



# The Write Touch

RWA Chapter 13  
Volume 102, No. 2  
April 2009

## Love is in the Cards III

By Donna Kowalczyk, Conference Coordinator

2009 marks Wisconsin Romance Writers 25th anniversary, and you aren't going to want to miss conference this year! #1 NY Times bestselling author Sherrilyn Kenyon is joining us, as well as Pocket and Kensington author Karin Tabke and Harlequin author Trish Milburn.

We're lucky to have a great lineup of agents and editors for pitch appointments: Deb Werksman (Sourcebooks), Birgit Davis-Todd (Harlequin), Brittiany Koren (Five Star Expressions/Tekno Books), Raelene Gorlinsky (Ellora's Cave), agent Laurie McLean, and agent/attorney Elaine English.

Friday we'll kick things off with the fun and fabulous workshop 'When Bad Covers Happen To Good People' presented by Raelene Gorlinsky of Ellora's Cave, followed by a Gourmet Dessert Reception/Cash Bar/Literacy Basket Raffle. And for those who like to gamble, Oneida Casino is open 24-7.

We're holding the Silent Auction again for a third year in a row where attendees may bid on first chapter critiques donated by top agents and editors. The Silent Auction opens for bids Friday night, and the winners will be announced Saturday at 5 p.m.

Saturday we'll get things started with the traditional

agent/editor Q&A, followed by both craft and business workshops, pitch appointments, and our awards luncheon.

Former Kensington editor Hilary Sares and agent Laurie McLean will present the interactive WisRWA's Got Talent III workshop.


Harlequin is celebrating its 60th anniversary this year, and editor Birgit Davis-Todd will tell us everything we want to know about writing for this fantastic publisher.

The literacy book signing will be held on Saturday from 4-5:30 p.m. To celebrate our 25th anniversary, we're holding a plated dinner Saturday night with a keynote by #1 NY Times Bestselling author Sherrilyn Kenyon.

After dinner, we'll open the Hospitality suite for mingling, refreshments, and 25th anniversary celebration cake!

Sunday we have a special treat: **Ann Voss Peterson, Barbara Raffin, and Lori Devoti**, three of WisRWA's own, will each present a workshop for us and end the conference with a bang.

So get ready for a fun-filled weekend of amazing workshops, great food, and even better company. I have no doubt this year's

conference will be one to remember, and I'm looking forward to seeing you all there! 

2009 Wisconsin RWA  
♥ 25th Anniversary ♥  
Write Touch Conference

Love is in the Cards III



June 5-7, 2009  
Radisson Hotel  
Conference Center &  
Oneida Casino  
Green Bay, Wisconsin

Keynote by #1 NY Times Bestselling  
Author **Sherrilyn Kenyon**

Plus workshops by: Karin Tabke, Trish  
Milburn and more...

## Board of Directors

### President

Mary Jo Scheibl  
mjscheibl@wi.rr.com

### Vice President

Rachel Berens-VanHeest  
reberens@charter.net

### Secretary

Jamie Kersten  
kerstens@charter.net

### Treasurer

Sandra Turriff  
SandraTurriff@msn.com

## Area Contacts\*

### Greater Green Bay

Donna Kowalczyk  
Paulck1225@aol.com

Stacey Netzel  
snetzel@wildblue.net

### Madison

Bobbi Dumas  
bobbiwrites@att.net

### Milwaukee

Ilona Fridl  
lockup48@aol.com

Maureen Welli  
maureen.welli@cexp.com

### NW/Chippewa Falls

Peggy Strand  
peglet@clearwire.net

### Wausau

Laurel Bradley  
laurel@laurelbradley.com

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](http://www.wisrwa.org), is updated regularly. Submit changes and new information to the Web site coordinator, Rachel Berens-VanHeest.

## President's Report

By Mary Jo Scheibl

If we are lucky, spring may really have arrived by the time you receive this newsletter. Since this is Wisconsin, we can only hope. For our long-distance members I expect most of you are already enjoying spring flowers, leafed out trees, and flowering shrubs. Enjoy them for us.

April is a busy month.

