



August, 2018.

Volume XXX. Issue 07.

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.

August, 2018/Volume XXX/Issue 07/1

♥ 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

**Next COFW Meeting on August 18:
Recap
2018 RWA National Conference in Denver**



Listen, take notes, enjoy stories from members who attended sessions you couldn't fit into your schedule or weren't able to attend.

Reviews of two sessions of the many to be covered include: "Writing for Your ID" from Jeanne Estridge and "Military Characters" from Janice Beckett.



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. 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 10

ALLIE PLEITER

THE CHUNKY WRITING METHOD

**MORNING WORKSHOP AND AFTERNOON WRITING TIME
FOR NANO WRITING PROJECT**

Clintonville Woman's Club

3951 N. High St., Columbus 43214

9:30 A.M. to 4:00 P.M.

**Members: \$45. Non-Members: \$49.
Includes Lunch.**

Bring laptops, extension cords and enthusiasm.

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

Allie's innovative Chunky Writing Method offers practical, real-world productivity advice in an easy-to-read and inspiring workbook. You will follow a step-by-step plan to identify your unique writing "chunk" and wield it to create a solid plan that works "even when life gets in the way."

It doesn't matter if this is your first manuscript or your 20th, writers of every experience level have "gotten Chunky" with dramatic results. Whatever your writing style, *The Chunky Method Handbook* will help you chart an individualized path to your creative writing goals.

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

Registration Opens: 9:00 A.M.

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-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.

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

☆ *Arianna Jones* wins an RWA Golden Heart® for her contemporary romance, *Thrown*. An RWA Golden Heart® recognizes an outstanding manuscript by a member who has not published a novel or novella.

☆ *Janice Beckett* is listed on the Debut Authors page in the June 2018 issue of RWR as Kimberly Beckett and her contemporary romance, *Dressage Dreaming*, released in April.

Minutes, Treasury Report, Attendance for July 14, 2018

Norwich Township Building, Hilliard

Submitted by Susan Gee Heino, Secretary

President Jenessa McRoy convened the meeting at 12:30 p.m.

Works in Progress sheet was distributed.

Board Business

Recent Board Meeting: Our third annual 2018 COFW Board meeting was held this morning. One more board meeting will be conducted before the end of the year.

Program Chair: Aleta Dodson agreed to continue in her role as Program Chair. Membership celebrated.

Online Workshops: The Board announced plans for online workshops in 2019, as well as our usual monthly meetings. This will bring needed funds into the group. We are planning three online courses through the year and are looking forward to good responses from members as well as non-members. More details will be announced as plans progress.

Voting for By-Laws: In September we will be voting to incorporate RWA's by-laws changes into our own. If COFW does not accept the by-law changes, we will no longer be affiliated with RWA and must disband. This is a fairly routine procedure and the by-law changes are not extensive.

Policy & Procedures update: The COFW board will begin updating our Policies and Procedures (P&P) manual. This is also a routine procedure and must be done every year to assure the manual is current with our policies and procedures.

Incentives: Julia Blaine announced that she will not be available to offer incentives next month and asked for a volunteer to take her place. Susan Gee Heino raised her hand.

Several members had news or milestones to share this month, including Linda Rice who finished retyping a memoir for a veteran. Arianna James, is a new/returning member from Phoenix, AZ, and a Golden Heart finalist.

Newsletter Update: Sandy Kachurek hoped members were receiving their newsletter and reminded us COFW pays \$15 for articles of relevance to the membership. Julia Blaine volunteered to write the recap of today's speaker.

Treasurer's Report: Jeanne Estridge presented the treasurer's report. Total checking is \$7,131.51, our PayPal account is \$1,169.85, and our Financial Assistance Fund contains \$1,564.57.

Programs Update: August 18 meeting: RWA Recap! Anyone going to the RWA National Convention was asked to attend our August 14 meeting to give a recap of her experience at the event. Those not attending the conference look forward to hearing from those who did. Those attending the conference were asked to contact Aleta Dodson to coordinate reports.

September 15: "Mastering the Meet-Cute" with speaker J. Leigh Bailey.

October 13: COFW member Suzanne Sabol on "Mapping Your Series."

November 10 All-Day Event: In conjunction with National Novel Writing Month, COFW will be hosting Allie Pleiter, who will present her "Chunky Writing Method" at the Clintonville Woman's Club. The day will include workshop, lunch and writing time. Cost will be \$45 for COFW members and \$49 for nonmembers.

December Holiday Party! We love to celebrate the end of the year with a party for members only. Date, time, location details to come.

January 19, 2019: Author Maddie James will continue her presentation from this past January about writing a series.

Other 2019 Program possibilities: Cover Shoot. Aleta is in the process of bringing in a photographer and cover models to show us what goes into creating the art for the beautiful romance covers.

Damon Suede. One of the hottest RWA authors out there and an excellent teacher, too. Aleta is working to bring him to present a workshop in 2019.

New Business: Jenessa brought up continuing issues with Yahoo! Groups. She's been unable to post to our Files section and is worried we will lose our important information as well as our ability to communicate easily. A change needs to be made and she's been investigating options.

