



North Texas Romance Writers of America

HEART TO HEART

FOUNDED MARCH 1983

CHAPTER 33, REGION 5

JUNE 2011

VOLUME 30, ISSUE 6

GET READY FOR NATIONALS WITH SPEED PITCHING ON JUNE 18TH

RISING STAR Awards Most Pages Written

Candy Havens

320 pages

Heather Long

189 pages

Rosemary Clement-
Moore

150 pages

SPUR Awards Most Pages Edited

Heather Long

1880 pages

Barb Han

609

Genevieve Wilson

435 pages



**THE
PRESIDENT'S
CORNER**

PAGE 2

INSIDE THIS EDITION

MINUTES **PAGE 3**

SPOTLIGHT ON CANDACE HAVENS **PAGE 5**

WRITING TIPS **PAGE 9**

PRESIDENT'S CORNER - MARSHA WEST

We continue with the saga of my writing journey. Yes, I finally did complete the edits to The Theatre and "pushed send" to those agents who'd asked to see chapters when I'd pitched to them at conferences. Now one of those has already said no thanks, but others haven't responded one way or the other yet. I also sent a query to an agent who asked to see chapters just from the query. That's never happened before and was very exciting. Talk about an emotional rush. That old adrenalin shot down my arms, my palms got sweaty, and I nearly hyperventilated. Now I know nothing may come of the request, but it was so validating.

I concluded an online class about Alpha Heroes. I'm known to not write very manly men. LOL I began another class on Infusing Your Story with Emotion. I can already tell this is going to be challenging for me. The leader wants us to "feel" our character's emotions ourselves. I'm hard pressed to make bad things happen to my people, and I sure don't want to "feel" their hurt. You see why the class will be difficult for me and why I so desperately need to take it. LOL



The teacher built at least the beginning of the course on Lee Strasburg, the great New York acting coach, who took his lead from the Russian director Konstantin Stanislavsky's philosophy of acting. My old college text, which taught his "method" is still in a box in my garage, maybe titled The Art of Believing. In a way, I'm ahead of the game, because I "get" the method. However, I was also a tad nutty in college, so going back to that "stuff" is not comfortable. I want to be published, so I'll do almost anything short of breaking the law or hurting someone to make that happen. For purposes of this class, it means getting in touch with some past memories. If I'm not grinning a lot at the next meeting, it will mean the course is working. LOL

I'd be remiss if I didn't mention that this month our RWA National Conference begins in New York City. If you're going, please make sure to contact Kim Campbell. If you're not going, it's very important you send to Kim or bring to the June 18 meeting your voting proxy. (Those of you going, get hold of yours, too.) Last year, not enough members attended or turned in their proxies to hold the annual meeting. The proxy form is in the May issue of the RWR. You can fill out Form A, turn over your voting authority to the president, or Form B and turn it over to Kim (technically, anyone who's attending). Please, please remember to do this.

In other places in the newsletter, you'll find information about our chapter basket. If at all possible, please help us out with that.

And to those of you going, have a safe, informative, and fun conference. Can't wait to hear all about your experience.

Perfection is attained by slow degrees; it requires the hand of time.

— Voltaire

MAY MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER:

A regular meeting for the North Texas Romance Writers of America (NTRWA) was held on Saturday, May 21, 2010 at the La Hacienda Restaurant in Colleyville, Texas. The president and secretary were present. The meeting was called to order at 10:40 A.M. The minutes of the March meeting were approved as they were printed in the April newsletter.

OFFICER REPORTS:

President: Marsha West reported:

Wendy Watson will take over as the new GE Coordinator.
Thanked the published authors for providing critiques for the meeting.

Treasurer: Ron Campbell reported:

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

Program Director: Nikki Duncan reported:

The remaining schedule for NTRWA 2011 calendar is as follows:

- June – Speed Pitching
 - July – Synopsis Review by Victoria Chancellor
 - August – Discuss 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
- Texas Two Step is set for April 2012.

Membership: Jamie Webb reported:

There are seventy-eight (78) members.
There were no visitors.
There was one new member.

