



January 2021

Issue 1

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.

2021 Leadership

Board

President: Bernie Miller
Secretary: Shari Heinrich
Treasurer: Michelle Orloff

Non-Board Positions

Newsletter Editor: Rachel Dye
Programs Chair: Vacant
Education Chair: Vacant
Social Media Chair: Vacant
Incentives Coordinator: Vacant
Ignite the Flame Contest Chair: Vacant
Monthly Meetings Facility Coordinator: Vacant
Equipment Inventory Coordinator: Vacant

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: February 13th, 2021; Donna McMeans- The New HEA, Making your readers fall in love with your characters from the very first page.

Join us for an educational talk with author Donna McMeans on defining the happily ever after for your reader! 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

16 January 2021

Minutes, Meeting 01/16/2021, Zoom only

Central Ohio Fiction Writers

The mission of the Central Ohio Fiction Writers is to promote excellence in romantic fiction, help writers become published, and establish careers in the writing field.

12:00 Networking

12:30 Call Business Meeting to Order

Welcome Visitors & Round Table: introduction of members, starting with how many years you've been a member, where you're out of, and something about you:

- Jeanne Estridge—maybe 7 years, Dayton, loves us! Writes paranormal and contemporary.
- Sandy Kachurek—Springfield, member 6th year.
- Rachel Dye, writing as Juliette Hyland—contemporary, medical for Harlequin.
- Susan Yutzey (new member)—Columbus, originally from New Jersey, came to Ohio for college, married, stayed. Retired school librarian; was an administrator at OSU. Writing a contemporary with Liz; trying for some comedy.
- Janice Beckett, writing as Kimberly Becket—contemporary (Horses Heal series), 2017 member, Soul Mate publisher, 5-book contract, working on 5th book.
- Liz Deskins—Susan's partner in crime, also retired school librarian, adjunct for Kent State, and writes some books for school librarians. First Draft done, and now editing.
- Linda Rice—here since the beginning, going on 35 years; we used to put on big conventions, editors/agents, not as big a crowd now because everyone puts those on. Founding member along with Becky. Contemporary romance.
- Donna MacMeans—90s joined; member of RWA for 30 years, and even longer for COFW. Sadly, leaving RWA, doesn't want to leave COFW, but please, reach out if you have questions. Published with Berkley and also as indie.
- Erin Novotny, writing as Tobi Doyle—contemporary and romantic suspense; joined COFW after one of those workshops, years ago, lives in Huntington, WV.
- Becky Barker—Written for many publishers, contemporary/contemporary suspense/western.
- Michelle Orloff—Dayton area; newer to group, 2nd year. Contemporary, 1st book, will be self-published this year. Our Treasurer this year.
- Stacy McKittrick—paranormal, published in Kensington, but now indie.
- Susan Heino, writing as Susan Gee Heino and Serena Gilley; mostly Regency, traditional Regency, some fantasy/light fantasy as Serena. Shifted gears and doing more contemporary

with a book sold to Harlequin Love-Inspired line, a suspense. Lives North of Columbus between Marysville and Marion.

- Janet Ciccone—Upper Arlington, 1995 published her first romance with Penguin Putnam, had 7 historical romances for them (writing as Janet Lynnford); then got told she couldn't keep doing real history + romance; went back to work full time at OSU and writes for them, still loves this group, and looking at publishing her back list.
- Shari Heinrich—your secretary, types for a living as a business process analyst, joined in 2017, she thinks. Joined after participating in NYCM SSC, drawing romance and rom-com and making it through to the final round, figured had some talent in romance, and fell in love with the chapter. Lives in Westerville.
- Marcia Anderson, writing as Marcia James—Hot, humorous romances since 2006.
- Bernie Miller, writing as Jordan Riley Swan—President, hopes we don't fall apart in his hands. Writes high fantasy and sweet romance, but more “gentle romance” based on readers' responses to his first book.

