, Buckley and Belle, on Virginia's beautiful eastern shore. Rudy is the real star of the dog walker series and, although he passed away last January, lives on in her heart, her books, and his blog. Look for a photo of her latest rescue canine, an adorable bichon, in the back of book three, which will be out in 2010.

Retired from her stint as a nationally rated women's gymnastic judge, Judi raises orchids and tends her garden, while concocting more adventures for Ellie and Rudy to share. Contact her to make comments, ask questions, or enter one of her contests. If you have a picture of your own four-legged buddy, send it to her and she'll post it on the Puppy Pages. She promises to personally answer every e-mail.



Mark your calendar for these Upcoming Meetings

July 17: Georgette Radford with Barnes and Noble **Everything You Wanted to Know About Book Store Sales**

Aug. 21: Shelley Keahr **Website building**

Sept. 18: Wendy Watson **The Wrong Man**

Oct. 16: Dallas Medical Examiner Reade Quinton **"Reality is Stranger than Fiction"** (Graphic topics—discretion advised)

YOUR STORY COULD BE HERE!

HEART to HEART is looking for original articles written by NT members. If there's a topic that you feel passionately about or want to explore please consider writing about it for the newsletter. All stories are posted on the RWA™ Editors' Loop, and hopefully other member chapters will pick them up. If you're interested contact Jean Marie Brown at Newsletter@ntrwa.org

Spotlight on J. Kathleen Cheney

Written by Kim Quinton

Please welcome one of our newest members, J. Kathleen Cheney.

Her journey has taken her from math teacher and academic team coach to published author in Speculative Fiction to the RWA and exploring the world of writing romance.

Please tell us about your background- Have you always thought about becoming a writer? What prompted you to take the plunge into writing full time?

I've had different jobs, starting with grocery jack-of-all-trades in college. Once graduated, I became a clothing buyer for a department store chain, and then later moved into teaching. I had some weird idea that teachers get time off during the summer, and I would be able to write then. I started teaching English, but soon found that Math positions were much more common, so I moved over to that. I also did a 2-year stint as a Gifted and Talented specialist, but moved back to Math when the district had to cut funding for Special Ed. But I kept the additional duties gained during that time, coaching the Academic Team, the Robotics Team, Mock Trial, the Chess Club, the Math Honor Society...I knew every geek in that school!



As a new member to NTRWA, what common ground are you finding between Romance and SCI FI /Fantasy?

It's easier to spot the differences, but I would say both genres try to tell stories about believable characters in impossible situations. Both genres exist in the genre ghetto, often looked down upon by the 'literary' elite. The distinction is purely one of marketing, because many of those 'literary' novels are Romance or Speculative Fiction, but the distinction sticks.

What drew you to RWA? Are you working on a romance or adding more romantic elements to your Speculative Fiction?

I decided to join the RWA after several of my Speculative Fiction friends discussed how little we knew of the Romance world, despite the fact that we were all trying to include romantic elements in our work. SpecFic, in many ways, doesn't speak the same language as Romance, so I joined in an attempt to better understand the genre.

Spotlight on J. Kathleen Cheney

Congratulations on being published in several magazines and anthologies. What are your upcoming publications? Are you working on something new?

I've sold more than a dozen short stories in the Speculative Fiction genre (Fantasy, Science Fiction, and Horror), and have appeared in such publications as Writers of the Future, Beneath Ceaseless Skies, Fantasy Magazine, and Jim Baen's Universe. My short fiction has landed on several 'Best of' or 'Notable' lists, including the Locus Magazine Recommended Reading List for 2009.

Most writers are readers first. What do you read for pleasure? Do you have any favorite authors?

I read a great deal of non-fiction, usually related to whatever I'm working on. When I do read fiction, my favorite Speculative Fiction author is Martha Wells, and my favorite Romance author is...Mary Balogh...no, Julia Quinn...no, Georgette Heyer...

Do you remember the first romance you read or perhaps ones that encouraged you to write?

