



June. 2018.

Volume XXX. Issue 05.

Welcome to Central Ohio Fiction Writers Newsletter

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Newsletter Editor, Sandra J. Kachurek

Central Ohio Fiction Writers (COFW) <http://cofwevents.org> is a non-profit professional association for romance writers and a local chapter of the Romance Writers of America® (RWA) organization that offers monthly meetings. Since 1987, COFW has promoted excellence in fiction writing, encouraging writers to grow and gain knowledge in their craft. Members provide a networking system to share knowledge and support the goal of becoming published.

June. 2018/Volume XXX. Issue 06/1

♥ Central Ohio Fiction Writers ♥
Proud Chapter of the Romance Writers of America®

2018 Leadership

President, Jenessa McRoy <jenessahl@gmail.com>
Secretary, Susan Heino <susan_gee_heino@yahoo.com>
Treasurer, Jeanne Estridge <jeanne.estrIDGE.author@gmail.com>

Program Chair, Aleta Dodson <aletawrites@hotmail.com>
Newsletter Editor, Sandra J. Kachurek <sandrajkachurek@gmail.com>
Membership Chair, Linda Rice <lindarice05@gmail.com>
Social Media Chair, Andrea McConnell <fyrefly93@gmail.com>
Incentives, Julia Blaine <julmassie@aol.com>

Meetings

First "Teen" Saturday of the Month.
Social: Noon to 12:30. Business: 12:30. Guest Presentation: 1:30.

Location

Norwich Township Building
5181 Northwest Parkway. Hilliard, OH 43026

Dues [Must also join RWA.]

Renewal before January 31: \$25.
After January 31: \$30.

Follow COFW

Twitter <https://twitter.com/COFWriters>

Facebook <https://facebook.com/COFWriters>

Closed Facebook Group

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/177462723049177/>

Central Ohio Fiction Writers

P.O. Box 24254
Dayton, OH 45424

The Next COFW Program

June 16

Danielle Barclay

Publicity and Marketing Tips

Danielle Barclay, Owner and Marketing and Publicity Director of Barclay Publicity.



Danielle is the owner of [Barclay Publicity](#), a boutique public relations agency specializing in author publicity and book promotion. She started her career in publishing close to 20 years ago.

Before founding Barclay Publicity, she held the position of publicity director at Entangled Publishing, helping launch and brand six of the company's twelve imprints. She also provided publicity support for the RT Booklovers Convention in 2010 and 2011.

As an industry recognized award winning social media expert, she has created and implemented over 700 publicity campaigns. She conducts presentations for writers groups and has a passion for mentoring aspiring and debut authors.

As a public relations professional, Danielle strives to get her clients in the right place to connect with readers so they can tell their story to as many people as possible. Aside from her marketing responsibilities, she also acts as copywriter, media buyer, and graphic designer for the company.

She has worked with numerous *New York Times* bestselling authors including Shannon McKenna, Sarah Castille, Sharon Hamilton, Tracy Wolff, Noelle Adams, Katee Robert, Gina Maxwell, Jennifer Probst, Laura Kaye, Jennifer L. Armentrout, and Tawny Weber.

July 14

Robin Yocum

Robin Yocum is an award-winning author whose critically acclaimed novel *Favorite Sons* was named the 2011 USA Book News Book of the Year for Mystery/Suspense and a Choose to Read Ohio Selection for 2013-14.



Dead Before Deadline is a compilation of stories from his days as a crime beat reporter with the *Columbus-Dispatch*. His latest and fifth novel, *A Perfect Shot*, will be available in April 2018. Its setting is the industrial town of Mingo Junction, Ohio.

Robin draws inspiration for his stories from a life growing up in the steel mill towns of the Ohio River Valley with its unique landmarks, neighborhoods and people. Robin joined the *Columbus-Dispatch* as a reporter in 1980 and worked there for 11 years, spent four years on the crime beat, followed by a post as a reporter on the investigative desk. He has won over 30 local, state and national awards while at the paper.



