



December, 2017.

Volume XXIX. Issue 11.

Welcome to Central Ohio Fiction Writers

Brainstorming story possibilities and celebrating COFW membership carried throughout the November members' meeting and the December holiday party at the home of member Robin Gianna. The events wrapped up a successful year for COFW in which membership increased by ten to total 66. Welcome again, Janice Beckett, Anne Chlovechok, Rachel Dye, Eva Greenleigh, Katey Hawthorne, Shari Heinrich, Courtney Hilbert, Maddie James, Linda Munn and Erin Novotny.

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COFW 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.

Brainstorming Story Ideas and Story Problem Solutions



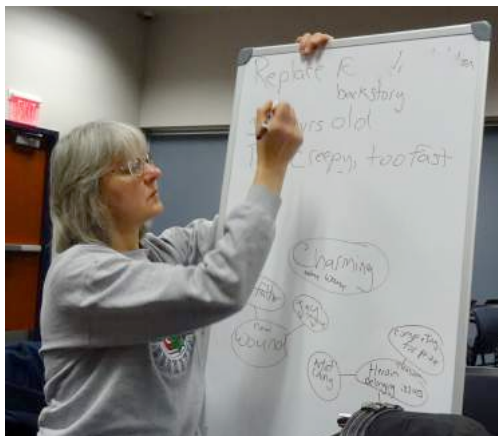
Margaret Crowley and Robin Gianna explain Brainstorming. (Photo by Shari Heinrich)

November's meeting gave members an opportunity to share works in progress and receive feedback from their group. Whether looking for new ideas, tackling a plot, character or conflict problem, everyone had a chance to participate in the process.

Before members separated into groups, Margaret



Feedback from group members is invaluable as each writer perfects her storytelling.



Shari Heinrich helps out a writer by keeping track of group input on a white board..

Crowley and Robin Gianna explained how Brainstorming worked and the application of white boards and cameras to capture each group's ideas for the writer to take home and work over herself.

The experience also gave members a chance to talk with each other, meet someone new, and just share what it means to be a romance writer among fellow writers.

Minutes for November 18, 2017, Norwich Township Building

At 12:35, President Jenessa McRoy welcomed members and guests and called the meeting to order.

With no opposition and with a quorum in place, a motion passed to accept the following Board Members for 2018:

President: Jenessa McRoy.

Treasurer: Jeanne Estridge.

Secretary: Susan Heino.

Member of the Year poll is live on RWA.org. Please vote before the membership holiday party on December 2.

Julia Blaine offered incentives, recipients included: Shari Heinrich for finishing the first draft of her third novel, for editing book two, and for receiving a final rejection for her first book, *River Daughter*. Robin Gianna has a new release, *The Spanish Duke's Holiday Proposal* and received a pin from RWA for publishing her tenth book. Sandy Kachurek ran a writers' retreat for her writing group. Julia Blaine finished her edits and announced her book would be out on November 29. When she mentioned it on Facebook, she got a lot of response.

Robin moved to approve the minutes from October, which Stacy McKitrick seconded and the members approved.

Treasurer Stacy shared the Treasurer's Report: Checking: \$5,186.42; PayPal: \$4191.64; and Financial Assistance Savings Account: \$1,564.49. Linda Rice asked for a line item detail, which Stacy provided.

Linda presented a final update for October's workshop by Larry Brooks. She said revenues and expenses came out basically even, and half the attendees were non-members. Linda will provide Jeanne with a list of attendees, and Jeanne will send them a survey regarding their responses to the workshop.

Open Discussion: Future of the Chapter

*Should COFW be more of a writing group?

*Ignite the Flame Contest:

No contest chair has stepped up, and at this point, COFW is not planning a contest for 2018. In 2017, the contest brought in \$700 and in 2016, \$2,000.

A committee should form to revamp the contest, and Becky Baker volunteered to participate on such a committee.

Eva Greenleigh suggested asking for member input on the loop before organizing a committee, and Jenessa will post a request for input.

A review of RWA guidelines is necessary before significant changes are made.

Becky suggested having the contest open to self-published authors. A reminder was made that the current contest is open to any unpublished manuscript.

Eva suggested perhaps offering prize money instead of a work being seen by an agent or editor.

