



connections

the newsletter of the Connecticut Romance Writers Association
Romance Writers of America, Region One, Chapter One



letter from the president

I HAVEN'T BEEN as productive as I should have been lately, and I blame George Martin.

A little background—I don't have HBO, but other cable channels were running ads for a series called *Game of Thrones*, which looked interesting. I got a friend of mine to record a few episodes for me, and I was enthralled. Then, when I was sitting at dinner with some of the editors and agents after Connecticut Fiction Fest, I mentioned that I loved this series, and my agent informed me that it was based on a series of books edited by one of our guests, Anne Groell. I asked Anne how she thought the series compared to the books, and she said that both she and the author, George Martin, were pleased, especially with the casting.

The next day I put the books on hold at my library. I was able to download the ebooks for my iPad. (Did I mention I have an iPad?)

The four books in the series, with the fifth out next month, are long, complicated, have a ridiculous number of characters, refer to backstory that goes back thousands of years, and have so many simultaneous plot lines that you might think that I, an impatient reader, would end up throwing the thing across the room (not that I would risk damaging my iPad).

But I found myself more caught up than I have been in any book for years. I stayed up late. I read at the dinner table. I neglected my yard work. I neglected EVERYTHING until I finished Book One. I went back to the library website and made sure that I got book two as a recorded book, so I can listen to it while I mow the lawn, clean the house, run errands and exercise. Otherwise, I probably would NOT mow the lawn, clean the house, run errands or exercise until I got through the rest of the series.

Experiences like this are why I was always a reader, and what made me want to be a writer. As some of you have heard me say, I want to write the book that makes you not notice when the phone rings. I want you to skip class, over-stay your lunch hour, and neglect your laundry to finish my book.

Why does George Martin's series make me feel this way? Well, the story is exciting, with lots of intrigue and adventure. The scary stuff is terrifying, and the battle scenes easy to picture. The point of view is extremely strong—even when I am in the head of a villain, I am totally invested in him or her. When a character I like dies, I am seriously upset.

Books that make me feel these things are a gift, and not just because of the entertainment they provide. They make me want to stretch and grow, and to capture someone else the way I have been captured. They make me aspire to be better.

This summer, lets all remember the books that inspired us, and take some time to re-experience the joy of reading that made us writers in the first place.

Sincerely,

Toni Andrews
President, CTRWA



table of contents

Letter from the Board.....	1
Calendar	2
Member News	2
Chapter News.....	2
Member Profile	3
Conference Etiquette.....	4
Know Thy Genre.....	5
Since Typing The End.....	5
Kensington Editor Interview.....	6
Dare to Daydream	6
Pointless Yet Fun	8
Board Members.....	8

June 9th

Roberta Buland
Editing for Publication

Bonus Session:
Writing the Dread Synopsis

Regular Meeting Schedule

Crit Group 9:30-10:45

Business Meeting: 11:00

Lunch (please use RSVP
form at www.ctrwa.org)

Speaker: 1:00

Bonus Session following speaker

Please note: There will be no
July edition of the newsletter.

member news

Susan Andrews is the lucky 13th member of the WaterworldMermaids blog, a group that knitted together to found a new blogging posse after the WRW In the Company of Writers retreat (the late-night game of Romance Jeopardy made "Waterworld" a famous wrong answer, the name was an obvious choice for a group blog: www.waterworldmermaids.com...

Rhonda Lane got her brain re-arranged at the day-long Donald Maass workshop at the Backspace conference in New York...

Gerri Brousseau got three requests for complete submission on her historical romance, *Plantation Hill* and five requests for partial submissions on her urban fantasy, *According To Legend*.

Gerri also guest blogged on Susan Hanniford Crowley's site, *Nights of Passion* where she shared her experience at CTRWA's Fiction Fest.... **Katy Lee's** manuscript, *Real Virtue*, is a finalist in the Touched by Love Contest, sponsored by RWA's Faith, Hope & Love chapter.... **Jennifer Fusco** just completed her first marketing handbook, "Market or Die: Sensible Brand Building Advice for Writers." It will be available for sale in June on Amazon.com for kindle and print....

