

Jen FitzGerald

From: NTRWA Newsletter <newsletter=ntrwa.org@mail205.atl81.rsgsv.net> on behalf of NTRWA Newsletter <newsletter@ntrwa.org>
Sent: Thursday, October 31, 2013 10:35 AM
To: Jen FitzGerald
Subject: November Newsletter

The holidays are almost here and that means writing, contests, and parties.
Don't miss what's coming up next...

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Founded March 1983

November 2013

Chapter 33, Region 5

Volume 32, Issue 10

Letter from the President

The year has flown by and I'm so looking forward to the end. As I write this message, I'm in the final stages of my first self-pub endeavor and I have to say, I'm a little nervous.

The first time I submitted a manuscript to a publisher, I stared at the *send* key for several long minutes. Once it was winging its way through cyberspace, the tingles abated but didn't disappear completely. They were manageable.

This self-pub thing is a whole new ballgame.

It's all on me, and I'm not the most organized person to begin with. There are too many

moving parts and all of them need my less than stellar attention.

One thought is keeping me sane. In two months, my duties as president of NT will be passed on to Clover Autrey. While I've enjoyed being a part of the Board, I'm ready to move to the back of the room and just take notes and visit with fellow members.

Service to the chapter has been interesting and enlightening. Here, too, are many moving pieces and all need attention. We are a group of volunteers, whether we sit in front of the room or in the back. Our chapter will continue to be a worthwhile endeavor as long as members offer their time, experience, and knowledge to fellow members.

If you haven't volunteered yet, please consider it. There are many ways to help and not all are time consuming. If you haven't been tapped to participate on the Board, or if you've backed away before being asked, please reconsider. I've learned more, and met more people, in the last year than I did when I sat in the back and took notes.

See you next month!

-Michelle Welsh

Quick News

Meeting Minutes

October's Business Meeting Minutes will be run in the December issue prior to the holiday party meeting. No formal meeting is occurring in November.

Yellow Rose Award

Be sure to nominate your candidate for the chapter's Yellow Rose award:

<http://www.ntrwa.org/yellow.rose.nomination.form.aspx>

NaNoWriMo

National Novel Writing Month kicks off on November 1st! Check out the [NaNoWriMo site](#) to join in and find inspiration to get your words on the page.

Most Pages Written

- Suzan Butler 305
- Chrissy Szarek 85
- D'Ann Burrow 80
- Lavender Daye 77
- Clover Autrey 70

Most Pages Edited

- Tish Sanders 700
 - Suzan Butler 504
 - Lavender Daye 476
 - D'Ann Burrow 400
 - Angi Morgan 335
-

GREAT EXPECTATIONS CONTEST 2014

Deadline: Sunday, 12-29

Cost: \$20 through 12-8

Length: 5,000 words & no synopsis

Details: ntrwa.org or

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

\$20.00 ... You can't beat that price anywhere. And it's getting harder to find a contest that provides three judges' comments. Oh and don't forget Editor feedback when you make the finals.

We'll be drawing for a free entry fee at the December meeting (you must be present to win). Entrants must be unpublished and uncontracted in book-length romantic fiction (over 20,000 words). Published authors must be unpublished and uncontracted in the category entered.

For additional information on how to enter or judge: <http://ntrwagreatexpectations.blogspot.com/> or please contact: GEcoordinator@ntrwa.org.

10 Free (Or Mostly Free) Book Launch Strategies

By Beth Barany

*The following article first appeared in the August 2013 issue of *Heart of the Bay, *the newsletter of the San Francisco Area chapter of RWA. Permission is granted to RWA chapters to reprint or forward this article with proper credit to the author and chapter.*

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This article is for independent authors, but the tips can apply to traditionally published authors, too.

Many new independently published authors think that they need to launch a book with lots of fanfare right after they hit the publish button. Actually, you don't need to do that. You can "launch" your book in the first few weeks or even months.

Here's a list of marketing activities that I or authors I know have used to increase sales and visibility.

