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Calling all volunteers!



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Chapter 33, Region 5

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Letter from the President

IT'S THAT TIME OF YEAR AGAIN

Well ladies and gents, it's time to form the 2016 Board of Directors who will be working with Suzan Butler (President-Elect). The Board must be formed by the end of October. Our President-Elect chairs the **nominating committee**. If you'd like to serve (we need two people), please contact me or Suzan.

We have several positions open...especially **treasurer**. This is a position required by not only National RWA but also by the state of Texas. You can't have an organization like ours

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without three people: President, Secretary and Treasurer. Unfortunately, Jen Fitzgerald can no longer be our secretary as of 2016. She's here for the transition, but can't hold the office. Some of you know that Jen and I have pretty much been passing this baton between us every two years for a while. Sorry folks, this is one position that I'm unwilling and shouldn't take next year.

As the bylaws are currently written (and delegated by national RWA), the Treasurer does NOT have access to the bank accounts. My reason for not taking the position is not due to time constraints but for consistency. It might better serve the chapter if I have access to the accounts during the transition to the new Board and can train new members.

So what exactly does the treasurer do?

- Keeps the checkbook (no debit card)
- Writes checks, obtains signature from President
- Balances the checking accounts
- Keeps an electronic ledger
- Monthly reports to the Board and membership
- Keeps the paper accounts
- Works on the budget with the Board

Quite honestly, this is a very easy board position. And we need a person unafraid to take it on and work with Suzan.

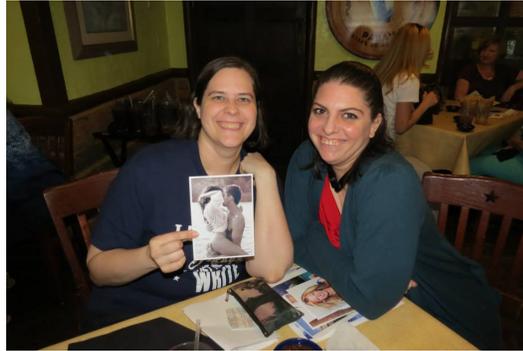
Please think about it. Talk with Jen or myself ... and definitely speak with Suzan.

~Angi

Angi Morgan is the author of Intrigues where honor and danger collide with love. She combines actual Texas settings with characters who are in realistic and dangerous situations. Her debut Harlequin Intrigue, Hill Country Holdup, is her Golden

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near winning manuscript and also an NT & Booksellers' Best Award nominee.



SOCIAL MEDIA

Social Media is important to a writer's world. Complete the social media form <http://ntrwagreatexpectations.blogspot.com/p/ntrwa-social-media-form.html> and get connected with other NT members.

FOLLOW ON TWITTER

Let us know if you have a # (hashtag) specific to promoting North Texas authors. Share other hashtags on our loop or with the hashtags below.

#TXauthors

#ntrwa-gecontest

#dara-ntrwa-pals

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MEMBER NEWS

- Susan Miller received her PRO pin in last month.
- C.A. Szarek has started offering editing services.
- Jerrie Alexander has *Flirting with Fate, a Noble Pass Affaire Novella* available for pre-order.



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Next Meeting: August 15th with Addison Fox

WHAT MY DAY JOB TAUGHT ME ABOUT PUBLISHING

For most of us, a day job is a necessary nuisance (evil?) to a writing career. Paying bills, socking away the 401K and enjoying the benefits of employer-paid insurance are a necessity in this day and age. But what if that job – a constraint on our writing – was actually providing benefits that went beyond the financial?

In this workshop, Addison Fox will discuss the positive lessons she's learned while juggling a day job with a writing career – time management, networking, character studies, story ideas and even battling deadline dementia – all while working toward that professional holy grail: writing full time.

Addison Fox can't remember a time when words weren't a part of her life. An avid reader since childhood, she found it a natural transition to author when she discovered a desire to work on stories of her own. In between penning stories about strong-willed and exciting heroes and heroines, she's spent twenty years working in marketing and advertising. Her day job – currently a senior lead on the marketing team for a major restaurant chain – has given her the opportunity to travel around the world. But no matter how far she travels, there's nothing like coming home to her stories and the people who populate her imagination.

