

# North Louisiana Storytellers and Authors of Romance

## NOLA



## NEWS

Chapter 40 of Romance Writers of America

Issue 2/13

March/April 2013

## Where Do Your Ideas Come From?

By Kathy Ivan

How many times have you heard this question? I think every time somebody hears the words "writer" or "author," it seems to be the first question that springs to peoples minds.

Most of us have vivid imaginations. Try thinking back to when you were a child. As children we made up games to play with our friends. We'd go outside into the yard or onto the front porch and spend countless hours living and playing in our imaginary world. There were no limits and no boundaries to confine us. We sang songs to music only we could hear the words and melody to. We'd dance and twirl with abandon, seeing the movements and hearing the rhythms in our minds and our hearts. We even made up tall tales to tell all our friends about how we spent our summer vacation.

Stepping forward from the imaginings of childhood, our minds still form and shape the images and pictures of everyday life into cohesive (at least we hope) storytelling. We watch, we absorb, and we contemplate. We listen, we sniff, we taste. The people and places around us are an endless source of inspiration.

Let's start with the lady in line at the grocery store in front of you, a toddler seated in her cart. Her phone rings and even before she answers, her expression fills with so much hope and anticipation it nearly breaks your heart. Is it her husband or lover on the phone? Or is it a call from the doctor's office calling to tell her the biopsy was benign? Maybe it's the employment office telling her she got the job she's been desperately seeking for months. The wheels in your mind can spin the tale in any direction you want, just from watching thirty seconds in the life of a stranger.

Maybe you're in your favorite coffee shop and you see a man and a woman seated across from each other.

They're talking softly, furtive whispers of conversation, animated with gestures on his part. Yet the more he talks, the further his companion seems to shrink back into her seat. What's their story?

You're watching television and the news comes on. There's a story about a major pharmaceutical company's new breakthrough weight loss miracle drug the FDA just approved. As the reporter drones on about all the wonderful attributes of this medication, they show pictures of overweight people. If you're a suspense writer (like me LOL) imagine where this story could go. What if this new wonder drug really did help people lose weight—but there's a teeny tiny side effect they didn't mention. In a select few cases, it caused homicidal tendencies—sending the individual taking it on a killing spree. Think of all the possibilities, all the wondrous directions one simple news story can take you?

Stories and ideas are everywhere around you if you just look for them. Let your inner child come out and play, free your imagination to frolic and dance and sing and you'll begin to see where all my ideas come from.

Kathy Ivan is busy working on her next story, people watching to find inspiration. Her debut romantic suspense, *Desperate Choices*, was the 2012 Winner of the OKRWA International Digital Award for suspense. Her novella, *Second Chances*, is now available from Amazon, Barnes and Noble, and other e-retailers.

The following article appeared in the November/December 2012 issue of the *DARA News*, the newsletter of the Dallas Area Romance Authors. This article may be reprinted with proper credit to the author and chapter. Please note, this article first appeared on the Not Your Usual Suspects Blog, September 2012.

# March Program Written in the Stars 2013

*For more information, go to Page 4*

**Friday, March 1**  
**Saturday, March 2**

---

## April's Meeting

TBA

**Saturday, April 13**

---

## May's Meeting

**Robin Miller**

**Goal, Motivation and Conflict**

**Saturday, May 11**

---

## Attention Nola Stars Members

**If you have suggestions for future programs or speakers, please contact Winnie Griggs with your suggestions. If you have a program you wish to give at RWA National or any other conference but would like to practice first, contact Winnie at [WinnieGriggs@aol.com](mailto:WinnieGriggs@aol.com).**

### *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 Phylis Caskey
Contest Chair	
Librarian	Nikki Kirkhart
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](http://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 15<sup>th</sup> 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](mailto: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

### Lynn Boyett

*Don't only practice your art,  
But force your way into its Secrets.  
For it and knowledge can  
Raise men to the Divine.*

Ludwig van Beethoven

**Lyn Morgan** reports that "Skookum", the movie (written by Lyn Morgan and Debi King), will be filmed in April. Lyn is sewing the Bigfoot costume and Debi is cooking and freezing meals to be taken to the set twice daily. Even after a setback or two, they aren't afraid of work, which is the backbone of the movie industry. Nothing succeeds like success. Congratulations.

