

DARA NEWS



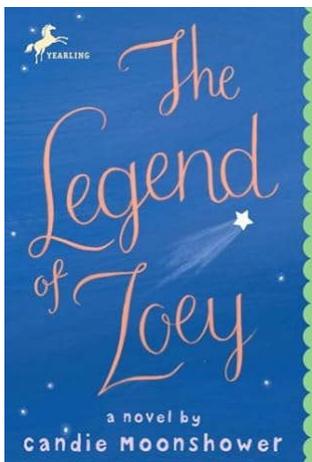
Candie Moonshower

‘Time Is On Your Side’: How to Use the Events of Our Lives to Plot our Stories

When do I start my story? When do I end it? Sometimes the hardest part of plotting is figuring out the timing. In this interactive workshop, I'll share some of my tried-and-true ways to figure out how and when to start (and end) your story, scaffold your plot, and help you outline using historic or contemporary events, Aristotle, and ticking time clocks. Using both time and events gives you a

definitive start and finish, helps you develop your characters, and aids in research. Bring your pen and paper for both group and personal exercises!

About Candie: Witty banter is Candie Moonshower's favorite aspect of a romance novel. It is also the basis of her thirty-three happy years of marriage with her handsome Hubcap. She enjoys using her wits to teach her students how to write well and to introduce them to reading romances, which she does in the class she designed and passed through committees (with much laughter), a survey of the modern romance genre. Moonshower is the author of two published books and 200+ freelance articles and essays.



Zoey's family has a strange feeling about the two-tailed comet in the sky. But that doesn't mean Zoey will let them chaperone her class field trip to Reelfoot Lake, Tennessee—especially since Grandma Cope grew up near there. What if Grandma tells everyone about being a Native American? Zoey has no interest in her family's past. All she wants is for her parents to get back together, and for herself to fit in at school. She doesn't know what's hit her when, during the bus ride to Reelfoot, she's propelled back in time to 1811, when the lake was formed!

Now Zoey's cell phone doesn't work, there's no fast food in sight, and massive earthquakes keep rattling the land. Prim, proper Prudence Charity and her way-too-pregnant mother are the first people Zoey sees, but they don't believe her story—until they meet up with Chickasaw Chief Kalopin and his beautiful Choctaw bride. Kalopin is convinced that the Great Spirit has cursed him for stealing Laughing Eyes from Chief Copiah, and that soon, the river will swallow up his village and everyone in it. Zoey knows they're headed for disaster, but can she find the courage to save them?

Reading Age: 8-12 Years

Paperback: 224 Pages

President's Letter

"Go confidently in the direction of your dreams. Live the life you have imagined." — Henry David Thoreau

Happy Mother's Day!!

May is a month for celebrations: Mother's Day, Memorial Day, Cinco de Mayo, graduations, and weddings. May stands between the spring's unpredictable weather and the certainty of a hot summer. I always look forward to May because of the crisp, cool mornings, the warmer afternoons, and the anticipation of summer vacations.



Summer vacations, and activities that go with it, are a good source of inspiration for writers. Reading is a big part in inspiring you to write, but there's nothing better than visiting different locations to refresh your creativity. Treat your summer distractions as research.

Use the note app on your phone to jot down ideas that spark your interest. Take along a small writing device like the Alpha Smart, or the new thing called Freewrite. I once took my Alpha Smart to Port Aransas and sat under an umbrella, in the sand, and worked on a plot. While on a cruise, I wrote on my iPad and kept a diary of the ship, ports, and my excursions.

I'm sure you get the point I'm making. Let your writing and your summer fun fuel each other. Balance is the key.

The biggest distraction for me this summer will be the RWA conference in Niagara Falls, Ontario. I'm the type of person who has to mix business with pleasure. Especially when I'm in a place I've never been before. I intend to sight-see as much as time will allow. I'll have my iPad with me writing notes that may end up a short story set in Niagara. I hope you all keep a log, or a diary, because we will discuss the conference at the July meeting.

In June, I have reserved the Lochwood Library for our in-person meeting. See you all there.

—Donna McGoldrick

Zoom Meeting For May 24th. Social Time: 9am. Business Meeting: 9:30 am. Speaker: 10am.

Click the Link to Join the Zoom Meeting. If you can't click it, highlight the link and paste it in a browser.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89546354660?pwd=u21xAD6ii05leZd0bb6pCDwX8KyRiM.1>

Meeting ID: 895 4635 4660

Passcode: 897562

Hybrid Meeting In June

We'll meet in-person in June at the Lochwood Branch Library. The address is 11221 Lochwood Blvd., Dallas, TX (214) 670-8403.

