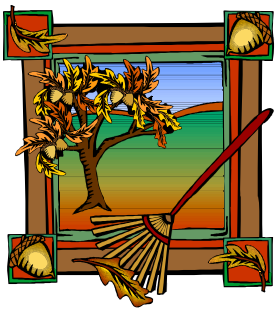

Heart to Heart

Volume 27, Issue 12

Founded March 1983

Chapter 33, Region 5

North Texas Romance Writers of America

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THANKS for a Great Year!

What an awesome year!

I may have joked about my nerves prior to every meeting. I may have been counting down the number of meetings left that I needed to stand in front of the lectern. I might not have to store extra boxes in my office much longer. I might not have to work on agendas or coordinating board member dates. I might sigh with relief that the responsibility won't be on my shoulders every month.

BUT I LOVED IT !!

The 2009 Board was fantastic. Our numbers grew, members sold or acquired their PRO status. We had terrific monthly workshops, and a hugely successful conference. I think the volunteers have done a wonderful job helping everyone on their road to publication.

I encourage each of you to volunteer for our chapter in at least a small way. Interacting with members is a surefire way of getting to know more writers, sharing information, and to just have fun.

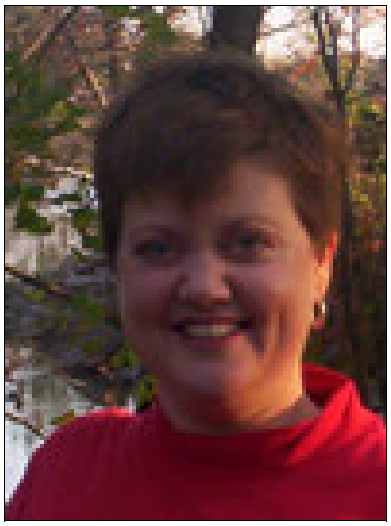
After joining RWA in 2001, I found NT in 2003. I loved the Great Expectations contest and wanted to help. And I did. My love for the GE will continue as the 2010 contest chair. I'll step off the Board as a voting member, but I'll still be there helping as much as I can.

"Thank You" doesn't seem to be a powerful enough word. Just know that the thanks is from deep in my heart. I loved being an officer and president. I'm sure I will serve on the board again. (In a while.)

Thanks again for all the support and guidance I've received as president. I appreciate each of your generous spirits.

THANK YOU
THANK YOU
THANK YOU

From the Next Prez



Four years ago I began my journey toward publication by visiting an RWA® chapter here in the metroplex. I didn't join that chapter, even though it was closer and had more members. I joined NT because of the warmth and genuine camaraderie I experienced on my very first visit.

NT has become my writing home--a place filled with acquaintances and good friends, challenges and accomplishments, where for a few hours every third Saturday of the month I can hide from life's banalities and rouse my loftier dreams.

It is with pleasure that I now look forward to serving North Texas RWA® in 2010 as President.

But in order to maintain the programs, conferences, and supportive environment we all cherish and enjoy, we need a Board of Directors committed to making the hard and easy decisions--a group of people willing to sacrifice only a few hours a month to keep North Texas a vital and essential part of our writing careers.

Won't you join me in serving our friends and fellow writers as an officer on the NT Board? Together we can continue to encourage and support our members, published or unpublished, new arrivals and veterans, to reach their goals and dreams.

If you are interested in serving with me on the NT Board, please drop me a line at presidentelect@ntrwa.org. I hope to hear from you soon.

