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DECEMBER HOLIDAY PARTY

We'll meet December 9th, the SECOND Saturday to celebrate each other and the holidays.

We'll be doing our annual ornament exchange once again, so please bring a wrapped ornament to participate.

Wear your tacky holiday sweater/sweatshirt/ tee shirt as well.

There may be a short business meeting, but there will be no official / formal program.

NTRWA CONTESTS

The Carolyn Readers Choice Award Contest is now open for entries. Early bird pricing is \$20 through December 14th. Contest closes to entries February 14th, 2018. Enter for a chance to win ad space on RT's Daily Blog page for two full weeks during July.

For all the information, visit our website:

<http://www.ntrwa.org/thecarolyn/the.carolyn.info.htm>

The Great Expectations Contest opens November 30th and closes shortly after the New Year. Get fresh eyes and great feedback on a new story!

Visit our website for more information:

<http://www.ntrwa.org/contest/contest.aspx>

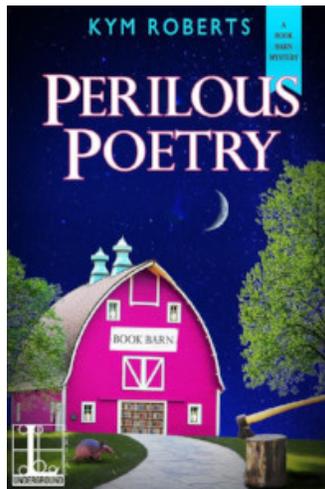
So we had a ton of newly released and upcoming releases, so they're going up here this month.

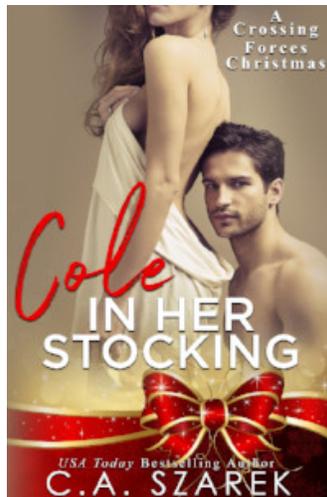
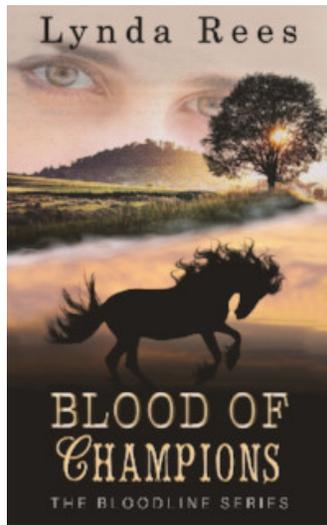
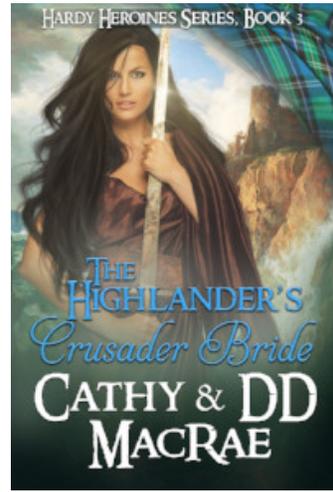
Look all the pretties!!!

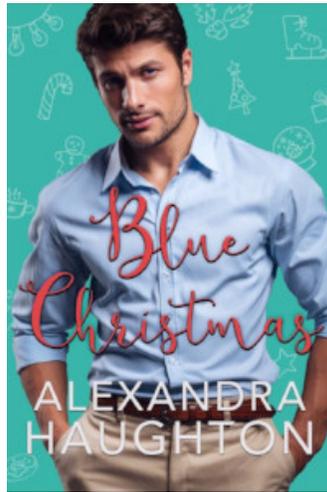
Way to go NTers!!

Congrats to one and all.

The following books are now available:







The following books or series are coming soon:

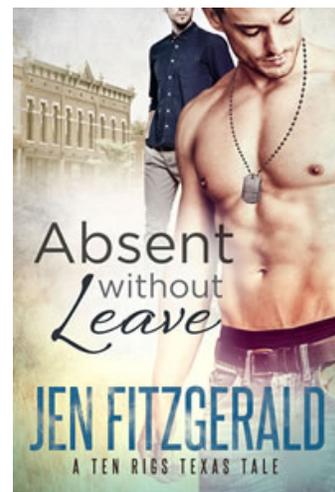
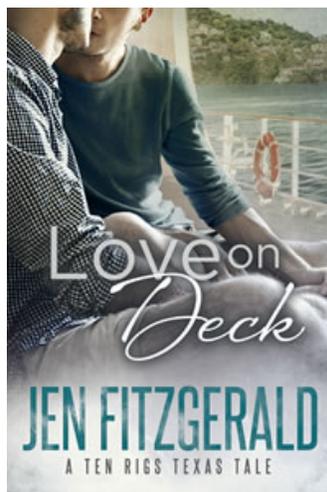
Love On Deck by Jen FitzGerald releases Nov. 23rd.