Author Interview with Fenley Grant

Submitted by Donna McGoldrick



Fenley’s favorite books involve magical worlds, action, adventure, intrigue, and of course, love. Fenley is an award-winning author, a 2019 Golden Heart finalist, and an author with Champagne Book Group. She writes urban fantasy, time travel, and paranormal romances.

Welcome Fenley, and thank you for taking the time for this interview.

Tell us a little about yourself.

Hey! I’m Lisa Fenley, and I write under the pen name Fenley Grant. My genres are urban fantasy, time travel romance, and paranormal romance.

I’ve published twelve books so far, plus participated in three short story anthologies with other authors, and I’ve earned a few awards for my works.

Being an army brat while in my younger years gave me a unique perspective—when you move often, you have to get a quick read on any new place you encounter. This is where I honed my people-watching skills, and I think the observations of other peoples’ interactions has helped me create unique and interesting characters for my books.

What is your favorite aspect of writing urban fantasy, time travel romance, and paranormal romance?

I love the creative world builds of what I write, and I love developing the interesting characters in these types of stories.

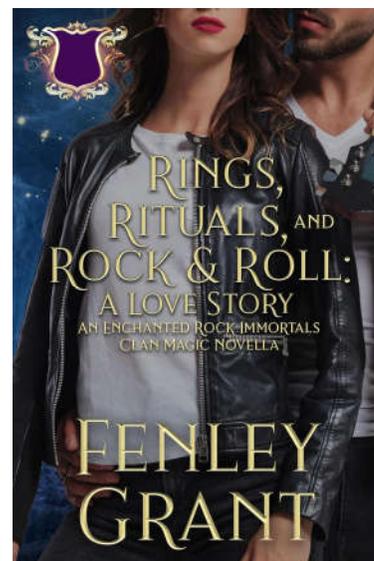
What do you think are the key elements that keep your readers engaged?

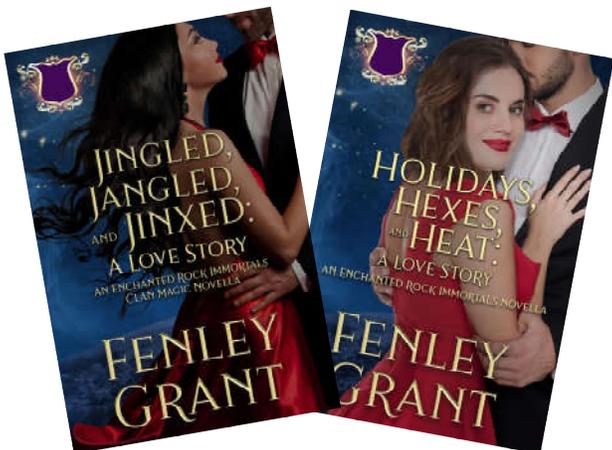
A sense of humor never hurts, so I try to have some element of the story that makes readers laugh. I also spend a great deal of time developing my characters and my world build so the reader experiences the uniqueness of the story.

What is your typical writing process? How do you stay focused? And do you use writing software tools?

Technology and I aren’t close friends—I repel tech—so I don’t use writing software tools.

My process is to set goals for the year of what I want to write, then break down that large goal into manageable pieces by quarterly, monthly, weekly, then daily goals. Scheduling the writing in time blocks helps me stay on task, and I write in the morning, when my brain is operational. I’m useless when it comes to writing at night. My process is to work off a very rough outline, get words on the page, then go back and clean up the copy later to



Fenley Grant Continued

add in the details. I'm dialogue-heavy on the first draft, which makes the work look like a screenplay. I also try to keep to a Monday through Friday timeframe, but life interferes. Since I also copy edit/proofread for other authors, I have to balance my work with the schedules for theirs.

How do you keep details straight while writing a series?

Book Bible for the win! I have one per series. Mine contain elaborate character studies, pictures, family trees, maps, histories, descriptions of settings, weapons, clothing, and anything else I need to remember about the series.

What is it like as a hybrid published author? What challenges have you faced?

Self-publishing was never my goal, but trying to get an agent, let alone get a contract with a "Big Four" publisher in the paranormal romance genre for a debut author was unlikely. I know this because I tried. Most agents who represent romance authors represent contemporary, not PNR. Most publishing houses aren't willing to risk taking on a debut author in the genres in which I write, so a group of friends and I decided we'd get together to self-publish a series to create our own opportunities.

