



March 2019

Issue 3

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.

2019 Leadership

President, Jeanne Estridge

Secretary, Sandra J. Kachurek

Treasurer, Stacy McKitrick

Program Chair, Aleta Dodson

Newsletter Editor, Rachel Dye

Membership Chair, Linda Rice

Social Media Chair, Andrea McConnell

Incentives, Julia Blaine

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

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

- Membership with Romance Writers of America required.

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 Meeting: April 13th, Jill Kemerer

Exquisite Planning: Ditch the Guilt and Get More Done

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.

To verify members are meeting and to stay in touch in between, we use this email:

cofwplot@yahoogroups.com

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, March 16th

**Minutes of the Central Ohio Fiction Writers
Norwich Township Fire Station, Hilliard
March 16th, 2019**

Business Meeting of COFW

I. Welcome. WIP.

II. Approval of the Minutes: The minutes of the February meeting were accepted as posted.

III. Reports:

A. President:

1. Jeanne has been monitoring loops from RWA, passing on the information that is important to COFW.

B. Treasurer:

1. Cash on Hand included \$6973.15 in Checking and \$540.82 in PayPal totaling \$7513.97.

2. Financial Assistance fund contained \$1519.65.

C. Programs:

1. Aleta Dodson presented updates on the Damon Suede workshop on November 2. Thanks to Robin Gianna's connections, COFW put a deposit down for workshop space at the Dublin Rec Center. Fees will be \$75 for COFW members and \$85 for nonmembers. Still in discussion are lunch plans.

2. Aleta presented the 2019 Program Calendar as confirmed. Events to be posted online.:

April 13: Julie Kemerer, "Exquisite Planning: Ditch the Guilt and Get More Done."

May 18: "How to be a Positive and Affirming Contest Judge" and "Portal? What's a Portal? Navigating the new RWA Website." Members are welcomed to bring their worst samples of writing to use in the judging program. No names necessary. See Jeanne.

June 15: Julie Sturgeon, "Pitch to Tule Publishing and Four Career Sabotages Sneaking Up on You."

July 13: Laura Schnebly.

August 17: 2019 RWA National Conference Recap.

September 14. Eliot Parker.

October 19: Alessandro Torre in a marketing workshop video.

November 2: Workshop with Damon Suede.

D. Ignite the Flame.

1. Linda Rice and Shari Heinrich reported that the new website is more mobile friendly for presenting the contest info. The rules, entry form and scoresheet are completed. Now work is being done on getting good judges and confirming guidelines for judges. The links for the contest are currently live except for the entry window and PayPal is not open.

2. One person outside COFW has volunteered to judge 16 entries. All members are asked to participate as judges. Although contest categories no longer exist, judges who favor certain genres, such as historical romance or erotica, are asked to send their name and reading preferences and the number of entries they can handle to Linda or Shari. Discussion followed on developing a Google form for judges. Rachel Dye offered to help.

E. Incentives.

1. Julia Blaine shared a basket of treats with most of the members.

2. Jeanne reminded us that a spreadsheet for daily word counts with earn-able points, presented in the January newsletter by Erin Novotny, is an excellent method of keeping one's writing in the forefront. Counts are posted, so friendly club competition can be established. For example, at the end of February, Rachel Dye earned 464 points and Jeanne 29 points for their word counts. Here's the link: <https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1zVFawQ8oa5V1eTjqgcyaEl-pZLqbDe6-8avOZxg3PDI/edit#gid=2046845186>.

F. Social Media.

1. Andrea McConnell has uploaded the new COFW logo to all media sites. However, the formatting of the logo on Facebook's group page is not satisfying. She is contacting the logo designer for ideas.

2. Publicizing new releases on social media will begin again. An email will inform members of where to go to get the form.

