

# HEART TO HEART

North Texas Romance Writers of America

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## PRESIDENT'S CORNER—JULY 2009

by Angi Platt

“So 2009 is my year. It’s my time to get that story on the page and finish projects that deserve to be finished. It can be your year too. Let’s grab it together and do all we can to help ourselves further along the road to publication.” *January President’s Corner*

**Goals. Encouragement. Take Action. Keep Writing. Distractions. Recognition.**

**Write some more. And the next step – Submitting.**

You have a request. YAY ! Maybe you went to a local conference or you’ve attended the RWA® national conference, but you have a request. The first thing you want to do is say a blessing over the actual pages and get your baby in the mail to the editor or agent.

Slow down. Take a breath. You want to submit the BEST work you have, so don’t rush. Remember all those fellow writers who’ve offered to look at it one last time? Don’t forget them. They mean what they offered.

My advice? Print yourself (or anyone) a copy of your submission and have them read it for errors. Read it yourself--backwards. Oh yeah, that’s a copy-editing trick (a job from my life before kids). Beginning at the end of your submission, read each paragraph for errors. Proceed through each paragraph back to the beginning of your manuscript. Separating the paragraphs, keeps you from “getting into your story” and missing the errors you might have bypassed before.

Today’s publishing industry isn’t the same as thirty years ago -- hey, it’s not even the same as four years ago. This year at National, I heard more and more authors stating that their editors are also their copy-editors. Will you lose a sale because of a misspelled word? Not if the story is one they want. But a better over-all product leaves a better over-all impression.

So send your best and get submitting! ‡



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# JULY MINUTES

**CALL TO ORDER:** A regular meeting of the North Texas Romance Writers of America (NTRWA) was held on July 11, 2009, at the La Hacienda Restaurant in Colleyville, Texas. The president was present. Jennie FitzGerald took minutes for the secretary. The meeting was called to order at 10:44 a.m.

## **OFFICER REPORTS:**

**President, Angi Platt reported:** Since there were no corrections to the June minutes, they stand approved as printed in the July newsletter. There was a conference committee motion to officially change the name of the chapter's conference to: North Texas Two Step. Motion passed.

**Treasurer, Chris Keniston reported:** The treasurer's report was presented and filed for audit.

**Program Director, Marty Tidwell reported:** 27 people have signed up for the North Texas Two Step conference in November.

**PAN Liaison, Shelley Bradley reported:** Lee Swift received his first sale to Siren Publications. There will be a PAN® get together soon (August or September). Shelley also encouraged everyone to submit a proxy if they were not attending the national AGM.

**PRO Liaison, Clover Autrey reported:** The PRO® Beta-read Retreat will be August 8, 2009, and Regina Richards is chairing the event. Two members received their PRO® status from RWA® National: Marty Tidwell & Mary Duncanson.

## **COMMITTEE COORDINATOR REPORTS:**

**Hospitality Chair, Marsha West reported:** There was \$245.00 worth of gift card donations for the PRO® Literacy Readers for Life national basket.

The business meeting was adjourned at: 11:00 a.m. ‡

<b>RISING STAR AWARDS MOST PAGES WRITTEN</b>	<b>SPUR AWARDS MOST PAGES EDITED</b>
Candy Havens 150 pages Bill Woodrow 77 pages Marsha West 65 pages Marty Tidwell 52 pages Michelle Welsh 50 pages	Shelley Bradley 1,035 pages Nikki Duncan 650 pages Mary Duncanson 540 pages Bill Woodrow 394 pages Marty Tidwell 373 pages



## SPOTLIGHT: TRACY WARD

From Shelley Kaehr writing as Leah Leonard

**Q: Great website, Tracy! When did you first start writing?**

A: Thank you! I guess this is where I plug Nikki Duncan's techno-brilliance. As far as- when did I first start writing? I have to say as a child I can't remember a time when I didn't write. I'd put on puppet shows that I'd written, jot down short stories and even started my first book in the 6<sup>th</sup> grade about the Russians invading the United States. Then I got boy crazy, delved into sappy crappy and shortly after that discovered Johanna Lindsay and Kathleen E. Woodiwiss, which led me to reading rather than writing. After that, I didn't write anything for fun until 2 years ago.