Kimberly Dias, writing as Jordan K. Rose signed a contract with Crescent Moon Press. Her book *Perpetual Light* will be released Winter 2012. Yay, Jordan!... **Paula Sharon** (writing as PJ Sharon) is indy publishing her first contemporary YA romance, *HEAVEN IS FOR HEROES*, set to be released September 24, 2011. She is both excited and terrified, but lives by the motto NO GUTS, NO GLORY. She's taking one bite of the elephant at a time (although at this point, it feels like she's chomped off a whole leg).... **Marian Lanouette** received 2 requests for her full manuscript at Fiction Fest and 2 partial requests. She was also invited to submit the second book in the series at the same time.

Marie Roy, writing as Collette Thomas, was thrilled that two books *Deadly Games* and *Deadly Affairs* will be appearing in a full sized ad with 8 other books that my publisher placed in the program book at Thrillerfest 2011. Marie was so inspired that she's back at work in the third Todd Hollow Book titled *Deadly Intent*.

Kristan Higgins said yes to a four-book deal from HQN and is very, very happy to be staying with her beloved editor. Kristan was at Book Expo America in late May, signing copies of *My One and Only* and ARCs of *Until There Was You* and was quite delighted when her mother-in-law popped in to say hello. And congratulations to **Julia E. Antoine**, whose first romance novel, *State of Ecstasy* was just released (on her birthday, how's that for good karma?). Her second novel, *Temptation to Sin*, will be following in a couple of weeks. Both novels are written under her pen name, Ju Ephraime.

calendar

June 9...Roberta Buland discusses editing your manuscript to enhance your chances at publication. This seasoned editor will discuss common mistakes and how to view your work as would an industry professional.

PRO Meeting - June 9 at 9:30 am in Harry's Bar hosted by Bob Bonitz. Share your knowledge, agent/editor feedback, new ideas or if you just need to blow off steam, the PRO meeting is the place to do just that.

Craft Corner: Peter Andrews on High Velocity Writing: Five tips that will help you pick of the pace and get that novel

Bonus session: Writing the Dread Synopsis. Yes, it *does* seem harder than giving birth to a twelve-pound baby, but don't worry, gang. Toni Andrews knows a lot about writing these bad boys. Help is on the way.

June 28th-July 3rd...Romance Writers of America National Convention, New York City! CTRWA members presenting are: Jennifer Fusco & Jessica Andersen, Toni Andrews and Kristan Higgins.

August 13 - Huntley Fitzpatrick. You got the call...now what? Huntley will talk to us about what you after your signed by and agent and before your book releases, what's involved and what you need to know.

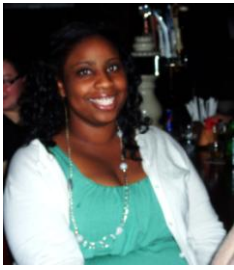
Bonus session: Agent and attorney Eric Ruben will take questions and hear pitches.

25

Special shout out to the Devine Mrs. Thea, whose 25th novel will be published in June -- *The Darkest Heart* (video and excerpt at www.theadevine.com). She'll be signing at the Literacy Booksigning at RWA/New York. And she and John are celebrating their 45th wedding anniversary, which is the coolest thing of all.

45

member of the month...Jamie Pope

**Tell us about what you're working on now.**

What am I not working on? Right now I have a romantic suspense waiting to be finished and a series about war heroes half completed. But the WIP that keeps me up at night is a

romantic comedy tentatively called *Since I Lost my Baby*. Trinity Golden, consummate good girl, is in the process of losing her mind. After losing her mother and inheriting a huge money pit of a house she has lost her focus in life, as well as her filter. Just when she thinks she can't take it anymore, Dan Andersen, her Nordic god next door neighbor enters her life tempting her at every turn with his slow lazy smiles and steamy touches. He is far from perfect and comes with more baggage than any one woman could handle but Trinity finds herself drawn to the man who could make her ordinary life not so ordinary. I am also working on, as you may have noticed, the art of writing a good query.

What's the next major step you need to take in your writing?

