

August 2020

Issue 7

Welcome to Central Ohio Fiction Writers Newsletter

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Newsletter Editor: Rachel Dye

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.

2020 Leadership

Board

President: Janice Beckett.

Secretary: Sandy Kachurek

Treasurer: Stacy McKittrick

Non-Board Positions

Newsletter Editor: Rachel Dye

Programs Chair: Vacant

Education Chair: Erin Novotny

Social Media Chair: Gina Smith

Incentives Coordinator: Julia Blaine

Ignite the Flame Contest Chair: Shari Heinrich

Monthly Meetings Facility Coordinator: Vacant

Equipment Inventory Coordinator: Robin Gianna

Meetings

First "Teen" Saturday of the Month. Social: Noon to 12:30. Business: 12:30. Guest Presentation: 1:30. Location: Check www.cofwevents.org

Dues

New Members: \$35

Renewal before January 31: \$30. After January 31: \$35.

- Dues run January to December
- Membership with Romance Writers of America required.

Follow COFW

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

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

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/cofwriters/>

Closed Facebook Group <https://www.facebook.com/groups/177462723049177/>

Central Ohio Fiction Writers

P.O. Box 24254 Dayton, OH 45424

Next Meeting: September 19th, 2020; Fun with Plotting with Patricia Sargeant

The success of a romance rests upon its ability to evoke emotions: The reader must National best-selling and award-winning author Patricia Sargeant will host a two-hour presentation designed on seven elements of plotting..

Business meeting at 12:30 pm, Discussion at 1:30 pm

Our meeting will be held via Zoom. The password will be posted on the Central Ohio Fiction Writers Group page which can be accessed via the Romance Writers of America website under the Forums tab. If anyone has any questions, email authorkimberlybeckett@yahoo.com

COFW Fiction Plotters Meet Monthly - East

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-ging enough? Consider stopping by the COFW Fiction Plotters group. We meet the first Wednesday of the month at 10 a.m. at the Panera Bread in Taylor Square in Reynoldsburg, Ohio, 43068.

If you have questions, contact:

Andrea McConnell: fyrefly93@gmail.com

Saralee Etter: saralee_etter@yahoo.com

COFW Fiction Plotters Meet Monthly - West

All the same fun as above but located in Huber Heights. We meet the second Monday of the month at 6:30 pm at the Panera Bread off I-70 exit 36.

If you have questions contact:

Jeanne Estridge: jeanneestrIDGE@gmail.com

Rachel Dye: juliette.r.hyland@gmail.com

Minutes of the Central Ohio Fiction Writers via Zoom

August 15, 2020

I. Welcome.

II. Attendance/WIP:

Approximately 13 members in attendance.

Highlights of WIP:

Rachel Dye/Juliette Hyland is working on another Harlequin medical; Karin Shah's 7th and final book in her *Chimera Chronicles* is with beta readers; Janice Beckett/Kimberly Beckett's book #4 in her *Horses Heal Hearts* series will be out in September; Erin Novotny/ Tobi Doyle plans to submit something on suspense for Harlequin Intrigue and has been enjoying Linnea Sinclair's current digital class, which ends August 31; Shari Heinrich is on her 7th draft of *Queen of Wands* and hopes to have it complete by the end of November.

III. Minutes from July were accepted as posted; motion by Shari, seconded by Erin/Tobi, approved by all.

IV. Reports

1. President Janice Beckett:

A. She gave an overview of RWA Membership Town Hall meeting: no quorum;

~A new code of ethics is in place, which relates to the national level, not the chapter level; if there is a complaint, send it to RWA

~29% loss of membership but it is leveling off; of the 105 local chapters, four have disaffiliated;

~898 are registered for the virtual national conference; no pitch sessions, lots of workshops and sessions; hoping for an in-person conference in Nashville in 2021;

~DEIA training modules will **required** annually for every member to retain membership in RWA; RWA has realized that the once-absent DEIA component is the core of what has caused the problems of the past;

~Dreamspinner Press has been issued a three-year ban though more may be happening with this situation;

~RWA's building in Texas is for sale; the financial account is seeing half of what it usually has at this time.

