



# North Texas Romance Writers of America

## HEART TO HEART

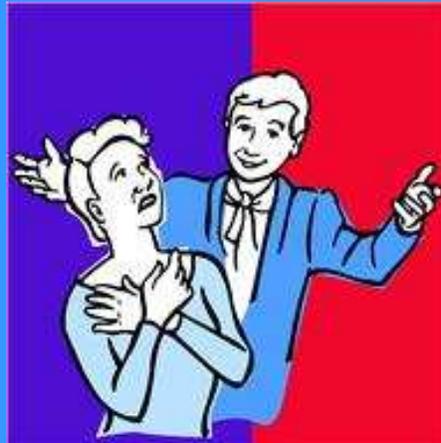
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CHAPTER 33, REGION 5

APRIL 2011

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**DON'T MISS OUR APRIL 16 MEETING  
WE'LL HAVE A LIVELY DISCUSSION ABOUT  
TAGS AND PACING  
WITH TIPS ON HOW TO GET IT RIGHT**



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CORNER  
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## PRESIDENT'S CORNER - MARSHA WEST

Let me begin by saying, "AAAGGGGHHHH!" I'm doing word searches on my 3<sup>rd</sup> book, *The Theatre*, (92,000-words give or take a few) getting ready to send to agents, Jeannie, Jerrie and I visited with at the NOLA conference. What an exhausting, back-breaking, shoulder aching endeavor. My list compiled from various sources, including Margie Lawson, my CPs, and discoveries of my own "favorites" contains 75 word(s) phrases. The process has been ongoing over a couple of weeks and especially intensive the last four days.

Some are not words I use often. Others are near and dear to me. For instance: I found 85 "a little." (Got it down to 3.) 82 feel/felt combinations, down to 6. The biggie is "see." 178 of those babies, down now to 14. Folks, this is tedious work. At least for those of us who write very colloquially, which I do. (I removed "I know for a fact" from that sentence. Jeez Louise!!)



The good news is I can see the ms tightening up. I've been forced to search for more specific ways of writing. This is good. (Not good is the extra time I spend writing emails, because my brain is in edit mode, and I keep stopping to fix every problem. Crazy) The word count has both shrunk and expanded. Deleting words like "some" is fast and easy. Other times you have to use more words to say whatever. As I tiptoe through the ms line by line, possibilities to expand descriptions & emotions arise.

I've used this technique before, but never to the extent I am now. I'm anxious to complete the word search and discover what the results are for the finished book. What and who will it sound like when I read the ms out loud?

This year's theme is *Keeping On, Keeping On*. The word search exercise illustrates the reality of what those words mean. I'm realistically looking at another week, and boy would I like to stop, call it a day. But I'm close and will keep on keeping on. Sometimes we have to be in the right place to learn a new idea, guess I'm there.

We are fortunate in NT to have many writers willing to share what they've learned along the way on their writing journey. Please mark your calendars for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of the month and come learn with us.

Marsha

*Success can be measured more by obstacles overcome when trying to reach success than plateaus reached. Anonymous*

## MARCH MINUTES

### **CALL TO ORDER:**

A regular meeting for the North Texas Romance Writers of America (NTRWA) was held on Saturday, March 19, 2010 at the La Hacienda Restaurant in Colleyville, Texas. The president and secretary were present. The meeting was called to order at 10:35 a.m. The February minutes were approved as they were printed in the March newsletter.

### **OFFICER REPORTS:**

#### **President: Marsha West reported:**

Regina and Clover Autrey have been given Prayer Shawls since they have lost a close loved one (like a husband or child). Donations of yarn and money will be accepted to help make the Prayer Shawls.

#### **Treasurer: Ron Campbell reported:**

The February treasurer's report will be filed for audit.

#### **Program Director: Nikki Duncan reported:**

The schedule for NTRWA 2011 calendar was reviewed as follows:

- April – Interactive Workshop regarding Pacing
- May – Roundtable Critique
- June – Speed Pitching for Nationals
- July – Synopsis Review by Victoria Chancellor
- August – Writer's Guide to E-publishing with Misa Ramirez
- September – Finding A Place in the Market with Tracey Wolf
- October – Discuss Dialogue with Julia Quinn
- November – Members Retreat
- December – Christmas Party

#### **Membership: Jamie Webb reported:**

There are seventy-one members.

There were two new members

Kay Overton  
Genevieve Wilson

There were four visitors.