Finishing something. I mean really finishing a manuscript to the point where it sparkles and shines and there are very few grammatical errors. Other than that I need to get my writing out there. Almost no one knows that I write. I kept it a well guarded secret and only practiced my craft when there was no fear of discovery. Joining CTRWA has taught me that being a hermit does not get one published.

What's the hardest part of the writing process for you?

I am a perfectionist so I revise and revise and revise until a scene is what I consider to be perfect. I often find myself unable to move on until it is, leaving my poor characters hanging in space with unfinished stories.

What's your favorite part of the writing process?

All the lovely day dreaming and making my characters do things I would never be brave enough to do.

Any quirks or special talents you'd like to share?

Quirks? Too many to name, but being late for things puts me in a near panic. (I arrive at work an hour and a half early everyday.) Special talents? I can sing like a bird and in German if I had to. I was classically trained but lately have more love for Lady Gaga than Handel.

Have you been given any great advice on writing fiction, or do you have any to impart?

Well no. It was more of an order given by my literacy professor. She told me I had to write because it was in my

blood and I at 19 years old was so blown away by that statement went back to my dorm room and picked up a pen. Dr. Courtney I still love you!

Who are some of your favorite authors and why?

Kristan Higgins duh! (*Editor's Note: in the interest of full disclosure, Jamie is my grasshopper, and I made her say that.*) Susan Elizabeth Phillips wrote the first contemporary that I have ever read and it was the first book that made me sigh like a little girl. I love the steaminess of Sherry Thomas and Elizabeth Hoyt but Mary Balogh is probably my ultimate favorite. There is a sweetness to her writing but at the same time its dark and complicated and so well written it has me thinking about it for days afterward. She's the kind of writer I want to be.

Best CT restaurant in your humble opinion?

Maggie McFly's with three locations in Brookfield, Southbury and Middlebury. There is an airplane hanging from the ceiling! I don't sit under it but it's still pretty cool.

If you could cast your current hero or heroine, who'd get the call?

Hero is easy. Chris Hemsworth as Thor (hotness!). As for an actress, that was very hard for me because they make actresses so small and petite without any body fat. I would have to pick Christina Hendricks from *Mad Men*. She's got the type of body I'd sell my mother to get.



"How many calories are in one of those?" she asked never taking her eyes off the confection. "How many squats would I have to do if I ate six of them? How large could I expect my ass to grow if I ate a dozen?"

—From the work of Jamie Pope

Branding Is Painless...Really?

by PJ Sharon

MARKETING GURU AND CTRWA Vice President Jennifer Fusco and 'Action and adventure with a touch of nerd' best-selling author, Jessica Andersen, did a fabulous job talking about creating your personal BRAND at the recent CTRWA Fiction Fest.

It was interesting to hear from both of these marketing whizzes about the importance of creating a Brand that speaks to who you are as a writer and also encompasses what it is you are writing. Coming up with that one catch phrase that will draw your target audience to you and your book is no easy task. And that's really only step one in the Branding process. It seems that branding is mostly about packaging yourself and your books in a way that connects name recognition with a product that delivers on reader expectation. When I pick up a Kristan Higgins book, I know I'm going to get a funny, sweet romance about a quirky gal and her crazy but loveable family. If I read one of Jessica Andersen's books, I'm strapping in for a steamy, action packed adventure with lots of cool science and a few explosions, fires or other disasters. These ladies have created their Brand and readers know what they are buying.

I'm still not quite sure I've nailed my brand exactly, but I'm honing in on it. I write 'Extraordinary stories of an average teen-age life.' Not your typical high school experiences, my stories are about the real life that happens to teen-age girls outside the classroom--with their friends, families, and the guys they fall in love with. My first book,

HEAVEN IS FOR HEROES, will be released Sept. 24th.

In preparation for independently publishing my first book, I've been studying marketing and promotions like a lawyer studying for the bar. I assure you, the information is just as appealing to me as a law journal. I'm a writer, a healer, an athlete, and an artist...marketer extraordinaire—not so much. I've found, as many writers have, that actually writing the book was much easier than the process of publishing and marketing the book.

With publisher's giving less promotional assistance these days, authors wear many hats, and Jennifer and Dr. Jess gave us some great ideas for putting ourselves out there. From blogs, giveaways, and contests, to Facebook and Google ads, these ladies were a plethora of great information. Thanks for helping us blaze some trails, ladies.