The first Romance? That would be The Witch of Blackbird Pond, by Elizabeth George Speare. I read my first genre romance in college, when a roommate (Thanks, Marla) got me hooked on Georgette Heyer. I love Regency Romances!

Is there an author that in your mind has successfully combined romance with speculative fiction as a "crossover" author?

The first author I recall reading specifically for her romantic content was Juanita Coulson, but the field has more and more authors trending that direction these days. I'm very partial to Sharon Shinn and Teresa Edgerton.

What advice would you give to new writers joining the group? Helpful tips or mistakes to avoid?

I suppose the primary rule is that money should flow toward the author. If a new writer isn't certain about how appropriate a possible editing/agenting relationship is, they should definitely ask others in the group for their opinion on it. Too many writers end up losing a lot of money that way...

Please list your websites, contact info and anything else.

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Blog: <http://j-cheney.livejournal.com/>

E-Mail: jkcheney@earthlink.net

THANK YOU!!!!

National Conference Raffle Basket

As most of you know conference is almost here and the creation of our NTRWA National Raffle Basket! NTRWA members have always been very generous in making each basket a stand-out at conference.

This year our theme is "Texas Proud." How could we not be proud? Texas has some of the most talented romance writers, published and unpublished.

That's why this year we thought what better way to showcase our talented writers than asking each published author if they could donate a book (autographed copies, of course) for our basket.

We're asking the rest of our to-be-published writers to donate gift cards (from national stores and in small increments) and/or Texas memorabilia to fill our baskets to show our fellow romance writing members how proud we are to be Texans! (I'm also talking to non-Native Texans who moved here as soon as they could).

You can bring your donations to our June meeting. If you're unable to attend please notify me or one of our board members and we'll find a way to collect your contribution.

Thank you all for your generosity!

Member News!

"Something to Hide" a historical romance novel by Sheniqua Waters is now available! It's the story of a southern belle with secrets that threaten everything she hold dear.



Beth Shriver will sign her devotional "Peace for Parents of Teens" on Saturday June 12, from 2 - 4 p.m. at the Barnes & Noble located in the Shops at Highland Village.

WWW.BETHSHRIVERWRITER.COM

The following article first appeared in the April 2010 issue of the NEORWA (Northeast Ohio Romance Writers Association) newsletter. Permission granted to forward or reprint to sister RWA chapters with proper credit to author and chapter. *Kym Lucas and Rena Koontz, co-editors*

Point Of View Made Easy

by Jamie Denton
NEORWA member

I've become a stickler when it comes to viewpoint. I've become one of those annoying purists who rarely switches POV within a scene. This could be because way back in the day when I first started writing, I made a mess of POV and was determined to master this elusive component in crafting a novel.

I went beyond your average Head Hopping Syndrome and stormed right into so ridiculous it wasn't funny. With a little help from my friends, and by studying how other authors handled POV in their stories, I learned. But first, I had to understand exactly what was POV.

There are different types of point of view; omniscient viewpoint, sometimes referred to as authorial intrusion. There is first person point of view (POV/1), otherwise known as the "I" perspective. And finally, third person point of view (POV/3), which is most commonly used in genre fiction, romance in particular. We live our lives in only one viewpoint, so this should be simple, right? It's looking at the sunset, or listening to Mozart (or Nickelback), maybe enjoying a banana split on a Saturday afternoon, or inhaling the sweet fragrance of a dew-kissed rose. Let's not forget the swelling of our heart when we look at a newborn child. Hard to believe that we experience this all through only one perception, isn't it?

Now let's transfer this to our characters.

One of the most important things to remember is if your hero or heroine can't see it, hear it, taste it, smell it, or feel it, neither can your reader. In other words, the heroine can gaze at the hero, but she can't gaze at him with desire burning in her gaze if we're in her point of view.

Why? Because your heroine can't see this.

Another example would be if you are in the steward's point of view in your most recent historical work in progress (WIP) and he calls out to the priest walking toward him. The steward can't know that the priest still hasn't forgiven the steward for insulting him unless the priest has told the steward this previously. If the steward hasn't heard this (or witnessed the priest's reaction in an earlier scene that tells him in no uncertain terms that this is true) then he cannot possibly know it.