Addison lives in Dallas. You can find her at her home on the web at www.addisonfox.com or on Facebook (facebook.com/addisonfoxauthor) and Twitter ([@addisonfox](https://twitter.com/addisonfox)).

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Finding the "UNIQUE"

By Angi Morgan

Where does a unique story come from? Since the [seven basic storylines](#) have been listed and reinvented, why do we continue to tell stories? What within each romantic suspense makes us pick up another and like it for its own story? Or perhaps not like it at all? What makes each story we tell unique?

I've written about how locations inspire my stories and my characters' actions, even about how the location influences the plot. Individuals in my life and the world around me play an important part, too. Thing like the news, what I hear, a T-shirt in an airport, observing folks out for their evening walk...and even getting my makeup touched up for a party.

Last summer I went to a makeover party and the makeup artist asked how I thought up different stories. I replied that everything inspired me. She didn't believe that having my makeup done could inspire a romantic suspense.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4iOi_iPNC50

Barney Stinson - Challenge Accepted Compilation from How I Met Your Mother

CHALLENGE ACCEPTED

It took only minutes to realize that her occupation was exactly what I needed for my next proposal. Days later, Kenderly Tyler had been hired by a mobster wife's to fix her hair and makeup before an important dinner. My heroine witnessed her client's murder and needed to be rescued by my hero. BULLETPROOF BADGE (I've been told and reminded) was one of the most organic stories I've written. The occupations of the characters drove the plot. Each scene grew from the previous. I can't say it was the easiest I've written, but it's

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definitely one I had a lot of fun finishing.

My challenger and inspiration for Kenderly Tyler puts the finishing touches on author BJ Daniels.

SHOTGUN JUSTICE, Texas Rangers: Elite Troop #2, Harlequin Intrigue March 2016

I write “on-the-run, heroine-in-jeopardy” stories set in Texas. That’s my personal “basic” storyline. But hopefully each story is told in a very unique way. Marshals, sheriffs, cops, federal agents and cowboys pair up with scientists, cops, shop owners, astronomers, agents and beauticians in major cities and small towns. I shouldn’t run out of ways to make them different. There’s just too many cities, things to see and people around my home state to ever have to repeat myself.

Writers continually accept the challenge to make our stories unique with each book. Put ten authors in a room, give them the same facts, and at least ten stories will be born. Remember those seven basic plots? Even the story of Beauty and the Beast changes if “Beauty” is the hero.

~ ~ ~

ANGI MORGAN writes “Intrigues where honor and danger collide with love.” She combines actual Texas settings with characters who are in realistic and dangerous situations. Angi’s work has been a finalist in the Bookseller’s Best Award, Romantic Times Best First Series, Carolyn Readers Choice, Gayle Wilson Award of Excellence and the Daphne du Maurier.

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The following article first appeared in the August 2015 issue of In Print!, the monthly newsletter of Houston Bay Area RWA. Permission granted to reprint or forward to sister RWA chapters with proper credit to author and chapter.

Top Tips from Editors and Agents: Face the Consequences

by Donna Maloy

If I haven't said it before, one of my all-time favorite blogs to follow is Kathy Temean's [Writing and Illustrating](#). She covers the world of writers with in-depth author, agent and publisher interviews. Her interviews with artists actually feature step-by-step examples of the book illustration process. If you write for children or teens, the blog is a must. If you write for adults, or design covers for books, you might be surprised how transferable the advice is!

In her post today, Kathy interviewed agent [Alex Slater](#) with [Trident Media Group](#). Slater repeated the most important advice a writer can hear: in order to write a compelling story, you MUST create tension. Alex offered several ways to do that, including my favorite—

Allow characters to face consequences

Well-developed, fully human characters often choose badly. They take a knife to a gunfight, they pick keeping a secret over being honest, they go alone and without backup into danger, they gamble one serving of Death by Chocolate won't really affect their diet. Stupid, right?

Perhaps your instinct as a writer is to avoid having your protagonist do stupid things. You

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want your main character to be a hero all the time, save the day and the damsel in distress, work miracles by day and still be sexy at night, kill vampires while never breaking a nail or mussing a hairdo, finish the quest with a battalion of baddies flat on the ground and nary a scratch of their own. BORING.

