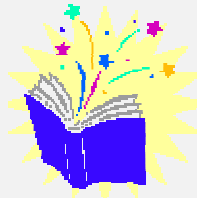


North Louisiana Storytellers and Authors of Romance

NOLA



NEWS

Chapter 40 of Romance Writers of America

Issue 1/13

January/February 2013

It's Never Too Late

by Heidi Markwell

Epiphanies can strike anyone at any time. Young, old, middle-aged, any age.

When I graduated from high school (AHEM) xx years ago, I did what was expected of me. I went to college. But I went to college not having a clue what to major in. I liked history, I liked cultural/international studies and I liked literature. So the classes I chose centered around the topics I enjoyed learning about. Two four-year institutions, three declared majors at different times, a couple of lifelong friendships formed—one who is like a sister to me—and one community college later, I had an Associate Degree in Applied Science. Yep. I sort of got lost in the mix, never having found my niche. Don't get me wrong, I wasn't a flunky. Granted, I was a little misguided, but I held a good average. And after my sophomore year, I decided to go home. That's when I earned my Associates.

My passion for writing and storytelling existed more or less like a shadow that moved when I moved. It's always been a part of me, always there when I needed to escape, and it's never let me down. My senior year English-Lit teacher gave me the choice between researching and writing a report about a past U.S. president or writing an autobiography. I chose the latter. And I'm glad I did. I had a helluva blast writing and reliving the first eighteen years of my life with my not so boring family, and our incredible experiences. Needless to say, I got an A+++.

So why didn't my destiny smack me in my face? Why didn't the obvious bounce around like a jester wearing bells? Who knows? I'll never know. Maybe

I wasn't ready to "grow up" yet. Maybe life had different plans for me at the time. Lucky me, I met my husband. We dated. He read and complimented me on my work—short stories, poems, little things here and there. Suddenly other things became more important and I shuffled my hobby aside to exist as no more than a little shadow at my heels. Then my husband and I got married.

He went back to school for his Masters. I promised myself I would too ... one day. Then we moved. Bought a house. Had a baby. And then another. Many years past us by. I embraced my hobby once more shortly before we celebrated my daughter's first birthday over three years ago. Here we are in 2012 and I finally know what I want to be when I grow up. A published author in fiction works with a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Creative Writing, and a Certificate in Publishing backing up my name. What a mouth-full! But I'm damn proud and relieved to know where I'm going with the full support of my family and friends.

So my friends, the moral of my tale is: Do what you love. Do it well. Take your hobby and turn it into a career. Embrace it. Nurture it. It's never too late. You're never too old or too young.

The secret of success is making your vocation your vacation ~ Mark Twain

The following article was used in the September 2012 of the Carolina Romance Writer's newsletter, The Final Draft. Permission granted to use with proper credit.

January's Speaker

Dennis Clarkston

Interviewing Your Characters

Saturday, January 12

As authors, an idea for a book usually pops up out of the most unusual places. We massage this idea at the start so that we have an idea of the beginning, the ending, and other elements of the novel.

Now, let's use this information to fill in gaps. One way to do this is to interview our characters. Not only do we interview the hero or heroine, but we can interview the antagonist, the secondary characters.

These interviews can give the author another perspective on how the story will go. It provides insight about how the character acts, handles herself/himself, likes/dislikes, etc. Interviewing our character could help get us unstuck in a scene.

The workshop should show various steps used in interviewing characters which should allow the author to gain more insight of the character and the story being written.

Dennis H. Clarkston is a long time resident of Natchitoches Parish, Louisiana. He lives to the west of the city limits of City of Natchitoches. There, he earned a B.S. of Electronic Engineering Technology and a B.A. of Journalism from Northwestern State University.

His interest in writing showed itself in first grade. The blank page seemed to call for him to write. This interest did not rekindle until he turned 24. He has been writing every since. Today, it seems that I am still the happiest when I place my hands on the keyboard and allow my stories flow onto the screen.

Dennis joined RWA and Nola Stars in 1991 and ACFW in 2010. His writing interests cover a variety of areas including romance, science fiction, fantasy, mystery and humor or a combination of them.