August 18

2018 RWA National Conference Recap

Listen to the stories from members who attended sessions you couldn't fit into your schedule or if you weren't able to experience RWA's event of the year yourself.



September 15

J. Leigh Bailey

Mastering the Meet-Cute in Romance Fiction

The very first encounter between the romantic leads of your story sets the tone for the rest of the book. This encounter either pulls the reader deeper into the story or makes them decide the book isn't for them.

The meet-cute is the quirky, funny, sexy, and/or memorable way two people meet for the first time. It has been used for decades in film, television, and novels as a way to get the audience immediately sucked into the romantic storyline.

This presentation will use examples from popular movies, television shows, and books to identify the main characteristics of an effective meet-cute, to recognize the basic formulas and tropes of the meet-cute, and to explore ways to create fresh versions of this classic plot device.

J. Leigh Bailey is an office drone by day and the author of Young Adult and New Adult LGBT Romance by night. She can usually be found with her nose in a book or pressed up against her computer monitor.



A book-a-day reading habit sometimes gets in the way of ... well, everything ... but some habits aren't worth breaking.

A reader of romance novels since she was ten, the last 20 years or so have not changed her voracious appetite for stories of romance, relationships and achieving that vitally important Happy Ever After.

J. Leigh Bailey's a firm believer that everyone, no matter their gender, age, sexual orientation or paranormal affiliation, deserves a happy ending.

<http://jleighbailey.net/>

October 13

Suzanne Sabol on Story Mapping

[Suzanne M. Sabol](#) is the author of urban fantasy and paranormal romance. Book 7 in her *Blushing Death* series, *Violet Abyss*, was released last May 2017. Her latest, *Sliver of Silver*, is coming soon.

Suzanne has been writing from age 16 when she finished her first full-length novel. She graduated from The Ohio State University with a major in Criminology, International Studies, Russian and Political Studies.

She married her wonderful husband, Ross, who makes sure her books don't have too much gore ... because there could be more. They live in Columbus with their daughter, Scarlet.



November 17

ALLIE PLEITER

THE CHUNKY WRITING METHOD

Do you find you can't seem to finish that book you've been writing?
Do you want to write faster and get published?
Fear squelching your muse?

Allie's innovative Chunky Writing Method offers practical, real-world productivity advice, whether this is your first manuscript or your twentieth.

http://www.alliepleiter.com/thechunky_method.html

**Open to the Public and Members
(Cost, Location, Time to be Determined.)**

COFW Fiction Plotters Meet Monthly

Need a boost with a story idea that has yet to see words on a page?

Can't get your protagonist out of a hole you've written her into?

Not sure whether the antagonist is antag-ing enough?

Consider stopping by the COFW Fiction Plotters group.

They meet the first Wednesday of the month at 10 a.m. at the Panera Bread in Taylor Square in Reynoldsburg, Ohio, 43068.

To ensure members are meeting and to stay in touch in between, they use this email: cofwplot@yahoo.com

If you have questions, contact:

Andrea McConnell: fyrefly93@gmail.com

Saralee Etter: saralee_etter@yahoo.com

☆☆☆ *Stellar News* ☆☆☆

What have you done recently to get one step closer to achieving a contract, perfecting your business, connecting with your readers? Let's celebrate your efforts.

☆ **Karen Harper:** As part of the Thurber House Summer Literary Picnics, Karen will focus on her recent release, *The It Girls*. June 27. Cost includes dinner. Bring your own lawn chair.

<http://www.thurberhouse.org/literary-picnics/>

☆ **Alicia Anthony:** *Inherent Lies* earned First Place in Paranormal in Wisconsin's Fab Five Contest.

Minutes, Treasury Report, Attendance for May 19, 2018 Norwich Township Building, Hilliard

Submitted by Susan Gee Heino, Secretary

President Jenessa McRoy convened the meeting at 12:30 p.m. There were 11 attendees.

Introductions were made and Works in Progress sheet was distributed.