***Workshop**

Linda suggested having multiple speakers and an agent and/or editor, but doing so would require more planning help.

New Business

Jenessa would like to see COFW step away from bigger workshops and stay with smaller, single-speaker events.

Robin announced a Readers Event at the Tremont Library in Upper Arlington on Saturday, January 20, 2018. She will put the info on the loop and notify Aleta Dodson to promote it on social media. Last year, COFW had a table and should have a table again in January.

Robin announced the COFW table banner was lost at the Columbus Library during the Laurie Schnebly event. Linda suggested putting on the loop whether anyone has it or has seen it. If not, the banner will need to be replaced.

Kris Branch has offered to organize another weekend retreat for 2018. Eva said she would like to see one and discussion included when Kris would be available.



Without further questions, the meeting adjourned at 1:35.

COFW Secretary Jeanne Oates Estridge writes paranormal romance she describes as "dark, snarky and happy every after." Her first novel *The Demon Always Wins* won the RWA® Golden Heart® in 2015 and will be released in September 2018.

Attendance and Works in Progress for November 2017

Jeanne Estridge: *The Demon's in the Details*.

Stacy McKittrick: Still decided what to write.

Shari Heinrich: *D2 Begins*, *Solve for X* (YA).

Becky Barker: Working on cover art and updating files for re-issue in 2018.

Julia Blaine: Finished final edits on *Adrian's Pearl* to come out November 29.

Linda Rice: Still working on plot.

Eva Greenleigh: Editing a YA manuscript.

Robin Gianna: Working on a new medical romance.

Sandy Kachurek: Book 2 of my series.

Jenessa McRoy: Schoolwork!

Like a Holiday Present, COFW Wraps Up the Year With A Party



As the afternoon sun washes the room with light, members attending the COFW holiday party at Robin Gianna's home pose for the last photo of the year.

Thanks to the hospitality of member Robin Gianna who opened up her home to us, COFW members celebrated the holiday season and a year of meetings and workshops by gathering together for conversation and food.



Sandy Kachurek, Stacy McKittrick, Robin Gianna, Sheri Adkins, Shari Heinrich, Julia Blaine, Andrea McConnell, Linda Rice and Jeanne Estridge enjoy their moment as Member of the Year nominees.

COFW Members of the Year nominees were awarded pink roses. The winners, and there was a three-way tie, were also given a necklace and a jewelry box.

Congratulations to Sheri Adkins, Sandy Kachurek and Stacy McKitrick for their efforts to make COFW a great RWA Chapter.



Congratulations to Members of the Year, Stacy McKitrick, Sheri Adkins and Sandy Kachurek for their efforts.

COFW 2018 Membership Renewal \$25 Through January 31, 2018

The renewal process is easy. The pricing is simple.

Members renewing their COFW dues by January 31, 2018, pay \$25.

Whether using a credit card or check, go to this link first:

<http://www.cofwevents.org/membership>

You'll be taken to RWA's website and through the process. This is a must.

If paying by check, there's a box to tick for that on the form on RWA's site. After filing the form with RWA (and COFW), write out your check, payable to COFW, and mail it to this address
Postmarked: January 31, 2018:

COFW
P.O. Box 24254
Dayton, OH 45424

After January 31, the cost for dues is \$30.

The It Girls

A Recent Release

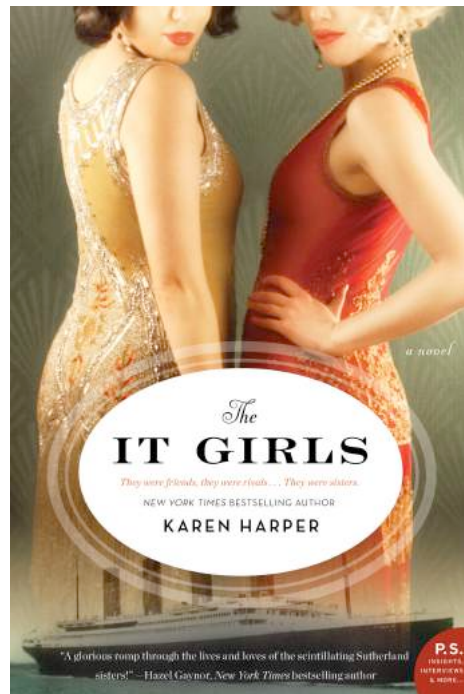
by Karen Harper

The real life Sutherland sisters turned their staid Victorian/Edwardian world upside down.