PJ Sharon began writing 'Extraordinary stories of an average teen age life' after moving out to the Berkshire Hills of Western Massachusetts, embarking on a second young adulthood, and marrying the love of her life (a guy who makes being a computer geek, hot). That's why Romance is a part of every story she writes. The challenges of her own teen age years inspired her to write real life stories that readers could relate to and find encouraging. Despite the drama and trauma of a rocky youth, PJ has raised two sons and is now a successful massage therapist, yoga teacher and personal trainer. PJ's first story, HEAVEN IS FOR HEROES, will be released in September of 2011.

Things You'll Be Glad You Packed

Traveling for a few days? Got a conference to attend, perhaps, or just going away for your day job? Your intrepid editor asked a few seasoned travelers what must-have items they always bring along.

Motrin
Peanut butter crackers in the snack-pack form
Teabags for puffy eyes
Slippers
Corkscrew (for checked luggage only!)
Extra phone charger
Quarters for vending machines
Nail file
Band-aids
Crazy Glue
Febreze
Baby wipes
Tide pen

Kindle or Nook
Flip Flops
Percogesic
Benadryl
Safety pins
Clothes pins (keeps curtains closed, can be used to tack up clothes that need to dry)
Highlighters
Duct tape (so many uses!)
Double sided fashion tape for fallen hems
Lotion (hotels are so dry)
Visine

Bathing suit
Noise canceling headset for plane travel
WD40 pen (squeaky doors, gum on the shoe)
A donkey to carry all this stuff.

For writer conferences:
an extra bag to carry your free books, or a box in which you can send them home.

What I've Learned Over the Years about Writing in No Particular Order

by Judi Phillips

1. Keyboards revolt, never to function again, when chicken soup is spilled on them.
2. My sieve of a brain leaks that brilliant idea--never to be recalled again--unless I write it down or record it. I have paper pads and pens strewn all over my house.
3. The save icon is more reliable than depending on the timed backup in the event of encountering the blue screen of death. Lost a lot of words before I figured that out.
4. Critique partners catch the too-stupid-to-live mistakes of my characters.
5. You can never have too many backups of your files. Dropbox is the best thing since those miraculous cut and paste icons.
6. You never know when your kids are going to turn into awesome brainstorming partners.
7. It's best not to annoy me. You can end up as a villain or villainess in my book.
8. Research is my crack cocaine. I can get seriously hooked every time I begin a new book.
9. A girl can never have too many pens. Or Post-Its.
10. The hardest thing about writing is not finding ideas. They are everywhere. The hardest thing is sticking with one idea, putting my butt in the chair and my hands on the keyboard and facing the blinking cursor.

Judi is in New Mexico, importing lobsters from Maine, playing grandma to her two-year old granddaughter, enjoying the sunshine and pondering a story set in NM. She says she doesn't have time to write a bio.

This following article was published in the May 2011 edition of Mainely Romance, the newsletter of the Maine Chapter of RWA.

Sweet Emotion

By Peter Andrews, CTRWA Member

REMEMBER THE BEGINNING of *Romancing the Stone*, where Joan Wilder is overwhelmed by tears as she completes her book? This is played for laughs, but genuine, strong emotions are what fiction writing is about. (Ray Bradbury says emotions are what *life* is all about.)

I learned by trial and error that flash fiction – those blink-of-an-eye stories of 1,000 words or less – always sell if they make you cry, laugh out loud or shiver. Without these strong, genuine emotions, the stories are likely to gather rejections.

I have come to believe that, while you can get away with wit, slices of life, nostalgia and whimsy in longer works, and you can even charm the reader with lyrical passages, without a good number of scenes that move the reader, there will be no sale.