**Q: How did your background/childhood/experiences, etc. prepare you or your muse for your writing?**

A: I'm the youngest child in a freakishly large family so I have tons of inspiration from which I can draw quirky characteristics. Plus, being raised by a single parent gave me that whole tortured existence that only years of therapy (or writing) can exorcise. I'm a hopeless optimist though. I can't ever see myself writing something that doesn't have a happy ending.

**Q: How did you pick romance as your genre?**

A: I've always been an idealist, a -love conquers all- kind of person. Plus I like hot sex. What I write isn't traditional romance, but I think one day there's going to be a place on the shelves for me.

**Q: Tell us about your family. How have they supported your writing career?**

A: I've been married to my husband, Ty, for 12 years and we have two fire-balls for children. Taylor is 6 and Dylan is 4. I am truly blessed in how supportive they've been, especially considering the road to publication isn't one of instant gratification. Their faith in me has never wavered, not since the day I sat down to write my first word. And it's so gratifying to see my kids sit down with crayons, pens and a stapler to make their own books.

**Q: Tell us about *Sleeping in the Wet Spot* and any other stories you're working on.**

A: *Sleeping in the Wet Spot* is a sexy women's fiction story about a housewife who's confronted by a woman claiming to be her husband's mistress. Husband denies the allegation and wife wants to believe him, but past suspicions cause her to

doubt. After that, a chance encounter with a fast-talking psychic leads to age regression hypnosis where wife uncovers her subconscious insecurities and discovers trust. That manuscript is complete and I'm looking to go the traditional publishing route, so the agent hunt is on- meanwhile I'm working on *Gypolar*, also sexy women's fiction. It's about a popular, talk-radio host who's caught in a compromising position with *The One Who Got Away*. But when her gay, soon-to-be ex-husband refuses to come out of the closet to save her reputation, she has to choose between loyalty to the man she married, her career and the man she loves.

**Q: Where do your ideas come from?**

A: Every day life is where I get my story inspirations. It might be something I've experienced myself (though my husband would probably like it noted for the record that he is NOT gay), or maybe one of my friends. I might see something on Oprah or get an idea for a character from a song. I keep a notebook in my purse and I might overhear someone talking in a restaurant or a mom on the playground. So yeah, be careful of your conversations, even when you think others aren't listening!

**Q: Talk about your Blog and how it helps to promote you. How often do you blog? On what topics?**

A: Ha! The Dreaded Blog. I'd actually hoped doing this spotlight would light a fire under me to blog, but to be honest, I've written three blogs in the last year. All of which are crap. I can say that because, well, they are. So I'd say a blog doesn't promote me at all. I know, not what you wanted to hear. But I don't think a blog makes or breaks you. It can help, absolutely, and depending what you are saying, it can hurt too. I think if you ask agents and editors they will all tell you something different. I think the consensus is it's not the be all end all.

**Q: How can writers network and promote their work using blogs?**

A: Social networking is a great place to start. Myspace is becoming a thing of the past, but Facebook and Twitter seem to be hot right now. You can post your blogs to both Facebook and Myspace and also send out updates that you've got a new one posted with a link directing to your website. There are also chat loops for anything that interests you as well. A simple signature at the bottom of an email with a link

(Spotlight continued on page 5)



(Spotlight continued from page 4)

to your site is sometimes all you need.

**Q: How would you get started going on a blog tour? Any helpful tips?**

A: What I would do to get started on a blog tour is simply contact all my friends who have blogs and ask if I can do a guest blog on their site. I'd also ask if they have friends who might be interested in letting me blog as well. Yes, writing is a business and your best place to start is your sphere of influence- start with those you know and branch out from there. If you are going to approach someone whom you don't know about guest blogging, I think you should do just like you would with query letters, get familiar with who they are and what they write. They'll be less likely to say no if you make them feel warm and fuzzy with some sort of personalization.