Truly yours,
Gina Lee Nelson

Board of Directors & Committee Chairs

President, Angi Platt
President@ntrwa.org

President-Elect, Gina Nelson
PresidentElect@ntrwa.org

Treasurer, Chris Keniston
Treasurer@ntrwa.org

PAN Liaison, Shelley Bradley
PANLiaison@ntrwa.org

Program Director, Marty Tidwell
Programs@ntrwa.org

Secretary, Carolyn Williamson
Secretary@ntrwa.org

PRO Liaison, Clover Autrey
PROLiaison@ntrwa.org

Web Site Director, Jen FitzGerald
Website@ntrwa.org

Hospitality, Marsha West
Hospitality@ntrwa.org

Great Expectations 2010
GECoordinator@ntrwa.org

Membership Director & Spotlights
Shelley Kaehr
Membership@ntrwa.org

Communications Director,
Alley Hauldren
Newsletter@ntrwa.org

Audio Librarian & BABS,
Nikki Duncan
Librarian@ntrwa.org

Election Bylaw Instructions

VOTE through the Members Only section of the website or In-Person at the Dec 12th meeting.

7.1.3. Election. The members of the chapter shall elect the officers of the chapter. All General members are eligible to vote. Voting may be conducted by (1) ballots returned by mail to the address shown on the ballot, (2) cast in person at the December meeting, or (3) otherwise voted electronically or by other means to the extent specified in the ballot mailing.

If available: Candidates for office may be voted on in an online Polls Feature. Each Poll shall be open for at least seven full days and announced via the Special Announcements Feature. The Poll shall close on the date specified after it opens. A majority of all votes cast is required to elect the officers.

7.1.4. Challenges. Any challenges to the election procedure or results must be filed with the Nominating Committee within thirty (30) days after the results have been announced.

Section 7.2. Qualifications. In order to be eligible for a Board position (whether elected or appointed), a candidate should: (1) have been a General member for at least one year immediately preceding filing for office; and must (2) not have a material conflict of interest that would disqualify the person from holding the intended office, such as concurrently serving on the RWA Board or another chapter Board. In addition, a candidate for President, President-Elect or Treasurer should have been a General member for at least two consecutive years.

7.3.1. Length and Commencement of Term. Officers and directors shall be elected to a one-year term, commencing on the January 1 immediately following each election. Prior to taking office, the incoming Board can discuss informally the following year's goals, activities, and related matters, but it has no power to take formal action on any matter until it takes office.

7.3.2. Limitation on Number of Positions. An individual may hold only one position on the Board at any time, and no candidate may run for more than one position at a time, but officers and directors may run for office while serving on the Board.

7.3.3. Limitation on Number of Terms. An individual may serve no more than two consecutive terms in any one office and no more than five years consecutive on the Board. With the exception of President who may serve no more than six years consecutively on the Board.

Proposed Bylaw Change

The following proposed change was made by board members to bring our bylaws into current practice and allow for additional board volunteers. Discussion and voting on the proposed bylaw will occur at the December general meeting.

PROPOSED
Section 7.2. Qualifications. In order to be eligible for a Board position (whether elected or appointed), a candidate should: (1) have been a General member for at least one year immediately preceding filing for office; and must (2) not have a material conflict of interest that would disqualify the person from holding the intended office, such as concurrently serving on the RWA Board **[or another chapter Board]**. In addition, a candidate for President, President-Elect or Treasurer should have been a General member for at least two consecutive years.
DELETE: or another chapter Board

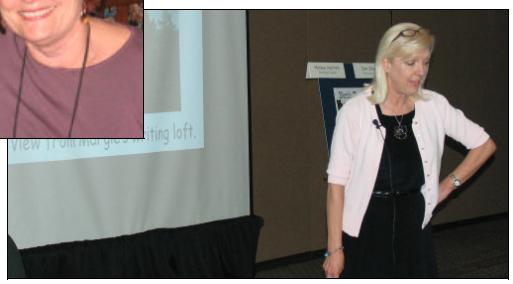
REASONING: This stipulation is not currently in practice regarding on-line and sister chapters. Removing the stipulation of serving on two boards will benefit the chapter.

