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NTRWA

Founded March 1983

Chapter 33, Region 5

February 2021

Volume 39, Issue 2

**DECEMBER 2021  
Newsletter****CHAPTER MEETING INFORMATION**

3rd Saturday of each month, via ZOOM

11:00am: General Speaker

12:00pm: Business Meeting

On Zoom & In Person Links on our  
Facebook page and below.**2020-2021 BOARD**Audra Lewandowski  
*President*Chrissy Szarek  
*President-Elect*Clover Artrey  
*Secretary*Jen FitzGerald  
*Treasurer*Celia Naples  
*Programs Director***Join Us!**

Hey y'all! It's that time of year again.

We get to celebrate not only the holidays but a year's worth of work. And since we didn't get to meet last year in person, let's do it this year.

Please join us Dec. 11<sup>th</sup>—members and non-members—to socialize and

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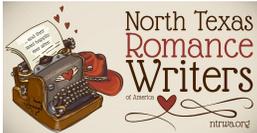
Marsha K. West  
*Newsletter Editor*

Christmas sweater. :)

Audra Lewandowski  
*Texas Two-Step  
 Conference*

We'll still be wearing masks and  
 distancing, of course if you join us via  
 Zoom, you are exempt. :)

Happy Holidays!



Audra



Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us>

[/j/83884654354?pwd=UXJDZEV6OGFhUjRiOTVIUURya25rZz09](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83884654354?pwd=UXJDZEV6OGFhUjRiOTVIUURya25rZz09)

Meeting ID: 838 8465 4354

Passcode: 525940

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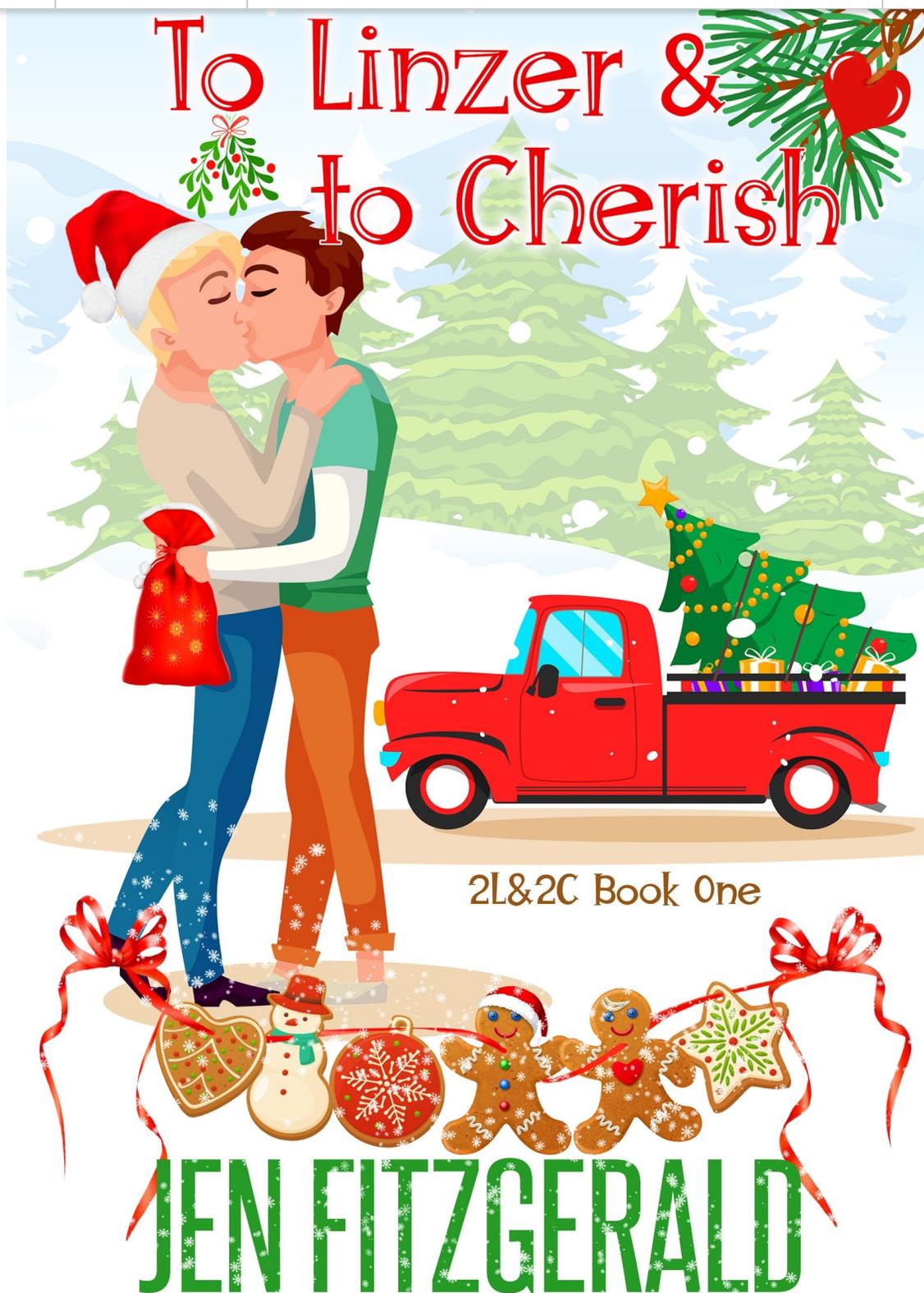
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**Member Article**

