



The Write Touch

RWA Chapter 13
Volume 101, No. 2
April 2008

FAB 5 2008 has been Fabulous!

By Mary Jo Scheibl, FAB 5 Contest Coordinator

It's early April and the contest entries have been judged, the category coordinators have figured out scores, the finalists for each category have been announced and these entries are now in the hands of the final judge listed for each category!

We had some real successes already. Unlike the past two years, FAB 5 did not have to cancel any categories because of too few entries. Even better, we had to turn away some entrants as we reached the maximum number for one category. Fortunately those entrants were able to fit their entries into other categories.

This was the first year we accepted electronic entries as well as paper ones. This new rule caused some interesting glitches and a real learning experience for my category coordinators. However, they met the challenge with patience and with great ideas for making the process better for next year. Thank you, dear coordinators!


The electronic option was used by most of our entrants this year as was paying for the contest using the

PayPal option. We had many more entrants from other countries entering this year. These foreign entrants, all RWA members, were from Canada, New Zealand, Australia, France, Bulgaria and a few other places I can remember right now. But you get the idea—WisRWA's gone global.

We will post the finalists on the WisRWA general and Alert loops. We will also post on the WisRWA Web site and several other loops so the word will get out.

FAB 5 has a great reputation and this is due in part to the first round judges who provide excellent feedback and constructive criticism. While the bulk of our judges were WisRWA members, I needed to send out a call for additional judges and RWA members from many states and different countries stepped up to help. Thank you, first round judges.

I believe when all the information is tallied and the final placements are announced we will see that FAB 5 2008 will be one of our "great" ones.

Congratulations to all the finalists. Special congratulations to the WisRWA finalists. See page 3 for the list of finalists. 

Volunteer Opportunity: Write Touch Readers' Award Contest

The 2008 Write Touch Readers' Award Contest is drawing to a close and WisRWA needs a volunteer to coordinate the 2009 contest. It's a growing contest and has plenty of judges eager for their new books each year. Coordinating the contest has been great fun and a real privilege, but after two years, it's time to pass it on.

The new coordinator will receive an updated detailed timeline and instruction sheet to follow. We'll also include suggestions for sharing the work among a committee (preferably comprised of two or three members of the same area group).

If you'd like to interact with our reader-judges and see the latest books of well over 100 authors, this contest is for you!

Thanks—and e-mail or call if you have questions.

Virginia McCullough
vemccullough@earthlink.net/920-662-9633

Turn to page 5 for a list of this year's Write Touch Finalists.

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The Board of Directors meets twice a year, in spring and fall.

*Area Contacts are the liaisons between the general membership and the executive board.

The *Write Touch* Newsletter is published quarterly. For more information, or for reprints, contact Rachel Berens-VanHeest, Newsletter Editor at reberens@charter.net.

The chapter's Web site, www.wisrwa.org, is updated monthly. Submit changes and new information to the Web site coordinator, Meagan Hatfield, at meaganhatfield@charter.net

President's Report

by Mary Jo Scheibl

It's early April as I write this, and vestiges of a very hard winter still linger. I long for a brave crocus or two. The sight of them would lift my winter-weary spirits and most likely those of other WisRWA members who've been enduring this very long, very difficult and very snowy winter. For those of you who got away from it all or live in sunny warmer climates (think *Dulcie* here, now better known as *Delia DeLeest*), well, I'm not *too* jealous.

Since our last newsletter, the subcommittee for revising the WisRWA bylaws met and did their job beautifully. When I sent the revised bylaws in to RWA for pre-approval before presenting our final vote, we got them back with very few changes to be made; only one change in dates we need to use for our fiscal year and two or three typos. So now your job begins: to read these revised bylaws. They are posted on the WisRWA Web site in the Members Only section, and the WisRWA Alert Loop and the WisRWA general loop in the files section. Then send in your ballot in the SASE provided so we can return the membership approved bylaws for RWA's final stamp of approval.

