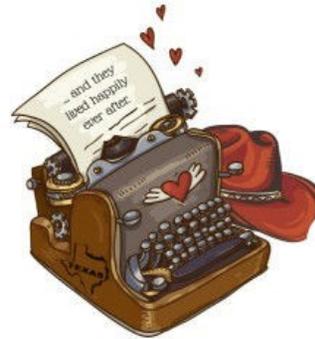


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of America  
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BLAKE KIMZEY  
Presents  
Character  
IS  
Action  
SEPTEMBER 21st

**GET PUBLISHED 10:00 to 10:30**

**BUSINESS MEETING & LUNCH 12:15 to 1:30**

### ***The Heart to Heart***

NTRWA

Founded March 1983

Chapter 33, Region 5

September 2019

Volume 38, Issue 1

## **2019 BOARD**

### **President**

Jen FitzGerald

### **President Elect**

Celia Naples

### **Secretary**

Kaylie Greenig

### **Treasurer**

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Stephanie Blackhart

**Program Director**

Chrissy Szarek

Want to be a part of the NTRWA machine?! Contact Jen! - [president@ntrwa.org](mailto:president@ntrwa.org)

**2019 Committee Chairs**

**PAN Liaison**

Chrissy Szarek

**PRO Liaison**

Randee Paraskevopoulos

**Bylaws**

Madison McCall



Join us for Blake Kimzey and his program, "Character IS Action."

He'll explain how to write more compelling characters through action, and why it's so crucial for great stories.



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**The Carolyn**  
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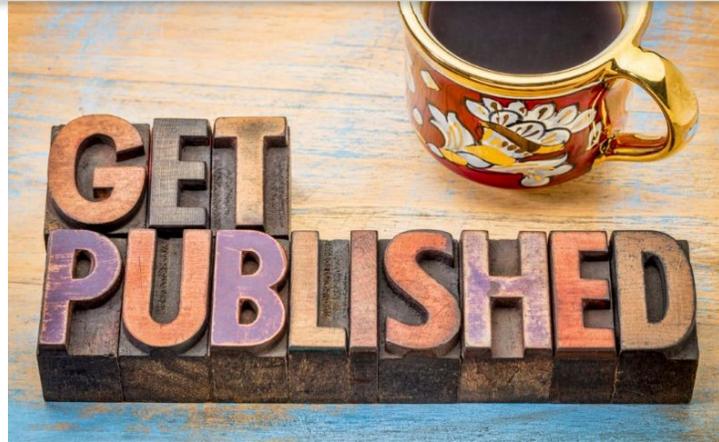
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**Hospitality**  
Clover Autrey

**Writing Incentives**  
Lisa Fenley

**Get Published**  
Lisa Fenley

**Spotlight Chair**  
Open



**#GETPUBLISHED - SEPTEMBER**

Jen FitzGerald

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What's next on your journey to publication. The GetPublished contingent will be meeting at a remote location for September's gathering.

We'll go over checklists, one for pursuing traditional publication and another for the indie route, and determine what's next on each person's journey as well as lay the groundwork for some future programming based on everyone's needs.

The location, once determined, will be posted on NT's Facebook page and sent out on our loop/forum.



Welcome to a new year at NT.

Jen, here... Your new president. The lovely Susan Miller ended up with more on her plate than she expected with a full-time job and school (another full-time job, really), and so I was asked to step in. I've been on the board for several years so I have the institutional memory, as it were, to know what is going on and what has gone on and what the plans for the future are and so am qualified from that perspective. I've also been president before; I know what the job entails. There will be few surprises. I hope there won't be any, really, but Murphy is a friend of the FitzGerald family, so, you know, he could knock on the door one of these days.

Why do we have a new president in September? Well, because back in January, the board voted to change the chapter's fiscal year to align with RWA National's (September 1 to August 31). Why, you ask? Because it made more sense for the new Treasurer to take over duties before the contests started and before membership dues started rolling in. Because contest chairpersons are usually chosen over

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all positions to be in alignment. Because there is more time available for more people to work on the actual transitioning in late August and early September than there is in December when almost everyone is focused on the holidays. Allison Kelley was consulted before the conversation with the board was even had and there were no rules or regulations against it.

My first stint as president was back in 2007, my last was 2012. I've served in every major board position except Programs and would have been your Programs Director this year had things proceeded as planned. (I told you Murphy was a friend of mine, right?)

RWA has come a long way. Publishing has come a long way. *I* have come a long way, baby. (Who remembers that commercial?)