Confused? Try this...

If your hero is observing your heroine from across a crowded room, your heroine can't know that the hero is lusting after her unless she sees some sign of his lust. Now, if your heroine is standing next to your hero, and she can see that "his gaze burned hot" or some such, your reader can know it as well. Why? Because we know your heroine saw this from her own viewpoint.

That all sounds much simpler, doesn't it? But, the question remains, how do you convey the non-viewpoint character's emotions without jumping into their head? Easy – emotion through action.

Here's an example of emotion through action from my first romantic suspense novel, *THE MATCHMAKER* (Kensington Brava, 2006), with the heroine, Greer, observing the hero, Ash:

She looked into his eyes and her pulse took off like a rocket. Desire burned

Point Of View Made Easy

within the intense depths of his gaze and whatever protest she'd been searching for vanished. Instead of pushing away from him like she knew she should, she reached up to cup his jaw in her palm.

And then she kissed him.

Within Greer's viewpoint I establish not only Ash's emotions (desire), but also Greer's emotions, which we see through her actions and her thoughts. We know that she still desires Ash (who is her estranged husband), as well, but also how she still feels about him, which we see through the tenderness of her touch. All of this information is given to us through Greer's point of view. No head hopping necessary.

Now that we have a better idea of what point of view is, how do you decide who should be the viewpoint character?

The answer is simple

1. Who will be the center of the action?
2. Who will have the most at risk?
3. Whose struggle toward their goal is the fuel of the scene?
4. And finally, who will be moved or changed by the outcome?

In romance, most likely it will be your hero or your heroine. So ask yourself these four simple questions for any given scene whenever you're unsure which character is the viewpoint character. Once you've answered these questions, the appropriate point of view character should no longer be a mystery.

For example, let's say Hannah Heroine has just announced to Hank Hero she's pregnant (and yes, it's Hank's baby). First of all, in the previous scene, we've already established Hannah's angst over being pregnant. She needs to know Hank's reaction to the news because it affects her. She's the one at risk. Therefore, the scene belongs to Hannah.

Hannah has just told Hank she's pregnant, but you need to know Hank's reaction. Why? Because you know from the story that Hank has something at stake as well. He was planning on leaving town in the morning to take a long awaited promotion he's been longing for on the opposite coast.

You DO NOT have to wait until the end of the scene before getting into Hank's head to know what he's feeling. We can use the ol' point of view switch <insert shocked gasp here> within a scene to find out what Hank is thinking. I'm willing to bet that you haven't read a romance in years that didn't have multiple points of view, unless of course the book is written in first person (POV/1). While secondary characters are occasionally used, point of view usually comes from the hero and heroine's perspective. It is possible to use more than one point of view within a chapter, or even with a scene, and not have it labeled as head hopping.

However, there are certain rules (and I despise that term, but couldn't think of a better word to use) to follow when switching point of view within a scene. Take a look at this example of a rather smooth, if I say so myself, point of view switch from THE SEDUCTION OF SYDNEY, an old, 1999 release of mine from Harlequin Temptation:

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Note that I re-establish the reader in Sydney's point of view by using the senses, specifically, how she feels when Derek touches her. Derek can't possibly know that Sydney is feeling warm and dizzy, or what she's thinking in regard to warnings she's choosing to ignore.

Here's another short example of point of view switching within a scene. We begin this scene in the courtroom during a custody hearing in Melina's viewpoint, but watch the change into Mario's POV:

...This man staring at her [across the courtroom] with such disdain was not the same man who'd nearly told her loved her a few days ago. This man looked as if he wished her dead.

Mario sensed Melina's torment but hardened himself against her. The flash of fear in her eyes gratified the part of him that wanted to hurt her. Hurt her as she'd hurt him, not once, but twice.

Both characters are in emotional angst at this point in the story, which is conveyed by their separate points of view and their observation of the other. From Melina's viewpoint we know that Mario can hardly stand the sight of her because of the way he's looking at her. From Mario's point of view we know that he's glad Melina is suffering right along with him because of what we see through his eyes.