Elinor wrote romances, including one that was banned because the lovers were not married! She also wrote screenplays for early Hollywood.

Lucille designed silky lingerie to replace corsets and sailed on the *Titanic*.

Both blazed the way for strong women of their day and future.



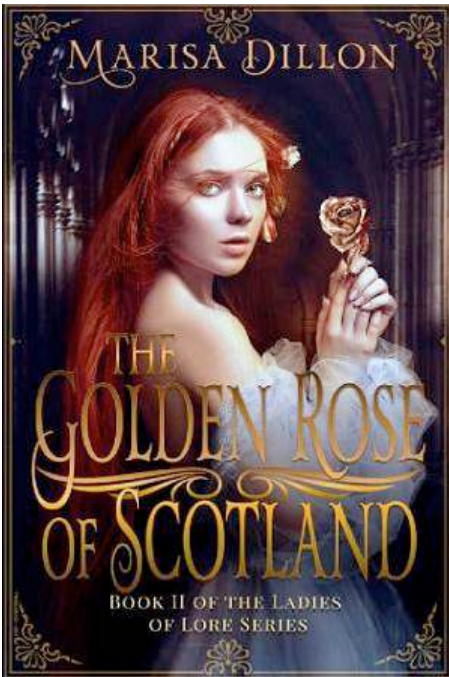
A founding member of COFW, Karen Harper has been there from the start. She was first published in 1982. "Travel and family demands get in the way of attending meetings sometimes, but it's great to still have some of the original friends over the years. Yet, new people and new ideas are also the bedrock of COFW."

A *New York Times* and *USA Today* best-selling author, Karen is a former college English instructor (The Ohio State University) and high school literature and writing teacher.

A lifelong Ohioan, Karen and her husband Don divide their time between the midwest and the southeast; both locations she has used in her books.

In addition to her American settings, Karen loves the British Isles, where her Scottish and English roots run deep, and where she has set many of her historical Tudor-era mysteries and her historical novels about real and dynamic British women.

<http://karenharperauthor.com/>



The Golden Rose of Scotland

New Release by Marisa Dillon

When poisonings are an everyday occurrence, healer Rosalyn Macpherson must be ready with an antidote. Unless it's for the English Lord who means to claim her clan's Highland castle.

What's in a name? Everything, for Lord Lachlan de Leverton, a charismatic English aristocrat. He'll break the law to sever his ties to his notorious family. But first, he must secure the deed to Fyvie Castle before the feisty Scottish lass wins it.

Deception in Tudor Times. Will love prevail?

Born in Norway, **Marisa Dillon** was raised in the States and became a U.S. Citizen when her Norwegian father became naturalized. Her maternal Italian grandfather, who immigrated to America, gave her the other half of her international roots.

Growing up, Marisa was always writing stories and now that she's all grown up, Soul Mate Publishing has given her a way to share them. With a degree in journalism, Marisa spent many years writing for the television industry. As an award-winning producer/director/marketer, she has worked on commercial production, show creation, product branding and social media.



About being a COFW Member: "The path to publication would not have been possible for me without the support and guidance of COFW and its members. From the very beginning, I was welcomed and encouraged. Now, years later, I strive to nurture others in the same spirit. Many thanks to all my friends in COFW!"

<http://marisadillon.com>

[Facebook.com/pages/Marisa-Dillon](https://www.facebook.com/Marisa-Dillon)

[Twitter.com/marisadillon](https://twitter.com/marisadillon)

New Member Maddie James: Looking Forward to Writing as a Day Job Again

Q: What is your name and what names are you writing under?

A: My legal name is Kim Jacobs, and I write a bit of non-fiction under that name. I write as Maddie James and Sophie Jacobs, and I write from Holland, Ohio.

Q: How did you hear about COFW and why join?

A: I've been an RWA member since 1989, and I've been aware of the various chapters in the region for a long time. I remembered that COFW always puts on some great workshops.