New Members:

Christina McKlure (romantic suspense)

MINUTES

Communications Director: Jean-Marie Brown reported:

Articles needed for the Newsletter.

The deadline for article submissions is Sunday, May 29, 2011.

Website: Jen Fitzgerald:

Agent and editor information for the Texas Two Step is on the NTRWA website.

COMMITTEE COORDINATOR REPORTS:

PRO Liaison: Clover Autrey reported:

There are four new PRO members.

Gloria Richards

Kim Quinton

Cecyle Rexrode

Christina McKlure

BETA Read is August 13th.

Great Expectations Chair: Angi Platt/ Wendy Watson

Angie Platt and Wendy Watson were recognized for their contributions to GE with paid memberships for the 2012 year.

Hospitality Chair: Barb Han:

T-shirts are on sale.

Need donations for drawings.

Need a theme for the basket for Nationals.

Next General Meeting: 10:30 a.m. on Saturday, June 18 at La Hacienda.

The business meeting was adjourned at 11:00 a.m. and followed by the Annual Roundtable Critique.

Submitted electronically by Sheniqua Waters

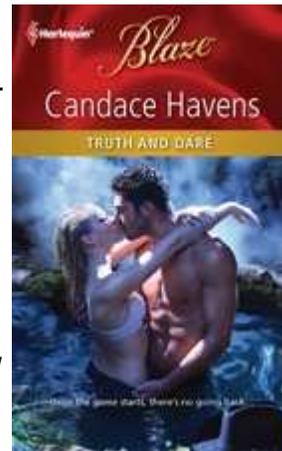
Date Approved: _____

Date Corrected: _____

SPOTLIGHT ON CANDACE HAVENS

BY CAROLYN WILLIAMSON

Candace Havens was an established nonfiction writer before she took up writing stories. Not only did she write articles for syndication, but she also wrote a biography of Joss Whedon, the creator of "Buffy the Vampire Slayer." Now she's made it big in the fiction markets with numerous books to her credit. And don't ever tell her you can't find time to write. I don't know anyone who does more in twenty-four hours than Candy.



1. Tell us about your day (and night) jobs. I'm a nationally syndicated entertainment columnist. I write one column and two cover stories a week about television shows and the actors on them. I'm also a film critic for New Country 96.3 KSCS. I go to grad school for Master in Humanities, and I write books, fiction and non-fiction.

2. Why did you decide to add writing fiction to all the nonfiction you do? A friend sort of dared me, and I haven't stopped since. It's therapy for me. I have so many ideas that my brain just doesn't stop. It's a good thing I like making up stories.

3. How do you find time to write? Well, sometimes I'm better than others. I'm not someone who is terribly focused but when it comes to writing I am. But I have to trick myself. That's how I came up with my Fast Draft. I like to win, and I made writing a competition. I also involved friends, which makes me accountable. I say all this, but when you have four books due in a year, you sit your butt in the chair and you write. (Smile)

4. Why did you decide to teach classes online? I had incredible mentors like Jodi Thomas. I was having a hard time saying no, to helping other writers. When I opened the Write Workshop it opened up an opportunity for me to help writers from all over the world. I remember how desperate I was in the beginning for writing advice, and how much it meant when someone took the time to help. This is my way of doing it on a larger scale and giving back to a community that was really wonderful to me. I'm a big believer in karma.

**SPOTLIGHT ON
CANDACE HAVENS**

BY CAROLYN WILLIAMSON

5. How did you happen to attract the attention of Harlequin after writing books for another publisher? They came to me. I'd been friends with Kathryn Lye for many years. Any time we were at RWA, we tried to get together. A couple of years ago I happened to mention I'd wanted to write sexy mysteries with spies. The next thing I knew, we were turning in a proposal. They also were very aware of my work ethic, and that I get out there and promote my books.

6. Now that you're an established author, do you get any rejections? Oh. My. Gawd. Yes. Sometimes from my own editor and agent. We've been shopping a young adult for several months. It's a story I know will be popular with teens. I actually designed a way to measure teen responses to it and tested it in Grad school. I just need to find a brilliant editor who gets me. (Smile)

7. As an established author, do you get much in the way of revision letters? Oh. My...Kidding. Yes. With Berkley, I never received more than a few sentences. With Harlequin, they are usually somewhere around 11 pages, sometimes longer. For my upcoming November book, it was only 4 pages and I felt like I'd scored the lottery.