**Q: Please list your websites, contact info and anything else...**

A: My website is [www.tracyaward.com](http://www.tracyaward.com). You can also find me on Facebook under tracyaward, and [myspace.com/tracy\\_a\\_ward](http://myspace.com/tracy_a_ward). ‡

## HEROSCOPES: THE LEO HEROINE

**By Bonnie Staring**

*The following article appeared in the August 2009 issue of romANTICS, the newsletter of the Toronto Romance Writers, Susan Haire, editor.*

Her future's so bright, she's gotta wear shades.

Born between July 23 and August 22, the Leo heroine is the head cheerleader of the Zodiac. Crowds gather around her, even when she's not at the top of a human pyramid, thanks to her oodles of charm and contagious zest for life.



This is a gal who lives to call the shots, be it on the field, at the boardroom table or during a game of strip Jenga. Sometimes her always-forgiving nature can be puzzling to others, but Leo heroines are all about living in the moment, which doesn't leave room for emotional baggage. You can cry on her shoulder if you want, just don't forget to tell her how much you appreciate it. And offer to pitch in for the dry-cleaning bill.

If you don't adore a Leo heroine at the get-go, don't bother. She can't stand competing with another, whether it's your ex, your career, or the sports network. This lioness needs a partner who can bring out the best, not the beast, in her. Great date ideas include adventure and the spotlight, so treat her to front row seats, dinner at a little-known hideaway where the celebs hang out, or an afternoon of blindfolded white-water rafting. Famous Leo heroines include Emily Bronte, Amelia Earhart, Whitney Houston, and Kathie Lee Gifford.

Next month: NEW SERIES - Matchmaking by Heroscope

~ Bonnie Staring is a comedic triple threat (writer, performer, coupon user). She's inches away from achieving her goals from 1986 and may even create new ones. This is the last of her heroine-inspired Heroscopes. To receive a copy of the 12 original Heroscopes and/or the 12 heroine-based Heroscopes, contact Bonnie at [www.bonniestaring.com](http://www.bonniestaring.com). ‡



## INTERVIEW: ROSEMARY CLEMENT-MOORE – YA RITA® WINNER 2009

*I was so excited when I found out that Rosemary had won the YA RITA® at RWA® Nationals that I just HAD to do an interview with her and share it in our newsletter..... Alley Hauldren*

**Q: Wow, Rosemary! What wonderful news about your RITA® Award! Can you share what you were thinking when you heard your name at the RWA® National Awards Ceremony?**

A: I'd been bouncing back and forth all day from "it COULD be me" to "there's no way" to "those books are so good" to "but my book is good, too." I was sitting with my fellow finalists, Tina and Tera, and thinking about how much I like both of them, and their books, and that I was okay whatever happened. And then I heard "Hell..." and it was sort of a blur after that. Until Tina congratulated me, I didn't really believe it.

**Q: Did you have your speech prepared or was it "off the cuff"?**

A: It seemed presumptuous to write a speech, and foolish (not to mention disingenuous!) not to. I guess I split the difference by jotting something casual, no big deal, at the last minute. In fact, it was a page from my notepad (the coffee-stained one I carry everywhere), with a scribbled list of who to thank. It still had the spiral-torn edge. Very classy. I folded it up small and wrote on the outside: "Just in Case."

**Q: When you stood on stage, how did you feel when you looked out over the crowd?**

A: I couldn't see the crowd. This is a holdover from my theatre days. When the house (audience) is dark, you can't really see them if you don't look, so I don't look. What WAS unnerving was the big projection screen dead ahead. Confronted with your own gigantic image while you've got this litany of "don't trip, don't drop anything, don't say anything stupid" running through your head.

**Q: Of course, we want to know what you wore to the ceremony!**

A: Well, a picture is worth a thousand words, so I'm attaching one. It's a vintage 1950's pattern, and I made it in a teal shantung fabric. Between my red hair and the teal dress, I was very colorful on that ginormous TV screen.