Question Every Premise!

Hi friends, **Jen FitzGerald** here...

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resonates with me.

Anyone who knows me well enough, knows that I march to the beat of my own drummer... And that's hard in publishing. Especially when you're just starting out and you know nothing.

Of course, I'm not just starting out and I know a few things at this point. But when I first read the book back in November of 2020, I felt seen, and the decisions I've made in regards to my publishing journey were validated. By someone who didn't know me and who had information and numbers and experience to back her conclusions. In re-reading it, I'm more confident in and happy with the decisions I've made along the way.

As soon as I read her book, I wanted to know more and I wanted to share this huge lightbulb moment with all of you. I don't know why I waited so long to recommend the book... We'll chalk it up to the 2020 holidays and then being busy with writing and then just the passage of time. And, you know, that other thing that's plagued us all for the past year...

But! As most of you may remember, Becca did come speak to us last April (via Zoom), and I was so excited for that, but it can be hard to absorb all the information a speaker shares in a 45-minute presentation. Not to mention, that format may not be the most conducive for an individual's learning style.

(We do have the recording of that session for anyone who wants to watch / re-watch it. If you do, contact me.)

Her point in both her presentation as well as in the book is to...

Question The Premise.

Any premise. Every time. Even hers. :0)

As a side note, Becca offers up 7 myths in the video and 16 in the book with maybe only 2 or 3 repeats, so there's a lot of bang for your buck here.

On to the review!

Now, the book's title (Dear Writer, You're Doing It Wrong) may seem counter-intuitive, but the purpose of the book is to address those things many of us were told as newbie authors we "should" do. And which, when we try and don't get the same results as the person who told us to do that thing, we think we must have done it wrong. That is very much not the case.

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“You Don’t Need a Street Team.”

In those chapters, and all the others, she explains why not everyone can or should do that thing. Which she references as Personality Strengths in her Zoom presentation. We all have 34 of them in different combinations. (These are officially called CliftonStrengths® via Gallup, the poll organization.)

Anyway— Every chapter in that book speaks to me. Some speak to me more than others, of course, and I encourage every one of you to read it, but most especially those of you who are fairly newly published or not too far away from becoming so. Indie or traditional doesn’t matter.

One chapter that I can speak to with a great amount of experience is chapter sixteen... “You Don’t Need Author Signings.” Need is the key word. Want to attend and enjoy are two other things altogether.