November Event

Jenessa announced that the Board has voted to go ahead with final plans for our November workshop event. Our speaker will be Allie Pleiter who will share her “Chunky Writing Method” regarding time management and productivity.



*President Jenessa McRoy
presides over the May meeting.
(Photo by Shari Heinrich)*

Her website:

http://alliepleiter.com/thechunky_method.html .

More details on location, cost and times will be announced soon.

This event will be hosted in conjunction with NaNoWriMo (National Novel Writing Month). Non-COFW members will be invited but will

pay a higher fee. COFW hopes to make a profit on this event since we have no other fund-raiser planned for this year.

Contest

Kimberly Beckett is still working on brainstorming ideas for our annual contest. Is the “Ignite the Flame” theme still relevant or should we be rethinking that, too? Some history of the contest was discussed, and suggestions included additional training for judges or perhaps better vetting for judges and/or their comments since several past entrants complained that judges were too harsh and not helpful. Several members had praise for the

contest and felt that the theme is still very relevant.

With RWA recently announcing they are considering doing away with the Golden Heart contest, should we look at our contest as a way to fill that gap? At the same time, in today's market, our contest needs to be open to published as well as unpublished authors. How will we best position our contest and how can we increase our marketing? Publicity needs to become a priority for the future.

It was mentioned that documents from past contests including guidelines, judges forms, promotional instructions, etc. have not been made available to the current contest committee. Jenessa will see if she can find out who has these documents and will try to get them turned over so they can be used.

Incentives

Julia Blain was not available to offer incentives this month; we will double up next month.

Newsletter

Saralee Etter will write our recap for the newsletter.

Treasurer's Report

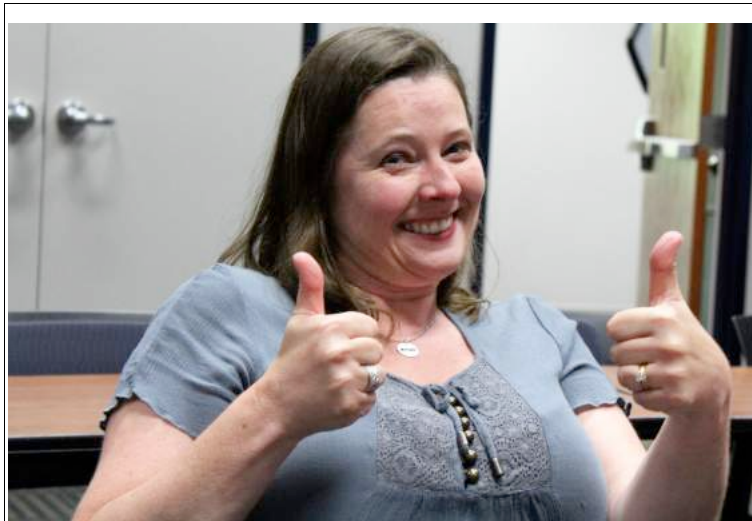
Treasurer Jeanne Estridge is out of town so Jenessa presented the treasurer's report. With no fund-raiser planned for this year, our funds are depleting. Programs Chair Aleta Dodson has been very frugal with our programming. We are doing all right but need to think toward the future.

April Figures: \$7,549.50 in Checking; \$1,140.81 in PayPal; \$1,564.55 in Financial Assistance Savings; \$10,254.86 in Total Assets

Meeting adjourned at 1:30 p.m. to prepare for plotting and brainstorming session.

Attendance and Works in Progress

01. Janice Beckett w/a Kimberly Beckett: writing.
02. Linda Rice: trying to plot.
03. Linda Munn: editing "Another Love Story."
04. Erin Novotny: editing a cozy mystery and a romantic suspense.
05. Gina Smith w/a Rochelle Bradley: on Book 2 of Fortuna, TX series.
06. Rachel Dye: editing *His Forgotten Duchess*.
07. Saralee Etter: writing *Her Wild Irish Rogue*.
08. Shari Heinrich: *Queen of Wand*, D3 halfway through.
09. Jenessa McRoy: paranormal WIP.
10. Susan Gee Heino: still working on *Rogue of the Greenwood*.