**Q: Did you sleep at all that night afterwards?**

A: No, but mostly because I had to get up VERY early and get



on a plane, and I don't fly well. So it was lying there thinking how I was going to get Rita on the plane, let alone myself, that kept me up. :)

**Q: Anything else you'd like to share with us about the ceremony or RWA® National?**

A: I'm extremely honored to receive this award. It means a great deal that it's given by my peers. The things I've learned from RWA®, and the motivation I've received from the people I've met, are the reason I'm published. I'm so glad that Candy made me get a credit card so I could go to that first conference in Reno. It's worked out pretty well.

**Q: Now, back to basics: What was the first thing you ever wrote and at what age? What happened to it?**

A: I don't remember ever NOT writing. I wrote plays for the neighborhood kids to put on, I wrote stories for my friends to read during recess (we ditched kickball, and frequently got in

*(Rosemary continued on page 7)*



(Rosemary continued from page 6)

trouble for it). The first story I remember in detail concerned a girl who wakes in the middle of the night to a spaceship landing in her front yard. An alien monster (it had a dinosaur body and a head like a parrot, which I think I ripped off of some 60's Jules Verne based movie) comes out of the ship, and the girl (it was written in first person, so that's my thing, I guess) beat it off with an umbrella she grabbed from the stand by the front door. My mom kept it for a long time, but I think it was a victim of a flooded storage building on their ranch.

**Q: I remember meeting you the first time at ArmadilloCon in Austin, and I can't even remember the year. (Do you?) I remember realizing when you said you lived in Arlington that we were neighbors. I was so excited! And I told you about the writing groups in the area. What were you writing then and where in your "career" were you at that time?**

A: I had just moved to Arlington, maybe a month before that. I'd quit my theatre job to take care of my parents (Dad was sick and Mom was disabled by an injury), and I figured that this was an opportunity to get serious about writing. I was somewhat directionless at that time. I'd started several novels, had some really polished chapter ones, but no chapter threes. That sort of thing.

**Q: Can you give us a little trip down memory lane on how your writing progressed since ArmadilloCon?**

A: Well, Mom was getting better, and Dad was getting worse, so that took precedence for a while, but after he passed away, that was when I started coming to DFW Writer's Workshop and NTRWA. That was June 2005, and I gave myself until the end of the summer to finish a novel. So I did, and *Prom Dates From Hell* was the result. I submitted my first query letter on Labor Day, had an agent by October, and sold *PDFH* and *Hell Week* to Delacorte Books the first part of November. Whew!

**Q: Do you have an agent? If so, when and where and how did you meet your agent?**

A: Yes, I have an agent. I made a list of agents I wanted to query (based on the RWA® website's list of agents), and just ... queried her! She represented everything I wanted to write

(Fantasy, mystery, romance) but, ironically, no young adult. Obviously, that was not an impediment.

**Q: How beneficial has your agent been to your writing career and each book?**

She advises and supports me, and has gotten me more money, so I'd say quite beneficial. :) The biggest thing, though, is that my relationship with my editor can be strictly about the creative stuff. The business stuff is Lucienne's to deal with. If there are issues, she gets to be the heavy. And conversely, if there is bad news from their end, I don't have to hear it from my editor.

**Q: What advice would you give authors seeking representation?**

A: Do your research and make a list of agents that represent clients in whose shoes you would like to be. Prioritize it. Dream big and start at the TOP of the list with your queries. (Or first chapters, or whatever they ask for on their website. Like I said, do your research.)

**Q: Are you still publishing with the same publisher/editor?**

A: Yep. I love working with Random House. They've been really supportive.