February's Meeting

TBA

Saturday, February 9

March Program Written in the Stars 2013

For more information, go to Page 5

The Board

President	Amy Talley
Vice- President	Winnie Griggs
Secretary	Dennis H. Clarkston
Treasurer	Nikki Kirkhart
Member-at-Large	Kimberly Proctor
Community Outreach	Erin Cole
Past President	Dennis H. Clarkston

Committee Chairpersons

Bylaws Chair	
Conference Chair	Winnie Griggs Phyllis Caskey
Contest Chair	
Historian	Dennis H. Clarkston
Librarian	Pauline Bowlin
Newsletter Staff	
Editor	Dennis H. Clarkston
Editorial assistant	Lynn Boyett
NOLA STARS Loop Chair	Kimberly Proctor
NOLA Board Loop	Winnie Griggs
Webmistress	Winnie Griggs
Program Chair	Winnie Griggs
Published Author Liaison	Connie Cox
Welcoming Chair	Kimberly Proctor

NOLA STARS meetings are held on the second Saturday of each month at 10:00 a.m. at Bossier Parish Central Library on Beckett Street, Bossier City, Louisiana, except for the months of March and December. Visitors who are not RWA® members may visit free twice per calendar year. Please visit our website at www.nolastars.com for details on membership and/or application form, or send a request to the address below. Submissions to the NOLA NEWS should be received by the 15th of the months of February, April, June, August, October, and December. Exchange copies, submissions, and notices should be sent to: P.O. Box 5418, Bossier City, Louisiana 71171-5418 or emailed to: garnara@gmail.com. If you do not receive confirmation, please resend and/or call the editor. Electronic Submissions are preferred.

Opinions expressed in the NOLA NEWS are those of the individual author and not necessarily endorsed by RWA® or NOLA STARS. No endorsements or warranties should be taken or implied on any information presented. All submissions may be edited for grammar, space and readability, and will be published at the discretion of the editor. RWA® Chapters may reprint material original to this newsletter, but must give credit to NOLA STARS and the author.

Good News

Dennis H. Clarkston

Spoiler Alert: I finally broke down and did it. Since we did not have any Good News reported for this issue, I made up member and their news. I hope you enjoy this little farce. Thanks. (Big Grin)

“I’ve heard no news is ‘good news’, but to me, no good news could mean ‘bad news.’”

Da Ed Itor, January 2013

Procas Tenator reveals that her books *Later* and *In a Minute* are to be released in March through Afta A. Wile Publications.

Note: Opps, sorry, the books came out last March. He just now got around to sending in the announcement.

Encor Agement signed a contract for a trilogy with Happigo Lucky Productions. Her inspirational tomes, *You Can Accomplish Anything*, *Speak Out*, and *We Can Do This Together* will appear in stores in the following year. She expects a successful run.

Member **Badd Additud** has countered with corresponding tomes of his own from Ohhec No Publications. His works *I Can’t Do It*; *Oh, Shut Up*; and *Get Away From Me* will be out soon. Though having lackluster reviews, Badd stated he is working on a fourth work titles *Who Cares!*

Bichok Jones’ inspirational work, *Get On In And At It*, tells how she forced herself to sit behind her computer running her fingers of the keyboard to produce this story. She stated “If she can do it, so can everyone else.” We are behind you, Bichok.

An finally, a request from **Eddi Torr** asking for contributions to his next anthology titled *Good News*. He states that the pay is ‘non-existent,’ but the work does offer exposure. Deadline for submission is February 18.

Where to Find Us on the Web

NOLA STARS	www.nolastars.com
Rosalyn Alsobrook	home.earthlink.net/~ralsobrook/
Laura Marie Altom	lauramarielaltom.com
Jennifer Blake	www.jenniferblake.com
Dennis H. Clarkston	www.clark-stone.net
Beth Cornelison	www.bethcornelison.com
Connie Cox	www.conniecox.net
Keri Ford	www.keriford.com
Winnie Griggs	www.winniegriggs.com
Sarah Hamer	www.sarahhamer.com
	www.passionateforfiction.com
Cherrie Lynn	cherrielynn.com
Teresa Lynn	www.teresalynn.net
Pepper Phillips	pepperphillips.com
Patti Rowell	www.patriciafrancesrowell.com
Lynn Shurr	www.lynnshurr.com
Liz Talley	www.liztalleybooks.com
Joanna Wayne	www.joannawayne.com
Lenora Worth	www.lenoraworth.com
Cora Zane	www.corazane.com



Editor’s Note: Be sure to send your good news to either Dennis Clarkston at garnara@gmail.com or to Lynn Boyett at AGALY@aol.com

If no one sends us their good news, we can not put it in the newsletter. So, if you have any news you wish to share, please send it to the above email address. We are not allowed to pull it off of the Nolarom loop.