3. Live streaming our business meetings may be of interest to members who cannot make a meeting but are interested in following the agenda. After a discussion, only the business portion would be live streamed and if a visual, only the backs of heads, or audio only. Interaction with comments posted by online listeners can happen, adding a section of the business agenda to addressing the posted comments and questions. Motion made by Andrea McConnell to pursue the use of Live Streaming the business meeting to members, seconded by Rachel Dye. Motion carried.

G. Newsletter.

1. Rachel Dye, editor, said today's program of plotting didn't require a recap. Newsletter items of interest included Harlequin Medical taking proposals in the following two weeks.

2. Robin Gianna, medical romance writer for Harlequin, shared her experiences and observations of presenting a proposal in what is called a Fast Track. She said a medical-based romance for Harlequin should be about 50,000 words; with locations in exotic places, not the US, unless it's Miami or NYC. One-night consequences are popular tropes, and a baby on the cover sells well. The story doesn't have to be in a hospital but it's a challenge otherwise. No doctor-patient plots. Show the external and internal conflicts of medical workers, such as doctors, EMTs, nurses and mid-wives.

IV. Old Business.

A. Digital Classes.

1. So far, 15 people have signed up for Linnea Sinclair's "Inside Out: Crafting Your Character's Internal Conflict," April 1-30. The cut-off number is 20; however, Linnea will extend it for a few more students. Cost is \$25 for COFW, \$30 for RWA only, \$35 for all others.
2. Linnea's class, running in June, is "Pitches and Blurbs and Tags, Oh, My."
3. See info and comment on these classes at #amwriting, #amwritingromance, #COFWevents #romancewriter.

VI. New Business.

A. Education Chair: Jeanne asked that someone lead the way for setting up digital classes for the future, in similarity with the current two by Linnea Sinclair. What classes are people interested in? Erin Novotny volunteered to chair this project and begin developing a plan or schedule as soon as possible.

B. Updating the "Policies and Procedures Manual" (P&PM).

1. Jeanne has begun looking through the P&PM language, last updated in 2016, to see where changes should be made, especially in areas dealing with technology.

C. Proliteracy's Fundraising Challenge.

1. RWA's women's power initiative claims 65% of the illiterate in this country are women. Funds for this project provide women with learning materials to become literate. Top money-raising chapters will be announced during 2019 RWA National Conference, deadline July 23. Does COFW want to donate money as a chapter or individually?
2. The chapter chose to create a Funds for Women's Literacy. At the May meeting, for example, members can bring in nearly new, top-selling books to sell, and in June, sell raffle tickets for baskets.

D. Any other New Business?

1. Given the new COFW logo, new Chapter postcards and banner, and flyers announcing the Damon Suede workshop should be ordered so COFW authors can display them as they attend writing events.

VIII.

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 1:50.