Our Write Touch Readers' Award finalists were announced early in the month. WisRWA had several members among the finalists. Congratulations to them. A major thanks goes to **Virginia McCullough** who has coordinated this contest for the past two years. She's now stepping down, so we will need a **volunteer** to do this next year or the contest won't happen. So if you're interested in helping out WisRWA, if you are organized and have the room to sort lots of books, please contact me at mjscheibl@wi.rr.com.

Our FAB 5 finalists were also just announced. Thanks to all of you who so generously volunteered to be category coordinators and first round judges. A special thanks goes to **Karen Miller** who's stepped up to co-

ordinate the whole contest and has done an excellent job. Again, Karen, her category coordinators and the first round judges have **volunteered**. Without them, WisRWA wouldn't be able to run the contest.

Another big item in April is the chance to nominate a WisRWA member who, over the course of his/her WisRWA membership, has gone the extra mile and **volunteered** to serve the needs of our organization and its members. The WisRWA Web site lists past winners, and if you check the list out, you see names of people who've served in many ways. Please take the time to nominate someone you think deserves this special recognition. The nomination form and information has been sent to the Alert loop and the general loop. You can also find a copy of it on the WisRWA Web site: [www.wisrwa.org](http://www.wisrwa.org) or e-mail me for one.

The contest winners and the chapter service award recipient will be announced at the WisRWA conference, June 5-7, 2009, in Green Bay. WisRWA will be celebrating its 25th anniversary, and the conference will have some extras this year. Like in a marriage,

## Send in your News!

Do you have something to include in the newsletter or add to the Web site? 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! Wondering about proper format? Just follow the example of what's already up on the site or in this copy of *The Write Touch*! Or contact Rachel with any questions. Send in your news—we want to help you celebrate!

## President's Report (continued)

25 years is worth celebrating in a special way. I hope to see many of you there. If you see me and I don't know you by face, please come up and introduce yourself.

Since I've been president, I've highlighted a volunteer from one of our Wisconsin areas in each newsletter. This time I've chosen **Kathy Steffen**. Kathy is from the Madison area and joined WisRWA five years ago. I first became aware of her at one of the Madison conferences about that time. Everywhere I went and wherever I turned to ask a question or get information, Kathy was there to help.


As with other volunteers I've highlighted, Kathy answered my questions about volunteering. She took the time from a busy schedule as she's now a multi-published author and busy promoting her work and meeting deadlines.

Kathy worked on the WisRWA conference committee and was Madison Area Contact for two years. While preparing for monthly meetings when she didn't have specific speakers, she researched topics and did the job herself. Sharing what she learned opened many new avenues for her, such as now doing some teaching for UW's writing programs. She says volunteering for WisRWA led to opening important doors for her. By volunteering to give back to WisRWA for all the help its members gave her, she got so much more. "I've always heard you get back double what you give, and this was definitely true in my case!"

She mentors her area colleagues because she's received help from published WisRWA authors on her journey to publication. She's giving back and volunteering to keep that spirit

of supporting others along their writing paths. Why? Because she knows what "it's like to need help and not be sure where to turn." The best part of volunteering for her is meeting new people and making new friends.

Kathy believes volunteerism is so important because whenever you reach out to others, positive energy explodes between you. Volunteering is about spreading your passion for the programs or organization to others and in doing so, you accomplish the best you can in this world.

WisRWA is lucky to have Kathy Steffen as a volunteer. But she spreads herself among several other organizations that support the arts. Thank you, Kathy, for all you do for WisRWA, the arts, and for those "little kitties you want to take home from the shelter." 

### Write Touch Readers' Award Contest Coordinator

WisRWA needs a new coordinator for the 2010 Write Touch Readers' Award Contest. It's been a privilege and great fun, but after three years I must pass it on.

Virginia Athey and I have updated the instructions and timeline, so the new coordinator will have the tools to go forward. While the contest has a designated coordinator, we've included suggestions for sharing the work among a committee (preferably comprised of two or three members of the same area group).

E-mail or call if you have questions. Thanks for stepping up!

—Virginia McCullough  
vemccullough@earthlink.net or (920) 662-9633

*Press on. Nothing in the world can take the place of persistence. Talent will not; nothing is more common that unsuccessful men with talent. Genius will not; unrewarded genius is almost a proverb. Education alone will not; the world is full of educated derelicts. Persistence and determination alone are omnipotent.*

—Calvin Coolidge

## Ten Tips on the Care and Feeding of Your Blog

By Debra K. Maher

Through the miracle of WordPress.com, Blogger, or TypePad, you've created a blog. But to thrive, a blog needs to be groomed and nurtured.