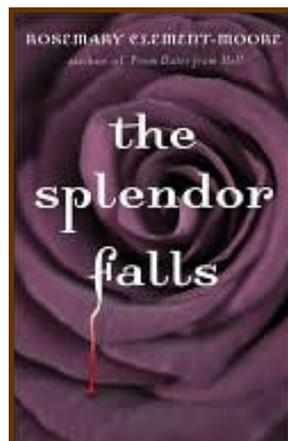
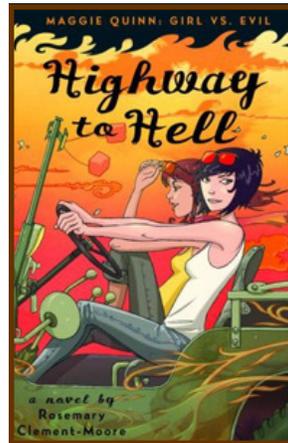
**Q: Now to the really intrinsic questions: Where did your ideas/characters/stories for your books come from? Some say they write from a dream, or an odd idea that popped into their head, or some phrase someone said or they read.**

A: All of the above. I'm absorbing information and ideas all the time. They settle into this primordial soup in the dark recesses of my brain, where over time they percolate, ferment, stew together. Sometimes an idea will pop up unbidden, sometimes sparked by some random thought, sometimes I have to reach in and pull it out, mostly when I need something specific.

**Q: What are you working on now?**

A: I'm working on another gothic mystery romance, this one set in Central Texas. There's a ghost and a cowboy and magic and buried treasure. It's a follow up to my September book, *The Splendor Falls*, which is a gothic mystery set in Alabama. They're stand alone novels but of the same type.

(Rosemary continued on page 8)





(Rosemary continued from page 7)

**Q: What classifies your books as "Young Adult"? They are so well-written and fun to read, I would think these could be "double shelved" in both the adult section and YA section.**

A: Why, thank you! I'd love to see them double shelved, because I have as many adult readers as teens. If this makes sense: I don't write for teens. I write the book I want to write, and it happens that I have a young protagonist who is dealing with themes/operating in a setting that teens will relate to. And so will adults, but you've got to shelve it somewhere. :)

I come from a fantasy background, and you see a lot of YA relatable themes in traditional fantasy. It tends to be a lot about finding your path, discovering your mojo--the prince/apprentice/farmboy having to prove himself and take on larger and overwhelming forces. What teen doesn't relate to that?

**Q: Where do you see yourself as an author in ten years? What do you want to have accomplished? Experienced or not experienced?**

A: Well, I'd love to have commercial to go along with my critical success. ;-) But wouldn't we all. I'd love to see a

Maggie Quinn movie or TV series. Or a graphic novel! That would rock. But mostly I want to continue to grow as an author, keep doing different things but keep true to my voice and my work.

**Q: What advice would you give to aspiring authors?**

A: The same advice I give myself. You have to keep writing, you have to believe in yourself. You can't second guess every little thing--in the market, in your manuscript, in life in general. Write the book you need to write, serve the story, and the rest will work out. Somehow.

**Q: I know you have websites, would you share them with us?**

A: [www.rosemaryclementmoore.com](http://www.rosemaryclementmoore.com) or [www.readrosemary.com](http://www.readrosemary.com) will take you to my site, which has links to my facebook, twitter, blog, good reads page, etc. etc.

**Q: Rosemary, thank you so much for your time. I know the members of NTRWA will be excited to read your answers and of course we'll be ready to congratulate you at the next NTRWA meeting in August!**

A: If the universe wouldn't keep conspiring to put me out of town the second weekend of every month, I'd see y'all more often! ‡

## TIME CAPSULE—JANUARY 1992

*Reading this old article I couldn't help but wonder if the shopper is still wandering around today from bookstore to bookstore asking the same questions!! lol.*

The following article originally appeared in the January 1992 issue of the Heart to Heart newsletter.

### The Autographing by Karen Leabo

An author sits alone behind a cloth-covered card table at the entrance of a mall bookstore. Many people walk by. Sometimes they pause a few feet away to stare at the colorful stacks of books on the table; some times they scurry past, artfully avoiding eye contact.

At last one woman stops, stares meaningfully at the author, then approaches shyly as the author's heart flutters with anticipation. At last, someone is interested in

her book!