Lynda Jensen (western historical)  
Gloria Cope (paranormal, contemporary romance)  
D'Ann Burro (young adult paranormal)  
Julie Haza (women's fiction)

### MARCH MINUTES

**Communications Director: Jean Marie Brown reported:**

Anyone who wants to get the Newsletter should give their names to Jean Marie Brown. Articles can be submitted by members to be placed in the Newsletter. The deadline to get items in the Newsletter is Friday, March 25<sup>th</sup>.

**Website: Jen FitzGerald:**

A link of e-publishers will be listed on the chapter's website.

**COMMITTEE COORDINATOR REPORTS:**

**PRO Liaison: Clover Autrey reported:**

There is one new member of PRO.

**Hospitality Chair: Linda Graves reported:**

Reviewed the door prizes which are:

A gift basket, two twenty-five page critiques by Heather Long and a twenty-five critique by Denise Bartlett of Gypsy Shadow Publishing. Also, a first chapter and synopsis critique by Laura Barth of Harlequin.

Name tag holders are on sales.

Shirts are on sale for \$12 & \$15.

**Audit Committee reported:**

Heather Long and Kim Quinton completed an audit of the 2010 books and found no irregularities. A motion was made to approve; it was seconded, and passed.

**Spotlight Chair: Carolyn Williamson reported:**

Heather Long spoke in place of Carolyn Williamson and gave Donna Stockton the Spotlight.

Next General Meeting: 10:30 a.m. on April 16th at La Hacienda.

The business meeting was adjourned at 11:15 am.

Submitted electronically by Sheniqua Waters

Date Approved: \_\_\_\_\_

Date Corrected: \_\_\_\_\_

## 2011 NTRWA Schedule

**April**            **Tags and Pacing:** An interactive exercise to see just where we halt our pacing with introspection and detail.

**May**             **Round Table Critiques:** Have 15 pages of your WIP read and critiqued by an NT published author.

**June**            **Speed Pitching for Nationals:** Practice pitching your story to our "editors and agents of the day" to prepare for those face-to-face opportunities at conferences.

**July**             **Synopsis with Victoria Chancellor:** Get your synopsis written and polished so that manuscript is ready for post-conference submission.

**August**        **The Writer's Guide to ePublishing with Misa Ramirez:** Presentation on ePublishing ins and outs, as well as some numbers.

**September**   **Finding Your Place in the Market with Tracy Wolff**

**October**       **Dialogue: It's More Than What You Say** with **Julia Quinn:** We'll follow Julia's talk with a book signing. Non-members will be charged \$5 for this month's workshop.

**November**    **Retreat TBA**

**December**    **Christmas Party**

## SPOTLIGHT ON WENDY LYN WATSON

BY CAROLYN WILLIAMSON

Author, attorney and university professor, Wendy Lyn Watson succeeded at what I tried to do and failed. She landed a delightful interview on Good Morning Texas. Read on to find out how she did that.

**1. Which do you like writing better, historical romances? What do you like best about each genre? Are you going to write any more romances in the near future?**

While I love reading romances, I'm better suited to writing mysteries. I doubt I'll ever write another straight romance again. But I love to weave romance into my stories, whatever they are.



**2. Do you separate info about the romance from info about the mystery on your website?**

The historical romance I wrote was my very first manuscript. I have a soft spot in my heart for the characters and story, but I know it has its flaws. I published it (through an e-publisher) under a pen name, and I've basically let it die a natural death. In other words, I'm not promoting it anymore, and my current writing has definitely moved squarely into mystery and suspense territory.

**3. What do you teach at UNT and how many hours does that take, both in class and before class?**

I teach various courses in American politics. I'm actually in class 9-12 hours per week. Add another 10 or so hours of prep, 10 for course development, and 10 for meetings with students and colleagues ... it's at least 40 hours per week.

**4. Do you have to do research and write articles for UNT?**

Actually, I took the position at UNT so that my research obligation would be smaller than with a traditional tenure-track teaching position. I still do research and write articles, but most of them are about teaching (as opposed to political science scholarship). I am, however, working on a book manuscript with two of my colleagues. The book is about the legal disposition of ancient human remains found in

Washington State. I love bringing my story-telling skills to this real life suspense-filled drama.

**5. How do you find time to write?**

Thankfully, my husband is very understanding. He's a musician, and so he has a "hobby" that consumes a lot of his life. He understands my need to slip away on weekends and evenings for hours at a time. And he's pretty laid back about the laundry piling up, the dishes sitting in the sink, etc.