I joined because I recently moved back to my hometown in Ohio after living in Kentucky for 43 years. My KY chapter folded several years ago. I was active in that chapter for a long time, and I missed the camaraderie of the group. I thought I'd seek out a new RWA chapter.



Q: What are your favorite genres in which to write?

A: I have a difficulty naming favorites of anything! Generally, my favorite is what I'm writing right now, which is contemporary romance.

Q: What is your favorite writing regimen?

A: Up at 5 a.m. Coffee, laptop and afghan. Write until 7 a.m. Every. Day.

Q: Where do you like to write?

A: I work from home for the day job, so I don't write in a writing space. I write each morning in my favorite chair in my living room with my feet up, TV off, dog generally snoozing beside me.

Q: What/who inspires you to write?

A: Good question. I've been writing so long, it's good to reflect on that. I think the answer is that the inspiration comes from somewhere inside me. If I'm not intrinsically motivated to write, I won't. Of course, getting a good review or a positive note from a reader is nice--but basically, I'm inspired to tell the story I want to tell and take that journey to the words, "The End."

Q: What one writing goal do you hope to achieve?

A: I'm creating/recreating a contemporary romance series with rewrites of older books (updated and additional chapters) and a few new stories along the way. It's a 20+ book series. I released the first book in October, and it's my goal to release one book a month in this series until they are all used up in the marketplace. Yes, lofty.

Q: Who's your favorite author?

A: Favorites again! Difficult. It changes over time. Sandra Brown used to be my go-to author. Anita Shreve and Elin Hilderbrand are two I love.

Q: What is your favorite book?

A: *Gone With the Wind* by Margaret Mitchell hooked me on romance in the 5th grade.

Q: What can you say about yourself personally?

A: I have two adult children who live in Kentucky, both in their 30s with children--five grandchildren who range in age from 2 to 13. I have a significant other who is the love of my life.

By day I work as a Senior Director for the National Center for Families Learning, a Louisville non-profit with a mission statement that claims we work to eradicate poverty through education solutions for families. I'm over professional development, publications, and education content for digital properties, such as Wonderopolis.

I am a creative person by nature, and I'm looking forward to day-job retirement in a year or so, so that I can pursue more artsy/craftsy projects, such as painting, photography, upcycling furniture, etc.

Q: What else would you like COFW members to know about you?

A: I started out traditionally published in 1996. It took ten years of writing and persistence to get that first book published. It was a different world back then. Since that time, I've run the gamut of NY, small press and indie publishing, experiencing the publishing world from many angles.

I owned a small publishing house for six years before changes in the industry (aka Kindle Unlimited) forced me to close the doors. It was a great learning experience for me and I honed a lot of skills just running that company, including book formatting, cover art, even accounting.

I indie publish all my books today. That doesn't mean I will forever because, if I've learned anything in 20+ years of publishing and 30+ years of writing, nothing in this industry is constant. The past couple years for me have been challenging, and I'm very much looking forward to retirement when my writing can be my day job again.

www.maddiejames.com

www.sophiejacobs.com

Twitter -- [@maddiejames](https://twitter.com/maddiejames)

Facebook -- <https://www.facebook.com/maddiejames1>

<https://www.facebook.com/MJNovelist/>

<https://www.facebook.com/sophiejacobsauthor/>

New Member Linda B. Munn

Writing As Herself

Q: How did you hear about COFW and why join?

A: I heard about COFW on the Internet. I was looking for a group of diverse writers. I've been to two meetings and liked the way they were run. They were very business-like.

Q: What are your favorite genres in which to write?

A: Historical, science fiction, paranormal, romance, contemporary.

Q: What is your favorite writing regimen?

A: Write first in a paper notebook. Input on the computer. I do this as I go along writing it. Once the novel is inputted completely, I print it out. Then I edit, edit, edit.

Q: Where do you like to write?

A: Usually at home at my desk. (I have two desks, each in a separate room.) Or at a park or a restaurant, if need be.

Q: What/who inspires you to write?

A: A dream, a news item, or just a thought of "what if."

Q: What one writing goal do you hope to achieve?

A: Get a novel published. Get a novel making money.

Q: Who's your favorite author?