What are the strong emotions? Rage. Grief. Joy. Wonder. Terror. Passion. Disgust. Those emotions that hit you in the gut, make your laugh until it hurts, give you chills, raise your heartbeat – create real, physical responses. And they need to be genuine. Some writers are naturals at living the scenes they write so that, like Joan Wilder, they use up boxes of tissues as they work on novels. For others, the tools of the actor may be helpful. Sense memory exercises (see www.theatrgroup.com/Method/sense_memory.html) evoke physical responses, and they are part of the work the reader expects the writer to do – whether they know it or not. You know the quote, “Sincerity is everything; if you can *fake* that, you've got it made”? Maybe. But I suspect you'll get caught eventually if you don't make the emotions genuine.

I've just finished reading a set of contest entries—the first 20 pages of novels. These are supposed to hook me and keep me reading. A couple did, but most did not. The problem was not so much the quality of the prose as it was a lack of genuine, strong emotions. Curiously, I found a good amount of genuine emotion. The writers were *present* for many of the scenes they composed. That's good. Unfortunately, they were concentrating on being clever, or their characters were irritated or mildly curious or calculating or, worst of all, content. These emotions are real, but they don't grab hold and refuse to let go. As experienced by the writer, they probably were involving, but such weak emotions are diluted once they hit the page.

In small amounts in a novel or screenplay, weak emotions may work and even help with the management of tension. However, if you write 20 pages, especially the opening pages of a book, and you don't infuse that work with genuine strong emotions, the reader will stop reading.

By day, Peter Andrews writes speeches. By night, he writes YA. In a one year period, he finished in 12 RWA chapter contests.

GOODREADS: Good Resource!

by Alyssa Goodnight

IT SEEMS LIKE I'm late to the game for every sort of social media outlet, probably because I have the 'never gonna happen' mentality. First it was Facebook, then Twitter, and now I've succumbed to Goodreads. When I joined I wasn't too optimistic; mostly I was just doing it because I saw that other authors were doing it, and I figured it couldn't hurt. I didn't expect that I'd be all that interested in organizing any virtual bookshelves or reading some random reviews, but honestly, I'm intrigued!

Goodreads was created to give readers a more personalized way of discovering new books that fit their tastes and interest. The idea is that you'll friend readers whose tastes are similar to yours and whose reviews you trust, and then use the site to keep track of those books. (I'd previously been doing that with an Amazon wishlist.)

When I signed up, I decided, at least for the time being, not to play catch-up, so the only books on my bookshelves are books I've added to my TBR stack this year or books I've read this year. For each of those I've already finished, I've posted a mini-review and a couple of favorite quotes from the book. Each time I add a book, or write a review, all my friends (and fans) get notified. It's like a little connection between us... a little, "Hey, have you heard about this book??" Goodreads also offers the capability to link to your Facebook and Twitter accounts, so you can talk books everywhere you go. Virtually speaking.

The fact that I've authored a book that exists in the Goodreads database (which is linked to the Amazon database), has allowed me to create an 'author page.' The how-to's can be found at http://www.goodreads.com/author/how_to. I've already synced my blog to my Goodreads author page so that now I'm communicating with my Goodreads friends 'beyond the books,' sharing author news or just random interesting stuff. Another connection...

When it gets closer to my release day, I can host a giveaway through Goodreads, offering one or more copies of an ARC or finished book. Being listed on the Goodreads giveaway page will get my book lots of visibility, and with any luck, encourage those readers who do not win a copy to go out and buy one...and then review it (favorably!) on Goodreads. If these readers/reviewers have their Goodreads accounts linked to Facebook and Twitter, then those reviews show up there too, and suddenly it's viral.

Goodreads lets you host author chats, post quizzes, purchase targeted pay-as-it's-clicked ad space, and post giveaways to foreign countries, which can garner you some new readers in other parts of the world...and perhaps even trigger some foreign sales. You can also post content (ebooks

2011 ctrwa board

Toni Andrews, President
toni@toniandrews.com

Jennifer Fusco
VP/Programming Director
jenniferafusco@gmail.com

Jennifer Iszkiewicz
Membership Director
jmp3274@gmail.net

Janet Messina, Treasurer
janmessina@comcast.net

Kristan Higgins, Media Director
k.higgins@snet.net

Members at Large
Bob Bonitz
bonitz99@yahoo.com

Barbara Gerwien
gerwienb@yahoo.com

or excerpts) and even view your author stats, which keep track of how many people are adding, rating, and reviewing your books. For a book-loving author (aren't we all?), it's like one-stop shopping!