**6. What kinds of research do you have to do to write your mysteries?**

If the authorities ever search my internet history, I'll have some explaining to do! I spend a lot of time researching poisons, guns, methamphetamine production ... and all sorts of criminal enterprises. In addition, I find myself looking up tidbits about beauty pageants, strippers, Texas slang, carnival rides, Boy Scouts ... the list goes on and on.

**7. Do you make up the ice cream and topping recipes you put on your cards and bookmarks yourself or do you find them somewhere?**

I sometimes start with a recipe I find elsewhere, but all of my recipes (on my cards and in my books) have been altered and made my own. That's my favorite kind of research!



**8. How did you manage to get the interview on Good Morning Texas?**

It's all about who you know ... Rob McCollum (one of the GMT hosts) does voice acting for the studio where my husband works as an engineer. Somehow my writing came up during one of Rob's acting sessions, and he told my husband that I should drop him an e-mail when my book was about to come out. Rob very graciously set everything up..

**9. Did you notice a surge in sales after that interview?**

I didn't notice a big jump in sales, but I would still do it again in a heartbeat. I had a great time, and the experience was wonderful.

**10. Do you plan any special publicity other than a book signing for your new book?**

Unfortunately, the next book comes out during a fairly busy time for me, so I won't have an opportunity to do much. But I'm planning an ARC giveaway and sweepstakes in the month of May to let people know the book is on the way!

**11. What's the name of your new book? When does it come out, and where can we get it? Are there Kindle and Nook versions?**

The third Mystery a la Mode is called "A Parfait Murder." It will be out on June 7, 2011, and should be available at bookstores nationwide. Penguin distributes via Kindle and Nook, so you can definitely pick it up for your e-reader.

<http://www.wendilynwatson.com/>

The following article first appeared in the January – March 2011 issue of Out of This World, the newsletter of the Fantasy, Futuristic, and Paranormal Chapter.

## **THE RIGHT WORD**

by Margaret L. Carter

### **TWO MORE PAIRS OFTEN CONFUSED:**

"Disperse" is easily mistaken for "disburse" because the two words do have vaguely similar meanings. "Disperse" means to scatter widely. It can be used either transitively or intransitively.

The mayor ordered the crowd to disperse.

The police dispersed the crowd.

The financial term "disburse," however, means to expend, as in disbursing funds. The treasurer might disperse the money far and wide when he disburses it, but normally one would hope not. This word is prone to the misspelling "dispurse," not completely illogical, because it does ultimately come from the Latin word for "purse."

I often see "jive" (banter, improvisation, talking nonsense to deceive) used erroneously in print for "jibe" (to be in agreement, derived from a sailing term), a simple confusion of sound with no similarity of content. Two things "jibe with" each other, not "jive with."

Don't jive me; your story doesn't jibe with the facts.

To add to the confusion, there's also "gibe" (pronounced the same as "jibe" but with a completely different derivation), to jeer, taunt, or scoff. Keep these words straight and nobody will gibe at you!

*Along with her other talents, Margaret Carter is a writer of fantasy and paranormal and vampire romances.*

*The following article originally appeared in the April (Q2) edition of the Passionate Ink newsletter.*

## WRITER IN THE MOOD

By Vonna Harper

I just finished writing a sex scene. Bet you think I'm fanning myself.

Think again. Writing erotica is work, especially the sex part. As someone who has written some forty books, novellas, and shorties since jumping onboard the erotica bandwagon, I know what's ahead of me when my characters start shedding their clothes. Because it's vital that each sex scene is representative of my characters, there's no plug and play. Every act has to stand on its own.

Does writing about sex satisfy me in that way? Sure I become emotionally and physically involved but no way is writing a sex scene the same as experiencing same.

I have to keep body parts straight. I need to keep track of what clothes are where. Once, if not for my critique partners' eagle eyes, my heroine would have removed her bra three times! Also, what the lighting's like, the temperature, whether I packed a blanket so if my characters are in the wilderness, they won't wind up with rashes.

How do I go from point A to point Z? Simple, I orchestrate the dance that begins with foreplay. Who takes the dominant role, who the more submissive one or are they equals? Who makes the first move, the second, and how are those moves carried out? When or if is the condom pulled out? Are clothes slowly peeled or ripped? Whose hands are doing what to who? Where are the legs?

Equally important is the emotional component. Where are my characters in their relationship? Is this a quickie or the ultimate in commitment? My poor characters all have emotional baggage so I have to keep that baggage in mind. I write a lot of capture and bondage so maybe the hero has to take his captive/lover back to his war chief. Can he shove responsibility to aside while getting it on? Is my heroine determined to get back her freedom or surrendering to her submissive nature? Will the dilemma cool her libido?