Respectfully submitted,

Sandy

Sandy Kachurek

Works in Progress/Attendance for February 16th

Attendance/WIP for March 16, 2019

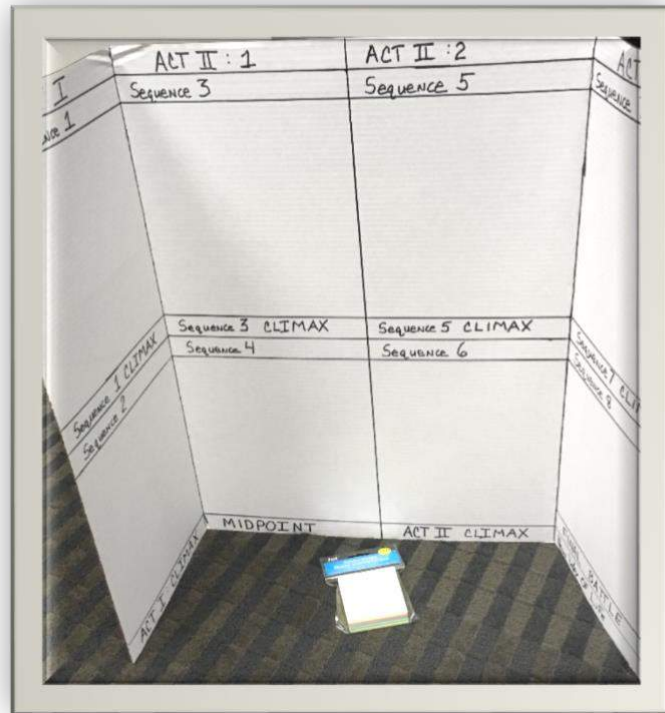
1. Aleta Dodson: recovering from flu; took Alessandro Torre's free seminar; researching venue and costs for Damon Suede workshop, November 2.
2. Erin Novotny: revising *Garza Security* Book 2; querying a second book.
3. Shari Heinrich: revising YA *Queen of Wands*, aiming for beta readers March 17!
4. Robin Gianna: revising *Second Chance for the Surgeon*.
5. Andrea McConnell: struggling to find time to write!
6. Becky Barker: mostly promo for new release; writing blurbs and adjusting formats.
7. Linda Rice: worked on Ignite the Flame contest.
8. Rachel Dye: *The Spy's Unlikely Bride*.
9. Julia Blaine: rejection from Hallmark; considering rewrite.
10. Stacy McKittrick: revising *Biting the Curse*; writing book 9.
11. Jeanne Estridge: *Touched by a Demon*, Book 3.
12. Saralee Etter: "Granny Quest," weird western.
13. Sandy Kachurek: final revision of fantasy novel before submitting.

Meeting Recap for March 16th

Group Brainstorming & Plotting

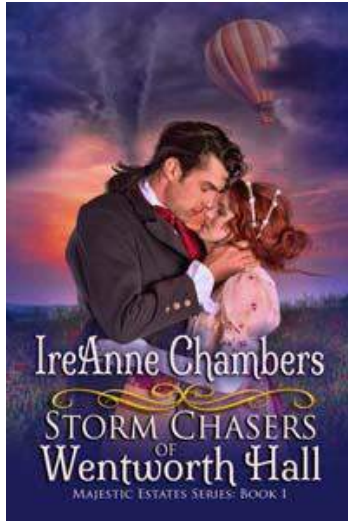
There is no recap for the March 16th meeting. COFW members spent the meeting plotting and brainstorming ideas with each other.

- Plotting Board examples



☆☆☆ New Releases ☆☆☆

Storm Chasers of Wentworth Hall, by IreAnne Chambers



A storm is brewing in Regency England and the first storm chasers are born. Lady Ariana Wentworth devises a storm of her own to avoid an arranged marriage, but when her life is threatened one man comes to the rescue.

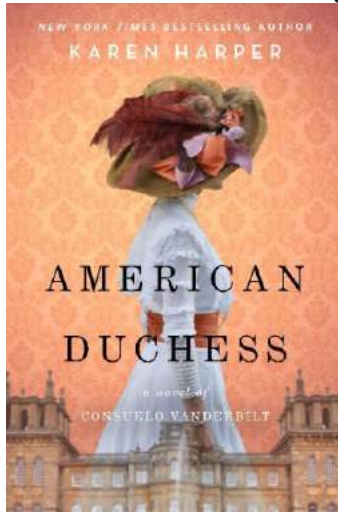
Ariana is not concerned when it comes to the dictates of the day relating to marriage. Her father has not insisted she marry. Until now.

The future Earl of Warwick will make a suitable match according to her father. All is settled between the families although stubborn Ariana refuses to meet her betrothed until the day of their wedding. A chance encounter with the most intriguing man she's ever met may provide a way out, but arranged marriages, calculated

scandals, attempted murder, and family secrets spur Ariana to the one happy ever after she doesn't expect.

Available April 18th!

American Duchess by Karen Harper



Karen Harper's novel AMERICAN DUCHESS has been selected by *Womans Day Magazine* as one of the 10 most anticipated books of 2019. This is the story of Consuelo Vanderbilt and her 'wedding of the century.' She is the forerunner of our favorite media bride, Meghan Markle.