Alyssa Goodnight is the author of AUSTEN-TATIOUS, the story of a girl, a journal, and the incorrigible Jane Austen, to be published by Kensington Books in February 2012. Keep up with her on her blog at www.alyssagoodnight.blogspot.com, 'friend' her at www.facebook.com/AlyssaGoodnight, follow her at www.twitter.com/a_goodnight and friend or fan her at www.goodreads.com/alyssagoodnight

This article first appeared in the April 2011 issue of In Print!, the monthly newsletter of Houston Bay Area RWA.



On Being an Older Writer

by Hilda Lindner Knepp

AS I SIT here waiting for the Microsoft Malicious Software Removal Tool to complete its scan of the five billion files on my desktop, my mind drifts to the good old days when the most likely interruption to crafting a story was a pen that had run out of ink. Yes, I'm one of those. I started writing in the dark ages, before computers, closer to the time period known as the Mesozoic Era. You know, the Age of Dinosaurs, when all the continents were connected, and average temperatures were about 10 degrees warmer than today, even though not one Spinosaurus owned a car.

I like to think fate has a reason for keeping me unpublished into my mature years. Maybe I wouldn't have appreciated it as much when I was younger. Or, what if I'd gotten published before I was any good, and bad reviews made me stop writing, forever. You've heard of late bloomers? Well, I was the latest. I was a young woman during the decade of free love and cheap weed and I'm embarrassed to admit I didn't partake of either. At sixteen, horses were still more interesting than boys, I didn't drive until I was eighteen and I thought I had to wait until I was twenty one to lose my virginity (Mom said so). As for marriage, my husband didn't find me until I was thirty six. Perhaps I needed to "know myself" first so my writing could be informed by the person I discovered myself to be. Unfortunately, it took me a long time to unearth that person.

Whatever the reason, I'm barreling down the road to the big 60, still writing and still unpublished. I'm not upset about my non published state. It will happen eventually. The big 60, however, is another story. Forget the conventional wisdom that says sixty is the new forty. As it relates to writing, it's just not, and I'm here to tell you why.

Take this article. I have to write it in fourteen point font, even while wearing my glasses. I've misspelled about ten words so far, words I would never have misspelled even five years ago. What's worse, after I look up the correct spelling, it still doesn't look right. Age has made me a bad speller, and cranky about it to boot.

Writing takes twice as long now, and trust me, I wasn't all that fast to begin with. What's slowing me down, you may ask? I've lost half my vocabulary, due to estrogen depletion, for one. If I use the thesaurus once, I use it several times per page. My typing speed is still good, but my memory is just shot. I'm waiting to forget the location of the letters on the keyboard, probably immediately after I sell my first book.

As an older writer, it's much harder to find the energy to write. Because everything else takes so much more energy, by the time I sit down at the computer, my mind

wanders or shuts down, or I feel myself nodding off, even in the middle of a love scene. And speaking of love scenes, since most of my characters are at least thirty years younger than me, how do I know if they have sex like we did? Actually, I'm pretty sure it's completely different. The younger generation is weird in every other way. Why wouldn't their sex be weird, too? I mean, they have friends with benefits. Is that supposed to be a good thing?

I'm not totally disgruntled over my current situation. Of course, I know I don't have a choice. However, while there are some very good younger writers, those pesky early bloomers, I had to season before I became any good at this craft. I really see things differently now, I'm not as impatient, I give my characters time to evolve instead of forcing them into a contrived box.

Of all the things I've lost of youth, I've gained some invaluable insights with age. These insights allow me to revel in the joy of a solid scene, a dead on sentence, dialogue that rings with truth. I know if the writing flows, I'm onto something. Hopefully, that something is the ticket to catching a publisher's eye, and then a loyal readership, the same goal we all have, no matter our age.

After finishing her day job as a librarian, Hilda stalks the corridors of her own odd mind in search of words for the romances she writes. She remains confident publication is in her future, no doubt posthumously.

This article first appeared in the April 2011 issue of UnderCover, the electronic newsletter of the Ohio Valley Romance Writers

On Receiving Criticism...