A quick note there are as many books as there are authors. I've seen some really creative campaigns. It's up to you to mix and match, and experiment because you may not know what will work for you or your audience until you try.

1. Use other people's lists. If you're just starting out and don't have a lot of people in your social media circles or on your newsletter—you do have a newsletter, don't you? If not, get one; more on that below—then ask friends of yours to share the good news that your book is out.

* 2. Send a newsletter announcement.* At the end of the day, social media channels may disappear, but your email list of fans, followers, and friends will be yours. I've been cultivating a list for years, even before I knew I would self-publish, and now I have over 1,770 people to whom I can send announcements. Many authors think a newsletter means that have to send out a monthly (or more often) newsletter. That's an old idea. We can send out an announcement when there's news, like when your book is published, you've released an audio edition, to highlight a great review, or when you're giving a presentation. As you get ready to publish your book, you can build excitement by sending out an announcement to reveal the cover. Be sure to put your newsletter signup box on your site or blog.

*Resource: *Mail Chimp gives out free accounts, and it stays free until you have 2,000 subscribers. So there's no excuse to get started: www.MailChimp.com

3. Run a sale. Many authors discount their books when they first publish them. If you're a first-time author, or want to build buzz and excitement, put your book on sale. If your book is fiction, this is more common. Not so much with nonfiction.

4. List your book for free. Free works well in certain fiction genres. The Kindle Select Program allows you to have your book for free in a 5-day period over 3 months. But you have to not have your book listed anywhere else.

Resource: Learn about the Kindle Select Program here: kdp.amazon.com/self-publishing/KDPSelect

5. Run a blog tour. Organize a blog tour to use the power of other people's blogs and their avid fans to spread the word about your books. Blog tours are great for increasing your visibility and getting your books in the hands of major influencers: book bloggers.

*Resource: *Find more about tips on running a blog tour here:
[www.writersfunzone.com/blog/
2013/06/07/3-essential-tips-to-running-your-own-blog-tour/](http://www.writersfunzone.com/blog/2013/06/07/3-essential-tips-to-running-your-own-blog-tour/)

6. Organize a review request campaign. If you don't want to do an extensive blog tour, you can create a book review request campaign. Essentially, you request reviews from friends, family, colleagues, and readers, and ask them to post their review on Amazon within a certain period, and enter all of them in a drawing for prizes.

7. Run a contest. I've seen some authors create contests like sending in photos, or videos, or stories. You pick a winner and give a prize. This type of activity can also work before the book comes out.

8. Give away gifts. Combine giveaways with a blog tour. People love free stuff! I recommend giving away something that's related to your book, but people also really like gift cards. The more related the prizes are to your book the more you'll hopefully attract lifelong fans.

9. Run a pay-with-a-tweet campaign. This free tool is a fun way to give away a book, and works well if you already have a few books out, and can give away a book that feeds into your other books.

*Resource: *Find out more here: www.paywithatweet.com/

10. Invest in paid advertising. I've been hearing good results with BookBub.com though I have not tried it myself yet. Read their instructions and subscribe first to see how they work.

The Promotion Posse is a monthly column spotlighting promotional strategies for authors, written by members of SFA-RWA with a knack for PR.

Beth Barany raves about kick-ass heroines, magic, and love, on her site, author.bethbarany.com and on Twitter at www.twitter.com/beth_barany. Her latest romance novella is "Touchstone of Love" in the collection *Gargoyle: Three Enchanting Romance Novellas*.**

The Most Effective Marketing for the Pre-Published Writer

by Jeffe Kennedy

*The following article first appeared on the Word Whores blog and was reprinted in the Third Quarter issue of *Out of This World*, the newsletter of the Fantasy, Futuristic & Paranormal chapter. Permission granted for reuse by RWA chapters with appropriate credit given to the author and chapter.*

One week on the Word Whores blog, which is a group of seven authors of various kinds of speculative fiction, who blog weekly on various topics (<http://word-whores.blogspot.com/>), I kicked off the topic of *Word On the Street: Most Outrageous (Yet Effective!) Marketing Plan For The Not-Yet Famous*. For some reason, when I first read this topic, to mull over my take on it, I understood it as "not yet published." I see now that it's "not-yet famous," which is, um, pretty much every damn one of us who isn't Stephen King, Stephenie Meyer or J.K. Rowling.

