



July, 2018.

Volume XXX. Issue 06.

## **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.

July, 2018/Issue 06/Volume XXX/1

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

**2018 Leadership**

President, Jenessa McRoy <[jenessahl@gmail.com](mailto:jenessahl@gmail.com)>  
Secretary, Susan Heino <[susan\\_gee\\_heino@yahoo.com](mailto:susan_gee_heino@yahoo.com)>  
Treasurer, Jeanne Estridge <[jeanne.estrIDGE.author@gmail.com](mailto:jeanne.estrIDGE.author@gmail.com)>

Program Chair, Aleta Dodson <[aletawrites@hotmail.com](mailto:aletawrites@hotmail.com)>  
Newsletter Editor, Sandra J. Kachurek <[sandrajkachurek@gmail.com](mailto:sandrajkachurek@gmail.com)>  
Membership Chair, Linda Rice <[lindarice05@gmail.com](mailto:lindarice05@gmail.com)>  
Social Media Chair, Andrea McConnell <[fyrefly93@gmail.com](mailto:fyrefly93@gmail.com)>  
Incentives, Julia Blaine <[julmassie@aol.com](mailto: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 Meeting Welcomes  
on July 14  
at Fire Station 83, 4283 Davidson Rd.\*

**\*Note Location Change.**

Robin Yocum

Keeping Motivated and Keep on Writing



Edgar-nominated author Robin Yocum and former *Columbus Dispatch* investigative reporter will share his tips on overcoming impediments that keep you from writing your first novel or staying on track with your current novel.

Robin will teach you his method for not only starting a novel, but also for maintaining the momentum. This will include discussion on goal-setting, creating a beginning and ending, and the tricks that will keep you working to completion. Robin likes his workshops to be interactive and will also share experiences of his reporting days.

Robin Yocum is known for his fiction set in the Ohio River Valley. His latest book, *A Perfect Shot*, was released in April 2018. He is the author of two non-fiction books, and four additional works of fiction: *A Welcome Murder*, *A Brilliant Death*, *The Essay*, and *Favorite Sons*, which was named the 2011 Book of the Year for Mystery/Suspense by USA Book News. He is Literary Advisor for the Thurber House.

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. 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](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](mailto:cofwplot@yahoogroups.com)

If you have questions, contact:

Andrea McConnell: [fyrefly93@gmail.com](mailto:fyrefly93@gmail.com)

Saralee Etter: [saralee\\_etter@yahoo.com](mailto: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.*

☆ *Gina Smith*: As Rochelle Bradley, Gina had her first author's table.

☆ *Jeanne Estridge and Susan Heino*: Completed their first emailed newsletter to their readers.

☆ *Rachel Dye*: Recent response from Harlequin regarding her MSS was they loved her author voice.

# **Minutes, Treasury Report, Attendance for June 16, 2018**

## **Norwich Township Building, Hilliard**

Submitted by Susan Gee Heino, Secretary

President Jenessa McRoy convened the meeting at 12:30 p.m. There were 18 members and three visitors. Introductions were made and Works in Progress sheet was distributed.

### **Board Business**

**Code of Conduct:** RWA has issued a Code of Conduct and this has been added to National Bylaws. COFW will need to vote to accept this if we intend to continue as a chapter of RWA. We do intend to continue, so we will have an online vote soon and incorporate this Code into our chapter's bylaws.

**Next Board Meeting:** Our next COFW Board Meeting will be held on July 14, one hour before the regular meeting.

### **Incentives**

Julia Blaine offered incentives. Many members had good news to share, of contest wins, new releases, and completions of projects. Everyone is encouraged to keep writing, keep submitting, and keep letting COFW know of your milestones—good news as well as bad news—so we can all cheer and support each other.

### **Newsletter Update**

Sandy Kachurek reminded everyone to send information to be included in the newsletter. COFW pays \$15 for articles of relevance to our membership. Julia Blain volunteered to write the recap of today's speaker.

### **Treasurer's Report**

Jeanne Estridge presented the treasurer's report. Total cash is \$8601.32 and our Financial Assistance Fund contains \$1564.56.