If you absolutely have to change viewpoints within a scene, keep the transitions seamless. Really cement the reader into your new viewpoint character's head by using three simple rules (ack! there's that word again <g>).

Name (Mario)

Action (Stared)

Emotion (in disbelief)

The best way to learn how to switch point of view is by not switching point of view. Sound confusing? Not as much as you might think.

The way I learned to make a seamless point of view change was to write an entire scene in one character's viewpoint using the five senses as my rule of thumb. If my heroine couldn't see it, hear it, taste it, smell it or feel it, then quite simply neither could my reader. Once you understand what it takes to firmly establish your character's viewpoint within a scene, making the transition between the hero and heroine's point of view is a great deal easier to accomplish.

That said, it's a rare occasion when I switch POV within a scene. I've become a purist in that regard. Love scenes may be the exception, but really, not so much. I found I prefer the challenge of conveying all I need in only one point of view per scene. It also allows for the opportunity for deep point of view. One thing to always keep in mind -- when using a singular POV per scene, DO NOT rehash the same information in the next scene in the opposite character's viewpoint.

If you remember the theory of Scene and Sequel, this shouldn't be a problem. Whether you want to switch point of view within a scene, or become a viewpoint purist, in the end, the best thing you can do for yourself, and your characters, is to always trust your instincts.

~~*~*~*~*~*~*~*~*

Jamie Denton writes fun, sexy romances for Harlequin Blaze and steamy, thrilling romantic suspense novels for Kensington Brava. She is currently at work on her 26th novel. To read more about Jamie and her upcoming releases, visit her website at www.jamiedenton.net, where there's always something hot and steamy brewing.

The following article appeared in the June 2010 issue of romANTICS, the newsletter of the Toronto Romance Writers, Susan Haire, editor. It may be reused by RWA chapters with appropriate credit to the author and chapter.

Creating a Vivid, Realistic Setting For Your Novel

By Margaret Moore

One of the most important things you have to do when you write a novel is to establish a sense of the time and place in which your novel takes place, and do it quickly. This is one way to draw your reader into the world of your characters, and to engage their imagination.

You can always take the most easy way out — say so right in the beginning, as a heading before the story begins. *England, 1066*, for instance. This tells the reader right away where they are and what sort of things to expect.

But it takes more than that to really establish a sense of time and place. Think details — the buildings, the furnishings, the clothes, the vehicles. You should have the details as correct as you possibly can for the era in which you're writing, including the present. If you're writing about a mall, just saying "the mall" isn't enough. Large? Small? Well kept? A mess? Ditto a castle, or a manor house.

To add another layer to your setting, think of the five senses: sight, sound, smell, taste and touch. Don't think just about what your characters can see, but how else they experience their world.

Be on the look-out for the "telling detail," something that immediately tells your reader they're not in Kansas anymore (unless, of course, they are <G>). It can be a simple, everyday thing, like a utensil, or something really unique to a time period, like a uniform or a hat. Sometimes one item like this can be worth paragraphs of general description.

Ultimately, the amount of space you devote to setting is a matter of style — there is no "right" or "wrong" here. Some readers like to feel totally immersed in the setting; others prefer a faster-paced story, or one that concentrates more on the conflict between the characters. Think of the books you've enjoyed the most, and ask yourself how much the setting, and the descriptions, contributed to that experience.

Recommended Reading:

"Word Painting: A Guide To Writing More Descriptively" by Rebecca McClanahan. USA Today bestselling author and past president of Toronto Romance Writers, Margaret Moore has written over forty historical romance novels and novellas for Harlequin, Avon and HarperCollins Childrens Books. Her latest release is THE WELSH LORD'S MISTRESS, a Harlequin Historical Undone available at eHarlequin. Visit Margaret at www.margaretmoore.com or her blog at

<http://margaretmoore.blogspot.com>.



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NTRWA Monthly Meeting
Third Saturday of the month
Doors Open 10 a.m.
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