I ran with the “not-yet-published” aspect, not just because that’s what I mentally prepared, but because I think I have good advice. And here it is time to elect a new FFP board, so the topic is timely.

My advice even counts as outrageous, because I think it’s something that doesn’t occur to most people:

Volunteer to be President of your local or special interest writing chapter.

Seriously.

Now, maybe this advice is tailored more for the romance writers, because RWA has local and special interest (read: online) chapters. Organizations like Science Fiction Writers of America (SFWA), while they have informal regional gatherings, don’t have chapters in the same way. Even if they did, SFWA doesn’t embrace the pre-published authors in the same way as RWA does, so the point is pretty much moot.

So, here’s my story. Back in the day (2008), when I was shopping the book that became *Rogue’s Pawn*, I joined RWA for one reason and one reason only – so I could attend the RWA National Conference and personally pitch to an agent and editor. I was naïve enough then that I truly believed that this was all I needed to do to sell my book.

(Yeah, you can take a moment to shake your heads sadly.)

I knew Not One Person there and, after I pitched and got my requests, I celebrated at the bar by myself with a glass of champagne. Sad and pitiful, I know. But I felt okay about it because I knew the agent and editor would read my manuscript, offer me a lucrative, multi-book contract. Then, I figured, I’d return to the conference the next summer – because the enormously high quality of the key-note and awards ceremony speeches, along with the workshops and panels had so impressed me – as a legit romance author and make friends then.

It could have been the champagne.

Of course, we all know how this story turned out. Both the agent and editor, to my astonishment, passed on the book. At loose ends, I took a couple of online workshops (I lived in the wilds of Wyoming at the time) and looked for help. One gal suggested I join the Fantasy, Futuristic and Paranormal (FFP) special interest chapter (online, naturally), for advice and support. Best advice ever.

Shortly after I joined up, calls went out for a new board. No one stepped up to be President and the pleas for a volunteer grew increasingly strident. I finally said, hey, total newbie here, but I’m willing, and they snapped up my offer with scary speed. I ended up serving two years as Prez of FFP and I still sit in on board meetings as Past President, for continuity.

The astonishing part was when I attended the RT Booklovers Convention the following spring and then the next RWA Conference. Suddenly, everyone knew who I was! The published members of FFP hugged me on sight, took me under their wings and introduced me to their agents and editors. They, and other agents and editors, took me more seriously. When I

pitched, we started out talking about FFP and what the chapter did. Serving on that board gave me an entrée that I'd lacked the previous year. I met my first critique partners (CPs) through FFP, several of whom are still my CPs and good friends today.

Even now, some of my best connections are ones I made by serving as President of FFP. Because I gave to them, all those wonderful people wanted to give back to me. And it's made all the difference.

*Jeffe Kennedy is an award-winning author with a writing career that spans decades. Her fantasy BDSM romance, *Petals and Thorns*, originally published under the pen name Jennifer Paris, has won several reader awards. *Sapphire*, the first book in *Facets of Passion* has placed first in multiple romance contests and the follow-up, *Platinum*, is climbing the charts. Her most recent works include three fiction series: the fantasy romance novels of *A Covenant of Thorns*, the contemporary BDSM novellas of the *Facets of Passion*, and the post-apocalyptic vampire erotica of the *Blood Currency*.*

*Jeffe lives in Santa Fe, with two Maine coon cats, a border collie, plentiful free-range lizards and a Doctor of Oriental Medicine. Jeffe can be found online at her website: JeffeKennedy.com or every Sunday at the popular *Word Whores* blog.*