SO PLEASE MARK YOUR BALLOTS AND RETURN THEM! Do this by the April 28 deadline noted on the ballot so we can meet the May 1 deadline.

Along with the revised bylaws, our board realizes we must update our Policies and Procedures Manual to accurately reflect bylaws changes and what we are now doing as common practice. This review, revising and rewriting will start in June. If the board calls on you for help, please do so.

Our Write Touch conference, "Love Is In The Cards" will be in May. I hope to see many of you

there! Thanks in advance to **Donna Kowalczyk** for all the work she has put in to pull everything together.

Our two contests, The Write Touch Readers' Award for published authors and the FAB 5 for unpublished authors will announce their winners at the conference. While not all the final tallying has been completed for the contests, it appears both have been profitable once more. This is excellent, as they provide funds for our organization.

Come summer, WisRWA will be having elections for officers and Area Contacts. Please vote and follow the directions given so your vote can be counted. Even more important, if you are approached to be a nominee or want to run for the WisRWA Board, please let me know.

Our treasurer, **Jamie Kersten**, indicates we have 154 members in WisRWA at this time.

Our treasurer, **Sandee Turriff** has been on sabbatical for the past several weeks. She is working on the treasurer's report as I write this. However, when I looked over the balances and expenses and the amount of dollars in our PayPal account for the contest fees, I'd say we are still solvent. Sandee will have a full report ready for our general meeting in May.

I'm continuing my practice of highlighting a WisRWA volunteer by focusing on someone from the Green Bay area. **Shirley Cayer** is a tiny woman with a tenacity of spirit that she uses to get things done. Lucky for WisRWA and for the Green Bay area, she includes us in her sphere of volunteerism.

Shirley has been a WisRWA member for 11 years. During those years she's served as a Co-Area Contact and Area Contact. She's been a FAB 5 first round judge for many years, and as the contest coordinator, I so appreciate judges who take on this task


President's Report (continued)

year after year. Thank you, Shirley.

Shirley volunteered to restart the WisRWA printed newsletter and served as editor for three years. She did a fantastic job on that. She's coordinated the Barnes & Noble Valentine's Day book signing for four years. This event highlights participating WisRWA romance writers. I've even heard that chocolate is sometimes available at these events. She's served on several subcommittees as needed and written many publicity articles for the Green Bay Area chapter and our state chapter. She's also organized and/or given helpful programs for the Green Bay area.

When I asked Shirley why she vol-

unteered, she answered with a question: "Why not?" She believes being a member of WisRWA demands more than paying your monetary dues. She believes a volunteer gets more from the experience of volunteering than she or he gives. She believes members must interact and support each other and volunteering in some way accomplishes those tasks. Furthermore, Shirley believes strongly that she's gained more from all she's done for WisRWA and her Green Bay chapter than she can ever express. How lucky for us we have her.

I speak for WisRWA when I say, "Thank you, Shirley, for your giving heart." 

Love is in the Cards II

It's so hard to believe the 2008 conference is just around the corner! We have another amazing weekend planned here in Green Bay with NY Times Bestselling author Lori Foster headlining, USA Today Bestselling author Susan Kearney and Bestselling author Janice Maynard. We have a great lineup of agents and editors including Hilary Sares, Rose Hilliard, and Jennifer Schober. I'm looking forward to seeing you all there!
—Donna Kowalczyk - Conference Chair

2008 Feb 5 Finalists

All listings done alphabetically by finalist's last name.
**denotes WisRWA member

Erotic Romance

Final Judge: Diane Carlile, Senior Editor, *The Wild* Rose Press
Cynthia Arends, *Wings of Desire*
**Jamie Kersten, *Work it Out*
Laura Logan, *Purrrfect Passion*
Lori Philbin, *Bluebeard's Hunger*
Barbara Zukowski, *Love Rocks*