B. New Slate of Officers for RWA National Board; one person per position, so no competition but the board is excited.

C. National RWA Conference from August 28-30 will be virtual.

D. New Chapter Affiliation Agreement: please read the attachments in a recent email on the forum's loop to read the newly adopted language. COFW's signed affiliation agreement is due to RWA by September 30.

E. Vote to remain affiliated with RWA National will be held at our next membership meeting online September 19. Brief discussion was held of the benefits of being affiliated with RWA. The voting process will be blind, most likely via the RWA blind voting system.

2. Treasurer Stacy McKittrick (not in attendance):

At the end of the month our current assets were as follows:

Checking = \$6,314.24

PayPal = \$1,519.82

For a total of \$7,845.26 available cash

Balance in the Perseverance Fund = \$1,519.82

Significant changes in account balances this month consisted of:

Income of \$584.56 (net PayPal fees) for the August Online class (which \$450 is due to the presenter)

Income of \$405.50 (net PayPal fees) for the September Online class (which \$450 is due to the presenter)

Expense of \$161.14 to Zoom to hold monthly meetings (for the period of April 2020 – April 2021)

Expense of \$135 for Website Maintenance (Jul-Sep)

3. Programs Chair Jeanne Estridge:

Today: "Evoking Emotions" with Sherry Thomas of *The Lady Sherlock* series.

September: "Fun With Plotting" with best-selling author Patricia Sargeant, who also writes as Olivia Matthews and Regina Hart, via Zoom.

October: Grace Burrowes, via Zoom.

November: "Stronger Scenes" with Jeanne Estridge.

December: Holiday party.

4. ITF Chair Shari Heinrich:

She'll get a feeling for whether judges are apt to help in 2021 but will need assistance from others who know more industry contacts. The \$300 Copy Edit prize of the past was good, but we may want to have an agent reading, too. Other chapters, such as Noir, have chosen not to do a contest next year. Many judges have lost their personal jobs because of closures.

In the event she is secretary of COFW in 2021, however, she will not be chair of ITF.

5. Education, Digital Classes, Erin Novotny/Tobi Doyle:

Registration: Classes Page on COFWEvents.com

Calendar:

*August 1-31: "Characterization: Making Strengths and Weaknesses Work for You (or No More Mary Sues!)" with Linnea Sinclair.

*September 1-30: "Emotion Without Purple Prose" with Alicia Rasley.

*October 1-31: "Being the Extroverted Introverted Writer: Developing Your Author Platform" with Eliot Parker.

*January 1-30, 2021: "The Book Writing Checklist Class" with Linnea Sinclair and Stacey Kade.

A poll will go out to members for input and interest in classes for 2021.

6. Newsletter, Rachel Dye/Juliette Hyland:

Anyone with a new release is encouraged to get their blurb and cover design to her before the first of the month. Erin/Tobi will write the recap for today's program.

V. Incentives:

Rachel/Juliette has launched her new website, logo and tagline, "Hot Drink and a Sweet Read." Gina Smith/Rochelle Bradley's recent anthology for charity has sold 100 copies in presale. Janice/Kimberly's three books are in audio. Becky Barker's many books are in audio and doing well.

VI. Social Media:

A. Weekly Writing Sprints: Shari says the sprints have kept her writing in the summer when she is usually doing yard work; she would never have been as far in her editing without the sprints. Linda Rice says the sprints made her realize that she can write.

B. Plotting Group via Zoom: A good "shot in the arm." It meets the second Monday of the month.

VII. Unfinished Business:

None

VIII. New Business:

A. Vote for RWA board members.

B. COFW Board and Non-Board Positions:

Sandy has sent out an email to current position holders, asking if they want to remain there for 2021 and has made a general posting on the loop to any member interested in serving, especially as president, treasurer and secretary. New rules by RWA now open general membership status members to run for board positions.

C. Vote to Remain or Disaffiliate:

The vote to remain or disaffiliate from RWA will be made by the September 19 meeting.