1. *Establish a focus.* Is your blog a personal journal? Is it to promote your books? Add a short one-liner so readers know what to expect. Examples:

- *Magical Musings* – (<http://magicalmusings.com>) – Four writers who believe no story is complete without a little magic.
- *Daily or Not* – (<http://caitlondon.blogspot.com>) – Cait London's take on writing, reading, and life.
- *Murderati* – (<http://murderati.typepad.com>) – Mysteries, murder, and marketing.

2. *Personalize your template.* Many free templates offered by WordPress and

Blogger can be made your own by customizing the header and/or sidebars.

3. *Give it identity.* Post a short bio. Link it to your other site/s.

4. *Post often to keep it fresh.* Daily? Weekly? Bi-weekly? A regular schedule establishes connections with those who start to anticipate your postings.

5. *Offer more but keep it neat.* Keep your sidebar links organized and up-to-date. Check back for "dead links." Periodically groom, trim, and add new.


6. *Show your style.* Let your postings reveal your writer's voice.

7. *Post pictures.* Use photos you have taken to complement your writing. If you don't have a digital camera, beg, buy or borrow one then learn to use it.

8. *Don't clutter with ads.* Personal bias here. If your blog's purpose is to sell your name and establish your brand, why create clutter with annoying ads for other stuff? Like everything in your writing life, keep it professional and focused.

9. *Install a counter.* StatCounter.com offers one of the best free counters I've come across. It offers visible or invisible counters. You can then log on for other useful statistics.

10. *Visit others.* Comment succinctly, and make sure to link discreetly back to your own blog.

Feed your blog, but don't let it become a monster that takes over your writing life. When handled appropriately it can become a strong asset to your career. 

### 2009 Write Touch Readers' Award Contest Finalists Announced

The Wisconsin Romance Writers (WisRWA) is pleased to announce the finalists for the 2009 Write Touch Readers' Award Contest. The finalists are listed in alphabetical order, and \*\*indicates member of WisRWA:

#### Short & Long Contemporary

\*\*Helen Brenna, *Finding Mr. Right*  
Lisa Childs, *Finally a Bride*  
\*\*Ann Voss Peterson, *Christmas Awakening*

#### Mainstream with Romantic Elements

Gemma Halliday, *Alibi in High Heels*  
Rhonda Peller, *Knock 'em Dead*  
JD Tynan, *Who Killed Walter Dobbs?*

#### Single Title Contemporary

\*\*Lynette Baughman, *Love With a Welcome Stranger*  
Christine Carroll, *The Senator's Daughter*  
\*\*Christie Craig, *Weddings Can be Murder*  
Susan Mallery, *Sweet Trouble*  
Susan Mallery, *Sweet Spot*  
\*\*Donna Marie Rogers, *There's Only Been You*

#### Inspirational/ Traditional

Sandra Bricker, *Love Finds You in Snowball Arkansas*  
Deeanne Gist, *Deep in the Heart of Trouble*  
Debby Guisti, *Countdown to Death*  
Debby Guisti, *MIA: Missing in Atlanta*  
Valerie Hansen, *Nowhere to Run*  
Carla Rossi, *Almost Home*

Roxanne Rustand, *Wildfire*  
Lisa Wingate, *Talk of the Town*  
Trish Wylie, *The Millionaire's Proposal*

#### Romantic Suspense

Jennifer Morey, *The Secret Soldier*  
Brenda Novak, *Watch Me*  
\*\*Martha Powers, *Conspiracy of Silence*

#### Erotica/Romantica

Lacey Alexander, *Seven Nights of Sin*  
Elizabeth Amber, Lyon, *The Lords of Satyr*  
Jess Michaels, *Something Reckless*  
Sharon Page, *Black Silk*  
Lara Santiago, *Menagerie*

#### Paranormal

Shayla Black, *Tempt Me with Darkness*

Claire Delacroix, *Fallen*  
Ann Macela, *Your Magic or Mine?*  
Catherine Mulvany, *Wicked is the Night*  
Patti O'Shea, *In Twilight's Shadow*  
Candance Sams, *Electra Galaxy's Mr. Interstellar Feller*

#### Historical

Trish Albright, *Siren's Song*  
\*\*Shari Anton, *Magic in His Kiss*  
Deb Marlowe, *An Improper Aristocrat*  
\*\*Ann Schmidt, *Seaside Cinderella*

Congratulations to all our finalists. The final placement will be announced at WisRWA's chapter conference, Love is the Cards III, June 5-7, 2009.