Paranormal

Final Judge: Nephele Tempest, agent, *The Knight Agency*
Lauren Daughtry, *Heartbreaker*
Ann Hinnenkamp, *Dyad Quest*
Cathy Leming, *Angels At Almack's*

Michalea Moore, *Lord Of Abydos*
Moira Rogers, *Big Easy*

Romantic Suspense

Final Judge: Kim Whalen, agent, *Trident Media Group*
**Sandra DeTaranto, *Vegas, Baby*
Diane M. Garner, *Redemption*
Pamela Kopfler, *Queen's Justice*
Billie Jean Te, *It's Only Music*
Sharon Wray, *Guardian's Promise*

Series Contemporary Long/Short

Final Judge: Wanda Ottewell, Senior Editor, *Harlequin SuperRomance*
**Kate Bowman, *Lani Meets Her Match*

Jan Hoffman, *Coming Home*
Theresa Ragan, *Better Late Than Never*
Anna Sugden, *Bad Boy, Good Man*
Jennifer Wilson, *Claire's Wish*

Single Title

Final Judge: Deb Werksman, Senior Editor, *Sourcebooks Publishing*
Kim Duffy, *Saving Stoney Brook*
**Jamie Kersten, *Family Recipe*
Marie Robison, *A Cottage By The Lake*
**Anne Stratton, *The Last Codex*
Joanna Westreich, *Risking It All*

Women's Fiction with Romantic Elements

Final Judge: Hilary

Teeman, editor, *St. Martin's Press*
Ann Grace Crowder, *Becoming Kay Callahan*
Rachel Goldsworthy, *Pasteur's Angel*
**Lorrie Kruse, *A Life Worth Living*
**Virginia McCullough, *Keeping Secrets*
**Virginia McCullough, *Island Healing*

Historical

Final Judge: Shauna Summers, Senior Editor, *Bantam Dell Publishing*
Pamela Bolton-Holifield, *Lost In Love*
Beverly Kendal, *The Gauntlet*
Robin La Fevers, *Nightshade*
Donna Rosenbloom, *Entrapping The Earl*
Deb Yates, *Heaven Sent*

Five Mistakes Even Published Authors Can Make

By Anna Schmidt

#1: Not looking at the BIG Picture

This one is a double-edged sword:

First, writers are notorious for trying to fit writing in among the many other demands of their busy lives. Multi-published authors are as likely as are those who are just beginning to bemoan a lack of time to write.

Because time (and project) management skills are important for a writer, take a moment to answer the following:

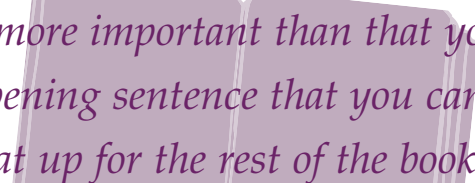
- What is your overall goal—your desired outcome?
- What is your timeframe for accomplishing that?
- What are the obstacles/conflicts?
- What are the primary actions you need to achieve?
- What is the goal/purpose of each action?
- Identify your milestones in a continuum
- Identify obstacles/conflicts that could be delegated
- Establish a project planning/scheduling sheet for the overall project and for each sub-action
- Develop a pie chart of your time use now and determine what will have to shift to provide time for writing.

Second, you must have a clear vision of your novel from the outset—not just an idea. There is no question that as you write the book it will take turns and byways that you never planned on in the beginning, but that does not negate the fact that you must know at the outset what you want this book to be about and why whatever that is will have universal appeal to an audience of readers.

Consider your idea against the following criteria:

- What is the appeal of your story for a mass market?
- How is it a new twist on a universal idea?
- Why should you be the one to write this?
- How much experience and knowledge do you already have about the characters and their lifestyles and problems?
- How much knowledge do you have about settings, careers or

you can—and that you keep that up for the rest of the book. A good battle plan is to think of the reader as walking into the middle of something. The reader is so drawn in by the opening scene that she is willing to catch up with what came before later. Many an experienced writer—including me—will tell you that we often write the first three chapters and then wind up starting the book with chapter three.