One good option is Groups.io, which has features to Yahoo! Groups but more stability.

Arianna James asked if Jenessa had looked at the forums offered for chapters through the RWA site. Jenessa had, but with these concerns:

In speaking with other chapters, she learned of privacy issues since RWA leadership has access to all the content and discussion on these forums. Some members find the RWA site hard to navigate. Because RWA is currently rebuilding their site, another concern is for a resulting wave of bugs and glitches.

Other questions about online groups were raised:

Can we use a social media site like Facebook? Jenessa explained we cannot control our ownership of files or documentation stored in social media. Also, many members do not wish to use public social media.

Can we make sure the new platform will work with everyone's email? Membership doesn't want to log into another platform but wants to continue

to receive communication via email. Several members said RWA forums do indeed work this way and have been improved.

How are we going to learn to use this new platform? Jenessa assured the membership that whatever we do, COFW will provide training and resources for everyone.

What training resources will people prefer? Videos, handouts, in-person training sessions, etc? Membership agreed all of these would be helpful, but a day of in-person training would be great. Jenessa will work with Aleta to schedule a day for this next year.

Introductions were made around the room at this time.

Meeting adjourned at 1:05 p.m. to prepare for our speaker, Robin Yocum, past journalist and Ohio author.

Attendance and Works in Progress

01. Aleta Dodson: finishing Nashville trilogy series.
02. Dorothy (guest): Aleta's lovely mother.
03. Rachel Dye: editing *Finding His Way Home*, plotting *The Prince's Lotto Bride*.
04. Pam Johnston.
05. Karen Harper: finished book 6 in her *South Shores* series; next a historical.
06. Linda Rice: continue editing WWII book.

07. Julia Blaine: only wrote recap from June.
08. Andrea McConnell: *The British Captain*.
09. Sandy Kachurek: writing fantasy.
10. Arianna James: editing *Thrown*.
11. Linda B. Munn: editing *Another Love Story*.
12. Eva Greenleigh: starting next YA novel and writing/exploring story ideas for an adult romance fantasy.
13. Saralee Etter: working on *Her Wild Irish Rogue*.
14. Jenessa McRoy: moving!
15. Jeanne Estridge: writing paranormal romance.
16. Susan Gee Heino: still slogging through *Rogue of the Greenwood*, a Regency historical based on the Robin Hood legend.
17. Antricia Tran (guest): writing romance/mystery.
18. Lily Tran (guest): writing many things.



Robin Yokum's Stories Begin With an Idea

Recap by Julia Blaine

If you grew up in southeastern Ohio along the Ohio River, with a quarry, lots of coal mines, sand pits, hills and railroad tracks, all the things your mother warned you to stay away from, you might or might not become a writer. Even if you played football in high school, publishing a book could be less than a dream.

Hailing from Brilliant, a once-bustling industrial Ohio town, Robin Yocum proved dreams could become reality. Highlights of his work in fiction include *Favorite Sons*, 2011 *USA Book News* Best of the Year for Mystery Suspense.

After graduation from Bowling Green University with a degree in journalism, Robin expected to cover sports. He took positions at the *Lancaster Times-Gazette* and the *Martins Ferry Times Leader*, finally becoming a reporter for the *Columbus Dispatch*. There he became a crime reporter, assigned the 6 p.m. to 2 a.m. shift, collecting more experiences to weave into his boyhood adventures.

He began to put childhood exploits to paper. When he had completed *The Essay*, a YA novel, he methodically queried publisher after publisher. His work always ended up in the slush pile until a secretary at a Boston company fortuitously discovered the book and showed it to the editor. It was a contract but unfortunately it was also 2008, the year the economy dipped.

When asked, “Why did you keep on writing when your books were not selling?” He said it could only be self-confidence.

During his time at the *Dispatch* he tried his hand at non-fiction, producing *Insured for Murder*, based on a true crime and *Dead before Deadline*, behind the scenes at a newspaper.

But did he want to write nonfiction or fiction?

Publishers of nonfiction contacted him to ghost write or assist other authors, such as Jack Kevorkian, but Robin Yocum did not feel comfortable with the subject matter.

He chose to concentrate on selling his fiction and rewrote his earlier books to create a three-book series he titled *The Duke of Mingo Junction*, *The Baron of Brilliant* and *The Earl of the Ville*. Though he was partial to the royal connection between the titles, he dropped it on advice from an editor.

Other advice came from a former director of the Columbus Thurber House who reminded him that 85% of books sold in the US were bought by women and maybe his stories should include women.

What is his writing process?

His ideas, he said, come from a spark of inspiration from memory, from an incident, from anything, though he prefers subject matter that touches upon "gray areas" where other authors might not go. He then does what he calls "brain dumping" the idea until he figures out how the story will end. Next come the characters, mentally assigning a real person to each character, and concentrating on relationships.

He next step is how the tale will evolve. Unlike his work in nonfiction, in fiction he can make up information. It is wise, he cautioned, not to over-think the plot. That can stop everything.

When Robin actually begins to write he is impatient and does not like to re-read, but he does. He writes 500 words a day, taking eight to nine months to finish and is happy his editors and agent do not ask for a synopsis.