THE NORTH LOUISIANA
STORYTELLERS & AUTHORS
OF ROMANCE

Announces

The 2012 Suzannah Contest Finalists:

The Soldier by Anna Richland

The Winds of Fate by Elizabeth Bysiek

Gladiator Heart by Jenifer Shimpach

Homecoming by Jo Anne Banker

Mirror Reader by Karen Duvall

**His Roman Heart's Desire by Melanie
Meadors**

Saving Simon Merrithew by Myretta Robens

The seven finalists will all be evaluated by our panel
of industry judges to determine the overall winner.

The final round judges are:

Erika Tsang, Avon Romance/Harper Collins

Wanda Ottewell, Harlequin Superromance

Leah Hultenschmidt, Sourcebooks

**Saritza Hernandez, The Corvisiero Literary
Agency**

Alicia Condon, Kensington/Brava

Michelle Grajkowski, 3 Seas Literary Agency

Dr. Julie Nelson, sponsor of The Suzannah

Grand Prize Winner will be announced during the
Written in the Stars 2013 Conference luncheon on
March 2, 2013.

Thank You
All Those Who Participated
in
The Suzannah

Proposed 2013-2014 Board

The candidates for the board for the year starting
April 2012 through March 2013 are

President	Erin Cole
Vice President	Winnie Griggs
Treasurer	Laura Alford
Secretary	Dennis Clarkston
Member-at-Large	Barbara Burnley
Community Outreach	Amy Talley

The chapter will vote on the above candidates at the
February 11 meeting. If anyone wishes to place
her/his name on the list as a candidate, send an email to
Debi King-McMartin at dking@texarkanalaw.com

Membership Renewal

Hello Members, it is that time of year again. The
membership renewal fee of \$24 is due by the February
meeting. After that, the fee jumps to \$29. Remember,
you have to add \$5 if you wish to get the printed
newsletter.

Instructions on paying your dues are on the Nola
Stars web site. (nolastars.com)

Once on the web page, select the "Join Us" button
to get to the renewal information. Then scroll down for
instructions on either registering either electronically or
by snail mail.

To renew or join electronically, just fill out the
online form. At the end of the form, you will press
'submit' and the browser will take you through the
steps to pay through PayPal.

If you wish to pay through mail, download and fill
out the membership form. The membership form
comes in two formats: RTF (Rich Text Format) and
PDF (Portable Document Format).

For those wishing to use snailmail, send the printed
form to the following address:

NOLA STARS
Attn: Membership Coordinator
P. O. Box 5418
Bossier City, LA 71171-5418

For those who may be thinking about running for office, here is a list of officer duties. Please look through these to determine if you can fill any of these positions.

ARTICLE 5 Officers

Section 5.1. Officers. The officers of NOLA STARS shall be the President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary, and Member-at-Large and shall be elected according to the provisions set forth in these Bylaws.

Section 5.2. President. The President shall serve as spokesperson for NOLA STARS; call, set the agenda for, and preside over all meetings of the Board and the members; appoint, with Board approval, such committee chairs as may from time to time be necessary; serve as a nonvoting ex-officio member of all committees except the Nominating Committee; execute chapter business as specified by the Board; appoint, with Board approval, qualified members to fill any officer or director vacancies; and coordinate all activities and fulfill any other obligations designated by the Board. The President shall vote when voting is taken by ballot; when voting is not by ballot, the President shall only vote to break a tie.

Section 5.3. Vice President. The Vice President shall assume the duties of the President and preside over all meetings of the Board and members in the absence of the President; be responsible for planning and overseeing program-related activities undertaken by the chapter, including those at regular meetings and workshops; and fulfill any other obligations designated by the Board.

Section 5.4. Secretary. The Secretary shall be responsible for membership applications and an up-to-date list of chapter members; record attendance; record the minutes of all meetings of the Board of Directors and the membership; keep chapter records, including copies of newsletters, RWA® communications, chapter business correspondence, committee reports, and all other official documents; mail notices; and fulfill any other obligations designated by the Board of Directors.

Section 5.5. Treasurer. The Treasurer shall be responsible for collecting dues; notify the Board of delinquent members; supervise the collection and disbursement of chapter funds; keep the financial records of the chapter in good order; work with the Secretary in maintaining the list of chapter members; provide an accurate and up-to-date financial statement to the Board at least every six months; present the annual audited report to the members and, if required, to RWA®; and fulfill any other obligations designated by the Board of Directors.