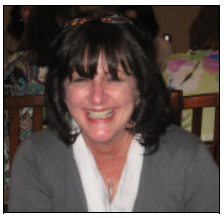
BASKET & AUCTION DONATIONS

A BIG THANK YOU TO ALL THE NT TWO STEP

Michele Acker
Jerrie Alexander
Clover Autrey
Shelly Bradley
Allison Brennan
Sherry Davis
Sandra Ferguson
Jen Fitzgerald
Jeannie Guzman
Mary Malcolm
Laura Martello
Gina Nelson
Regina Richards
Delores Shaffer
Beth Shriver
Marty Tidwell
Angi Platt
Wendy Watson
Marsha West

Shelley Bradley
Cori Deyoe
Rosemary Clement-Moore
Tami Cowden
Katherine Garbera
Kristi Gold
Candy Havens
Lorraine Heath
Melissa Jeglinski
Cathy Spangler





2010 NOMINEES

2010 President: Gina Nelson, currently serving as President-elect

NOMINEES
President-elect: Marsha West
Secretary: Carolyn Williamson
Treasurer: open
Communications Director: open
Programs: Kym Matthews Roberts
Membership: Jeanne Guzman
Website Director: open

In order to keep our status as a chapter, we are required to have a President, Treasurer, and Secretary. Chris Keniston has volunteered to be the Treasurer, once our bylaws have been changed to allow her to serve on both the DARA board and NT's.

Volunteers for Chair Positions
PAN Liaison:
PRO Liaison: Clover Autrey
Audio Librarian:
BABs Program:
Bylaws: Angi Platt
Hospitality:
Newsletter Editor: Jean Brown
Spotlights: open

Great Expectations Coordinator 2011: open

North Texas Two Step Coordinator 2010: Marty Tidwell, confirmed

Great Expectations Coordinator 2010: Angi Platt, confirmed

If you'd like to volunteer for a chair position or an open seat on the board of directors, please contact Gina Nelson: presidentelect@ntrwaorg

Per bylaws and policy, only board positions are voted upon by the membership. Chair positions are appointed by the president and confirmed by the board.

VOTING PROCEDURES
--Vote Online by December 10th--
Go to: www.ntrwa.org
Click on the "Member Login" link (left side nav link)
Login: user ID = e-mail address password = RWA number)
Click on "NTRWA News" link (left side nav link)
Click on "Members Only" link (top of the page)
Click on "NT Forum" link (top one in list)
Under the "Active Discussions" header, you will see the individual polls for the individual board positions and Yellow Rose Award: NT Online Elections
Click on each poll in turn and click on the name of the person you want to vote for.
Click on "Member Notices" in black bold letters to return to the list of polls, then choose the next poll and vote.
Repeat steps the last two steps until you've voted for each position available.

VOTING INSTRUCTIONS

Why So Long From "Sale" to "Shelf" by Terri Garey

Parts I and II were printed in the November edition of the *Heart to Heart*.

PART III: What's going on while you're doing all that revising?

The search for the perfect title. The cold, hard fact of the matter is, original titles are rarely kept. You may think that nothing suits your lush historical except "The Roses of Autumn," but your publisher is far more like to want something like "The Barbarian's Bride." Truly. You see, they're looking at that title as a marketing tool, and they are, quite frankly, out to sell romance, not roses. ☺

I was incredibly lucky to be allowed to keep the original title of my first book, *Dead Girls Are Easy*, but was told that the title to the sequel wasn't "romantic" enough (which I found pretty ironic under the circumstances--"dead girls" was hardly a romantic title!), and I was asked to provide a list of "alternate" titles. This list will be discussed in meetings involving the sales and marketing departments. Your title may be chosen from that list, or you may end up a title you didn't even choose, based on how "marketable" a title is deemed.

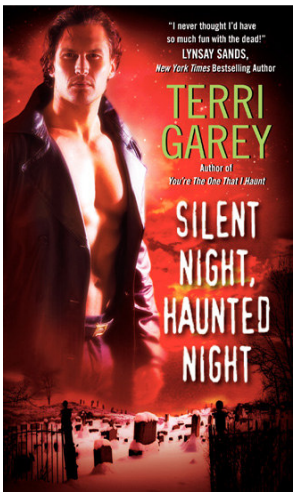
What I learned from this process is that less is more; if you're asked for a list of alternate titles, keep that list small--three or four, maybe. I made the mistake of offering too many on my second book, and ended up with the one I liked the very least, *A Match Made In Hell*. So, for the next two books, *You're the One That I Haunt* and *Silent Night, Haunted Night*, I made a point to only offer alternate titles that I *knew* I could live with.