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 1:28 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Sandy Kachurek, Secretary

**Sherry Thomas – August COFW Online Workshop –
Evoking Emotions
By Erin Novotny**

Sherry provided us with her full notes, but here is a very brief overview of what she taught:

BIO: *USA Today*-bestselling author Sherry Thomas decided that her goal in life is to write every kind of book she enjoys reading. Thus far she has published romance, fantasy, mystery, and a wuxia-inspired duology. Her books regularly receive starred reviews and best-of-the-year honors from trade publications, including such outlets as the *New York Times* and National Public Radio. She is also a two-time winner of Romance Writers of America's prestigious RITA® Award.

Sherry immigrated from China at age 13 and English is her second language.

EVOKING EMOTIONS

What engages your emotions—from your real life to your favorite artworks will help you understand how to engage your readers at the visceral level

1. Pain—the most effective way to introduce a character and get to know them is through their pain, their emotional wound, a physical wound
 - a. Knowing someone's deepest, darkest pain creates an instant bond with them. Because we all understand pain, and we all understand pain so enormous the only way to keep going is to keep it hidden.
 - b. Pain comes in flavors and gradients and you don't always need pain like a sledgehammer to crack a character wide open
 - i. Her example was from *The September Issue*, a documentary on Anna Wintour, the editor of *Vogue*. While Anna is deeply respected in her field, among her family they find her work "amusing"
 - ii. Showing the character's vulnerabilities evokes emotions (especially when we have those same vulnerabilities)
2. Humor – pain turned on its head or something totally unexpected.
 - a. Kristin Higgins does this incredibly well – taking pain from unrequited love and creating an embarrassing and humorous scene that evokes emotions from the reader – because we all "know" this feeling
 - b. Pain—and its posse, frustration, disappointment, regret, restlessness, loneliness you name it—is the foundation of both drama and comedy.
3. Fear – we live with it and tapping into what the character's goals and their fears associated with them helps evoke emotions
 - a. Fears of poverty, loneliness, rejection, indignity
 - b. behind every goal/want, there is likely a fear
 - c. fear can shape decisions, and repeated decisions shape a person and their character
 - d. Yoda was right, Fear is the path to the Dark Side!
 - e. You can't argue with great pain in someone's past. That happened. They were shattered. But in fiction at least, when we are introduced to a character, their fear, which arose out of this original trauma, has invariably led them to the wrong life strategy.

- f. The character arc should show the person facing their fear and overcoming it.
- 4. Transformation
 - a. The greatest emotional power of storytelling, in my opinion, lies in character transformation.
 - b. Make sure that it is a true transformation, that at the end of the story, even though the original pain didn't change, your characters have broken free of the imprisonment of fear and all the limitation that fear had put on their lives.
- 5. True Nobility of Character
 - a. Not all characters need to go on a journey of transformation from bad to good. Sometimes the greatest strength they show is just remaining good and caring in an indifferent and often cruel world.
 - b. Think of Captain America, Black Panther, etc. The character faces choices, they can make their life easier but choose to remain noble to their beliefs despite the sacrifice it costs them
- 6. Show don't tell
 - a. Character changes for the character arc should be shown
 - b. When describing a detail in the character's life/scene (for example an object that ties in with the theme/motif of the book) truly connect it to the emotional theme of the book
 - c. Example from the workshop of highlighting a detail to evoke emotion:

"That's cute," said the passenger in the seat next to hers.

He pointed at her flash drive that was in the shape of a dragon, a green dragon with yellow eyelids, yellow spine plates, and a white belly.

"It's my husband's. He loves dragons." *It's. Loves.* Twenty months after Tim's passing, whenever she wasn't careful, she still spoke of him in the present. "He even took me to a geekfest called DragonCon once.

The last good year. Before his diagnosis. Before three years in and out of the hospital. He was buried with his very first set of Dungeons and Dragons rule books and the Lego Millennium Falcon he'd put together when he was thirteen.