Readers (any age, from toddler to adult) can't relate to that kind of protagonist. In this, the fictional world must mirror the real world: mistakes happen because no one is perfect.

Such mistakes give us a clearer picture of our characters, their weaknesses and their often mistaken priorities. All good things. But mistakes are useful for another purpose.

Mistakes and consequences increase tension

The need to survive consequences while at the same time pursuing the story goal can ratchet up the level of tension by several orders of magnitude. That is, it will if you let your characters make the kind of mistakes that raise story stakes, imperil themselves and those they love, or make the story goal appear to be unreachable.

Recovering from a broken fingernail isn't high stakes. Making a wrong turn isn't high stakes either, unless it means your protagonist can't make it to the antagonist's lair in time to defuse the bomb and save humanity. And in this case, having the wrong turn suddenly be revealed as the right turn after all isn't facing consequences. It's cheating. Nobody likes a cheater.

If the mistake is big and the consequences even bigger, then as writers we have to be prepared to come up with hard solutions. Ask a good mystery writer how many times she's backed her characters into a corner with bad choices and consequences, then had to pull every bit of creativity and ingenuity she's got into making the story solution both believable and a twisty surprise. But then, that's why she gets the big bucks.

[Kathy Temean](#) is a former Regional Advisor in New Jersey for the SCBWI (Society for Children's Book Writers and Illustrators). She also runs hugely successful [Temean](#)

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[Consulting](#), a web Design and marketing company for the creative individual or business.

Don't forget to pick up your copy of [Donna Maloy's](#) five-star, award-winning middle grade fantasy, [Celia and the Wolf](#), in ebook and print from most online booksellers. Fourteen-year-old shapeshifter Celia Ashleigh only thinks she's invincible. When she acts on that belief, the consequences for her and her mission are horrible.

A Note from the Newsletter Editor:

Please note photos included in the newsletter are provided by the members. Any photos you'd like to include can be sent to newsletter@ntrwa.org. It is at the discretion of the newsletter editor as to which photos will be included in the newsletter. Thank you.

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July 2015 Meeting Minutes

CALL TO ORDER:

A regular meeting for the North Texas Romance Writers of America (NTRWA) was held on Saturday, July 18, 2015 at the La Hacienda Restaurant in Colleyville, Texas. The President and the Secretary were present. The meeting was called to order at 11:03 a.m. The approval for the minutes for the June 20, 2015 meeting are tabled until the August meeting.

OFFICER REPORTS:

President: Angi Morgan reported:

- No report.

President-Elect: Suzan Butler reported:

- No report.

Secretary: Lisa Fenley reported:

- June minutes will be approved at the August meeting.

Treasurer: Jen FitzGerald reported:

- The Treasurer's report was presented and filed for audit.

Program Director: Lara Lacombe was not present:

- Report Submitted:
 - July: Angi Morgan and Michelle Welsh presented a session on Brainstorming
 - August: Addison Fox-Topic TBD
 - September: Cindy Dees-Topic TBD
 - October: Elizabeth Essex-Character Themed Writing
 - November: No Meeting
 - December: Holiday Party

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Website Director:

COMMITTEE COORDINATOR REPORTS:

Membership Director: Gina Nelson reported:

- 60 Members to date.

Communications Director: Kim Miller was not present:

- Report submitted:
 - Send information / articles / photos for inclusion in the newsletter to newsletter@NTRWA.org by July 28, 2015.

PAN Liaison: Chrissy Szarek reported:

- No report.

PRO Liaison: Dakota Byrd was not present. Clover Autrey presented:

- PRO pin presented to Susan Miller.

Great Expectations: Lisa Fenley reported:

- No report.

Carolyn Contest: Jen FitzGerald reported:

- No report.

Hospitality: Michelle Welsh reported:

- No report.

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- No Report.

Writing Incentives: Christine Crocker reported:

- No Report.

Bylaws: Angi Morgan reported:

- No Report.

Spotlights: Marty Tidwell was not present:

- No report.

Unfinished Business:

- No unfinished business to report.

New Business:

- No new business to report.

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

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