Cover Art and Design: Once again, an area where you have far less control than you expect. I was fortunate enough to be asked my "vision" for the cover, and was encouraged to submit actual images from books and magazines. "Hurrah!" I thought, and immediately let them know my "vision" for *Dead Girls Are Easy*: a graveyard, a hip-looking chick with an amused look on her face, a color palate of pink and black, a spooky looking font. And what did I end up with? I got the graveyard, I got part of a hip-looking chick, and I got a spooky font, but it was NOTHING like what I envisioned.

I did like a lot of authors do, and whined to my agent and (less so) to my editor, but did it do me any good? No. I was basically given a pat on the head and told to leave the marketing to the experts.

By the third cover, Avon decided to give me a new look, which I actually love, except that the girl on the cover, despite having dark hair, looked nothing like my heroine.

All in all, I learned a couple of things about cover design: 1) it's great to have input, but that doesn't mean you'll get what you want, so don't expect it; and 2) the sales department has a lot more input into the way your cover looks than you do. Yes, that's right--the sales department, not the art department. They're the ones who know which type of covers are "hot" and which are "not." Even more so, it's true that the big store buyers have input into your covers. If they don't like it, they say so, and very often, back to the art department it goes. Whether the art department uses live models, original artists, or copious amounts of airbrushing, it's all about marketing, not the author's ego or "vision."



Back cover copy: Who actually writes it? Someone from the Copy department or possibly even another freelancer like your copyeditor. Your editor sees it first, then shares it with the author and the editorial director of the department. Any changes or rewrites will come from the author, editor or editor's assistant. Once the copy's been approved it goes back to the original copy desk to be handed over to production. I've been overruled and I've been lucky enough to write the whole thing--it depends on the book and the marketing angle from your editor. The same process goes for that teeny little excerpt that's often in the front of the book--chosen by the Copy department, approved by your editor.

Part IV: Sales and Promotion. Most authors will receive very little in the way of promotion for one simple reason: it's expensive. Print ads are the most expensive. A full color ad in Romantic Times® Magazine, for example, runs from $3,475 inside the magazine or $4,415 for a small ad on the front cover. Full cover ads in the Romance Writers Report® run from $900 to $1300 for the back cover.

When you consider how many authors a large publishing house has, there is no way they can do that for every debut or midlist author. So most of the promotion

continued on page 7

A Behind-the-Scenes Look at the Publishing Process

continued from page 6

that's done on your book is going to be done by you.

Galleys, aka ARCs: Four to six months before your book is actually released, your publisher will send Advance Readers Copies to reviewers and independent book buyers. You'll may get a few as well, which can be sent to local media along with a press release, or used as giveaways. This preliminary copy of your book will include typos, because it was in production while you were doing your copyedits.

Cover flats and monthly publisher catalog: Cover flats, along with a monthly catalog of upcoming releases, are ways the sales department gets their initial orders. Cover flats not only show what the book is actually going to look like, it includes your selling points, as well as your author bio, your ISBN, your back list, and whatever advertising your publisher is willing to put behind your book. This gives buyers a sense of your publisher's commitment to your book, and your background as a writer.

Co-op in bookstores: This is where you want your publisher to put their promotion bucks! Co-op in bookstores means those special displays you see that hold multiple copies of your book. Prime space in displays right by the register, end caps (displays on the end of the romance section or other places within the store) shelf-talkers (small signs that draw attention to your book on the shelf itself), space on the "New In Paperback" or "What's Hot In Romance" sections.