## **Programs Update**

Anyone who is going to the RWA National Convention is asked to please attend our August meeting (August 14) to give a recap of your experience at the event. Many of us cannot attend and really look forward to hearing from those who did. If you will attend, please contact Aleta Dodson so that she can coordinate the reports.

Plans are underway for an exciting all-day event in November! In conjunction with National Novel Writing Month, COFW will be hosting Allie Pleiter who will present her “Chunky Writing Method” at the Clintonville Women’s Club. The day will include workshop, lunch and writing time. Cost will be \$45 for COFW members, and \$49 for non-members.

Our speaker for the July 14<sup>th</sup> meeting will be Robin Yocum, an Edgar-nominated author and journalist. NOTE: due to the Franklin County Fair, our meeting will be held at an alternate location: Fire Station 83, 4283 Davidson Road, Hilliard, Ohio.

## **Contest**

Kimberly Beckett is still working on revamping our annual contest. She appreciates the suggestions and documents that have been sent to her.

## **Further Questions**

Member Linda Rice asked for recommendations of resources she can use to find information on the marketplace. She has been editing a memoir and soon plans to begin searching for a publisher. Several members had suggestions, including searching the RWA database for publisher information, as well as visiting a local library to speak with a reference librarian regarding the Writers Market or current comparable publication.

Meeting adjourned at 1:15 p.m. to prepare for our speaker, Danielle Barclay, publicist.

## Attendance and Works in Progress

01. Aleta Dodson: working on Nashville Novella Trilogy; working on November 10 workshop featuring Allie Pleiter "Chunky Method" with an afternoon of NaNoWriMo writing.
02. Stacy McKittrick: working on *In Love With a Vampire*.
03. Lauren Connolly: editing *You Only Need One* and writing *When You Lose One*.
04. Donna MacMeans: preparing to go to Alaska for ten days; then Denver for ten days. Whew! Working on *To Bait a Rake*.
05. Janice Beckett: writing Book 2 of *Horses Heal Hearts* series.
06. Sandy Kachurek: writing a new fantasy short story.
07. Anne Marie Lutz (guest): writing a new fantasy and trying for 1000 words a day.
08. Pam Johnston (guest): self-help, *Tools to Manage Anxiety*.
09. Susan Gee Heino: editing and rewriting the opening chapters of *Rogue of the Greenwood*, plus another monthly short story for her newsletter.
10. Jenessa McRoy: moving!
11. Julia Blaine: researching the Napoleonic War in Spain for next novel, *Abducted Duke*. *Adrian's Pearl* was published by SoulMate.
12. Karin Shah: launching a new pseudonym in a new genre. Gage Lively will be writing m/m romance; also still working on Book 6 of the Chimera series.

13. Rochelle Bradley: editing Book 2 in her Fortuna, TX series.
14. Rachel Dye w/a Juliette Hyland: finishing *Marked by Fae*; editing *Finding His Way Home*.
15. Saralee Etter: writing *Her Wild Irish Rogue* and editing a friend's book.
16. Danielle Barclay: guest speaker.
17. Kris Branch (guest): working on chapter 13 of book 3 of a paranormal series.
18. Jeanne Estridge: *Girl's Best Friend* contemporary.
19. Linda Rice: editing a great book!
20. Marcia James: writing a contemporary romance Christmas story for a fall anthology.
21. Shari Heinrich: two-thirds through the third draft of *Queen of Wands*.



***Members and guests take notes and follow handouts by guest Danielle Barclay on marketing and publicity ideas.***

# **Danielle Barclay: Promoting Authors and Their Books**

Recap by Julia Blaine

Do you know your computer's quirks better than you know your husband's family?

Is your yard a texture of golden flowers and delicate brown ballerinas on slender stems?

Does the pizza delivery man have your name and address memorized?

How many hours a day do you spend writing? How are your sales?

Most of us want to sell more books.

Writers are, on the whole, self-employed, spending hours cranking out stories and novels. If we spend our time writing, who is actually selling our books?

[Danielle Barclay](#) can help. Barclay Publicity, based in Columbus, offers author publicity and book promotion, complete social media brand management, signing events, media outreach, advertising strategies, newsletter management and other services for busy writers.