Gina Smith w/a Rochelle Bradley approves of the brainstorming method. (Photo by Shari Heinrich)

How Brainstorming Works

Recap by Saralee Etter

The May COFW meeting experimented with a new type of meeting content. Instead of listening to a lecture on writing craft, publishing or marketing, we held a group brainstorming session on plotting.

Members brought a lot of material to play with: magazines, poster board, colored markers, glitter—anything that might help to provide a visual representation of a plot. However, we ended up mostly talking as we brainstormed our way out of plot problems. I got some very valuable help for my own plot from the process, as did several others who volunteered to discuss their works in progress.

Talking through the problems and plot holes and listening to the suggestions of others was a lot like what happens during the monthly COFW Fiction Plotters meetings at the Panera in Reynoldsburg.

The following are examples of how the May brainstorming process worked:

One volunteer gave a summary of her story: A contemporary romance, in which the horse-owning heroine needs to win a horse race and be saved from a criminal organization. She has placed her hopes in an ex-military hero who suffers from PTSD.

The plot: In a moment of emotional closeness, the hero and heroine sleep together. He has a nightmare and wakes up to find he's actually hurting her. Horrified, he distances himself from her.

The problem: She wants him back but he is afraid because he doesn't want to hurt her. How can she heal the breach between them and make sure he doesn't have any further violent episodes? How can she rebuild trust, fend off the mob and win the race?

Suggestions: Bring in the hero's best friend, who can fall in love with the heroine and become a rival, thus making the hero realize how important she is to him. Or the hero and heroine can ride together to a special, meaningful location where they talk. Or maybe healing is achieved through using horse-whispering techniques that have worked with abused horses.

A second volunteer shared a story dilemma involving romantic suspense in which the heroine must find herself trapped, along with the villain's young child, in a car driven by the villain. But she must not be kidnapped by the villain because that happened in the first book in the series. They all have to be in the car, so a car chase ends with a crash that kills the bad guy and frees the heroine and child.

The plot: The heroine sees the bad guy's small child (heroine is not the mother—maybe she's his teacher?) in the bad guy's car and wants to rescue the child. Somehow, she hides in the bad guy's car and the bad guy unknowingly drives away with both of them.

The problem: Why can't she quickly remove the child? Why would she get into the villain's car? How can she hide in a two-door sports car without being seen?

Why does the abusive father want the child in the first place?

Suggestions: Maybe she volunteers to go along with the villain. Maybe the child is duct-taped into his car seat. Maybe the father just wants to punish the mother. Maybe there's a valuable document in the car that the heroine wants to retrieve in order to help the mother and child.

A third story situation involved a cozy mystery. The eventual solution to the mystery of random people disappearing without a trace is that the bad guy is using an Ancestry DNA type organization to harvest organs from unwilling



Linda Rice considers suggestions for plot development. (Photo by Shari Heinrich)

donors.

The plot: People are disappearing, and the sleuth must figure out what the common connection is between them all.

The problem: What sort of red herrings would make it seem like the DNA/family bond is NOT the reason for the disappearances?

Suggestions: People are disappearing because of a family secret, such as being related to a Nazi. Or maybe a secret relating to parentage, which would make people related when they think they're not; therefore, the DNA doesn't actually work, since the individuals don't know they're not related.

And yet another, fourth story involved a contemporary romance between a café owner heroine and the royal heir to the throne of a tiny European principality.

The plot: To promote tourism, the heir promises to marry whoever wins a country-wide lottery. The winner turns out to be the café owner, who doesn't want to marry a prince—she wants to run her café. The prince says they'll just do it for the publicity and then get a quickie divorce later on.

The problem: She didn't enter the lottery. She doesn't want to marry the prince. Why not? Why does he care? What is at stake for him?