She'd almost put in the green dragon flash drive, loaded full of all their pictures through the years, into the casket. But in the end she'd kept it, a memento of her wonderful geek, of all their happy years together, even though she never did make it through the first book of the Lord of the Rings, not even a hundred pages.

Final thoughts: Before we end the workshop, let me say that you actually cannot know what emotions your work will evoke in anyone else. My philosophy on this has always been to write something I love, a story that speaks deeply to me, and then trust that I'm not alone in my tastes.

So, the most important emotions to evoke are your own.

Sherry's full fourteen page notes from her talk are available here:

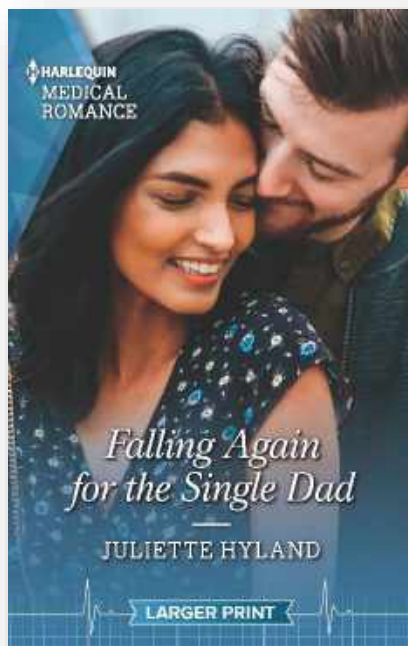
<http://www.sherrythomas.com/evoking-emotions.docx>

Ideas for 2021 Workshops:

Erin has put together a google doc to poll COFW members for ideas for next year's workshops. Please find it here:

<https://forms.gle/oJXsPjiJNRbrLVED6>

New Releases:



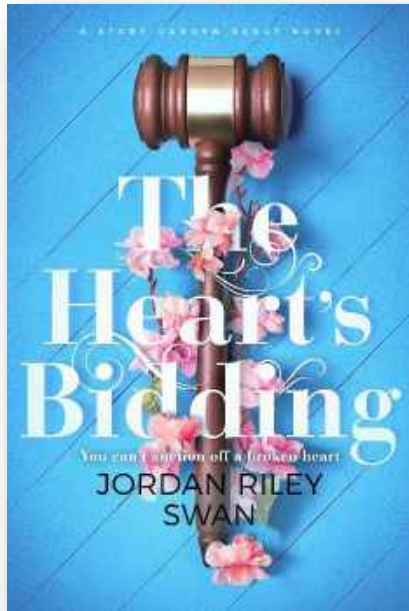
Falling Again for the Single Dad By Juliette Hyland

Fatherhood has changed him—

But can she risk her heart?

ER nurse Amara Patel is starting over. Running into her ex, physician Eli Collins, on her first day at Boston General throws a major wrench in the works! Because despite his still irrefutably sexy appearance, he's not the Eli she remembers. He's always put work first, but now that he's bringing up his niece, everything's changed—except his and Amara's feelings for each other! Dare Amara allow herself a second chance at love?

Available Now!



The Heart's Bidding By Jordan Riley Swan

Kaylee Heart would rather run through a roaring fire than endure even a minute of public speaking. Put in an eighty-hour work week? No problem. Shut down her grandfather's gold-digging girlfriend? Easy peasy. Stand in front of an auction crowd and call for bids? Show her the exit.

So she has no idea how Gerald, the golden-voiced auctioneer she's been crushing on at the local auction house, can find the courage to stand on stage every week, with all those eyes on him. But as cruel fate would have it, she is about to find out.

Her family antique shop, the Vintage at Heart, has tripped over one financial hurdle too many and Kay is propelled, full speed, into her biggest phobia—the spotlight.

With terror chasing her, she'll have to fight to keep the family business from closing forever. Even if the battle takes place in front of a live crowd...

Available in September

COFW has a goal sheet!!!



Want to track a daily word count and compete with your fellow COFW members for the highest point total? Add your name and goals to our Magic Spreadsheet here:

<https://bit.ly/2Wprwt0>

July Winner: Ann Chlovechok

The winner gets Eddie!