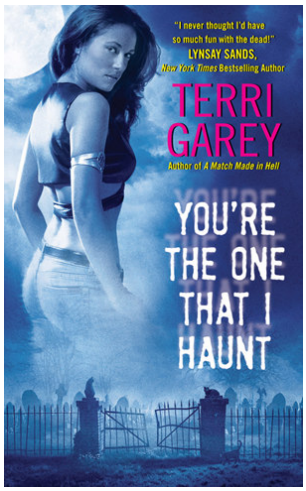
These features are paid for by your publisher, not randomly decided by the bookstore manager. (Independent bookstores have more leeway, of course)

Special Events: Avon is great about arranging special events when they know they're going to have a large group of their authors in one place, like RWA®'s national conference, or the Romantic Times® Conference. In addition to the normal literacy signings, they'll arrange Avon signings, cocktail parties, and a growing number of spots on Romance Radio.

It never hurts to ask: for simple, low-cost things like table posters for your signings. The art department already has the artwork, and printing up foam board posters isn't that expensive for them to do. Don't ask for too much.

A Word On Promotion: Here's a list of the promotional efforts I spent money on for my first book:

Website (redesign)
Print ad in Gothic Beauty Magazine
Banners for my signature line
Bookmarks
Bookstores That Care program
(7000 bookmarks, in bundles of 10, $300.00)
Quarterly email newsletter



I sponsored a registration for the RWA® conference
Press kits for local media
Avon Authors group website
Excerpt booklet

Other venues:
Fresh Fiction
Romance Sells
Online chats
Goodies for conferences (candy, magnets, nail files, etc.)

I discovered you can spend a huge amount of dollars on promotion, with almost zero feedback on whether it did you any good. The most "bang for my buck" is good old bookmarks, which you can mail yourself to bookstores and conferences. Check the back of the RWR® for upcoming conferences, look at chapter websites and email your goodies to the conference coordinator.

Reader groups are another great place to send bookmarks.

Hopefully, this article shed some light on the extremely complicated process of getting your book from sale to shelf. When it comes to the publishing industry, ignorance is not bliss. The more you know, the better able you are to focus on what's most important, which is WRITING A GOOD BOOK.

~ ~ ~

Terri Garey writes paranormal romance for Avon, and is a two-time RITA© finalist and the winner of the 2008 RITA© for Best First Book, as well as the winner of the 2008 PRISM Award. Visit her on the web at http://www.tgarey.com or http://www.harpercollins.com/TerriGarey.

The Great Expectations Contest Line-Up of Final Round Editors

Contemporary Series – Victoria Curran
Editor with Harlequin Books
Erotic Romance – Katherine Pelz
Editorial Assistant with Berkley Heat
Historical – Danielle Poiesz,
Gallery/Pocket Books Editorial
Inspirational – Natalie Hanemann,
Senior Editor with Thomas Nelson
Mainstream with Romantic Elements – Abbey Zidle
Senior Editor with Gallery/Pocket Books
Romantic Suspense – Alex Logan
Assistant Editor with Grand Central Publishing
Single Title – Holly Blanck
Assistant Editor with St. Martin's Press
Specialized Futuristic / Fantasy / Time Travel / Paranormal– Talia Platz
Editorial Assistant with New American Library
Young Adult – David Linker, Executive Editor with HarperFestival
HarperCollins Children's Books

WHY ENTER GREAT EXPECTATIONS?

The GE offers a quick turn around on your entry. By the beginning of February, you'll know if you're a finalist. We also judge your query letter, which is becoming one of the most important aspects of submission.

25 Electronic Pages = No Postage
$20 for members = that's .80 cents per page
3 critiques = that makes it .26 cents per page
NTRWA.ORG for rules = or email Angi and she'll send them to you
Deadline = December 29th
Questions = GECoordinator@ntrwa.org
ENTER TODAY !!

SPOTLIGHT ON . . . YELLOW ROSE NOMINEE

MARSHA WEST

"I remember reading *Gone With The Wind* when I was in the eighth grade. Sitting up late one night to finish it. Sobbing because it didn't end the way I wanted it too. That probably prepared me to be a romance reader and writer. I was not a happy camper after *Gone With the Wind*. Give me that 'Happily Ever After' every time."