Suggestions offered: Her estranged family suddenly pops back into her life. Disappointed females vandalize her café. The prince is offended that she doesn't want to marry him. Being rejected is his greatest fear. He can help her deal with the annoying family and the vandals.

Ideas to improve future brainstorming sessions:

If we do this brainstorming again (and we may want to), it might be helpful to have someone officially writing notes on an easel or dry-erase board, or maybe typing them on a computer which is projected to a screen, so everyone

can see the suggestions. Or maybe just audio recording the meeting so the notes can be referred back to.

Also, it would probably help to have a time limit for each discussion and have people prepare their summaries and questions in advance. Thinking and brainstorming takes time, and in order to get to everyone who wants help, it would be good to be able to take advantage of every bit of time.

We might need to think a little more about how to incorporate the images and such into the work. As a historical romance writer, I've found that Pinterest is much better for collecting and storing images. You get actual pictures of the things you want, and they're free.

Most magazines only have contemporary images and a very limited selections of those. Online, you can find people in historical dress, castles, carriages, horses and other period images. Lots of resources are online and just printing out what you want or need works great.

Also, for those who use Scrivener, images can be saved directly to the WIP file for future reference, putting all you need and want in one place.

Thanks to everyone who participated!



Saralee Etter is the author of three traditional Regency romances. Her next book, coming this summer, will be part of the *Legend to Love* Regency romance series, with a protagonist based on the legendary Irish hero Cuchulain. She is still working on *A Short Sharp Shock*, the first book in a Victorian-set mystery series featuring sleuth Lucy Turner and her friends, William S. Gilbert and Arthur Sullivan. www.saraleeetter.com

New Release by Sophie Jacobs

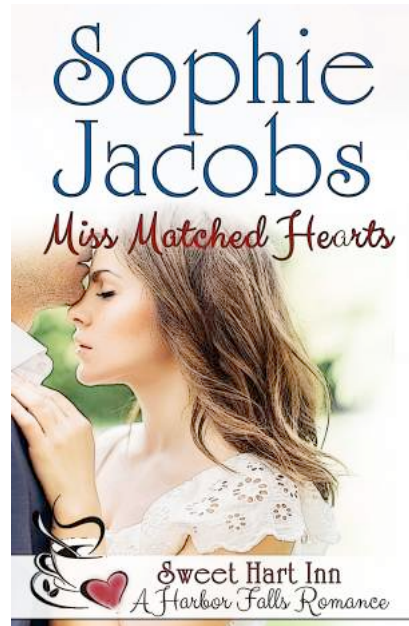
Miss Matched Hearts

A Harbor Falls Romance, Book 8: Sweet Hart Inn

When chef Suzie Hart Launches her debut cooking show, a blind date matchmaking sketch with a friend goes south quicker than geese in winter ...



Sophie Jacobs writes contemporary romance and woman's fiction. She lives a quiet life in a small Midwest farming community, has a fondness for both mountains and the beach, and traveling to familiar places. When she's not writing, she can be found puttering around her garden, walking the dog, delving into some sort of new crafty project, or partaking of a little back porch sitting.

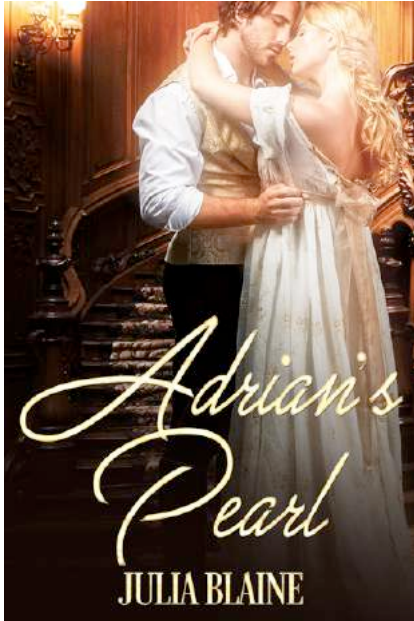


Visit her at www.sophiejacobs.com. [Sometimes, she writes as Maddie James.]