Back in 2007, it was all I could do stand up in front of the group and speak without trembling from nerves. Well, I did tremble with nerves for many months. Home life was filled with youngish children and a temperamental husband. Writing was a thing I did for pleasure when I could find the time and/or actually eek out any words. I had no notion of being able to submit a manuscript to any sort of publisher. Monthly NT meetings were a haven from real life with people who understood the drive to tell stories.

Fast forward twelve years...*twelve? really??*

I'm no longer the shy wallflower I once was. I came out of my shell, found my true self thanks to the power of the Internet and fanfiction. (That's a story for another day.) The children are all grown and terrorizing the world at large. The hubster has mellowed in his older age and I can bang out anywhere from 1K to 2K on a good day of writing. Now, those don't happen on any sort of regular basis, but when I know what I'm writing, 1K a day isn't unheard of. I frequently don't know what I'm doing, however. I did compile enough words in the intervening years to take advantage of a publishing trend not-even-considered back when I first joined RWA and NT: self-publishing. Also—I'm writing and publishing in a genre I would never have expected to find myself writing or publishing in—MM romance. (Murphy, you sly dog, you.)

My goal for the chapter for the upcoming year is to get our Policy and Procedure Manuals updated to reflect what we do these days and how we do it. It's not a terribly onerous task, but it's not going to be quick and easy either.

My goal for myself is to publish two books in 2020. One of those is guaranteed since it's going into the next disability anthology and because it's written and in revision stage right now and because I'm not in charge of actually publishing it. (Although I will) The other book has been in progress for a year and a half now. The plan is to have it ready for release in October when the one conference I attend rolls around again. Oh—I might have three books out—another anthology is slated for December/the holidays. *Hmmm...*

What about you?

At August's meeting, Carolyn talked about setting goals for your writing, for making time to write. What are your writing-related goals for the upcoming year? Be thinking about them, because I'm going to ask you at September's meeting.

Thanks for entrusting me once again with our group.

See you at the meeting.

*Jen*

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### FACEBOOK TIPS!

by @MiaLondon - Audra Lewandowski  
@NTRWA Social Media

Here are some additional Facebook tips for you:

- Just like Twitter, use # for posting (and searching keywords). Use @ for connecting.
- Some people don't know that an active FB page helps your Google exposure.
- Not everything you try on FB will work. Don't stop trying.
- Using social media doesn't take a lot of time (you just have to resist getting too sucked in).
- Lastly, no one is googling your name. They search for what they want to find. What is the phrase you want to be found from?

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Happy connecting!



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## **The Scoop About Great Covers**

**By Audra Lewsandowski (Mia London)**

Let's talk about covers.

I am no expert, but hanging around some experts and artists I've learned a few things.

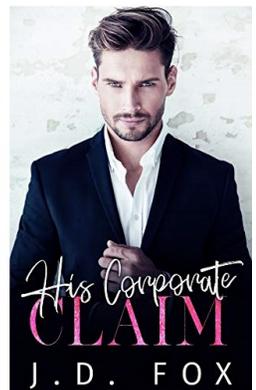
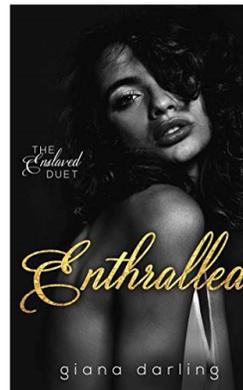
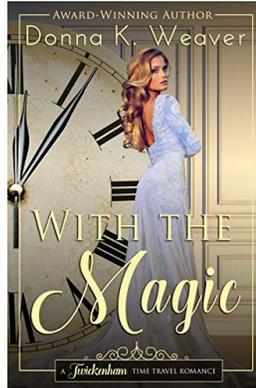
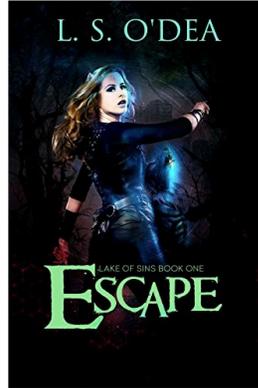
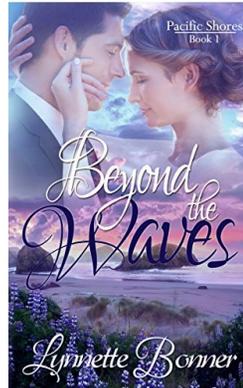
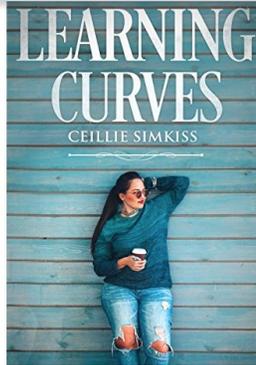
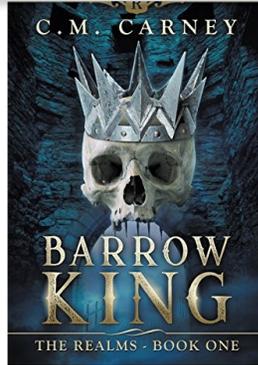
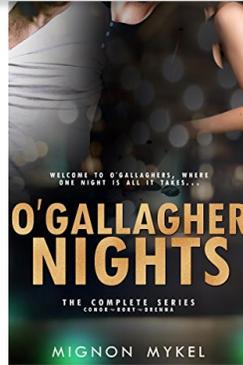
Looking at these 9 covers what do you notice? What are you drawn to?