Marsha West has been a member of RWA and NTRWA for a little over two years. Almost since joining NT, she's been the Hospitality Chair. Volunteering comes naturally to this teacher/principal turned romance writer. She's always jumping up with her hand in the air and always bringing the brightest door prizes to every meeting. OR sending them to the national conference for the literacy book signing.

Marsha also worked with the North Texas Two Step Committee, helping contribute to a very successful conference. The door prize baskets were awesome and the chapter has Marsha to thank for raising a considerable amount of money which defrayed membership attendance costs.

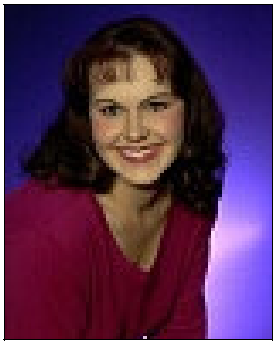
Marsha has been nominated for the Yellow Rose award because of her monthly contributions to the chapter. If elected, she will join the 2010 Board of Directors as president-elect.

Thank you, Marsha, for your service to NT.

SPOTLIGHT ON . . . YELLOW ROSE NOMINEE

SHELLEY BRADLEY

Shelley Bradley has been a member of NTRWA since 1989. She may have won the Yellow Rose Award before, but not in the past ten years.



Shelley has held almost all the board positions with the exception of treasurer. (She said we'd never want her to handle money!) She also began the Great Expectations contest in the 1990's and ran it for at least three years.

In 2009, Shelley began supporting herself with her writing. In addition to many family obligations and unfortunate grief, Shelley took on the position of PAN Liaison for NTRWA.

During a trying time for the writing industry, Shelley has managed to keep not only our PAN members, but all NT members informed of the changing publishing industry--both good and bad news--helping members new and old understand the business of writing.

Shelley hasn't just been an outstanding member in 2009, she's been a caring mentor to individual NT members for many years.

Thank you, Shelley, for your service to NT.

National RWA Conference 2009

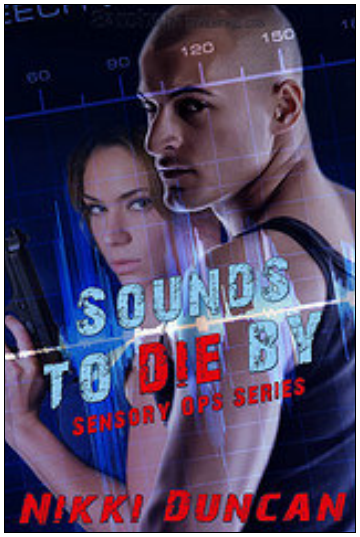
NIKKI DUNCAN

SPOTLIGHT ON . . . YELLOW ROSE NOMINEE

"I spend my time alternating between the chores of being a wife and mother, the duties of being an administration manager, the entertaining task of working on promotional products for authors, writing my own books, and striving to promote myself before I sell a book in hopes of things being a little easier when I do sell."

Member Spotlight
December 2007

Nikki Duncan sold in 2009 to Samhain Publishing. Her first book, *Sounds to Die By*, was released in October.



Nikki has volunteered as NT's Audio Librarian for the past two years, adding the responsibility of our BABS program (Bead A Book into Submission). She's also volunteered anytime she was needed for our conferences.

Nikki advises many members on their websites and book trailers.

Thank you, Nikki, for your service to NT.

North Texas Romance Writers of America

NT's monthly meeting
Saturday, December 12th
La Hacienda Ranch
5250 Highway 121 South
Colleyville, TX 76034

Visitors Welcome
Doors Open at 10 AM

Special Election Edition

Front Patio Room at La Hacienda Ranch

ELECTION RESULTS

YELLOW ROSE AWARD

YEARLY AWARDS

HOLIDAY PARTY

GAMES

DRAWING FOR GREAT EXPECTATIONS ENTRY

Board elections are on-line through the members only section of the website. Members may also vote in-person at the December 12th meeting.