His many years as an investigative reporter and his life-long reading habit benefit his mystery suspense stories as does his way of approaching each chapter as its own short story.

Does he think about his reader as he writes?

No, he said. He just wants to tell a good story.

Writing, he said, does not come easier as you go. "Your first writing may not be very good but confidence breeds confidence," he explained. "Getting a book published brings confidence but so does finishing a book."

Robin Yocum fulfilled a dream in becoming a writer but he remains a realist. "Don't quit your day job," he added. Currently, he is president of Yocum Communications, living in Westerville.

Recap Writer 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.



Guest speaker Robin Yocum and one of COFW Founding Members Karen Harper are both past author guests of the James Thurber House.

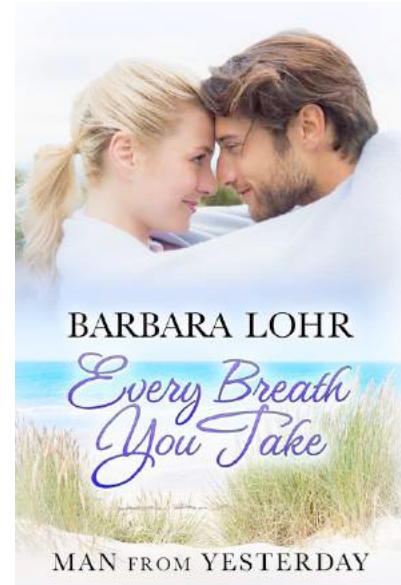
New Release from Barbara Lohr

Every Breath You Take

Lindsay came to clean his cottage. But somewhere between dusting and organizing Tanner's garage sale, Lindsay lost her heart...and her head.

In those mistaken moments, she forgets to mention that she's a mother. An only child, Tanner knows nothing about kids.

This sweet town romance is all about family choices and challenges. *Every Breath You Take* is Book 6 in Barbara Lohr's *Man from Yesterday* series.



Barbara Lohr writes heartwarming, sweet romance. One of COFW's out-of-state members, she now lives in Savannah with her husband and their cat, who claims he was Heathcliff in another life.

Let's Eat This Elephant One Bite at a Time

By PF Karlin

The following article first appeared in the July 2018 issue of *Happily Ever After*, the monthly newsletter of West Houston RWA. Permission granted to reprint or forward to sister RWA chapters with proper credit to author and chapter.

I started this article a month ago and then stalled. It just wasn't saying what I wanted. Very similar to when my characters go on strike.

Anyway, as I write this column, the push to fill positions for our Chapter's fund raiser, The Emily Contest, has begun in preparation for its official opening day of September 1, 2018.

So, I'm sitting on the couch, well, more like lying like broccoli, checking emails. A series of emails went out on our Chapter loop sent by our Emily Chair. The members started to respond.

From my reclining position, that's when it hit me. Our members were "Eating This Elephant One Bite at a Time."

I referred to this analogy once during a meeting. It spurred some giggles and something about the grisly hairs getting caught in my teeth. However, when you take it at face value, it simply means taking a big job and breaking it down one piece at a time, until the job is complete.

These are the basic building blocks of any functioning community that takes a big job and breaks it down into smaller parts.

The chapter is exactly that, a community of writers who come together to learn, support each other, and network. The Board is in place to run the Chapter. Then we have the wonderful members who take up the charge to fill committee positions because without these positions being filled, the Chapter struggles.

The other piece of this "elephant" is the multiple members who step forward to fill in the gaps by volunteering to take on smaller tasks. The response to

The Emily Contest emails is a perfect example.

I joined the West Houston Chapter in 2012 when I was as green as grass. Over the years, I have learned so much from our Chapter and its members.

Being a habitual volunteer, judging the Emily Contest was my first experience at being a contest judge, and, since then, I have volunteered to judge other writing contests.

What I receive from the experience is the knowledge and the opportunity to give back not only to our Chapter but also to pay it forward.

Any chapter's success depends on all its members stepping up to take on whatever task they can handle. When all the pieces are put together, the completed goal is obtained for a well-run group.

So, if any member ever thinks they do nothing to help our Chapter, it is not true. First of all, you help by just becoming a member. Then, by showing your smiling face at the meetings, you show support for all of our members and speakers. Finally, when you donate any of your extra time by volunteering, you are giving back to the Chapter.

With the help of all the members who have supported the Board and Committee Chairs, the Chapter is thriving.

As often as I try to say thank you, sometimes it gets missed.

So, I'd like to extend one to all our members who may, without knowing it, are helping us eat that elephant one bite at a time.

But, watch out for the hairs. I hear they can get stuck in your teeth.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Karen Pugh, writing as PF Karlin, is a Yankee, hailing from Chicago, Illinois. She graduated from Amundsen-Mayfair City College with an ADN in nursing too many years ago to mention. After having her fill of cold weather, she packed up, left the Chicago winters behind, and moved to Texas where she and her husband are enjoying Houston's nine-month-long summers. Karen spends as much time as she can afford with her family, enjoying her son, a marvelous daughter-in-law, and two phenomenal grandchildren. See her website at <http://pfkarlin.com/>