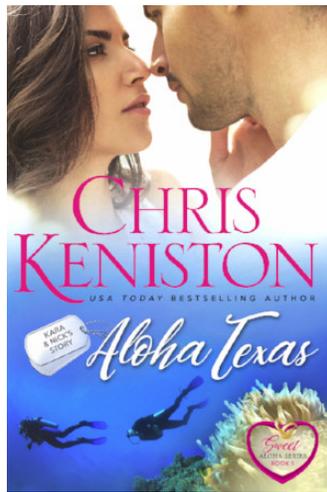
Absent Without Leave by Jen FitzGerald releases Nov. 23rd.

The sweet version of Chris Keniston's Aloha Series releases Nov. 24th.

Rock the Cradle of Love by Jen FitzGerald releases Dec. 21st.

Ranger Protector by Angi Morgan releases Dec. 23rd.





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The following article appeared in the October 2017 issue of ShoreLines, the monthly newsletter for the Long Island Romance Writers Chapter. Permission granted to reprint or forward to sister RWA chapters with proper credit to author and chapter.

Best,
Catherine Moore
LIRW - ShoreLines Content Editor

~*~*~

More Than a Reader by Blue Saffire

This year has been a challenge for me as a writer. My health has tried to step on me being great. Sitting for hours in my own worlds sometimes takes a toll on the body, but writing is my happy place.

I share a lot with my readers. They've become my friends and family in my head. They have been there to encourage me as they cheer me on for my hearts desires or to give me a push to the finish line. They've become my sisters and brothers in words.

However, not all of our moments together are happy ones. When my grandmother had a fall in August, this year, they were right there to pray and give words of comfort. When she passed away a few weeks later they were there for me, even when I just needed to pull into myself.

I'm currently heartbroken, as one of those very readers, which decided to reach out to me in a private message, has passed away. She was only twenty-five and suffering from Lupus. Her words to me were that she felt lead to tell me that she saw my pain and how I kept moving through it. Yet, she was in pain and in ICU at the time. She went on to share that I was one of her favorite authors and that my words took her away and allowed her to escape her pain and the fact that she was in the hospital.

When I received this message, it was right on time. I was in so much turmoil, but this was a light for me to keep going. It was a reminder that every word typed means something. These are not just books. Readers are not just numbers we need to make a list or to make a paycheck. They are people just like you and just like me. I've lost a friend.

While I started to write, and publish to heal myself, somehow that has spilled over into others. For this, I'm

so grateful to the characters that whisper in my ear day and night. I'm grateful for the joy I was able to bring into another's life. I've created, Once Upon a Times that have made someone's life a little more tolerable in her fight.

To readers, our words are gold, but to me, readers are diamonds. I love them to life, because without them my words would have no life. They are more than readers they're my friends.

The following article first appeared in the August 2017 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.

Thanks,
Leslie Marshman
Editor, In Print!

~*~*~

THE EDITOR'S CORNER

Behold The Mighty Cog

by Leslie Marshman, In Print! Editor

If you're reading this, you're a member of at least one local or online chapter of Romance Writers of America. We've all joined RWA for a variety of reasons. Educational workshops and conferences. Access to industry information. Writers helping writers. Hanging with our peeps.

What makes a chapter run like a well-oiled machine? The volunteers within its ranks who act as cogs, turning the gears of the board and moving the chapter forward.

I was having lunch recently with four fellow Houston Bay Area members. We calculated that between the five of us, we've accumulated almost fifty years of service, either as officers or chairpersons. Our current board members have served a total of sixty-five years between us (and only two of us overlapped the lunch group). Neither of these totals includes the many years of unofficial volunteering for conferences, literacy luncheons and special workshops.

Chapters need board members to survive, and they can't be the same people, rotating from position to position every two years. Boards need new blood, new enthusiasm, new ideas. And the members who have racked up ten or more years of service in various positions need a break. It's not the responsibility of just a few people to keep our chapter's wheels turning. We're lucky that we have a lot of members in HBA who can contribute to our chapter's excellence.

Not having the time to volunteer isn't really a valid excuse. Being a board member doesn't necessarily take a lot of time. I've been on the board for six years in three different positions, contest coordinator for thirteen continuous years and newsletter editor for the past eight years (sentences running concurrently). Many other board members have volunteered even longer. We've done it while working full-time jobs,

driving long commutes, raising children, burying loved ones. Oh, and writing.

Why do we do it? Partly because someone has to. But being on the board is as much a privilege as it is a commitment. It's a way to have a voice in the direction the chapter is taking, the speakers being brought in, the activities being planned. It's a way to become better acquainted with our chapter members as well as to network with those in other chapters. It keeps us connected when we might otherwise drift away while taking a break from writing.

If you're taking advantage of your membership by coming to meetings, listening to speakers, socializing with chaptermates, you're receiving something of great value. If you haven't already, isn't it time to consider giving something back? And if you already have, the entire chapter thanks you.

~*~*~

Leslie Marshman writes contemporary romance and suspense, and her publishing credits include short stories. Leslie called Denver home until she married a Texan without reading the fine print. She now resides halfway between Houston and Galveston. She's the editor of HBA's In Print! newsletter and contest coordinator for HBA's Judge A Book By Its Cover contest.