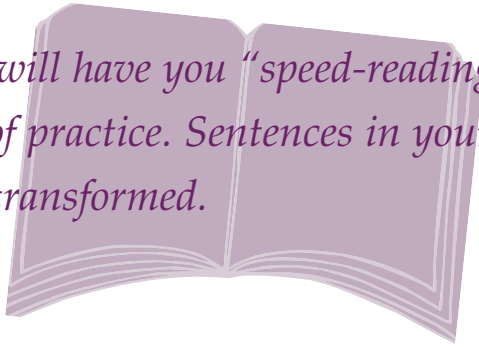
## The Body Speaks and You Can Learn Its Language

By Brenda Davis

Every writer has heard the adage “Show don’t tell.” But how do you do that? Ever wonder how to describe a villain’s glower? The heroine’s anguish?

Some helpful tips come in *What Every Body Is Saying*, written by Joe Navarro, an ex-FBI agent who specialized in non-verbal intelligence. Joe offers some answers for your next writing projects.

*This book will have you “speed-reading” people with just a bit of practice. Sentences in your manuscript ... will be transformed.*



This book will have you “speed-reading” people with just a bit of practice. Sentences in your manuscript such as, “He was angry,” will be transformed to “He squinted. His forehead furrowed, his jaw tightened and lips drew together, almost vanishing.”

Joe tells writers what to look for when studying the person’s feet, legs, torso, arms, hands and face. He offers insights into what that behavior means and shares anecdotes of how he has used non-verbal clues to negotiate situations in his personal and professional life.

Ok, to whet your appetite, here are 13 tips on non-verbal communication from this intriguing book.

1. You’ve heard about the “flight or fight” response when people are confronted with danger, but did

you know that before they make their choice, they freeze?

2. That freeze reaction, the author says, helps people to “hide” from predators and take a moment to process the situation and its options.

3. People sometimes signal discomfort by rubbing their foreheads.

4. When people are nervous, they

often engage in pacifying or comforting behaviors such as hair twirling, face touching or even gum chewing and cigarette smoking.

5. A person rubbing his or her neck may be saying that you or the topic you’re discussing is a pain in the neck.

6. In a tense business meeting, a man may pause to adjust his tie.

7. After a near accident, a man may exhale with puffed-out cheeks.

8. Want to know if a couple is getting along? Look at their legs and feet. Are their bodies turned toward each other? Are their feet close to each other? Generally, people position their body to lean TOWARD someone they like.

9. We lean AWAY from people we disagree with.

10. When we can move away from unpleasant situations or people, we often use our arms as barriers. We cross them over our chests.

11. We also can use our clothes as barriers. In an uncomfortable situation, we may pull a sweater closed or button a jacket.

12. Ever seen someone “steeple” their hands, placing fingertips to fingertips? That signals confidence.

13. Lowering your chin and tucking your head between raised shoulders signals the opposite: a lack of confidence.

To sum up, *What Every Body is Saying* is packed full of non-verbal behaviors you can interpret and use to add richness to your descriptions. Read this book for ways to dramatically SHOW your characters’ emotions—not just put a one-word label on them. I’ve simplified to keep the information article-sized and snappy. For the full explanation, I strongly suggest you give the book a read. It will help you to deepen your writing. 📖

*It’s never too late—  
in fiction or in life—  
to revise.*

—Nancy Thayer

## Author News

**Laura Iding's** Cedar Bluff trilogy will be coming out later this year. *Marrying The Playboy Doctor* in October, *Expecting a Christmas Miracle* in November and *The Surgeon's New-Year Wedding Wish* in December.