Section 5.6. Member-at-Large. The Member-at-Large shall act as liaison for the members to the Board. Be aware of how proposals presented to the Board would affect the members. Act as a representative of a member, if there is a dispute with the board.

Section 5.7. Community Outreach Chair.

2013 Written in the Stars Conference

Friday, March 1 & Saturday, March 2, 2013

The Holiday Inn Financial Plaza
5555 Financial Plaza.

Shreveport, Louisiana

Reservations: 318-688-1877

Ask for NOLA STARS Conference rate

SPEAKER LINEUP (TO DATE)

Allison Pittman	Kerri-Leigh Grady
B. A. Binns	Laura Marie Altom
Barbara Vey	Lenora Worth
Beth Cornelison	Liliana Hart
Betsy St. Amant	Liz Talley
Christa Allan	Lynn Cahoon
Connie Cox	Lynne Gentry
Elizabeth Mazer	Mary Sue Seymour
Janet Lee Barton	Sarah Hamer
Jill Marsal	Tessa Woodward
Jo Davis	Winnie Griggs
Keri Ford	Others TBA

ATTENDING INDUSTRY PROFESSIONALS AGENTS

Jill Marsal, Literary Agent, Marsal Lyon Literary Agency
Mary Sue Seymour, Literary Agent, Seymour Agency

EDITORS

Kerri-Leigh Grady, Editor, Entangled Publishing
Tessa Woodward, Editor, Avon Books
Elizabeth Mazer, Harlequin New York
Karen Reid, Harlequin Canada
Barbara Vey, Contributing Editor and Romance blogger
for Publishers Weekly

REGISTRATION FEES NOLA STARS Members

Before 01/13/13 - \$90 Before 02/23/13 - \$115

Non-NOLA STARS Members

Before 01/15/12 - \$110 Before 02/25/12 - \$135

Last minute registration fee (on or after 02/23/13) is \$160 across the board.

For information, go to the NOLA STARS Web Page:

<http://nolastars.com/conference/>

Questions: Contact the Conference Coordinator:

conf-chair@nolastars.com

NOLA STARS Authors' Releases

Laura Marie Altom

A SEAL's Secret Baby - Aug. '12

The SEAL's Stolen Child - Dec. '12

The SEAL's Valentine - Jan. '13

A Navy SEAL's Surprise Baby - Aug. '13

A SEAL's Bombshell Babies - TBD

A SEAL's Mystery Baby - TBD

The Cowboy SEAL - TBD

Harlequin

Jennifer Blake

The Tuscan's Revenge Wedding (Italian

Billionaires Series) - Oct. '12

Steel Magnolia Press

Beth Cornelison

The Reunion Mission- Black Ops Rescues

Bk 2 - Aug. '12

Cowboy's Texas Rescue- Black Ops

Rescues- Bk 3 - Mar. '13

Silhouette

Colton's Ranch Refuge - Oct. '12

Colton's Wyoming Continuity - Dec. '13

Harlequin

Connie Cox

Return of the Rebel Surgeon - Aug. '12

Harlequin – UK Release

Winnie Griggs

Handpicked Husband - Sept. '12

The Bride Next Door - July '13

Harlequin

Alyssia Kirkhart

Enraptured - Oct. '12

Cherrie Lynn

Leave Me Breathless - Nov. '12

Samhain Publishing

Pepper Phillips

Unconditionally - Aug. '12

Lagniappe ePress

Lynn Shurr

Mardi Gras Madness - Sept. '12

A Trashy Affair - Jan. '13

Paradise for a Sinner - Mar. '13

Courir de Mardi Gras - Aug. '13

L&L Dreamspell

Charles Sutherland

The Lost Dragoonier - The Chronicles of

Susah Book Two - Dec. '12

Narrow Way Press LLC

Liz Talley

Under the Autumn Sky - Jul. '12

The Road to Bayou Bridge - Sept. '12

The Spirit of Christmas, - Dec. '12

His Uptown Girl - June '13

Harlequin

Joanna Wayne

Live Ammo - July '12

Big Shot - Oct. '12

Harlequin

Lenora Worth

The Diamond Secret - Aug. '12

The Life of Riley - Nov. '12

Sweetheart Bride - Feb. '13

Lone Star Protector - June '13

Harlequin

Note: Please look through the above Author Release information to check for accuracy. If there is an adjustment or addition needed, let me know at garnara@gmail.com -- Dennis Clarkston, Editor.



NOLA STARS North Louisiana Storytellers and Authors of Romance

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