☆☆☆ Ignite the Flame ☆☆☆

2019 Annual Ignite the Flame Contest



A rewarding contest for ANY writer!

We call our contest Ignite the Flame for a reason. We want to see the scene where your couple meets—whether it's for the first time or a reunion after a time apart—and that unforgettable spark of attraction sizzles between them. Whether your characters are ancient nobility or modern-day entrepreneurs, LGBTQ or straight, super stars or high school students—or even not-quite-human—tease us with the moment their romance ignites.

Submit 15 pages of an **unpublished and uncontracted** novel-length manuscript (minimum of 40,000 words) starting **May 1, 2019 through May 31, 2019, 11:59 EDT**.

All writers are welcome, whether unpublished or published!

First prize is a copy edit of your full manuscript, up to 150,000 words, by Enterprise Book Services - a \$300 value.

See cofwevents.org/contest for details.

***Please note, we are looking for judges. If you are available to judge please contact: Linda Rice at lindarice05@gmail.com**

COFW now has goal sheets!!!

Thanks to Erin Novotny & Arianna James for setting this up.

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>

Looking for a way to hit those goals: Did you know that studies have shown you're up to 66% more likely to achieve a goal if you write it down and up to 95%(!) more likely to achieve a goal if you tell someone else what it is and have a deadline by which you need to meet it. List your goals here and Arianna will check in to see if you've hit them: <http://bit.ly/2HJoDNq>

Updating Your RWA Profile Information:

The new RWA website (rwa.org) is actually two different software packages. One is for communicating information about what's going on at RWA. (aka the RWA website). The other is used for chapter portals (We have one of these: cofw.rwa.org) and microsites (We don't yet have one of these). Each of these sites has a spot for profile information for members.

You can update your profile at: www.rwa.org and the forum profiles at: <https://community.rwa.org/update-profile>.

You can also access the profile update page by logging in to rwa.org and selecting "Update Profile" at the top of the page.

1. First update your RWA membership profile.
 - a. Click on the pencil beside the little silhouette.
 - b. In the "change picture" dialogue box, click Select.
 - i. From your computer, choose a picture with a file extension of one of the following:
 - .GIF
 - .JPG
 - .PNG
 - .BMP

Check the picture file's properties and ensure that it's less than 48.83 MB.

- ii. Click Open
 - iii. Click Save & Close
- 2. Click on the "About Me" tab and then click on the little pencils to update each section. Save each section after completing.
- 3. Click on the Preferences tab to update your communication preferences. Be sure to save your changes.
- 4. Review the other tabs to ensure the information is correct. If it's something you don't have access to change, click on Contact RWA at the bottom of the page to send Donna Mathoslah an email.
- 5. Update your RWA Community Profile (You should still have the original tab with the links to both profiles open)
 - a. Click on the little silhouette and upload your picture.
 - i. On this page, you have the option of pulling in a picture from your computer or Facebook or Instagram or Dropbox or a host of other places. Load your picture and save it.
- 6. Update your My Profile information:
 - a. Click on the little pencil next to Bio and share a little about yourself.
 - b. If you've been a finalist or winner in any contests, enter that under Honors and Awards.
 - c. If you belong to other professional organizations, enter the information under Professional Associations.
 - d. Add or update your social media links.
- 7. Some information was loaded from the old website. Verify everything is correct and up-to-date.
- 8. Click on Communities and then choose My Communities. You should see an entry for Chapter: Central Ohio Fiction Writers (along with any other communities you belong to, such as PAN).
 - a. Click on Central Ohio Fiction Writers.
 - b. Click on Settings and set up your preferences for the discussion forum.

As of January 1, 2019, Treasurer's Reports, Meeting Minutes and presentation documentation will be posted in our COFW community on the RWA site.

Reminder: On June 1, the Board will stop posting to the Yahoo loop and we will stop monitoring the Yahoo loop. Please have yourself set up on RWA COFW discussion loop prior to that date.