Nothing is more important than that you write the very best opening sentence that you can—and that you keep that up for the rest of the book.

other technical elements you plan to use in the story?

- Have you targeted some prospective publishing houses and if so, why?
- Do you know who the top fiction authors are at that house? Have you read their stuff? How does your story measure up?
- Do you have a clear understanding of the publisher's guidelines and "personality"?
- Does your book fit within those guidelines?

#2: Openings That Don't Engage the Reader

You have maybe three paragraphs to catch the editor's (or freelance reviewer's) attention and keep her reading and wanting more. Why? Because in today's busy world you have a little less than that to capture the average reader. Nothing is more important than that you write the very best opening sentence that

In addition to action, the setting is important; use well-selected details. Also, at least one of the characters present at the beginning must be either hero, heroine or villain. Finally, the reader immediately needs to know point of view.

#3: Don't Front Load Your Novel

See #2. Many authors, especially beginning authors, make the mistake of frontloading their novels with too much back story. The back story is the motivation that is driving the character's conflict in your novel. It's what happened to bring the characters to each pivotal moment. A general rule of thumb is that you won't need to provide in-depth details of the back story until about Chapter Three. Even then you want to be careful not to stop the forward progress of the story by spending too much time on back story.

Read your opening three chap-

ters and mark everything in them that is intended to provide the reader with a set-up for the action. How much of that does the reader really need to know at the outset? Have you used a sentence where the perfect descriptive word would do? Have you provided enough information so the reader is not confused, but not so much that she is bored?

#4: Watch out for giant leaps of faith

One of the pitfalls of not frontloading is that you're grooving along writing your novel and you forget that the reader doesn't necessarily know what you know—at least not yet. This is where having somebody else read your stuff can really pay off. Of course, you'll need to assure them that you really do want their honest opinion and ideas. And you'll have to remind yourself not to get defensive or argumentative when they take you at your word. My personal rule of thumb is that


if something was enough of a problem to stop a reader and make her turn back a few pages or puzzle over something, there's a problem. It may not be major, but it's there, and if it happens for more than one reader in exactly the same spot, then I'd better pay close attention to it.

#5: Avoid punchline or sound byte syndrome

Punchline syndrome is when the author is in too much of a hurry. The author knows the outcome and rushes to get there before the reader can figure it out on her own.

Sound byte syndrome is when an author is so wrapped up in impressing the reader with his or her lyrical prose that the story and its characters become secondary. One symptom of this is things like body parts taking on a life of their own—*her eyes quickly traveled both aisles of the church*. Another symptom is when as a writer you sit there agonizing over how to say something relatively ordinary in a

different way. But what you come up with is not the way you would say it in ordinary speech and you've never heard anyone say anything remotely similar. A third symptom is when every page and paragraph is filled to overflowing with flowery or offbeat-for-the-sake-of-offbeat metaphors and adjectives.

And in the vein of "Underpromise but over-deliver," here's one more: WRITING IS A BUSINESS! Keep remembering that as you write. Your publisher (or hoped-for publisher) has stockholders, boards of trustees, and others who could care less about your story and who could not care more about the bottom line. For them the only happy ending is a book that sells—and that, my friends, trickles all the way down the line to the editor or assistant editor who reads those first three paragraphs of your novel and makes the decision to keep reading—or not! 

Anna Schmidt will be presenting at WisRWA's 2008 Love is in the Cards II conference.

2008 Write Touch Finalists

All listings done alphabetically by finalist's last name.