**Beth Cornelison** shared that her workshop "No More Sagging Middles" has been picked up for the 2013 RWA National conference in Atlanta. It should be a class for consideration for all attending the conference. Recognition by one's peers is an honor.

**Sarah Head** had a surprise when Shreve Memorial Library sought permission to enter her book, *Look Behind You*, in the Ark-La-Tex Author Fair Contest. She didn't win the contest, but it's on their "also to be read" list. They requested that she send a copy of the book and her photograph to be displayed in their event advertising and promotion of the fair. Immortality can be gained through our work. Good job.

Not only did she gained PRO status in December, **Dianne Gibbons** signed a contract with Soul Mate Publishing. They accepted *To Love and Protect* for publication. This will be Dianne's first published novel. Dianne also states that her second book is in the final stages of completion but said it wasn't a sequel. Here's for them accepting the second one.

Steel Magnolia Press released two new boxed sets of **Jennifer Blake's** back list books in January. These are all mainstream contemporary romances, and include *Love and Smoke*, *Joy and Anger*, *Wildest Dreams*, *Shameless*, and *Tigress*. In addition, her medieval Three Graces trilogy was published in France, Russia and

## Where to Find Us on the Web

NOLA STARS	<a href="http://www.nolastars.com">www.nolastars.com</a>
Rosalyn Alsobrook	<a href="http://home.earthlink.net/~ralsobrook/">home.earthlink.net/~ralsobrook/</a>
Laura Marie Altom	<a href="http://lauramariealtom.com">lauramariealtom.com</a>
Jennifer Blake	<a href="http://www.jenniferblake.com">www.jenniferblake.com</a>
Dennis H. Clarkston	<a href="http://www.clark-stone.net">www.clark-stone.net</a>
Beth Cornelison	<a href="http://www.bethcornelison.com">www.bethcornelison.com</a>
Connie Cox	<a href="http://www.conniecox.net">www.conniecox.net</a>
Keri Ford	<a href="http://www.keriford.com">www.keriford.com</a>
Winnie Griggs	<a href="http://www.winniegriggs.com">www.winniegriggs.com</a>
Sarah Hamer	<a href="http://www.sarahhamer.com">www.sarahhamer.com</a>
	<a href="http://www.passionateforfiction.com">www.passionateforfiction.com</a>
Cherrie Lynn	<a href="http://cherrielynn.com">cherrielynn.com</a>
Pepper Phillips	<a href="http://pepperphillips.com">pepperphillips.com</a>
Liz Talley	<a href="http://www.liztalleybooks.com">www.liztalleybooks.com</a>
Joanna Wayne	<a href="http://www.joannawayne.com">www.joannawayne.com</a>
Lenora Worth	<a href="http://www.lenoraworth.com">www.lenoraworth.com</a>
Cora Zane	<a href="http://www.corazane.com">www.corazane.com</a>

Poland in 2012. She'll be honored as one of the "Legends of Romance" at the RT Book Lovers Convention 2013 in Kansas City, May 1-5.

**Sarah (Sally) Hamer** expresses her excitement over being asked to be a partner in and an acquiring editor for Gilded Dragonfly Books, a small press out of Atlanta. Sally states that they are accepting submissions of all genre fiction.

More good news, **Sally** will have a short story in the anthology *Deja Vu Carousel* that Gilded Dragonfly Books will publish on February 23. She said it is a time-travel to 16<sup>th</sup> Century Scotland. She plans to have copies of the book available at Nola Stars Conference in March.



**Editor's Note: Be sure to send your good news to either Dennis Clarkston at [garnara@gmail.com](mailto:garnara@gmail.com) or to Lynn Boyett at [AGALY@aol.com](mailto:AGALY@aol.com)**



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

### 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

**Everybody**

**\$160**

For information, go to the NOLA STARS Web Page:

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

Questions: Contact the Conference Coordinator:

[conf-chair@nolastars.com](mailto:conf-chair@nolastars.com)

## 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

Grand Prize Winner will be announced during the  
Written in the Stars 2013 Conference luncheon on  
March 2, 2012.

## 2013-2014 Board

Board for the year starting April 2013 through  
March 2014 are

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

Remember, the chapter still needs members to  
volunteer for various positions. Please keep you  
mind open and volunteer for various jobs that are  
available. An example of chairperson positions can  
be viewed on page 2.

If anyone wishes to volunteer for any chair position,  
contact Erin Cole.