THE EDITOR'S CORNER - The Only Thing Standing In My Way Is Me

by Leslie Marshman, In Print! Editor

The following article first appeared in the February 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 love to plot. Brainstorming a story problem gets me excited. I also love to edit. Tinkering and tweaking previously written words makes me happy. It's the stuff that comes between brainstorming and tinkering that sometimes makes me want to tear out my hair and rend my garments. You know, the actual writing of all those words.

We can analyze the psychology of it all until the cows come home, but it basically boils down to this: self-doubt, leading to fears that paralyze my mind and fingers. And there are really only two big fears here. Ironically, they're on the opposite ends of the spectrum.

Fear of failure. What if I finish and it sucks. I'll never be as good as I want to be. People will realize I'm a fraud, that I can't really write. I'll be criticized and ridiculed and will have to change my name and drift away from all my writing friends.

Fear of success. What if I finish and it doesn't suck? What if someone actually wants to publish it? Then I'll have to write another one, similar to this one because that's what readers expect. And it has to be at least as good as this one or everyone will say that one sucks. I'll have to deal with editors, agents, deadlines. I'll have to learn about edits, covers, marketing.

What if I make a wrong choice along the way? What if my long hours of writing become mandatory instead of voluntary? What if I lose the joy? The passion? What if I can't keep doing it all? (See fear of failure, above.)

These two fears then lend themselves to a truly amazing array of self-sabotaging behaviors.

Procrastination. The baseboards suddenly need to be dusted. That box of twelve-year-old tax papers must be shredded now. The newsletter article I've been putting off has to be written before I work on my book!

Avoidance. I deserve to watch that Netflix show everyone's been raving about but I haven't seen yet because I've been so busy writing, poor pitiful me. I also deserve to spend more time reading books, lunching with friends, playing with my dog. I shouldn't have to give up everything I love to do in order to write, should I?

Perfection Complex. I sit my butt in that chair, I put my hands on that keyboard, and I start writing. But the word I just typed isn't quite right. There's a better one, but I can't think of it. So I pull up Google on my other screen and do a quick synonym search to find the perfect word.

A couple paragraphs later, I'm not sure which imaginary river should flow into the imaginary lake in my story. I made up the lake, for God's sake. I should be able to make up the river, right? But what if that state has no rivers that flow into natural lakes? I don't have a dam on my lake. Should I? Back to Google, for never-ending research.

As writers, we all know that what we write will never be perfect. But that doesn't stop some of us from striving for it. It's not just in our writing – it applies to other areas of our lives. Again, I won't get into all the psychological mumbo jumbo of it, but it's a thing. Unfortunately, when we inevitably fall short, we beat ourselves up, call ourselves failures and say "I can't do this."

And...we've come full circle. Fear of not being perfect. Fear of failure.

I've come up with a few creative ways to deal with these self-sabotaging behaviors. I reward myself with a show or a book when I meet writing goals. I throw my dog's ball close to the wall when we're playing fetch, and she dusts the baseboards as she slides by. And instead of Googling as I write, I type one particular word in caps when I get stuck. Later, when I get to do the fun editing stuff, I do a search for that word and Google to my heart's content.

I know in my heart that I can accomplish any goal I set for myself. I just need to get out of my own way.

Leslie Marshman writes romantic suspense, using her psychology degree to get inside the heads of her characters. Her Goode Over Evil is the 2017 Charlotte winner, 2017 Molly winner, 2017 Rebecca finalist and 2018 Emily finalist. Leslie is the editor of HBA's In Print! newsletter and contest coordinator for HBA's Judge A Book By Its Cover contest.

Lesliemarshman.com @lesliemarshman

A vintage yellow typewriter sits on a light-colored wooden desk. To its left is a white bowl filled with orange soup and garnished with vegetables. To its right is a blue wristband with a white floral pattern. A person's hand is visible typing on the typewriter's keyboard.

COFW

*Professionals, Writers & Friends Perfecting the
Happily Ever After*