8. How did your first agent help you? Hey, she sold my first book and several after that.

9. Did you change agents? Why? I needed someone I could communicate with and who really understands me. Elaine Spencer can read my mind. I find that a necessary component in an agent. She gets my crazy insecurities and she loves me anyway.

10. What books do you have coming out in the future? Right now, I just have Model Marine in November. I just had two books out, She Who Dares, Wins and Truth and Dare. In a month or so, when I hear back on some proposals, I hope to have a bucket of books to tell you about. (Smile)

www.candacehavens.com

MEMBER NEWS

CONGRATULATIONS.....ANGI MORGAN "Hill Country Holdup" is a Booksellers' Best Award Nominee for Best First Book & Best Short Contemporary

ROSEMARY CLEMENT-MOORE has a new YA Paranormal Mystery/Romance coming out in July. Says Kirkus in their starred review of "Texas Gothic" : "This engaging mystery has plenty of both paranormal and romance, spiced with loving families and satisfyingly packed with self-sufficient, competent girls."



2011 NTRWA Schedule

June 18 **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 16 **Synopsis with Victoria Chancellor:** Get your synopsis written and polished so that manuscript is ready for post-conference submission.

August 20 **The Writer's Guide to ePublishing with Misa Ramirez:** Presentation on ePublishing ins and outs, as well as some numbers.

September 17 **Finding Your Place in the Market with Tracy Wolff**

October 15 **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 17 **Christmas Party**

Donations, Donations, Donations

NATIONALS—Let's gear up for our annual NTRWA Basket contribution for Nationals which as we know, is fast approaching. It's time to fill the basket. Please bring gift cards in any amount from \$5, \$10, \$20 and up (from national companies) to our June 18 meeting.

If you're published, consider donating a signed book.

Cash is always welcome as are checks.

Can't be at the next meeting? I'm happy to arrange a convenient pick up spot, or you can mail items to my home. Contact Barb Han for more information.

Special thanks to these members for kicking off our fundraiser with the following donations:

Wendy Watson - \$25.00 Barnes & Noble Gift Card

Jerrie Alexander - \$25.00 Cash

Nikki Duncan - \$25.00 Barnes & Noble Gift Card

DOOR PRIZES—A huge thank you to Regina Richards for donating a box full of goodies for Door Prizes. Look for these items in upcoming baskets: books on writing craft; picture frames; a cool purse; an artist easel; paperback books; and much more. Donations are always needed, and are much appreciated. See Barb Han for more details.

CAN WE TALK? I want to hear from you! What kinds of Door Prizes get you the most excited?

Been there, done that...want the T-shirt? Buy your NTRWA T-shirt now. There'll be fun promotions in the coming months for those who wear NTRWA T-shirts to meetings. Short-sleeve shirts sell for \$12; long sleeves for \$15. Stay tuned for more details.

Barb Han, Hospitality

The following article appeared in the June edition of Heart of Romance, the newsletter of the Coeur de Bois Chapter (CBC-RWA) in Boise, Idaho.

WRITING TIPS

BY MARY VINE

Writing a story

First of all, believe you can write. Don't let anyone else's opinion convince you otherwise. Poor contest scores or bad critiques can make you think about ending your writing career before it even gets started. My worst critique was done by a woman who said I had so many errors that she didn't have the time or energy to critique more than a chapter, let alone a complete manuscript. Thankfully, I thought this was a rather outlandish thing to say to someone, sloughed it off and kept trying. It is a well-known fact that if you continue to write you get better. My writing improved and my manuscript went on to sell. Not everyone is going to like your writing, it is really all subjective; people don't all like the same type of story.

What should I write about? Don't worry about writing the type of story that is selling right now as something else may be in vogue when you finish. Instead, write the kind of book you love to read and add what you know or are interested in learning. Further, stretch your horizons. I thought I could only write fiction, but then found I could also write an article on something I knew about, and sold to a magazine, twice, before I sold a book.