At the June COFW meeting, Danielle reminded us that every author must develop some kind of digital presence to be successful in the publishing marketplace. Few authors, she reports, do it well. Her company teaches fundamental strategies and tactics needed to build a thriving online persona where readers want to join you in creating something larger than yourself.

Your author brand is what readers, agents, and publishers discover about your author personality while reading your work or visiting your website. It lets them know what to expect from you and your writing. If your author brand isn't distinctive and apparent immediately they'll move on to someone else.

If you have an author brand and a personal brand, you should have a filter. Keep your personal information and author or book information separate.

Danielle reminded us that you actually own certain marketing tools: your website, your blog and your newsletter. You do not own all the other social media platforms, such as Facebook and Twitter. Rules can change on social media and some platforms can shut down. It's important to manage what you do own.



COFW members had many questions about websites.

Make sure your website is accessible, mobile-friendly and easy to search. Danielle suggests using FourSquare if you create your own but also suggests WIX, Wordpress or Weebly. Tap into Google analytics. Enter header/footer metadata when building your site. [This is part of Google analytics – don't forget to do it.]

Integrate your website, blog, social media, newsletter and book pages in one place. Don't make your readers click too often. Use a responsive design that automatically moves the reader. Create a trail, such as >info >buy.

You can connect to popular blogs like BookBub. This site will charge you to nominate a book for sale. BookBub likes older paranormal books but is interested in all genres.

Have a book landing page on your website rather than on Amazon Author Central. Your website can have a link to Amazon Author Central.

Through your website, readers subscribe to your website and may receive

your blog or newsletter, if they wish. Give readers a choice. Periodically, ask your subscribers as to their preferences. That way you can cull your mailing list and only keep contact with genuine readers.

In a poll, authors discovered only about 30% of subscribers actually open a newsletter. Most do not read a complete blog. Send out newsletters only to promote a new book or at a special time. Reward your subscribers. Use exclusive giveaways.

Use Mailchimp or MailerLite. Both of these are GDPR compliant. GDPR means the individual receiving your mail must agree to receive it. Otherwise your mailing will be treated as SPAM.

Be sure your newsletter is professional-looking. You can jump-start your newsletter by using prizes, including partial content of new releases, special stories just for subscribers or use teasers.

Convert subscribers into readers.

Content Marketing is a Push and Pull strategy. *Push* information out to social media platforms from your website, blog or newsletter. *Pull* readers to your owned assets from your FB page, Twitter, Instagram and Pinterest or other social media platforms.

Use your blog! Writing is a natural way for authors to communicate. Blogs can be short.

In your blog, refer readers *to* social media. Pull readers to your blog *from* social media. Host other authors. Offer prizes.

Danielle offered these suggestions for book review sites: *Smart Bitches/Trashy Books*, *Guilty Pleasures* or *I Smell Sheep*, among others. Look at them. Goodreads offers an author program to promote your book. You must join Goodreads. *Choosy Bookworm* is a good site for new releases.

Online readers may join *RacyReaders* on FB. They meet once a month on Tuesdays at 7 p.m.

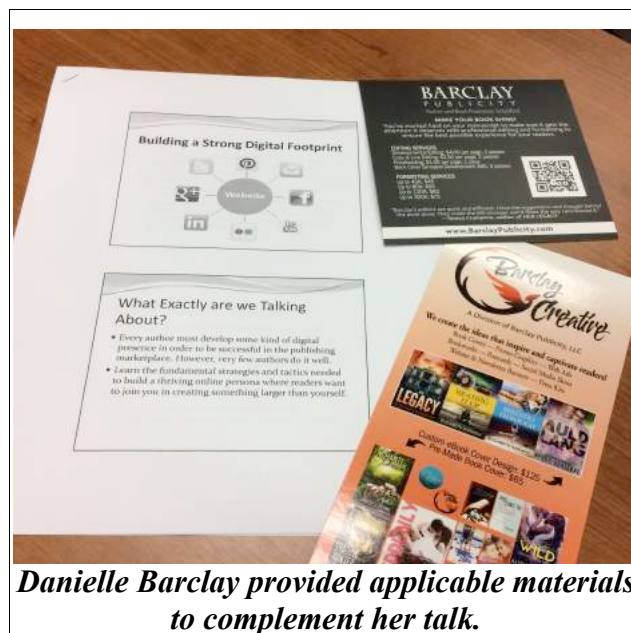
Amazon Marketing Service offers a no-risk platform. You only pay a percentage of the book's costs should someone click on your book.