As if those considerations aren't enough, I don't want to pound any particular word or words into the ground. Sentences need to be shaken up and turned around. I write for Kensington Aphrodisia, Ellora's Cave, Samhain, and Loose-Id and each have slightly different requirements. One publisher is fine with certain descriptions and terms, another not so much.

It sounds if I'm complaining when I'm not. I love writing erotica. At the same time, like every career, writing is a profession. No publisher will have anything to do with me if I don't bring my A game to the table. Hard to get lost in a scene when all that's at the back of my mind.

More information on Vonna Harper can be found at <http://www.vonnaharper.com>.

Amanda Racette Twentyfive  
writing as Cassandra Carr

Talk to Me, out now from Loose Id!

Uniform Behaviour, out now from Andrews UK!

Writer website: <http://www.booksbycassandraccarr.com>

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/AuthorCassandraCarr>

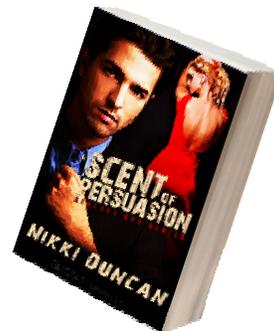
Twitter: [http://www.twitter.com/cassandra\\_carr](http://www.twitter.com/cassandra_carr)

Goodreads: <http://www.goodreads.com/CassandraCarr>

Amazon: <http://www.amazon.com/Cassandra-Carr>

## MEMBER NEWS

Nikki Duncan's *Scent of Persuasion*, book 2 in the Sensory Ops series, was released in print on April 5. She will be part of a book signing on Saturday, April 16, at the Barnes & Noble in Lewisville from 2:00 to 4:00. NT members Shayla Black, Candace Havens, and Angi Morgan will also be signing books.



Nikki Duncan was part of the author signing at DARA's Dreamin' in Dallas conference.

(photo courtesy of Jeanne Guzman)

## CHAPTER EVENTS LOOP

The chapter will no longer be responsible for sending info about contest and conferences to NT members on our loop. All of that information is available on the Chapter Events Loop. See below for how to join that loop.

Thanks,  
Marsha West  
NTRWA President  
[President@ntrwa.org](mailto:President@ntrwa.org)

The email address to send messages to the Chapter events loop is:  
[chapterevents@yahoogroups.com](mailto:chapterevents@yahoogroups.com).

To subscribe, the web address is:  
<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/chapterevents>.

If you were a member of the previous Contest Loop, you do not need to subscribe.

## CONGRATULATION 2011 GE WINNERS!

### **Contemporary Series Category**

Victoria Curran ~ Editor with Harlequin Books  
First: The Sheikh's Bargain Bride by Diana Kathleen Holmes

### **↻ Erotic Romance Category**

Katherine Pelz ~ Editorial Assistant with Berkley Heat  
First: Bound by Trust by Michelle Davids (partial requested)

### **↻ Historical Category**

Megan Records ~ Associate Editor with Kensington Books  
First: The Mischievous Lady Moorecroft by Kristen Boe

### **↻ Inspirational Category**

Natalie Hanemann ~ Senior Editor with Thomas Nelson  
First: Her Journey's End by Naomi Rawlings

### **↻ Mainstream with Romantic Elements**

Emilia Pisani ~ Editorial Assistant with Gallery/Pocket Books  
First: The Sweet Spot by Laura Drake

### **↻ Romantic Suspense Category**

Elizabeth Bistrow ~ Editor with New American Library  
First: Wicked Lies on a Moonlit Night by Wendy Gray (full requested)

### **↻ Single Title Category**

Holly Blanck ~ Assistant Editor with St. Martin's Press  
First: Restoring Mitch's Heart by Nancy Evertz (full requested)

### **↻ Specialized Category**

Talia Platz ~ Editorial Assistant with New American Library  
First: Kindred of the Fallen by Isis Rushdan

### **↻ Young Adult Category**

Meredith Giordan ~ Editor with Berkley Books  
First: Ceres Wrath by Candi Wall (full requested)



newsletter@ntrwa.org

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Grapevine, TX 76051

**NTRWA MONTHLY MEETING  
THIRD SATURDAY OF THE MONTH  
DOORS OPEN @ 10 A.M.  
LA HACIENDA RANCH  
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COLLEYVILLE, TX**

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