*She is represented by Pam van Hylckama Vlieg of *Foreword Literary*.*

Every Author has GREAT EXPECTATIONS

A favorite author and friend of mine, Catherine Spangler (former NTRWA member), 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 of your work. Getting honest opinions—from people not your friends—helps you look at your work from a different perspective. Most of the time judges have a definite feel for what's wrong with a chapter (in their humble opinion, of course). But judging has come a long way and can also point out what people like about your writing as well. 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 along with the critical. Questions on each score sheet help the judge look for category specifics, 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. We hope everyone in our chapter takes advantage of getting their first 5,000 words looked at. Who knows. You may just end with a requested manuscript and a sale. Great Expectations are what keep writers writing.

Contest details are on at NTRWA.ORG and <http://ntrwagreatexpectations.blogspot.com/> along with entry forms, score sheets, final round editors and frequently asked questions.

Want to judge? Have a question? Contact GEcoordinator@ntrwa.org

DALLAS AREA ROMANCE AUTHORS

is proud to present

HALLIE EPHRON

Romantic Suspense Workshop

Saturday, January 25, 2014

Holiday Inn Select, 1655 N Central Expy, Richardson, TX 75080, Phone: [\(972\) 238-1900](tel:(972)238-1900)

Hallie Ephron is the writer of multiple suspense novels, including *Never Tell A Lie*, which was nominated for multiple awards and was adapted for film as *And Baby Will Fall* for the Lifetime Movie Network. Hallie loves to teach and provide writing workshops. She published *Writing and Selling Your Mystery Novel: How to Knock 'Em Dead with Style*, which was the first how-to-write book nominated for the Edgar Award. Hallie is also an award winning book reviewer for the *Boston Globe*.

Hallie's workshop will provide writing tips with a focus on suspense. Topics will include writing a page-turner, red herrings, and narrative voice and viewpoint.

Registration is now open!

This would make a great holiday gift from loved ones!

The cost is \$60 for DARA, North Texas RWA, and Yellow Rose members; \$75 for Non-Members. <http://www.rwa.org/p/cm/ld/fid=1155>

AGENDA

8:00 - Registration and Continental Breakfast

9:00 - Introductions

9:15-9:30 - What makes (or torpedoed) a page turner?

10:30-10:45 - Break

10:45-Noon - Character and story: Getting them to dance together

Noon-1:00 - Lunch Buffet

1:00- 2:30 - Structuring forward momentum

2:30 - Snack and Raffles

3:00-5:00 - Narrative Voice and Viewpoint

5:00 - Workshop Concludes

** Plan on staying at the hotel for extra fun on Friday night. We have a block of rooms held for the event, with a special room rate of \$79, and several members already plan on staying for the weekend to enjoy fellowship, plotting and, of course, that all-important networking time in the Holiday Inn bar. Be sure to book your room early!

The Carolyn Readers Choice Award 2014

Deadline: Friday, February 14, 2014, midnight CST

Cost: \$20 until December 14/\$25 after

What: books published in 2013, any length

Grand prize: Winners of each category get their cover advertized in a shared ad on the All Romance Ebooks website.

Details: [ntrwa.org](http://www.ntrwa.org) (<http://www.ntrwa.org/thecarolyn/the.carolyn.info.htm>)

\$20 -- A no brainer for the chance to get your book in the hands of readers and for the chance to get your cover in that ad!

We'll be drawing for a free entry at the December meeting (you must be present to win). Books entered must have an American publication date of 2013.

For more information visit the NT website or contact carolyn.award@ntrwa.org

2013 Meeting Schedule

Please join us December 14th for our annual holiday celebration!

Visit the [meeting info page](#) for time and location.

There will no be a regular general meeting in November. Members will be invited to get together for a writing or brainstorming day. Details will be posted to the intenal loop. Or members may contact a board member directly for more information.

Email questions, comments, or articles to newsletter@ntrwa.org.

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