Works in Progress/Incentives

- Susan—revisions on that harlequin manuscript, not scary, only a few more hours of work. Won't be published until 2022. Also, she sent a proposal to Hallmark for co-written book and waiting to hear back.
- Rachel, writing as Juliet Hyland—Feb 1st release, *Stolen Kiss with the Midwife*; number 4 comes out in June, email from editor Monday, asking if she could turn it in early 😊 NOT after all from last year!
- Shari, hitting goals with 4th book, about the Chihuahua shifter, just hit 3rd beat of the 8-beat model in the Friday sprints. Also signed up for NYCM SSC again, which starts next week, 8 days to write once we get prompts of genre, character, and subject, short story no more than 2,500 words.
- Jeanne—a bunch of us are in Linnea's class, going well
- Erin—finishing revisions on book, beating head against wall because she's off her pace. *Wishes* she could take Linnea's lessons faster. For RWA, also working on Push to Publish Program for unpublished writers, so that's the harder one to write.
- Linda asked—Pinterest, you'd be surprised how much writing information is out there! She noticed there are 6 past presidents here.

Minutes from Last Meeting—Minutes are accepted as posted.

Treasurer's Report

Stacy McKittrick done as treasurer, submitted the December summary, Michelle in. Stacy posted those final numbers

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

- Checking = \$7,076.32
- PayPal = \$853.38

- Available cash = \$7,929.70, adjusted to \$6,581.52 when you take into account the deferred income and expenses received for January's online class and 2021 memberships, which will be recorded in 2021.
- Balance in the Perseverance Fund = \$1,519.87

Changes to account balances this month:

- Transferred \$1,200.00 from PayPal to Checking
- Purchased First Sale Pen for \$58.18
- Purchased 2019 & 2020 Member of the Year Awards for \$158.74
- Regarding January's Online class: 31 people have signed up through 12/31/20 for a total of \$945.00 (the income will be recorded in 2021's report). We will owe Linnea & Stacey 50% of the gross income since it is now more than \$450 (as per the signed contract).
- Membership for 2020 ended at 32 members. 15 have renewed by 12/31/20 (that income will be recorded in 2021's report).

Reported by Stacy McKittrick, COFW Treasurer

If you plan to renew, do so by end of the month. Questions?

New Business

Budget—we put together the 2021 budget, and talked about the sharing of the information. Shari shared her screen and went over some of the numbers, where we are operating at a deficit, but will still have money in savings. The budget has been shared on the Facebook page, and uploaded to the Treasurer 2021 folder in our chapter folder in RWA.

Summarized:

Gross Revenue	2400.00
Expenses	6099.00
Net	(3699.00)

Intro new board—Bernie, president; Michelle Treasurer; Shari, Secretary, but LOTS of open board positions

State Agent for COFW—Donna will no longer be the State Agent, since she is not continuing her membership. We need volunteer to take the role: Position serves as the contact that the state of Ohio has on file for contact as our organization. If they have something for us, they would send it to us. Basically nothing to do :0) You do need to supply your address and phone number.

Donna was never contacted during her time as the state agent.

Volunteer: Jeanne Estridge will be the State Contact person. Check to write, and form to fill out.
Treasurer took care of it last time.

Non-Board Positions (Unfilled):

- **Programs and Workshop Chair**—would really be easier if we had LIST from folks of what they want. AND to have marketing person coordinate.
Does RWA have a list of a speakers bureau? Yes, they used to have one, but we'd have to check to see how well it is maintained.
 - Members, please shoot Bernie ONE program you'd like to see; do not do it as a google doc—they tried that last year, and didn't get much action.
 - Donna; lots of strengths in the chapter: e.g., she has that “the other HEA” topic members have found helpful
 - Discussion: RWA offers a handful of prerecorded workshops in a box, which are perfect for Covid times:
https://www.rwa.org/Online/Training/Chapter_Leader/Workshops_in_a_Box.aspx?WebsiteKey=c531524b-2ea0-41e7-a099-7e5a27062137
Suggestion: Has Kerry Winfrey ever presented to this group?
 - Susan And Liz have done a Teams room for Ohioana, and then authors who signed books. Kerry did a session along with others, romance in the teen genre. She's written contemporary romance, using Columbus (please send to Bernie)
 - (and maybe for education chair, it's a tag-team with program, like, hey, that Lisa Cron!)
 - Shari had posted to chat, and 2 said “yes,” do it: How about I do a facebook Poll for topics, so we can add our topics, a presenter or ourselves, AND folks could also vote if they are interested?
 - No volunteers at this time from meeting attendees.
- **Education Chair (Digital classes)**—online education, you try to find 12 topics to give a class every month, and a google IO group for it; advertise it; publish it in the RWA magazine (which requires lead time). It typically makes some money for the chapter; it has the same issue as meetings, have to find topics and presenters who will do an online class. You're looking for those instructors who do not do the same topic over and over (which results in fewer outside members going to the class). Making sure the contract got signed and then work with treasurer to get the check out. Probably about 2 hours work/program. Erin could assist, but she's stretched thin and she is out of topics.
 - How about some workshops that are JUST a one-shot? Some folks don't want the month-long commitment.
<http://www.katemcmurray.com/workshops/> Cost \$200 but willing to negotiate depending on our budget. (The one she is doing for CRWOC is Worldbuilding: Writing Vivid Settings)
 - Nikki Sloane: <http://www.nikkisloane.com/> Cost is \$100 (The one she is doing for CRWOC is Slay your Promos)