A: The Bible, *Little Women* and *Jo's Boys* by Louisa May Alcott and *Where the Red Fern Grows* by Wilson Rawls.

Q: What are you reading now?

A: *Sacajawea* and *Bewitching You* by Viola Estrella. One is paperback and the other is on my Kindle.

Q: What can you say about yourself personally?

A: I'm a widow. I have two natural born daughters and two stepdaughters. I have ten grandchildren and seven great grandchildren (Boy, am I old!). I'm retired from Nationwide Insurance and IBM. I crochet, knot, needlepoint, paint and dabble with music. I have a weird sense of humor.



Q: What else would you like COFW members to know about you?

A: I had been writing poetry and children's stories when I was a teenager, then I progressed to novels. I'm not too hot of a short story writer, and I cannot write a mystery to save my soul. I have independently published five novels: *Snow Flower*, *H.A.L.*, *Hawk*, *Hear Me Roar* and *Tiarra*.

<https://www.facebook.com/LindaBordenMunn/>

<http://www.lbmunns.webs.com/>

<https://twitter.com/EYEROCK70>

Join COFW Members for Monthly Brainstorming Sessions in Reynoldsburg

Fiction Plotting with COFW Members

~First Wednesdays, 10 a.m.

~Panera Bread, 2374 Taylor Square Drive, Reynoldsburg, 43068.

~Sharing and discussing plots. Giving constructive advice on improvements.

~Between meetings, attendees stay in touch and ask questions via

cofwplot@yahoogroups.com

Financial Aid Is Available for COFW Events, Dues

1. COFW maintains a fund to be used by qualified applicants for the payment COFW Chapter Workshops, Conferences, other events or COFW membership dues.
2. Funding is obtained from member donations and is kept separate from RWA chapter funds.
3. To qualify for an award from the fund, an applicant must be a member of COFW for one full calendar year prior to applying. The applicant will submit the required form stating their need for assistance to the Chapter President. The letter shall contain a statement of the applicant's financial need as well as a description of the applicant's serious pursuit of a writing career.
4. An individual needing financial assistance may be awarded up to \$75.00 from the fund once every three calendar years.
5. Funds are to be distributed by the Board on a first-come, first-served basis; "first" being defined as the first applicant to submit a letter to the Board following the guidelines.
6. Funds shall be disbursed only to the extent there are available funds and qualified applicants. There shall be no limit to the number of applicants who receive funds in any year.
- 7. Requests will be reviewed by the Board President and Treasurer and are confidential.**

Congratulations, 2018 COFW Leadership

Executive Board

President: Jenessa McRoy

Secretary: Susan Heino

Treasurer: Jeanne Estridge

Committees

Programs Chair: Aleta Dodson

Newsletter Editor: Sandra J Kachurek

Membership Chair: Linda Rice

Social Media Chair: Andrea McConnell

Incentives: Julia Blaine

Central Ohio Fiction Writers

P.O. Box 24254

Dayton, OH 45424

<https://twitter.com/COFWriters>

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

Meeting Days:

The first "teen" Saturday of the month.

Renewal of Dues:

Renewals Before January 31: \$25. After January 31: \$30.

Thank You, 2017 COFW Leadership



President Jenessa McRoy

Executive Board

President: [Jenessa McRoy](mailto:jenessah1@gmail.com) (jenessah1@gmail.com)

Secretary: [Jeanne Estridge](mailto:jeanne.estridge.author@gmail.com)
(jeanne.estridge.author@gmail.com)

Treasurer: [Stacy McKitrick](mailto:semckitrick@aol.com) (semckitrick@aol.com)

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Newsletter Editor: [Sandra J Kachurek](mailto:sandrajkachurek@gmail.com) (sandrajkachurek@gmail.com)

Membership Chair: [Linda Rice](mailto:lindarice05@gmail.com) (lindarice05@gmail.com)

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

Incentives: [Julia Blaine](mailto:julmassie@aol.com) (julmassie@aol.com)

Ignite the Flame Contest Coordinators

[Nancy White](mailto:nancywhite0529@gmail.com) (nancywhite0529@gmail.com)

[Jane Conner](mailto:djconner@earthlink.net) (djconner@earthlink.net)