"Excuse me, could you tell me the price on the new Stephen King hardback?"

"I'm sorry, I don't work here. Why don't you ask the lady in the pink dress? I'm sure she can--"

"You don't work here?"

"No, I'm just here to autograph books."

"Oh. Ohhhh. You wrote this book? You're the person on the cover?"

"Yes."

"Really? I never met an author before. What's the book about?"

"It's a romance novel."

"No kidding? My (sister, secretary, grandmother) loves these things. Reads 'em by

the sackful. Is this your first book?"

"No, actually, it's my (third, tenth, fifty-fifth)."

"Really? Do you make a lot of money writing romances?"

"Some authors do, some don't."

Those books... they're sort of written to a formula right? I mean, you use the same basic plot, you just change the names and the locale and a few of the descriptions, right?"

"No. The publishers have established certain guidelines to follow, but by and large each book is unique."

"Is it hard to get published?"

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(Time Capsule continued from page 8)

“Yes, although most romance publishers are very open to new writers, so it’s a good genre to break into.”

“How long did it take you to get published?”

“A long time. Several years from the time I attempted my first book. But many writers learn faster than I did.”

“How long does it take you to write a book?”

“It varies, depending on how much time I can devote to it.”

“You know, I always wanted to write a novel. How should I go about it?”

“There are several excellent books on the subject. Romance Writers of America is a good resource to aspiring writers, too. I’d be happy to send you some information about our local chapter. ”

“Hey, thanks, that’d be nice. I’ll write down my address on this bookmark here... So have you sold any books today?”

“A few... would you like to buy one?”

“Naa. I don’t read that stuff. See ya.”

“Bye.” ‡

## MEMBER NEWS

▣ **Lee Swift** sold *Eternally Three: Perfection* to Siren Publishing.

▣ **Shelley Bradley’s** *Bound & Determined*, *Tempt Me with Darkness* and *Strip Search* were sold to Thailand. *Brothers in Arms* (historical trilogy) was sold to Japan.

▣ **Angi Platt’s** *The Scoundrel of Scone* is a Golden Claddagh finalist in the Celtic Category (sponsored by Celtic Hearts) and her *See Jane Run* won the Series Category of the Daphne du Maurier (sponsored by Kiss of Death). It was requested by Editor Allison Lyons of Harlequin and Agent Kevan Lyons. ‡

## GIVE YOUR VILLAIN A PLACE IN THE SUN

By Carolyn Williamson

“A hero has motives, and a villain has reasons.” So said Mona Sizer, writing as Deanna James. Like some heroes and heroines, a villain may be acting on a core belief, ingrained in him by past experience, usually unpleasant.

Two speakers at the national RWA® conference shed light on creating believable, interesting villains. Author Bethany Oliver said, “in their own minds they are right, the heroes of their own stories.” A villain may be driven by emotion, generated by a parent he couldn’t seem to get approval from, but he has his own code of honor. Like the hero in *The Writer’s Journey* by Chris Vogler, the villain also receives a call to action. It may be a voice in his head if he’s mentally disturbed or an opportunity to grab something without earning it. The call can also be a deep seated desire for revenge. Oliver says to give the villain three things: motivation, intelligence, and the desire to move things in his favor.

Agent Donald Maass pointed out that a protagonist may need a villain to create conflict by placing obstacles in the hero’s path as the hero tries to obtain his goal. “Villains need page time to be scary,” Maass said. The villain’s goal is often in opposition to the hero’s goal. Writers need to show the villain obsessing about what he wants with hints from his backstory that reveal why he wants that so much. Some villains may do bad things and be torn in two directions. A villain that is not all bad is usually more interesting. Maass recommends showing the villain doing something nice.

Maass mentioned the need for conflict in stories without villains, where the hero and heroine work against each other, perhaps for opposing goals. During the course of the novel, the couple must come to a resolution for a satisfying ending.