- For those who feel overwhelmed with emails from classes, go to the google IO and set to NO emails. Then you go into the google IO group and see the chats.
- Janet Ciccione: Our chapter had Kristan Higgins as a speaker at one of our conferences, and I remember her as being good. Looking at her web page, I don't see classes but I can follow up.
- No volunteers at this time from meeting attendees.
- **Social Media Chair**—No discussion, no volunteers.
- **Incentives Coordinator**—No discussion, no volunteers.
- **Monthly Meetings Facility Coordinator**—whenever it's safe to meet again. Bernie has the lead for a Columbus location. We also wanted a Dayton location.

Three seminars/workshops we have leads on:

1. **Liz Pelletier:** "Growth Hacking the Bestseller" (Shari has info): Liz could do it as 4- or 8-hour workshop. Hand poll taken, and 4-hour workshop it is. This workshop will be 5/15/21. Liz had offered this for RWA as an intensive, and it was a fantastic session, Shari said. The chapter talked about what we might charge for the workshop, but then asked Shari to work with Liz. Since the idea is to increase membership, maybe Liz meant for chapters to offer it for free. Shari will report back once she hears from Liz's assistant. Another idea the chapter floated: If we are allowed to charge, we could charge non-members \$30 and then say that we would apply that to COFW membership if they joined RWA.
2. Here are a couple that might work for us from Contemporary Romance Writers Online Chapter that Janice mentioned. They have been contacted and are happy to work with us:
 - **Kate McMurray:** list of workshops <http://www.katemcmurray.com/workshops/> Cost \$200 but willing to negotiate depending on our budget. (The one she is doing for CRWOC is Worldbuilding: Writing Vivid Settings)
From Erin—Kate McMurray - Better, Stronger, Faster First Draft would be my first choice, but they all look great
 - **Nikki Sloane:** <http://www.nikkisloane.com/> Cost is \$100 (The one she is doing for CRWOC is Slay your Promos)
 - Tom Stricklath is a potential contact for another topic.

New business

None on agenda, and none brought up by membership

Reminders

- Provide Rachel, as our newsletter editor, the cover of book, the book blurb
- Volunteer for program notes? Susan will take program notes. Today's program is by Jenny Cruise, "Motif & Metaphor"

Minutes respectfully submitted, Shari Heinrich

Motif & Metaphor
The stuff beneath the surface
By Jenny Crusie
COFW Jan. 16, 2020

Jenny Crusie is a New York Times bestselling author and two-time RITA Award winner. She has written more than twenty novels, which have been published in 20 countries. She has a Master's Degree from Wright State University in Professional Writing and Women's Literature, and an MFA from The Ohio State University. She has taught at several universities and helped design curriculum for a graduate-level Romance Writing program.

Jenny Crusie spoke to our group via Zoom. She began by reminding us that as writers, we have a unique story to tell. After all, not everyone makes stuff up all day. But we do! There's obviously a reason for that. There must be something in our subconscious that needs to get on the page.

The good news is we don't have to figure out what that is! We simply need to write. Ms. Crusie is a strong proponent of writing what she calls a "Discovery Draft" without taking time to edit, organize structure, or layer in details. She suggests just writing the draft, then we can go back to look at it and discover what we are trying to say. As themes and ideas appear throughout the draft, we can then determine if these are what we want to go out into the world.

"Readers are our collaborators," she asserts. A good writer is careful not to give them everything—we should let them have a say in figuring things out. "Imply a lot of things," she instructs. "Not only does this let the reader feel intelligent, but it invites them into your story to be a collaborator with you. After all, isn't it much more fun to watch people fall in love than just to be told about it?"