Don't wait for the perfect time to write; it will never come. I used to write on summer breaks from work, believing I could only write when I felt relaxed and stress free. Forget it. No one is ever stress-free, so start writing. For example, I work with high school students and though I have many good days, today was not one of them, yet here I am at home this evening working on a blog. Plan a time to write. Should I write on the weekend, after a busy week at work? Not necessarily. I discovered that if I wrote at least an hour after work each day, I had five hours of typing in and still had the weekend to spend with my family. If I had additional writing time on the weekend all the better, but if not I still felt like I'd gotten something written for the week and it was relatively easy to do.

Get your website started now-before you are published. I knew almost nothing about websites before my first book was published. With working full time, I

focused on writing and thought I could worry about a website later. If you get your website started and learn how to get traffic coming through, this can be helpful information to include in your query and you'll be able to focus on promoting your book when it is released.

Where do I send my work? Use a book like Jeff Herman's Guide to Publishers, Editors, and Literary Agents, to find out who is looking for manuscripts similar to yours, plus find out what their hobbies or interests are. I happened to find a publisher that enjoyed stories about ranches, cowboys, and the gold mining history that I'd written about. Her interest helped me land the deal.

Don't limit submissions. Shop your manuscript around, and don't just submit to the big publishing companies. In this day and age of economic difficulties, the midlist is vanishing. Publishers have been sticking with big name authors who have proven to be money makers. If you can't make a large house notice you, go for a smaller one. You'll have an eBook or paperback you can hold in your hand, as well as writing credits an agent or larger company will take notice of. Don't be thinking you can quit your day job to write. Nora Roberts and Dean Koontz may have quit their day jobs, but Mary Vine can't-yet. I know a writer who received \$60,000 for a two book deal. That money may get one through a year, or two if you're lucky, but you can't count on a third sale coming when you need it. I've learned to write while I work and you can, too.

My best writing help didn't come from a how-to book. Although I did learn about time management for the writer from a how-to book, my biggest help in making a sale came from joining a writers group. The value of a critique partner is considerable in getting your manuscript ready to submit. Believe it or not, you are too close to your work to see all the flaws, but a fellow writer can help spot them for you.

Keep reading. Reading is the way I learned how others put the words on the page, and gave me the desire to write. By continuing to read, my brain learned the process of weaving information, or details, into a book. One of the most important things to do is to keep reading; the more you read, the more you will learn how to write.

Clarissa Southwick
2010 & 2011 Golden Heart Finalist
www.gemstatewriters.com

MAY MEETING MEMORIES



Left: Gloria Richard. Right:
Heather Long



Carolyn Williamson,
Spotlight Editor



Left: Jamie Webb, Member-
ship Director. Right: Roni Grif-
fin, Writing Incentives



Left: Christine Crocker. Right: Nikki Duncan, Program Director

(Photos courtesy of Angi Morgan)



newsletter@ntrwa.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

President, Marsha R. West
President@ntrwa.org

President-Elect, Kim Campbell
PresidentElect@ntrwa.org

Program Director, Nikki Duncan
Programs@ntrwa.org

Secretary, Sheniqua Waters
Secretary@ntrwa.org

Treasurer, Ron Campbell
Treasurer@ntrwa.org

Membership Director, Jamie Webb
Membership@ntrwa.org

Communications Director, Jean Marie Brown
Newsletter@ntrwa.org

Web Site Director, Jen Fitzgerald
Website@ntrwa.org

COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Hospitality, Linda Graves
Hospitality@ntrwa.org

Great Expectations 2011,
Angi Platt & Wendy Watson
GECordinator@ntrwa.org

PAN Liaison, Karen Whiddon
PANLiaison@ntrwa.org

PRO Liaison, Clover Autrey
PROLiaison@ntrwa.org

Spotlights, Carolyn Williamson

Audio Librarian, Michelle Welsh
Librarian@ntrwa.org

Newsletter Editor, Jean Marie Brown
Newsletter@ntrwa.org

Writing Incentives (BABS), Roni Griffin
Incentives@ntrwa.org