



June 2019

Issue 6

Welcome to Central Ohio Fiction Writers Newsletter

Contents

1. COFW Basics: Contact and Meeting Info. Dues. Media Connections
2. 2019 COFW Program:
3. COFW Fiction Plotters
4. Minutes for June 15th
5. WIP/Attendance for June 15th
6. New Releases
7. Ignite the Flame Contest
8. Spotlight Corner
9. COFW Goal Sheets
10. Updating Your RWA Profile
11. The Danger of Labels by Patty Blount

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 McKittrick

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: July 13th

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, June 15th

Minutes of the Central Ohio Fiction Writers
Norwich Township Fire Station, Hilliard
June 15th, 2019

I. Welcome. WIP.

II. Minutes, Secretary Sandy Kachurek.

The minutes of the May 18, 2019 meeting were accepted as posted.

III. Reports:

A. President Jeanne Estridge.

1. As of June 1, COFW stopped using Yahoo Groups. RWA Forums will be the site for information and conversation exchanges.
2. Much gratitude to Stacy McKittrick who incorporated COFW rules and practices into the P&PM, *Policies and Procedures Manual* template, provided by RWA. The updated manual has been posted in the RWA Forums Library.
3. The two plotting groups, East and West, continue to meet when members are available. Plotters East meet the first Wednesday of the month at Panera in Reynoldsburg. Plotters West meet the second Monday of the month at 6:30 PM at Panera in Huber Heights.

B. Treasurer Stacy McKittrick.

1. Cash on Hand: Checking: \$6663.19. PayPal: \$1525.98. Financial Assistance: \$1519.68.
2. Current Membership: 49.
3. The past two online classes, a first for COFW, have brought in more money than expected.

C. Programs, Aleta Dodson.

1. July's program will be held at the smaller firehouse, Fire Station 83, at 4283 Davidson Road in Hilliard 43026 with Laura Schnebly.
2. If you are attending 2019RWA National, please let Aleta know which session you'd like to recap during the COFW meeting on August 17.
3. The special guest for September 14, Eliot Parker, had to cancel. The meeting will be an opportunity to plot and brainstorm your story ideas.
4. October's program will be an online workshop with Alessandre Torres, who will be live on Skype to answer questions afterward.

D. Ignite the Flame, Linda Rice.

1. ITF had 23 entries; each entry went to three different judges. The judges have until June 21 to complete their work with 38 entries still to come in. The entries and judges have been "wonderful." The members applauded Linda for the huge amount of work she's done for ITF.

E. Education, Erin Novotny.

Erin presented the following possibilities for online classes:

1. Casey L. Bond's "Build a New World in the New Year." She's the award-winning author of the *Frenzy* series and fairy tale retellings, such as *Riches to Rags*, *Savage Beauty*, *Unlocked* and *Brutal Curse*. One of her books was included in the swag bags at the 2017 Oscars. She's known for her YA and Dystopian novels.

2. Joanne Machin, freelance editor and Instagram Goddess. "Instagram Goddess for Authors." <https://www.instagram.com/heyjomachin/>

3. Eliot Parker, associate professor at the University of Mississippi and recipient of the 2019 JUG (Just Uncommonly Good), WV Writers, Inc., "Being an Extroverted Introverted Writer and Creating Your Author Platform."

4. Two classes with Suzanne Purvis, editor of Margie Lawson Classes, SCBWI, "Pitches" and "Sizzling Synopsis."

5. Stacey Graham, an agent with the Red Sofa Literary Agency, "Writing Proposals for NonFiction and Fiction."

Prices, dates, other facilitators, and further details are pending.

F. Incentives, Julia Blaine.

1. Julia passed out treats to everyone who had something to celebrate in their writing process, including Jeanne for getting through the recent tornadoes that touched down in her area of Dayton.

G. Social Media.

1. Gina Smith will work on graphics for the Fall Workshop with Damon Suede on November 2 at the Dublin Recreation Center. COFW \$75. All Others \$85. Fee includes lunch. Register now. So far four have registered. The center holds 70 people.

H. Newsletter, Rachel Dye.

1. Aleta volunteered to be the recap writer.

2. Rachel announced that in September, Hallmark will have an Open Call (un-agented) for submissions.

3. She also encouraged everyone to connect with Magic Word Sheet and get in on the fun and competition of noting your everyday word count and gaining points.

IV. Unfinished Business.

None.

V. New Business.

1. A Nominating Committee was formed, chaired by Sandy with members, Jenessa McRoy and Gina Smith. Sandy and Stacy agreed to serve a second term as secretary and treasurer.

Introductions.

Adjournment:

Meeting adjourned at 1:20.

Respectfully submitted,

Sandy

Sandy Kachurek
Secretary

Works in Progress/Attendance for June 15th

Attendance/WIP for June 15th, 2019

1. Rachel Dye w/a Juliette Hyland: working on *The Prince's Lotto Bride*.
2. Gina Smith w/a Rocelle Bradley: editing Book 4 in my *Fortuna, TX* series.
3. Julia Blaine: failed miserably to find out where to submit to Harlequin, but got some needed revision done on *Tea and Sympathy and Emus*.
4. Julie Sturgeon, guest speaker from Tule Publishing: working on editing two more books this month for Tule and developing posts on conference help for Mount Everbest.
5. Soya Overstreet, guest: looking to publish my first novel.
6. Jenessa McRoy: currently editing for friends.
7. Linda Rice: working on ITF contest and getting a publisher for the historical I edited.
8. Erin Novotny w/a Tobi Doyle: working on *Her Asset, His Dividend*, romantic suspense.
9. Saralee Etter: getting back to my weird western and Victorian mysteries after getting my son graduated from high school and ready for college.
10. Stacy McKitrick: 55K into *Finding the Perfect Mate*.
11. Aleta Dodson: scheduling a week off to write!
12. Jeanne Estridge: editing *Girl's Best Friend*.
13. Sandy Kachurek: working on blurbs and tag lines for COFW's digital class with Linnea Sinclair.