How can we do this? By utilizing Motif and Metaphor, of course!

Motifs and metaphors are small things, subtle things, that readers are not really even aware of.

These handy tools reach in and touch the readers' subconscious. They inform the reader that more is going on than the author is telling them. This is the difference between text and subtext.

A motif is anything in your story that is repeated to create effect or deeper meaning. It

is a theme. For instance, the very familiar theme music in the movie *Jaws* was a motif. When you heard that music, it meant something! The music motif was used in various situations, but it always created emotion and anticipation.

If something appears in your story once, it might not even be noticed. If it appears twice, it's a coincidence. If it appears three times, your readers' subconscious minds will sit up and take note!

A metaphor is like the grown-up version of a motif. A metaphor is a concrete thing that represents an emotion. This object is the vehicle which carries the abstract idea to the tangible. An example of this could be a bracelet that a heroine wears—perhaps it is an heirloom or has some other importance. What emotion would be created if she lost this special object? What emotion would follow if the hero fixed/found/replaced this bracelet at the end of the story? What would this bracelet say about their relationship?

The important thing is to use both motif and metaphor. But don't be too intentional about them! Write that first draft and let them appear. Then search for patterns and meanings—those will be your motifs and metaphors. Since your story is yours alone, let those “girls in the basement” send stuff up to you as you go along. This is what is inside you, deep down. *That* is what needs to rise up to be discovered. *That* is the story you have to write.

Once you have discovered your motifs and metaphors, then rewriting can happen. This is the stage when you fix structure and things of that nature. Using your discoveries, risk can get deeper, tension can grow stronger; your metaphor will become more meaningful.

Keep in mind, though, that a metaphor is not simply a symbol. A symbol generally has just one meaning, just as a flag is a symbol for that particular nation. A metaphor's meaning depends on its context. It is more universal than a symbol or a motif. A motif is much more personal to the protagonist. It is a rhythm in the background of their life.

In the end, you are searching for the authority of the text. You want your reader to trust you to give them a fulfilling story, one that touches their emotions and stirs their imagination. A failed story doesn't do this. Not only do you need to give your reader a satisfying ending, but it has to have *meaning*. That is what motif and metaphor can do for you. They are really powerful tools!

During our question-and-answer session after her presentation, several attendees wanted more information on the idea of the Discovery Draft. Ms. Crusie explained that the idea was to keep moving forward, to avoid stopping for editing and plotting. Have a basic idea of the story, then just dive in and write. “It's like walking,” she said. “If you get distracted and stop that forward momentum, you just might fall over.”

One attendee asked, “What if I waste too much time going off on tangents?”

The response was, “Tangents are always a gold mine!” Ms. Crusie explained that

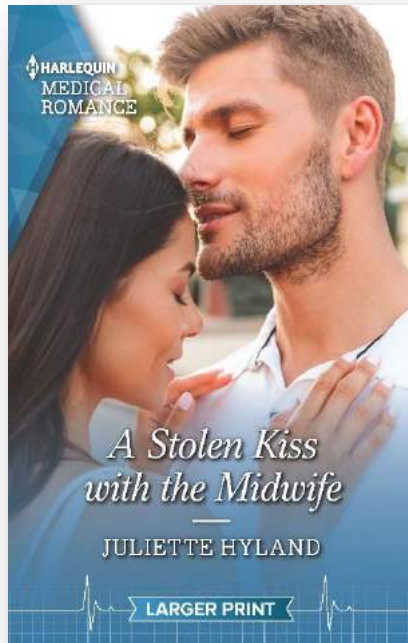
sometimes these tangents are the best way to come up with out-of-the-box discoveries. It's not a discovery if it's right up on the surface. The best stuff is often buried.

Another question was regarding the process of discovery drafting within a writing partnership. How would this work when it's not one author writing a draft, but two authors working together?

Ms. Crusie's suggestion is that the authors should first determine how they plan to divide the work. In her own experience, she found that the easiest way is to assign each author a character. Collaborate together on plot points and keep each other informed, but really each author should be on their own to draft the scenes in their own character's point of view. This way they can hit the marks, but still have the freedom of discovery.