**denotes WisRWA member

Short/Long

Contemporary

Linda Conrad, *Shadow Whispers*
Holly Jacobs, *The House on Briar Hill Road*
Geri Krotow, *A Rendezvous to Remember*
Linda Warren, *Once a Cowboy*

Erotica/Romantica

Lacey Alexander, *Voyeur*
Elizabeth Amber, *Nicholas, The Lords of Satyr*

Karen Kelley, *Double Dating With the Dead*
Sharon Page, *Blood Red*

Romantic Suspense

Valerie Hansen, *Shadow of Turning*
Brenda Novak, *Dead Giveaway*
Brenda Novak, *Dead Right*

Contemporary Single Title

**Anna Jeffery, *Sweet Return*
Susan Mallery, *Tempting*
Lori Wilde, *There Goes the Bride*

Mainstream with Romantic Elements

Claire Cross, *All or Nothing*
Marlo Schalesky, *Veil of Fire*
**Kathy Steffen, *First, There is a River*
Karen White, *Learning to Breathe*

Historical

**Kathryn Albright, *The Angel and the Outlaw*
Victoria Alexander, *What a Lady Wants*
Victoria Alexander, *A Little Bit Wicked*
Candice Hern, *Lady be Bad*

Inspirational

Nikki Arana, *As I Have Loved You*
**Lynn Cote, *Dangerous Secrets*
Valerie Hansen, *A Treasure of the Heart*
Shirley Jump, *Back to Mr. & Mrs.*
Mae Nunn, *Mom in the Middle*

Paranormal

**Lori Devoti, *Unbound*
Patti O'Shea, *In the Midnight Hour*
C.L. Wilson, *Lord of the Fading Land*

Author News

Kathryn Albright has been offered a two-book contract with Harlequin Historicals.

Susanne Saville's vampire romance *Vampire Close* is up for "Best Heroine" in the Ancient City Romance Writers' Anne Bonney Readers' Choice Award.

Laura Iding recently signed a four book contract with Mills and Boon for their medical romances.

DeeAnne Wildes-Mickelson sold her second manuscript, *Hedda's Sword*, to Samhain Publishing.

Rowena Cherry's Web site is the latest recipient of the Preditors & Editors' Author's Site of Excellence. Her book *Insufficient Mating Material* won the CAPA award for Best Fantasy Romance of 2007 as well as the SingleTitles.com Best Book of 2007 with Strong Romantic Elements. It is also up for awards at Single Titles for a Paranormal with Strong Romantic

elements; at theromancestudio for a CAPA Award in the Fantasy category; and at Long and Short reviews.com as a LASR Award nominee.

Anna Schmidt has contracts for three more historical inspirational set on the romantic island of Nantucket and written for Steeple Hill, Love Inspired Historical.

Two WisRWA authors are finalists in the Gayle Wilson Award of Excellence: **Lori Devoti** for *Unbound* and **Anna Jeffrey** for *Sweet Return*.

Sandra Marshall signed her first contract January 9, 2008 with Forbidden Publications for her book *Addiction*.


Deb Maher's manuscript *Hearts in Winter* has finaled in Silicon Valley RW's "Gotcha!" contest.

JL Wilson is an Eppie finalist for Your Saving Grace. Wilson also has signed contracts for three books: *Brilliant Disguise* with Resplendence Publishing, *Sun, Surf and Sandy*

Strangulation with Wild Rose Press, and *The History Patrol: Temperance* with Cerridwen Press.

An anthology featuring a story by **Christine DeSmet** won first place in the EPIC contest. The story is "Mrs. Claus and the Moonstone Murder," in *Tales from the Treasure Trove, Vol. 3*.

Jane Toombs has signed contracts for *Mischievous Music Duet* to Amber Quill Press (two Regency novellas in one book: "Mischievous Matchmaker" and "Music of the Heart") and *Unwanted*, the second book in her Underworld series to Crescent Moon Press.

Four WisRWA authors are finalists in Colorado Romance Writers 2008 Award of Excellence Contest. Short Contemporary: *Bride for a Single Dad* by **Laura Iding**; Single Title: *Sweet Return* by **Anna Jeffrey**; Mainstream with Romantic Elements: *First, There Is A River* by **Kathy Steffen**; Inspirational: *Dangerous Secrets* by **Lyn Cote**. 