Meeting Recap for June 15, 2019

Four Career Sabotages Sneaking Up on You

COFW members had the pleasure to host the engaging Julie Sturgeon as the June speaker. Julie is a development editor at Tule Publishing. She recently launched Mount Everbest (<https://www.mounteverbest.net/>) where authors can find guidance and editing services.

The first portion of the meeting was her presentation on career sabotages.

1. Social media – be careful what you share. These platforms are not your therapy group. It's okay to share about your writing, but don't post specifics such as "darn, didn't make my 5,000 word count today." Be positive about what you choose to post.
2. Age – keep up with the trends. What do readers like? The arrogant jerk is out as a male character and heroines who feel worthless and have a woe is me attitude are not desirable. Be careful when longing for the good old days in the books....it wasn't for peaceful times where kids could ride their bikes and you didn't have to lock the doors at night. If your characters are in their late 20's or early 30's, their childhood could have been filled watching Beverly Hills 90210, playing video games and listening to music on a boombox. Search the Internet for time specific events that could have shaped your characters' life.
3. Deadlines – turning in a manuscript early to your editor might mean it is rushed and not ready. Sending your latest work in to an editor for consideration might be a mistake because it is in more of a rough draft form. The new game is now beat the deadline. Writers produce quantity for a deadline, but it doesn't mean it's quality work.
4. Writing – authors need to continue to hone their craft skills. Authors do not work on their weaknesses...it is hard to do. Improve and get better, or you could find you are out of the writing game.

Julie spoke about her work with Tule Publishing, founded by Jane Porter. Tule loves small town settings. They don't want stories set in New York or Miami. They love cowboys. These heroes are honorable men and will always do the right thing. They love lighthearted, sweet love stories like movies that the Hallmark Channel is known for.

Since Tule is a boutique publisher, they are looking for diamonds. They want the best writers out there. Tule will do more social media promotion for authors as well as run ads on Facebook or BookBub. They also work with Net Galley and send out advanced reading copy (ARC) in order to garner reviews.

Tule invests in their authors by providing formatting, book covers and editing services. This saves the author anywhere from \$1,000 to \$3,000 investment if they were to self-publish the story. Tule only publishes in digital format.

Julie's wish list of submissions would include lighthearted comedy or a story with a twist that she did not see coming. However, wish lists narrow possibilities, so she is open to anything. Originality is king.

After her presentation, Julie generously listened to pitches from nearly everyone who attended the meeting.

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>

May Winner: Rachel Dye, 582 points, 34,974 words

The winner gets the EMU – to be named later:

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 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
 - 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.

BEGIN and AGAIN

by Julia C. Oliver w/a Julianna Hughes

The following article first appeared in the September 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.

Begin and again: these two words that have come to mean a lot to me in my life. And just what special meaning have they come to have for me? Well, let us look at these two words and their meanings according to the dictionary.

According to Merriam-Webster's Dictionary, the word *BEGIN* is an intransitive verb. It gives its meaning as: "to do the first of an action," "to go into the first part of a process, to Start," "to come into existence: *ARISE*," "to have a starting point," and finally, "to set about the activity of *STARTING*."

AGAIN is an adverb. Merriam-Webster tells us that it means, "another time" and "once more."

So, why have these two words come to mean so much to me? Especially at this time in my life? And why am I writing about these two simple words? To understand that, I need to tell you a bit about me.

I am a sixty-one-year-old retired police officer, who is about to publish my first book this month. For me it is a new *BEGINNING*. One I have dreamed about nearly all my life. In essence, I am beginning a new chapter in my life. But it is NOT the first time I have begun a new phase, or chapter, in my life.

During my life I have had to define, and then re-define myself several times. Each of those changes demanded that I *BEGIN*, and then pursue that dream in order to achieve the goal I set for myself. And over time I would look at my life and decide I needed to change my life and go in a different direction. Thereby, requiring I *BEGIN AGAIN*.

And as simple as it might sound, the hardest thing for most people to do is to simply *BEGIN*. As I've gotten older, beginning *AGAIN* has gotten harder and harder each time. So, retiring from the Houston Police Department after more than thirty-one years, and turning myself into a published author, required that I once again *begin again*.

So, as I teeter on the cusp of another new *beginning* in my life *again* I want to tell those of you who have a dream that the best way to accomplish your dream is to begin. And if you fail, begin *again*, and *again*, and *again*.

Years ago, I made up a motto for my life, and I would like to share it as a parting thought. ***Dreams can come true, if you are willing to do more than dream about them.*** So, my friends, if it is a dream, a goal, or a hope in your life, just take the first step, and begin.

Creating romantic stories is something Julianna has done since she was a small child. But it wasn't until she retired from the Houston Police Department after more than 31 years that she would be able to pursue her lifelong dream of having her stories published. Julianna writes historical romances, combining her love of history and writing to create stories with strong women and enduring heroes. <https://juliannahughes.com>



COFW

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