Conventions provide authors with opportunities in person and otherwise. You can send swag to faraway locations. If your book is a historical, for example, don't forget to connect with historical organizations. Look for connections.

Selling in person, whether at a convention or in another location, gives you the chance to talk to readers. All your conversations do not need to be about your books. Make friends.

If you can't do all this yourself, contact [Barclay Publicity](http://BarclayPublicity.com). Danielle has been a part of the industry and is comfortable wearing many hats. She's aware of authors' situations and wants to work with you.

**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.



*Danielle Barclay provided applicable materials to complement her talk.*

# The Day the Music Died

By P.F. Karlin

*The following article first appeared in the June 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'm sitting here trying to figure out what to write and I'm drawing a blank.

I've looked at a few newsletters from other chapters that have members who write articles every month and I'm awestruck asking, "How the heck do they do it?"

I don't have the answer to the question.

Maybe I'm just not that creative? But as the title of this article suggests, is today the day the music died? I took the line from a song written by Don McLean in 1971 called *American Pie*.

Unlike the song, this article will have no political voice. Instead, I'll take a different angle.

What happens when the music dies for you and your characters?

For over three years, I have been in a slump. I've been told it happens to all writers. I've had personal reasons that I can give as an excuse. I wrote the first two books in a saga and I haven't been able to complete the third book.

In short, the excitement died. Maybe it's my personality putting up road blocks. I do tend to get bored easily and I sometimes have to fight to stay on track. However, I don't think that is the entire cause of my lack of interest.

My problem stems more from falling out of love with my characters.

My first book was started in 2012 and published in 2014 and the second in 2015. I laid the ground work for the third with over 35,000 words placed on the page immediately after the second publication. I even have the end written.

Then my desire died as a series of issues entered my life, knocking the wind out of my sails so to speak.



Recently, I picked up my first book and started reading. Not only have I noticed all the newbie mistakes, and I credit my local RWA chapters for giving me the insight to notice them, but most of all I'm falling in love.

I'm finding myself getting excited about the world my characters thrive in, the world I helped build. And I'm just taking the time to get to know them all over again.

It's like seeing old friends I haven't seen in years. And yes, they are talking to me and telling me what they want because we have a lot of catching up to do.

As I'm renewing my friendship with my characters, I find ideas for the third book and the last of the saga forming into a stronger storyline.

That spark I had when writing the first book has started glowing a bit brighter. Now, I have to figure out what I have to do to ignite it into a flame.

One thing I know works. I find I am the most productive when I can just run away and hide. No, I really literally run away and hide. I have a place, not far from a lake which is nestled in the woods, where I can only be reached by cell phone or email. Since not many people have my cell number, I get very few calls.

Up there I can unplug and be in full control of who enters into my realm of creativity. In the past few months I have found myself running to my refuge and falling in love more frequently. This sounds like the start of another plot line.

Okay, running and hiding for days works for me, but not everyone can just leave. There are others in our lives we are responsible for and there's stuff like work that can get in the way of our writing.

However, there is something we all can do, we can unplug. I recently sat in on one of our chapter speaker sessions and the author giving the talk made the statement that she unplugs. A light bulb went off because I could relate to what she said.

I find when I'm alone and not disturbed by outside influences, and don't let anyone in except my characters, I'm more creative. In other words, I turn off all forms of outside communication. I'm finding this method much less

expensive than running and hiding.

Seasoned writers have done this for years so, for them, this is old news. I used to be one of those writers who spent endless hours at the computer. That is until the music died.

The fight back has not been easy, but talking to my characters is helping me extend their lives. So, the next time your fingers just can't seem to find the right keys to make those award-winning sentences, try unplugging and listening.

There may be someone in your head waiting to tell you a story.

**Guest Writer:** Karen Pugh, writing as P.F. 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. <http://pfkarlin.com/>