That was the recurring motif of Ms. Crusie's presentation—the beauty of Discovery. The most important thing we can do as writers is to write. Once we have those words on the page, then we can dig in and search for the nuggets of gold. We might find that we didn't even know what we wanted to say until we've actually said it. Once we have those nuggets in our hands, then we can begin using them as tools to craft deeper, more meaningful characters in truly satisfying stories. These are the stories that only we can write!

New Releases:



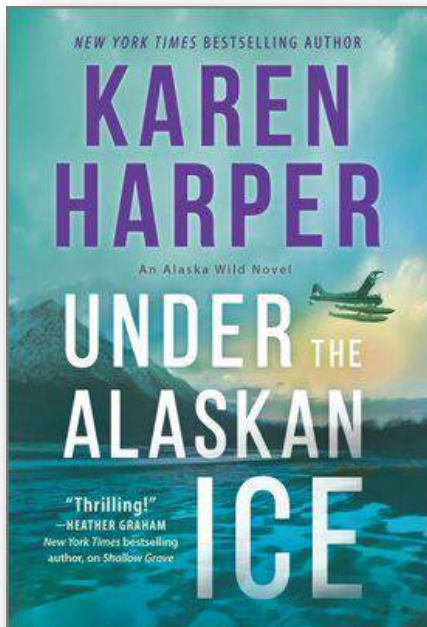
A Stolen Kiss with the Midwife by Juliette Hyland

Dare these best friends...

...risk it all?

Midwife Quinn Davis and Dr. Milo Russell have been friends forever. So why is it now that they're working together things have become...awkward? Quinn can't get Milo out of her mind—and when they share an explosive kiss, she's left questioning everything! Free-spirited Quinn never planned on settling down...and Milo has a life plan of his own. Are they ready to think about a new life—together?

Available Now!



Under the Alaskan Ice by Karen Harper

The truth always surfaces.

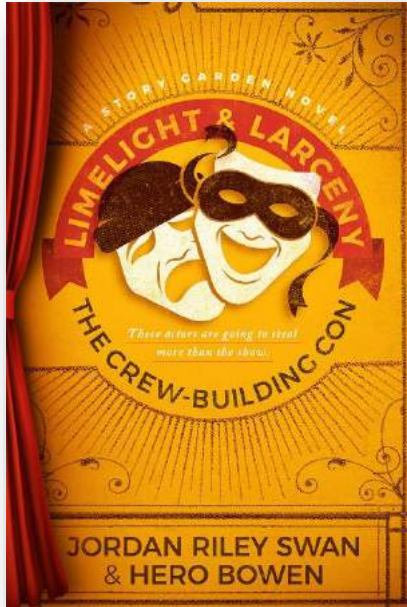
When a small bush plane smashes through the ice at Falls Lake Lodge, it's a chilling reminder of everything Megan Metzler has lost. Three years ago, Meg's pilot husband died in a similar crash, a tragedy Meg and her young son, Chip, have struggled to move on from. Still, Meg does everything she can to assist when Commander Bryce Saylor arrives to investigate, even as working alongside the handsome pilot stirs up painful memories—and an attraction that catches them both off guard.

Bryce knows time is of the essence as he plunges into the frigid water in search of clues. But when vital evidence is destroyed, it soon becomes clear this downed plane was no accident. With someone

tracking them from the woods, Meg and Bryce must race to unravel a mystery as indomitable as the Alaskan wilderness, or they might be the next victims to crash and burn...

Available Now!

This is Karen's final book. She lost her short battle with cancer last year. We will be forever grateful to the many contributions she made to COFW.



Limelight & Larceny: The Crew-Building Con by Jordan Riley Swan and Hero Bown

These actors are going to steal more than the show.

The Tandem Players love their community theater almost as much as they love the sweet old landlady who gave them a home to perform their plays in over the years. But when she passes away, and the will that was to leave the Broadtown Theater to the acting troupe disappears, they don't even have time to mourn their loss. Her son comes in like a wrecking ball, brandishing a twenty-year-old will and an ultimatum: leave, or be buried under the rubble when he has the place demolished.

The ragtag group of actors—a street magician, a former stuntwoman, an IT student, an FX specialist, a leading man, and their stage manager—will have to pool their talents and steal the will back. And they'll have to act fast, because the next wrecking ball that swings in is going to be a real one

Available Now!

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>

December Winner: Shari Heinrich

The winner gets Eddie!