To write a great story, don’t short change your villain. The protagonist will seem more heroic and more deserving to win his goal after fighting a strong villain who has had his time in the sun as well as in the shadows. ‡

**INTERVIEW: CANDACE HAVENS – RWA PRO MENTOR OF THE YEAR 2009**

**By Alley Hauldren**

**Q: What wonderful news, Candy! No one can doubt that you deserve the 2009 RWA® PRO® Mentor of the Year Award thanks to all the hard work you do with other writers, especially on your Yahoo! Groups. What got you started helping writers and how did it develop with Yahoo! Groups and the other venues you use?**

A: Jodi Thomas (NYT best selling author and RITA® Hall of Famer) was such a wonderful mentor for me, and really set a good example of what one person can do for another. When I started the [Write\\_Workshop](#) I was so busy and other writers kept asking for help. It seemed like a good way to help a lot of people at one time.

**Q: All this mentoring must keep you mega-busy! How much time in a day do you spend mentoring vs. writing your own stuff?**

A: It really depends on the week. If I'm teaching a class and looking at homework, then it takes more time. But I bring in other authors, agents, and editors to teach, so it's not all me all the time. It's good for the members of Write\_Workshop and it gives me the breaks I need.

**Q: Who was/were your mentors? And why?**

A: I've mentioned Jodi, but I've had a few. Jennifer Archer, Linda Castillo, the lovely Ronda Thompson (Man, I miss her.) My friend Britta Coleman helped me out a lot. And there were authors like Evelyn Vaughn who read my stuff and said, "You are ready to publish."

**Q: Who were the other candidates for RWA® Mentor of the Year?**

I honestly have no idea. You'd have to ask Pro Liaison Sherry Davis.

**Q: Can you share what you were thinking when you heard your name at the RWA® PRO® Retreat?**

A: I'd just given a speech and basically told the 300 or so people in that room that if they need me to, I could kick their butt. (Laugh out loud.) I had hammered them with, "If you want to get published, you have to finish your book. You have to submit. And you have to continue to move forward with your career and on to the next project." I was still on that speakers high when Sherry Davis asked if I could stay for a minute. Then, she gave a little speech, which I didn't hear

because I was in shock. I had no idea that I'd even been nominated. So it was kind of surreal. Then, when she handed it to me all I could think was, "Don't do the ugly cry.

You don't know these people and they might take pictures."



**Q: Did you have your speech prepared or was it "off the cuff"?**

A: I didn't give a speech afterward. I just told them thank you. I know, go figure, me without words. It doesn't happen often. I really was in shock.

**Q: I asked Rosemary this same question – What did you wear to the Awards Ceremony?**

A: Um, that was a different ceremony, but to the RITA's® I wore a little black dress, pretty much like everyone else.

**Q: On the RWA® National Convention itself, what did you feel was its best attribute this year? Or what benefitted you the most?**

A: For me, it's always about the opportunity to meet new people and to network. That time with my agent and editor to plan the future is just invaluable.

**Q: Now, back to basics: How long have you been writing, and how long have you been writing fiction?**

A: I've been a journalist for 21 years, and I've been writing fiction since 2003.

**Q: What got you into journalism?**

A: I'd been a dancer. I hurt my back and couldn't dance for a year. My dad said I'd always written for school newspapers and that I should check out some journalism classes. Turned out he was right.

**Q: What got you into writing about demons and**

*(Candace Havens continued on page 11)*



(Candace Havens continued from page 10)

**witches and sexy women and hunky dudes?**

A: That made me laugh. I write about the things that interest me. I love magic, strong women and hot guys. It's as simple as that. I write the kind of books I like to read.

**Q: Do you have an agent? If so, when and where and how did you meet your agent?**

A: I do have an agent, Elaine Spencer with The Knight Agency. We met at a retreat a few years ago. I had an agent then, but when I decided to make a change Elaine was there for me. She can read my mind, which is what I need. It's a very good fit.

**Q: How beneficial has your agent been to your writing career and each book?**

A: Both of my agents have helped to guide my careers and given me great advice. The books are pretty much up to me, though I run ideas through Elaine and she's brainstormed a lot with me. She came up some great ideas I'm pursuing after Nationals.