**Jeannine Van Eperen** will be signing copies of her books at the Fox Valley Book Festival on April 18, 2009.

**Carrie Lofty** is currently serializing a free novel on her Web site. *Serenade* is the story of a widowed violin prodigy who studies with the composer she idolizes, only to learn that he plagiarized the symphony he's most famous for. Chapters 1-11 are available now, with more posted each month.

**Lyn Cote** signed her latest books *The Desires of Her Heart* and *Her Captain's Heart* at the first ever Christian Book Expo in Dallas, TX on March 21, 2009.

**Lynette Baughman** took first place in the Contemporary Division for her book *Love with a Welcome Stranger* in the 2009 EPPIE's.

**JL Wilson's** *If Not For You* won the 'erotic' category for Mystery at the Eppie awards

**Laurel Bradley's** *A Wish in Time* is a finalist in ForeWord Magazine's 2008 Book of the Year Awards.

**Emily Bryan's** *Distracting the Duchess* was nominated for an RT Reviewers Choice Award--Best Historical K.I.S.S.! Her hero, Trevelyn Deveridge is gratified to be named a Knight In Shining Silver, but confesses to a bit of surprise. Evidently there must be a category for scal-

lywags and rogues! Winners will be announced at the RT Convention in Orlando this April.

**Kathryn Albright's** debut, *The Angel and the Outlaw*, Harlequin Historicals, is being released in the United Kingdom as part of an anthology for the UK version of Mother's Day. *On Mothering Sunday* will be available March 2009. Her second book, *The Rebel and the Lady*, will be released there May 2009. *The Rebel and the Lady* won Best Western Romance of 2008 at the Love Western Romances Web site. Its sequel, *Expecting the Texas Rancher's Child*, will be coming out September 2009. Additionally, *The Rebel and the Lady* is a finalist for the Colorado Romance Writers Award of Excellence. Winners will be announced at their annual Romancing the Rockies Conference on May 2.

**Helen Johannes** just contracted with The Wild Rose Press for her fantasy romance *Prince of Val-Feyridge*. It

will be part of the Faery Rose line in 2010.

**Renee Wildes' Duality** received CataNetwork's 2008 ecataromance Reviewer's Choice Award.

*Insufficient Mating Material* by **Rowena Cherry** has been named a finalist in the "Most Humorous" category of the Anne Bonney Awards. Rowena's *Knight's Fork* won the December "Authors' Choice" award from amazonclicks.com (It also won two consecutive PNR Reviewers' Top Pick awards in September and October of 2008 respectively).

*Wild Hunt*, **Lori Devoti's** June 2008 *Silhouette Nocturne*, was nominated for a Romantic Times Reviewers Choice Award. Juno Books, best-known for "contemporary fantasy novels that emphasize strong female protagonists in richly imagined contexts," will become an imprint of Pocket Books, starting with Lori's *Amazon Ink* in June 2009. They plan to co-publish one title a month together. 



Stacey Netzel, Donna Kowalczyk and Barb Raffin at a recent book signing in Appleton.

## FAB 5 2009 has been fabulous!

By Karen Miller, FAB 5 Contest Coordinator

It's April, the contest entries have been judged, and the finalists for each category were just announced. (See the list elsewhere in this newsletter.)

This was the second year we accepted electronic entries, and the first year we had only electronic entries. Thankfully, we worked out most of the 'bugs' last year, and only had a few issues for the category coordinators to deal with this year. However, they met the challenge with patience and have provided great ideas for making

the process even better next year. Thank you, coordinators!


One other change from last year was that we added a Young Adult category. It did quite well, with 18 entries.

Unfortunately, FAB 5 did have to cancel a category because of too few entries. Fortunately, we were able to fit those entries into other categories.

We will post the finalists on the WisRWA general and Alert loops soon. We will also post on the WisRWA website 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, many additional judges and RWA members from other states stepped up to help. Plus, many of the judges were returning judges, who made it much easier to meet the contest needs. I would like to extend a huge "Thank You" to all of the first round judges.

I believe when all the information is tallied and the final placements are announced, we will see that FAB 5 2009 will be one of our "great" ones. 