Sophie Jacobs, aka COFW member Maddie James, finds networking and new friendships with other romance writers one of the best aspects of being in COFW.

New Release by Julia Blaine

Adrian's Pearl



There are many ways to be wounded.

Catherine is a casualty of the war of the London Season. Her beautiful face is scarred. Her fiancé betrays her. There is no place in the Ton for her now. Adrian cannot possibly love an ugly woman, she believes.

False accusations against Adrian, in spite of being a war hero, follow him to Spain and back. In London, he is appalled at the condition of returning veterans and attempts to help.

Wounds eventually heal, but the world cannot be the same.

Can love win out?

Julia Blaine has been writing stories since before she could write. "I drew pictures until I mastered a few words." She lives in the country with a grumpy husband, a cantankerous computer, and too many ideas to take advantage of.

"I thought I could tell a good tale, but thanks to **COFW**, I learned about the publishing industry and what they wanted. Good friends in this chapter of RWA are always ready to help, whether it's a technical issue, offering a shoulder to cry on, or rejoicing at success."

Why Community Matters

By Julie Pitzel, Houston Bay area RWA

The following article first appeared in the May 2018 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.

I recently attended a conference hosted by another RWA chapter, Chicago-North's Spring Fling Conference. About 200 writers gathered to hear keynote speeches, take workshops, and pitch to agents and editors. While my writing craft and business savvy benefited from what I learned, I was reminded again that my favorite part of conferences is the community.

But not just conferences. I find enrichment in smaller communities too—like RWA chapter meetings (some of which are like a party); online groups where writers pop in for a few minutes and share about their WIPs, their lives, and their love of margaritas; and even another writer or two working beside me at the local library (I'm waving at you, Donna).

Why is community so important—not just for me, but for writers generally?

1. We want to belong. There's a reason the unkempt, wild-eyed hermit is a stereotype for fiction writers. It's not an (entirely) accurate stereotype, but writing a book is a naturally solitary activity. While we may relish the time we spend with our laptops and fictional friends, it can also be a lonely endeavor.

Everyone wants a sense of belonging, and connecting with other writers reveals and reminds you that you're part of a larger story. You are not alone, but rather one of many impacting lives, one word at a time.

2. We have expertise to share. I know stuff you don't know, and you know stuff I don't know. By virtue of having different backgrounds, experiences,

and perspectives, writers have lots we can share with one another. And not just the best places to hide a dagger beneath your heroine's evening gown.

We gain knowledge from official presentations but also from conversations we strike up with other writers. Learning from others is a shortcut to figuring out how to write better, navigate the industry, market our books, and run our Me Inc. businesses.

3. We're the only ones who get each other. One time, my husband was showing off his new truck to a mutual friend who was also a writer. When my husband opened up a hidden compartment in the truck's bed, our writer friend said, "Wow, you could fit two bodies in there." Without flinching, I answered, "And look, there's a drain." Needless to say, my husband was a little worried.

But other writers are your tribe! They understand having characters talk to you in your head, really do want to know what your story is about, wouldn't flinch at your Internet search history, and know "I'm writing a novel" doesn't mean it will be available in the bookstore next week. They know you're always researching books, even when you're looking at your spouse's new vehicle. You need people in your life who get you, and other writers are the ones who do.

4. We need a support system. Writing, both the experience and the industry, is an up-and-down journey. Some days you feel on top of the world, other days you want to hide in your closet and weep, and then there are all the days in between. Other writers understand that too.

We're here to celebrate with you when things go well, comfort you when things aren't working out, and cheer you on to get what you want and deserve. Writing communities aren't just a group of people who also write, but people who become your best supporters and true friends.

And they'll help you hide the bodies, fictionally speaking of course.

Julie Glover is currently being held prisoner at an undisclosed location, forced to serve out 12 months as chapter president. Since she's deprived of freedom and entertainment anyway, she's using the time to write a cozy mystery and praying her agent can find her if her Golden Heart-nominated young adult book sells.