Since 2017, I’ve attended every GRL >> Gay Rom Lit Con, a conference for readers and writers of gay romance and, on a slightly lower plane, all LGBTQ romance. My first foray was as a reader (I wasn’t pubbed at the time anyway) to get the lay of the land. I flew to Denver and enjoyed meeting people and participating in everything. I also enjoyed a bit of sightseeing as well as attending a Colorado Avalanche game. I mean, I was there, right?

I decided to attend GRL the following year as a published author with six books published. In October 2018, I flew to Raleigh, NC and drove to Portsmouth, VA. Raleigh because I had a friend to visit. (Sadly, I couldn’t get to a Carolina Hurricanes game—they were on a road trip.) Portsmouth was the con location.

What became apparent to me almost from that second conference was that there was no return on my investment, most especially monetarily.

Flying costs money. Hotels cost money. Eating costs money. Registration costs money. SWAG costs money.

In the book, Becca also discusses the premise of the hope of gaining that one new fan. Does that make it worth it? It depends. Monetarily, no.

Think about the amount of money you make from one book sale. How many books do you have? Say you make \$1 per book and you have ten books. That’s \$10. Let’s say she tells ten friends and they all buy all ten books as well. That becomes \$100.

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Now conferences may be a worthy endeavor for you if you get energy from being social. It might be a worthy endeavor if you like to travel and can combine it with a vacation. This all might be a moot point if money is no object and you have hordes of rabid fans. Alas, I don't think that's the case for most of us.

Another way it costs you is from a time perspective. Not just the time you're actually gone, but all the time in advance that you have to prepare for the conference as well as for being gone. Yes, those are two different things.

Preparing for the conference is booking hotel/s, airfare, a rental car, choosing swag, designing swag, ordering swag, packing, etc, etc, etc...

For me, preparing to be gone is about making sure I've done all the day job work tasks that would normally happen while I'm gone. At this point, I'm the only person who can do the bulk of my job at my place of business. I have to be on call while I'm away, as well, just in case something comes up.

Not only is there the work factor, there's the home factor. I have to make sure my household is prepared for my absence. That's going to mean different things for different households depending on the shape and form of it.

Are you single with pets? Who's going to sit your house? Your pet? Are you going to pay that person? Are you going to board your pet? (There's more money on top of more time.)

Are you a parent? Are you married? Do you have to prepare meals in advance? Shop in advance? Do ALL the laundry in advance?

Now, conferences like RWA's are a different beast. That's a learning opportunity, it's a networking opportunity, but many of the same considerations still apply.

Weigh all consideration before plunking down your hard-earned money for a conference that will probably cost way more than any money you'll earn because of your attendance.

So...read Dear Writer, You're Doing It Wrong. Get more information about some of those other "shoulds" you've been told to do over the years. Question the premises and free up time for more writing because what all these "shoulds" can't do is sell a book that doesn't exist.

I question a lot more premises than I did not so long ago and not just about writing

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I recently finished an online class, and I was so peeved at the instructor because she was presenting her “how to” as super easy—but knowing what I know now because of taking the personality strengths test is that it’s not that easy. Anyway, I strongly recommend Dear Writer, You’re Doing It Wrong as well as Becca’s Zoom presentation for NT. I’d love to chat with anyone about either if you’re so inclined.

Wishing you peace and joy through the holidays and best wishes for 2022.



1. Please remember to like our FB page: [\(20+\) North Texas Romance Writers | Facebook](#) This is the best way to get notifications on meetings.
2. If you'd like to write an article for our newsletter, please send it to marsha at [marsharwest.com](mailto:marsharwest.com) not later than the 25th of the month. Thanks.
3. Send in your inspirational thoughts. We'll share.

#### **Inspirational Thought**

The greatest good we can do for others is not to share our riches but to reveal theirs.

*Anonymous*

You become successful by helping others become successful.

*Anonymous*

I think these both sound like writers helping writers. :)

#### **New Officers for 2021-2022**

Thanks to our members willing to serve on the NT Board. They are:

President-Elect—Chrissy Szarek

Secretary—Clover Autrey

Treasurer—Jen FitzGerald

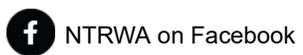
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