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center here?

Cover 2 shows when you keep the focal point in mind, you create something beautiful and balanced.

Cover 3 is basically monochromatic. The subtle texture keeps it interesting. Do you like that look?

Cover 4 is also monochromatic, but with so much interest and texture, yes? It will all depend on your genre.

Cover 5- in design, we call that *grounded*. The picture needs to be grounded. Too much black, blank space feels awkward.

Cover 6 shows how to soften that and create balance.

Cover 7- the b&w with a pop of color can be very impactful. And yellow is very attention getting.

Cover 8- the focal point (faces) is too low. Higher is better than lower.

Cover 9- nice cover, but how many times have we seen this model?

Last tip- make sure your cover looks good **small**.

Just wanted to give you something to think about. A quick critique. Not to pass judgment, but to help you think about the art you are creating.

Happy writing!



**MARK YOUR CALENDAR FOR THE SEPTEMBER WRITE-IN!!**

Saturday, September 7th, 2019

2:00pm-5:00pm

@ the home of Priya Ardis

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Join the group for concentrated writing sprints (or editing). Bring your beverage of choice, a snack, and your laptop or notebook, and plan on getting in as many words as your fingers can manage!



## UPCOMING LOCAL EVENTS

### September 28th, 2019

Read Between the Wines - Wine Tasting and Book Signing

Urban Alchemy Coffee+Wine Bar, Arlington, TX

[Facebook Event Page - Read Between The Wines](#)

### October 26, 2019

Delightfully Dirty in Dallas

Westin Galleria Dallas, Dallas, TX

[Delightfully Dirty Event Page](#)

### October 27, 2019

Buns n Roses Literacy Tea

Hyatt Regency North Dallas, Richardson, TX

<http://www.bunsandroses.org>

### November 8-10, 2019

Readers n Ritas hosted by Fresh Fiction

Hilton Garden Inn, Allen, TX

<http://www.freshfiction.com>

Have an event you want to share? Email us via [newsletter@ntrwa.org](mailto:newsletter@ntrwa.org) so we can add it to the list!