New Releases

March

Laura Iding
The Firefighter and the Single Mom
Harlequin Mills and Boon
Eden Rivers
Nature's Pentacle
Loose Id

Christine DeSmet
Mischief in Moonstone Series
Whiskey Creek Press

April

Kristina Diesen
Two of a Kind

Whiskey Creek Press
Torrid

Lori Handeland
"Mommy for Rent"
Mothers of the Year
Harlequin Superromance

Jane Toombs
Unwise
Crescent Moon Press

Jane Toombs
Forsworn
New Concepts Publishing

May

Isabel Sharpe
As Good As It Got
HarperCollins

Helen Brenna
Peak Performance
Harlequin NASCAR

Anna Schmidt
Slingshot Moves
Harlequin NASCAR

Jane Toombs
The Dark Lighthouse
Champagne Books

June

Lori Devoti
Wild Hunt
Silhouette Nocturne

Jannifer Hoffman
Secrets of the Heart
Resplendence Publishing

July

Anna Schmidt
Seaside Cinderella
Love Inspired Historical, Steeple Hill

Roxi Romano
The Sex Slave
Red Sage Publishing

August

Shari Anton
Magic in His Kiss
Grand Central Publishing

September

Kathryn Albright
The Rebel and the Lady
Harlequin Historicals

Jannifer Hoffman
Secret Sacrifices

Resplendence Publishing
Laura Iding
The Surgeon's Secret
Baby Wish Harlequin Medical

December

Carrie Lofty
What a Scoundrel Wants
Zebra Debut

Anna Schmidt
Mistletoe Reunion
Love Inspired Steeple Hill

Jannifer Hoffman
Rough Edges
Resplendence Publishing

Spring Cleaning Your Manuscript: Thirteen Considerations

By Brenda Nelson-Davis

Happy Spring! I've been studying seed catalogs waiting for spring and now, it's finally here. And with spring comes spring-cleaning time!

Almost anything can be tidied up. That includes our manuscripts. Here are 13 tips to help you get the cobwebs out of the manuscripts gathering dust in your desk drawer.

1. Just as you go through closets and remove out-of-style clothes, search through your manuscript and **eliminate unnecessary adverbs**. You'll usually find the adverbs linked up with weak verbs.

2. **Replace weak verbs with stronger ones**. Ted *rocketed* around the bases reads better than Ted *ran fast* around the bases.

3. **Get rid of adjective strings**. For example: You might change "Mary threw the light reddish ball" to "Mary threw the pink ball."

4. Ask yourself: **Is there a simpler way I can say this?** Sometimes one word can replace a whole phrase. For example, I wanted to describe the white part of a person's eye. After researching, I discovered it's called "sclera." Using sclera got rid of a bit of wordiness.

5. **Change passive sentences into active sentences**. Make sure someone is doing the action in your sentences. "Frank stole the cookies" sounds infinitely better than "The cookies were stolen by Frank."

6. Remember those comfy old slippers you love wearing around the house? The fuchsia faux fur has turned a dull gray rose and the sole flaps at the toes. They don't enhance your image, but you adore them. Likewise, **many writers have pet words that don't add to their manuscripts**. Find out what yours tend to be, and put them out with the trash. Examples include: *only, just, that, okay, all right, and, and then.*

7. **Check your pronouns**. Is it clear who/what you're referring to? *Juan and Jose scrambled for the sword. He got it and swung, parting his fingers from his left hand. Who got the sword and whose fingers are now on the floor?*

Ever repair a shattered vase? You have to make sure the pieces fit together well before you can successfully glue your vase together. Good writing is like that.

8. **Look for redundancies**. Areas where you've restated something. For example: *His fist clenched, Ron yelled, "I'm so angry!" His face was a mask of fury. Ron was mad.* Why state the obvious? It annoys the reader.