Dew Drop Continuity LONE STAR LOVE

As of today, I have FIVE submissions in my hot little hands: Fenley Grant, Tammy Jo Burns, Amanda Byrd, Gena Ellington, Clover Autrey, and my own.

If you've submitted a story and I didn't mention you above, MY APOLOGIES. Please resend to me at [jen.fitzgerald.writer @ gmail . com](mailto:jen.fitzgerald.writer@gmail.com).

If you're still interested in participating--YOU CAN DO IT!!!! It's only 3500 words or less.

For all the information about Dew Drop, check out the continuity page on the website: <http://www.ntrwa.org/anthology--2018--lonestarlove.aspx>. There are links at the bottom to spreadsheets where other participants have shared their characters or events or locations. If you have a question that's not answered, please email me at the email address above.

Submissions are **DUE JANUARY 28 2018** as we are working toward a publication date at the beginning of March, just ahead of our chapter's 35th anniversary celebration.

THANKS!

Jen FitzGerald
Continuity/Anthology Chair

CONTESTS, COORDINATORS, AND CASH

Help Us Help You!

North Texas RWA's primary source of income is from our two contests: the sixteen years strong Great Expectations Contest and the younger upstart, The Carolyn Readers Choice Award.

Right now, each contest is completely coordinated by a single person, with some help from one or two others.

These two coordinators give up a lot of writing time and personal time to serve the chapter in this capacity, and while they're (mostly) happy to do it, the adage of "many hands makes light work" certainly applies to these two endeavors.

Without the income from the contests, we couldn't bring you interesting programs or Two-Step Conference programs like the Sixteen Archetypes by Tami Cowden (Apr 2017).

With that in mind, Lisa and Jen are asking you to step forward and help in one contest (or both if there's crossover.) Some tasks are a bit more time consuming than others, but none require hours upon hours of work at any given time.

The Great Expectations needs much more help than the Carolyn, so when perusing the "help wanted" lists, please bear that in mind.

HELP WANTED: THE 2018 GREAT EXPECTATIONS CONTEST

- **FIRST ROUND JUDGE:** If each member of the chapter judged at least one entry, it would cut down on the number of outside judges needed. Finding qualified judges who will respond in a positive, professional manner to each entry is difficult—as members of the chapter, we comprehend that our contest's reputation is forged by our judges. Each contestant receives THREE judged versions of his / her entry, with the additional requirement that at least one of the judges is a published author. If we use 2016 as an example, that means we needed a minimum of 393 entries judged. Every judge counts, even if it's only one entry.
- **JUDGE COORDINATOR:** The Judge Coordinator will provide updated judging guidelines to all first round judges and will assist in sourcing both first round and final editor judges for the contest. Benefits of this position: interaction with numerous industry professionals and excellent networking opportunities.
- **CATEGORY COORDINATOR (NEED THREE):** The Category Coordinators will each be responsible for three categories (we have a total of nine). The responsibilities include: entry reformatting, preparing the document for judge distribution, distributing the entries to first round

judges, judge follow-up, and score verification upon the entry's return. Time frame is beginning of January to beginning of February 2018. Benefits of this position: enhanced software skills, interaction with contestants (many of whom go on to publish), networking opportunities, and an in depth knowledge of the financial implications of this contest to the chapter.

- **COMMUNICATIONS SPECIALIST:** In concert with the chapter's VP of Communications, ensure all advertising goes out as needed, contest information is distributed on all chapter loops and in the RWR, blog and website information is updated / posted, and all finalist / winner announcements post to the loops and the RWR. Benefits of this position include contact with all RWA chapter loops, blog management skills, and gaining knowledge of the advertising field. Time required is minimal and runs from August 2016 (RWR submission and initial advertising) to March 2017 (finalist and winner announcements.)

Training will be provided for all volunteer positions. Please contact Lisa Fenley at FenleyGrant.Author@gmail.com if you can help.

HELP WANTED: THE 2018 CAROLYN READERS CHOICE AWARD

ENTRY EMPRESS/CONFIRMATION QUEEN—as entries arrive, enter information into the master spreadsheet and send out pre-written confirmation emails (Nov 14 to Feb 14)

ADVERTISING ANGEL—ensure that any and all advertising (free and paid) gets done as needed (Aug 14 to Feb 14)

REMINDER DIVA—send pre-written reminders to judges once they've had a book for three weeks (Jan 14 to Apr 20)

VERIFICATION MISTRESS—compare the EmailMeForm data to the contest spreadsheet and a) verify the entered scores are correct and b) verify that the returning judge was marked ready to receive the next book (Jan 14 to Apr 30)

BLOG MOMMA—post updates as needed to the contest blog (Nov 14 to May 14)

Training will be provided for all volunteer positions and can occur at the volunteer's convenience. Please contact Jen FitzGerald at carolyn.award@ntrwa.org for more information or to volunteer.

Thanks!!!

Lisa Fenley & Jen FitzGerald
Your NT contest coordinators

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