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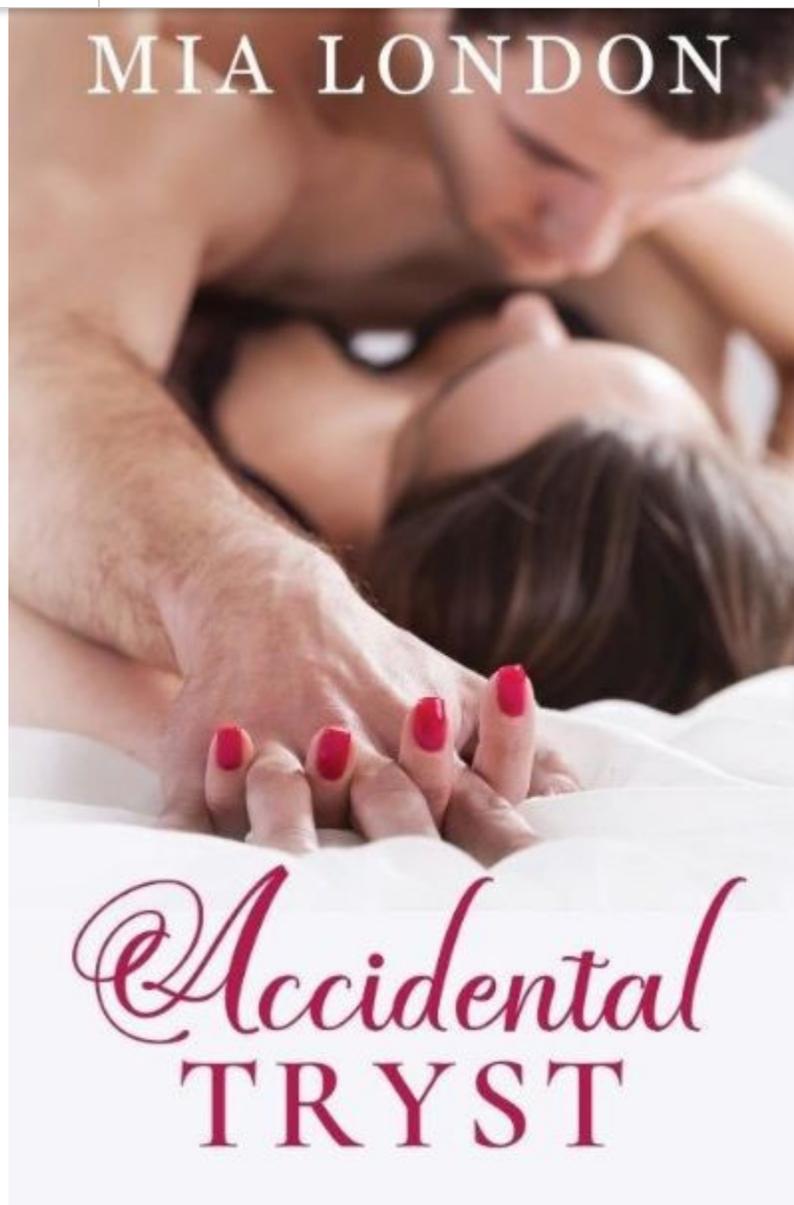
**Congratulations on NTRWA Members with new releases!  
Check out these amazing stories!**

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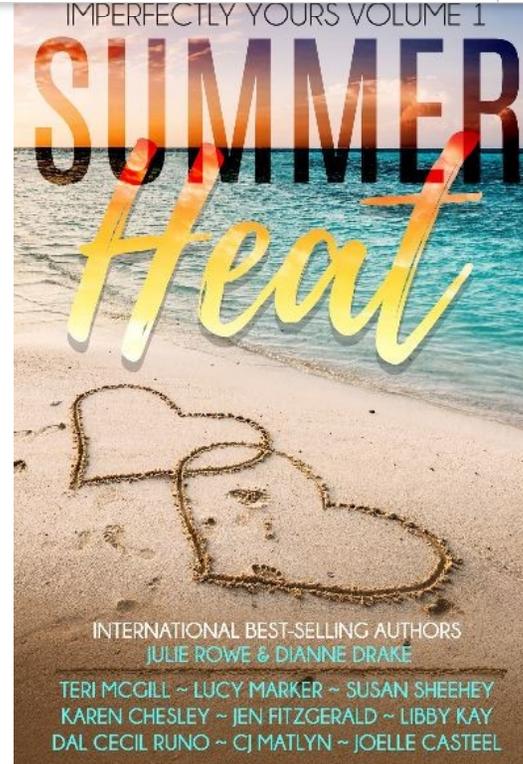
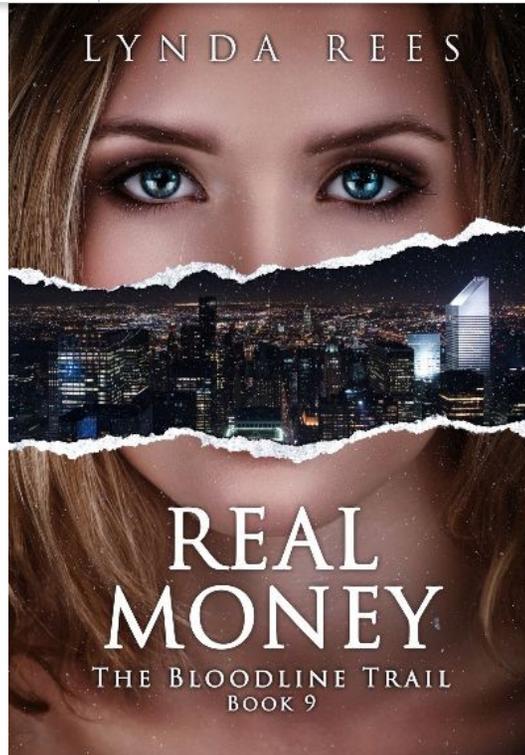