9. Ever repair a shattered vase? You have to make sure the pieces fit together well before you can successfully glue your vase together. Good writing is like that. **Things need to follow in a logical order**. In other words, keep the cart behind the horse. Make sure reactions are in the right sequence. Passages like this can confuse readers.

Ahmad ducked as he covered his ears. Bang! John dropped his gun. "Look out," John cried. The chambered bullet shot from the barrel.

10. **Follow the one-thing-at-a-time rule**. If you pull out all the stuff in your closets at once, you'll have a mess. That same mayhem happens when you throw too much at your characters before they can react. You get this:

"Tied to the railroad track as Engine 109 sped toward her, Penelope considered Dustin's proposal and remembered the time he'd kissed her on their first date. How luscious his lips had tasted after he bought her a sassafras at the salon. She said, 'Yes, I'd be happy to be your wife, if you'd just untie my hands before the train arrives.'"

These complex situations baffle the best of us. Here's how the same scene

might read one stimulus at time.

The tracks rumbled as Engine 109 sped toward her. Penelope wriggled her fingers, trying to free herself. Dustin ran over.

"Help, Dustin!"

"Only if you marry me," Dustin said with a smirk. Without waiting for her answer, he knelt, opened his pocket knife and cut through Penelope's bonds.

She rolled off the track. Gathering her in his arms, Dustin kissed her.

Penelope tasted sassafras on his luscious lips. "Of course I'll marry you. I've wanted to since our first date."

Engine 109's horn blew as it swept past.

When re-reading your work, ask yourself: Does this reaction follow this event logically?

11. **Look for clichés** like "quiet as a mouse," "fat as a pig," "big as a house," and see if you can rework them using your own comparisons. If not, cut them.

12. **Spell check**. If you use the computer's spell check, great, but remember to re-read your manuscript to make sure the computer's changes make sense. Don't just accept all.

13. On one of your edits through your manuscript, **read it aloud** as though you're performing the piece at a coffee-shop. You'd be surprised what you might be able to spot and correct. The ear edits almost as well as the eye.

Well, that's my 13 suggestions—and I've barely scratched the surface. I bet you can think of more. Happy spring cleaning!

Newbie at a Conference

By Jane Toombs

I may not seem so to those who know me, but I'm inclined to be shy around strangers.

At my first few conferences I knew a few other writers and hung out with them, meeting those they knew, but never venturing out on my own. It's great to do things with friends, I'm not knocking that, but we all need the stimulus of meeting new people.

Eventually I wound up at a conference that none of my writer friends attended. After a day of feeling very lonely, I made up my mind that I had to speak to at least five new people and not be put off if they weren't immediately friendly. Writers I sat with at a luncheon table didn't count.

Hating to admit I couldn't do


this, I fought down my nervousness and qualms.

Not one of the five snubbed me, though with two, our encounter wasn't long. The third one soon became a lifelong friend, but that didn't excuse me from going on to four and five.

As a published author, even before I became a charter member of RWA, I did have meetings with editors, so time didn't weigh heavily on my hands, but writers understand each other better than any non-writer ever can. I certainly wouldn't turn away from meeting new editors, but I've always felt a strong need to connect with other writers.

I still try to do this and it's still not easy, but I've had fun with and learned from those I chose at

random. And I have a much better time. Some I never saw again, others I correspond with via e-mail, some are now friends.

So I recommend going to a conference prepared to meet new people, even if you have to be the one to initiate the meeting. You'll still have time to hang out with old friends. And may well acquire new ones. 

Send in your News!

Do you have something to include in the newsletter? You don't have to wait for the Alert e-mail. Just e-mail Rachel Berens-VanHeest at reberens@charter.net whenever you have news to share!

The Write Touch Newsletter
438 Jefferson St.
Oregon, WI 53575