First, make sure you understand the criticism. Do not rationalize your performance; maybe you could have done a better job. Second, ask the critic exactly what it is they did not like and why. Third, ask how they would improve things. If they can't tell you, ignore the criticism and assume you have done a good job. If the feedback is valid, however, you should try to learn from it. And no matter what, when criticism is given thoughtfully and backed up with solid opinion—whether you agree or disagree with it—behave like an adult. You asked this person for feedback on your work. Accept it, think about it, and thank the person who took the time to consider your piece.

What you do with those comments is up to you.

pointless but fun

In honor of Father's Day—what was the best advice your dad ever gave you?

"You can want in one hand and sh*t in the other; see which one fills up faster." Jen Fusco's dad

Not advice, but a memory: he came to the house after (my husband's) memorial service, he didn't know what to say, but the look in his eyes told me he'd trade places with Kevin in an instant if he could.—Noelle Brunelle

"Mind your P's and Q's and remember who you are." I'm still minding my P's and Q's, but nearing 70, I can't remember who I am! — Allan Cooper

My father's best advice: Marry a man who makes you laugh. — Huntley Fitzpatrick

1. Come to work on time; 2. Do the job to the best of your ability
3. Be pleasant; 4. Go home. You'd be surprised how many people can't even achieve step 1. — From Shaunee Cole's dad

It's not what you say that matters; it's what you do.—Kristan Higgins's dad.

A smile is the universal language. No matter where you go in the world, this expression is understood. —Patti Cavaliere's dad.



"Trust yourself. You know more than you think you do."

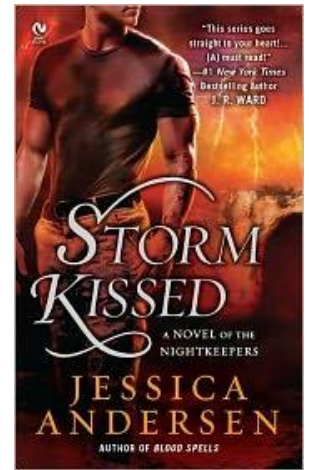
—Benjamin Spock, M.D.

Connections is published by CTRWA. Nothing may be reprinted without giving permission to CTRWA or the author.

member releases

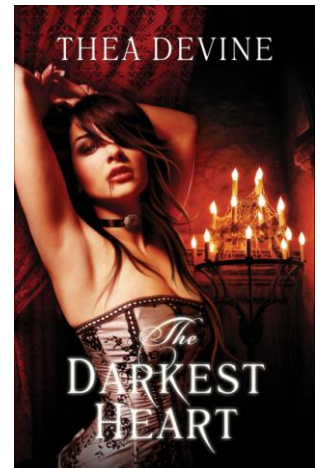
Jessica Andersen's newest Nightkeepers' book, *STORM KISSED*, hits the shelves (or digital waves) on June 7! In it, a sexy, kickass bounty hunter is reunited with her first and only love, a lightning-wielding mage who could be the key to saving the Nightkeepers from their greatest enemy. He claims to be a new man, but is he the savior he seems, or a rogue bent on a personal vendetta that could endanger the Nightkeepers ... and all of mankind? Ordering info at

www.jessicaandersen.com.



Countess Lazlaric is desperate to continue the family legacy. Determined that her rakehell second son wed and produce an heir, she's found the perfect bride. A distant relative, writing to beg for help, is ideal for her secret plans. Alone in the world, beautiful raven-haired Senna Landseth finds more than just Drom Manor's isolation sending a shiver down her spine. Countess Lazlaric seems overly eager to welcome her, strange noises fill the cavernous corridors of the gloomy manor, and she senses she is being spied upon.

www.theadevine.com



Fleeing to Martinique after a romantic betrayal, Daphne Cohen meets her future: Wolfe LaCasse, who takes her on a passionate journey. When the fires burn too hot for Daphne, she feels the island before getting burned. But she can't forget the state of ecstasy she experienced in Wolfe's arms. Can she risk everything and, for the first time in her life, follow her heart and return to the island—this time, on her terms. www.juliaeantoinne.com