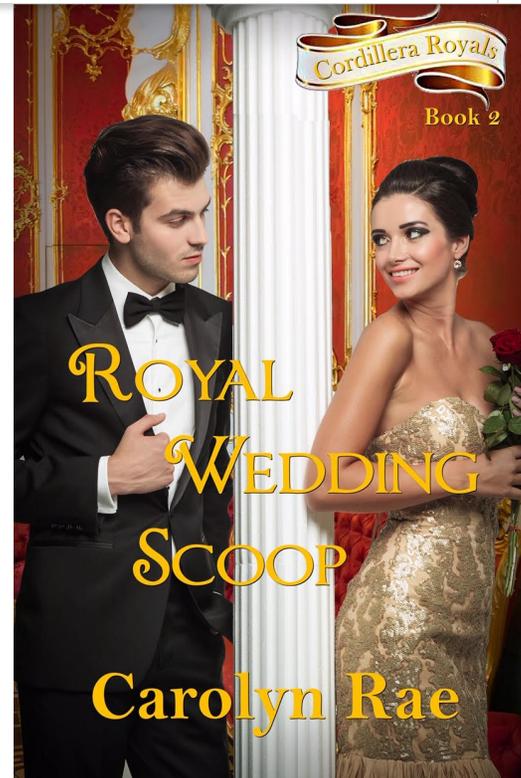
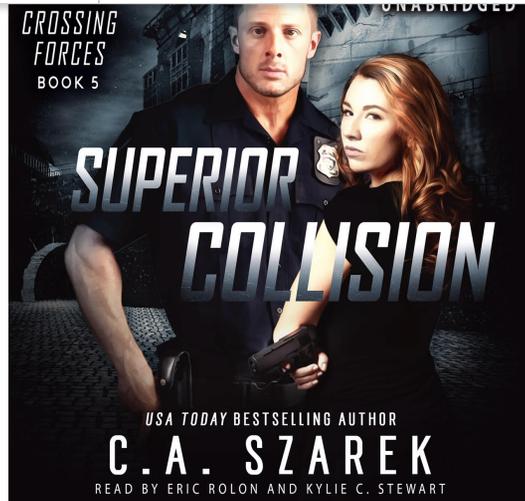
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### GENERAL MEETING MINUTES OF NTRWA August 17, 2019

A regular meeting for the North Texas Romance Writers of America (NTRWA) was held on Saturday, August 17, 2019 at the La Hacienda Restaurant in Colleyville, Texas. The President, the President-Elect, the Past-President, and the Secretary were present. The meeting was called to order at 11:11 a.m.

#### **OFFICER REPORTS:**

President Chrissy Szarek presided over the meeting. She reported the minutes for the July 15, 2019 meeting will be filed for audit.

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Chrissy reminded members that NTRWA's fiscal year now begins on September 1st instead of January 1st.

Treasurer Regina Richards was absent, but sent a report. Jen reported the amount in the treasury.

Jen FitzGerald announced the new officers. Celia Naples, President-elect; Stephanie Blackhart, Membership Director; Audra Lewandowski, Contest Chair; Clover Autrey, Hospitality Chair; Kaylene Greenig, Secretary; Susan Sheehey, Communications Chair (Newsletter Editor); Randee Paraskevoulos, Website Chair; Chrissy Szarek, Program Chair and Pan Liaison; Lisa Fenley, Get Published Chair and Writing Incentive Chair; and Madison McCall, Bylaws Chair.

Volunteers are needed for the Great Expectations Contest, the Carolyn Contest, and Spotlight Chair.

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Lisa Fenley announced the August Write-in will be from 2-5 on August 24. The location will be announced later by e-mail. September's write-in will be at Priya Ardis' home on Saturday, September 7, from 2-5.

Chrissy announced the cruise has been tabled for the time being. Jen FitzGerald and Susan Sheehey announced their stories, No Protocol for Love and Rip Current, were published in an anthology featuring characters with disabilities.

Chrissy Szarek announced the possibility of a writer's retreat on the second weekend of November, perhaps in Gun Barrel City.

Jen FitzGerald will perform the duties of the treasurer for the 2019-2020 fiscal year, and Secretary Kaylene Greenig will have check signing privileges in her stead. The meeting was adjourned at 11:32.

The top three of the authors for the most pages written were: Amanda Reid, Chrissy Szarek, and Jen FitzGerald; the top three authors for the most pages edited were visitor, Jo Cavender, Carolyn Rae, and Chrissy Szarek.

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Be sure to check out the schedule for the rest of the year's meetings and speakers on our website, including the Get Published topics!

<https://ntrwa.org/meetings/>

Sept 21st - Blake Kimzey - Character IS Action

Oct 19th - Jess Michaels - Making Your Career a Priority

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Nov - no meeting (retreat possibly in works)

Dec 14th - Holiday Party

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