### New Releases

#### January

Isabel Sharpe  
*No Holding Back*  
Harlequin

Renee Wildes  
*Hedda's Sword*  
Samhein Publishing

Jane Toombs  
*Mischievous Music Duet*  
Amber Quill Press

Mary Hughes  
*Biting Nixie*  
Samhain Publishing

Lynnette Baughman  
*Love with a Welcome Stranger*  
The Wild Rose Press

Honey Jans  
*Stealing Secrets*  
Whiskey Creek Torrid

Honey Jans  
*Roping a Runaway Wife*  
Red Rose Publishing

#### February

Lyn Cote  
*The Desires of Her Heart*  
Avon Inspire

Jannifer Hoffman  
*Secret Sacrifices*  
Resplendence Publishing

JL Wilson  
*Sun, Surf and Sandy Strangulation*  
The Wild Rose Press

#### March

Helen Brenna  
*From the Outside*  
Harlequin NASCAR

Stacey Joy Netzel  
*Chasin' Mason*  
The Wild Rose Press

Emily Bryan  
*Vexing the Viscount*  
Dorchester Publishing/  
Leisure Books

Laura Iding  
*Emergency: Single Dad,*

#### Mother Needed

Harlequin Medical Romance

Elysa Hendricks  
*Forbidden Moon*  
Imajinn Books

Anna Schmidt  
*His American Duchess*  
e-harlequin.com

#### April

Helen Brenna  
*From the Outside*  
Harlequin NASCAR

JL Wilson  
*Nowhere to Run*  
Resplendence Publishing

Lori Devoti  
*Dark Crusade*  
Silhouette Nocturne

Lori Devoti  
*Midnight Cravings*  
Silhouette Nocturne

Lori Handeland  
*Doomsday Can Wait*  
St. Martin's Press

#### May

Elysa Hendricks  
*The Sword and the Pen*  
Dorchester

Anna Schmidt  
*Gift from the Sea*  
Love Inspired Historical

Jane Toombs  
*Once An Outcast*  
Champagne Books

Mary Brady  
*He Calls Her Doc*  
Harlequin Super Romance

Isabel Sharpe  
*A Mother's Heart*  
Harlequin

Meg Hennessy  
*Shadows of a Southern Moon*  
The Wild Rose Press

Jeanine D. Van Eperen  
*Love Beyond Tomorrow*  
Wings ePress

## 2009 Fab Five Contest Finalists Announced

The Wisconsin Romance Writers (WisRWA) is pleased to announce the finalists for the 2009 Fab Five Contest. \*\*indicates member of WisRWA:

### Historical

*The Anchoress And The Fifth Knight* – Elaine Powell  
*Pyramus Lost* – Lisa Sullivan  
*Charity For A Ranger* – Terry Irene Blain  
*And Then I Loved Him* – Kathleen Bittner Roth  
*Dangerous Waters* – Bev Irwin

### Paranormal

*Stone Kissed* – Keri Kaeding  
*Dawn's Shadow* – Deborah Gilbert

*Blood Rule* – Christina Peruzzi Lopes  
*The Defective Demon* – Kate MacEachern \*\*\*  
*The Painted Spellcaster* – Shawntelle Madison

### Romantic Suspense

*A Heart On Hold* - Sherry Foley  
*Stealing Best In Show* - Elizabeth Pina  
*Kira's Keeper* - Jan Schliesman  
*Smokescreen* - Kathleen Irene Paterka  
*Black Swan* - Jean Tara Ownbey

### Series Contemporary (Long/Short)

*Getting Lucky* – Katie Graykowski

*The Consultant's Heartbreak Emergency* – Kamy Chetty  
*When Jonny Came* – Elizabeth Pina  
*Hardy's Triple Play* – Jamie Kersten \*\*\*  
*Redemption* – Nancy Evertz

### Woman's Fiction

*The Spin I'm In* – Kate Bowman\*\*\*  
*Rogue Angel* – Tamra Baumann  
*Lakota Dreaming* – Constance Gillam  
*Home At Last* – Janet K Jones  
*Worth The Weight* – Patricia Walters-Fischer

### Young Adult

*My Life In The Void* - Betsy Norman \*\*\*  
*Stunt Princess* - Emily Marshall  
*Another Will Die* - Laura Byrne  
*Light Of Truth* - Sheri Boeyink  
*Adventures Of A Teenage Truthseer* - Cat Shield \*\*\*

Congratulations to all our finalists. The final placement will be announced at WisRWA's chapter conference, Love is the Cards III, June 5-7, 2009.