# A Writing Schedule to Fit Your Life

By Joan Leacott

SMART goals. You know the acronym for getting a job done:

Specific  
Measureable  
Attainable  
Relevant  
Timely

Like many writers, you have the “Specific” and “Measurable”—a word count you need to achieve. You have “Relevant” and “Timely”—you’re a writer working to a deadline. You’ve done the math and calculated a daily word count.

And yet, like many writers, published or not, you struggle with “Attaining” your goals while maintaining your sanity. When things get hairy, try some Analysis. Not of your book’s plot, outline, or summary. But the way your daily life interacts with your writing life.

## Go Weekly for the Count

Count the number of weeks between Now and your Target Date. Divide this by the number of words outstanding. This gives your Weekly Word Count.

## A Forkful of Fudge Helps the Freak-out Go Down...

The slightest slip off target in a rigid schedule will increase stress levels. Build leeway into your schedule to allow for unforeseen events.

Three methods are:

Move your target date back by a week, e.g. instead of November 1st, use a date of October 24th and recalculate your word count

Increase your daily word count target by 10 – 15%

Use a 5-day week, or 4 days, or 3 days

Recalculate your Daily Word Count to incorporate the fudge factor.

## Not All Goals Are Measured in Words

Writing has goals other than word count: editing, getting critiques, revising, writing a blurb, synopsis and query letter.

Your life has goals other than writing: family, friends, work, chores etc.

I have a goal to sit for the Grade One Piano Exam in June 2013, so I schedule an hour a day at my piano.

Whatever they are, write them ALL down. Don’t forget “You Time”.

## Get Real

Get yourself a calendar, set up a spreadsheet, use an online calendar, or go primitive with a pad and pencil.

Slot all goals that are NOT WRITING into a weekly schedule. Whatever time is left is for writing.

Nothing left? Can you work while waiting? Can you get up early? Stay up late? Work at lunch? Delegate chores? Hire a teen?

Still too demanding? If you can, move the target date to give yourself some breathing room.

## Tweak it

In January, I set my writing goal as 1K a Day, 5 Days a Week. The schedule worked fine until I added another goal, social media. Guess what? My word count tanked.

I went back to my weekly schedule and slotted my new goal into the two non-writing days. No, it wasn’t that simple. It took discipline and another tweak, but last week, I wrote 6,029 words.

Joan writes contemporary multi-generational novels featuring the lives, loves, and scandals of small-town Clarence Bay, Canada. Drop by Joan’s blog and website at [joanleacott.com](http://joanleacott.com)

The following article appeared in the November 2012 issue of *romANTICS*, the newsletter of the Toronto Romance Writers, Susan Haire, editor. It may be reused by RWA chapters with appropriate credit to the author and chapter.

## NOLA STARs Authors' Releases

Laura Marie Altom  
*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  
*Colton's Ranch Refuge* - Oct. '12  
*Colton's Wyoming Continuity* - Dec. '13  
**Harlequin**  
*Cowboy's Texas Rescue- Black Ops Rescues- Bk 3* - Mar. '13  
**Silhouette**

Connie Cox  
*Return of the Rebel Surgeon* - Oct. '12  
**Harlequin**  
 Winnie Griggs  
*Handpicked Husband* - Sept. '12  
*The Bride Next Door* - July '13  
*A Family For Christmas* - Oct. '12  
**Harlequin**

Alyssia Kirkhart  
*Enraptured* - Oct. '12

Cherrie Lynn  
*Leave Me Breathless* - Nov. '12  
**Samhain Publishing**

Pepper Phillips  
*The Christmas Gift* - Dec. '12  
**Lagniappe ePress**

Charles Sutherland  
*The Lost Dragoner - The Chronicles of Susah Book Two* - Dec. '12  
**Narrow Way Press LLC**

Liz Talley  
*The Road to Bayou Bridge* - Sept. '12  
*The Spirit of Christmas*, - Dec. '12  
*His Uptown Girl* - June '13  
**Harlequin**

Joanna Wayne  
*Big Shot* - Oct. '12  
**Harlequin**

Lenora Worth  
*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](mailto:garnara@gmail.com) -- Dennis Clarkston, Editor.



NOLA STARs North Louisiana Storytellers and Authors of Romance  
 P. O. Box 5418  
 Bossier City, Louisiana 71171-5418