**Q: What advice would you give authors seeking representation?**

A: It's important to be smart about what you are doing. This relationship is so important and you need to work with people who really get you. Do your RESEARCH before even submitting. You'd be surprised how many people don't do this simple step.

**Q: Are you still publishing with the same publisher/ editor?**

A: I've been with Berkley for the last five or so years, and I'm working with Harlequin now. I'm mixing it up a little and trying new things. I have a Harlequin Blaze, *Take Me If You Dare*, coming out in Feb. 2010 with Harlequin. And *Dragons Prefer Blondes* just came out with Berkley.

**Q: What are you working on now?**

A: This made me laugh. Right now I'm in the middle of revisions for Harlequin. But I have a new YA paranormal in the works, and a new adult paranormal romance. I'm going to be busy for awhile.

**Q: Where do you see yourself as an author in ten years? What do you want to have accomplished? Experienced or not experienced? New genres?**

A: I'm going to continue to try new things. I would love to be a USA Today or New York Times Best Selling author. I wish that wasn't so important to me, but it is. And I'd love to do some anthologies/novellas with some of my friends and favorite authors.

**Q: What advice would you give to aspiring authors?**

A: No one can write a book like you, so sit down and do it. About 75% of writers never finish their books. And another percentage of those never submit. We hear all about slush piles that are 10 feet tall, but if you don't send in that finished work, you'll never know.

**Q: I know you have websites, would you share them with us?**

A: I have a lot. I do twitter, Facebook, MySpace and LiveJournal. You can get to all of those through my website [www.candacehavens.com](http://www.candacehavens.com)

**Candy, thank you so much for your time. I know the members of NTRWA will be excited to read your answers and, of course, we'll be ready to congratulate you at the next NTRWA meeting in August! ‡**



## HOSPITALITY NEWS

Here's a huge "Hat's Off" to all our NT romance authors who contributed to our Hat's Off to Romance basket for the National conference in DC with almost \$250 worth of gift cards:



Jeannie Guzman, Angie Platt, Marty Tidwell, Wendy Watson, Jerrie Alexander, Bill Woodrow, Nancy Connally, Kym Roberts, Regina Richards, Kathryn Miller, Michelle Welch, Shelly Bradley, Maria Murray, Alley Huldren, Carolyn Williamson, and Beth Shriver, and Marsha West.

Apologies to anyone I've missed. Please let me know, and I'll correct it in the next newsletter. Again many thanks to all of you who helped NT look good. Special kudos to Wendy Watson for getting the hat and box and to our terrific pres Angie Platt for hauling it to DC. Marsha, Hospitality Chair. ‡



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**NTRWA**  
2100 W. NorthWest HWY  
Suite 114-1081  
Grapevine, TX 76051

**NTRWA Monthly Meeting**  
Doors Open 10:00 am  
La Hacienda Ranch  
5250 Highway 121 South  
Colleyville, TX  
*Visitors Welcome!*

**We're on the web!**  
[www.ntrwa.org](http://www.ntrwa.org)

## CSI EFFECT: WHAT IS REAL? WHAT IS NOT?

**Next Meeting June 20, 2009**

Join us Saturday, August 15th, at 10:30 a.m. to hear Pete Salicco talk about what really happens when the police get involved in a crime scene. The TV Show CSI is entertaining, but how accurate is it? Pete is a former full-time police officer with over fifteen years of service in Amarillo, Grand Prairie, and Arlington. He currently works for the Dallas Police Department AFIS Team as a Latent Print Examiner. He spent eleven years as a full-time crime scene technician/analyst; and as a regular crime scene officer, he worked thousands of crime scenes. He also spent time with the Special Crimes Homicide unit in Amarillo where he worked over sixty homicides and officer-involved shootings. His training includes photography, crime scene search and collection, evidence processing, crime scene sketching, fingerprint classification, and latent fingerprint comparison. He has testified on numerous occasions in expert latent print examinations and crime scene matters. ‡