We went on a writing retreat at Cedar Creek Lake, I think in Gun Barrel City, and created the world of the #EnchantedRockImmortals. The books are paranormal romances, and the world is based at Enchanted Rock in Texas. We created five clans—Clan Fae, Clan Human Paranormal, Clan Magic, Clan Sanguis, and Clan Shifter—and our characters belong to those clans. Our first books came out on August 4, 2020. Today, the series has over fifty published books, which includes boxed sets, among six different authors. I love my team—I wouldn't have self-published without them. What I see as the biggest challenge to self-publishing is the cash outlay for editing, book covers, promotion, etc. I also find the number of decisions to be made a bit daunting at times.

As for my traditionally published work, I pitched my time travel series to a number of smaller presses and received three contract offers. I chose Champagne Book Group because I connected with them and their terms were the most favorable. What I love about trad publishing is I don't have to worry about paying out of pocket for editing, covers, distribution, etc. All royalties I receive are just that—royalties. I guess the downside is not having control over all aspects of my books. The time travel romance genre contains a smaller pool of readers, so I find the lack of complete control an acceptable trade-off to the pure profit on the book sales.

Can you talk about your current work in progress?

I'm working on a new series—*Warrior Wolves of Texas*. The series begins in the fictional town of North Eden, Texas—home of the Central Texas Pack.

I'm still deciding whether to pitch this work or self-publish. I've given myself until July to make that call.

The first book in the series, *Warrior of Eden*, was a 2019 Golden Heart finalist. The book has been through the editing process, and I'm finalizing the manuscript. The pitch:

GI JANE X RUNAWAY BRIDE, werewolf-style.

Fenley Grant Continued

Werewolf Alpha Katrina Stone joined the army to escape an arranged mating. When the wounded warrior returns home, she faces an uncertain future...and the angry Alpha she left behind.

The current work-in-process is the second book in the series, *Warrior of Wolf Lake*, and the manuscript will go to my editor in June. I'll start on book three, *Warrior of West Texas*, sometime in the fourth quarter.

How to find me:

Website: <https://www.fenleygrant.com/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/FenleyGrant.Author>

BlueSky: <https://bsky.app/profile/fenleygrant.bsky.social>

Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/fenley_grant/



DARA Elections - October 10th!

DARA's elections are not too far off. We have three months to select nominees for the 2026 Board of Directors. During the June meeting, we'll select someone to be the Elections Coordinator (EC). The EC will solicit members for Board positions in July, August, & September.

As members of DARA, you need to think seriously about giving back to the chapter and volunteering.

Schedule for elections:

June: Select Elections Coordinator.

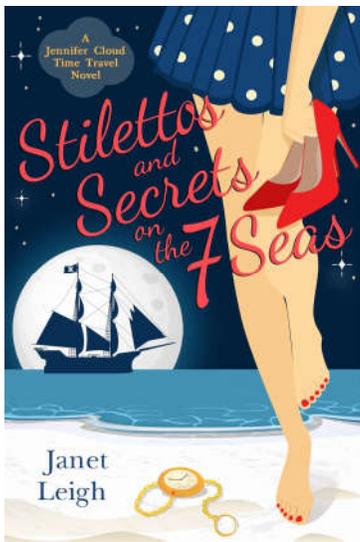
July/August/September: Gather nominees. Publish the nominees bios in the newsletter.

October 10th: Vote for the 2026 Board of Directors. Publish the election results in the Oct/Nov newsletter.

December 6th: Introduce the new Board at the holiday party. Old Board and New Board will meet to handover information.



New Releases



Title: Stilettoes & Secrets on the 7 Seas
Author: Janet Leigh
Genre: Time Travel Romance
Release Date: May 6, 2025
Available In: Kindle & Paperback
Length: Novel (92K Words)
First/Subsequent Sale: Subsequent

Jennifer Cloud, a transporter for the World Traveler Federation, is determined to lead a mission, but only male Defenders get that job. Her current defender, the hunky, He-man Marco Ferrari, has decided, against her better judgment, to stay in Nassau 1718, an island run by unscrupulous pirates, shady smugglers, and convenient courtesans.

When Marco doesn't return to the present, Jennifer's boss gives her the green light to save him, but her current beau, the impossibly handsome Scotsman Caiyan McGregor, isn't happy about her solo mission—or that she's helping the He-man. The tides turn after Jennifer embarks on the mission and finds herself aboard a ship captained by the infamous pirate Charles Vane. While looking for a lost relic, roadblocking a ruthless brigand, rescuing her defender, and saving a past historical figure from losing his life, she finds herself engaged to not one but two men.

At least she brought her lucky red stilettoes.



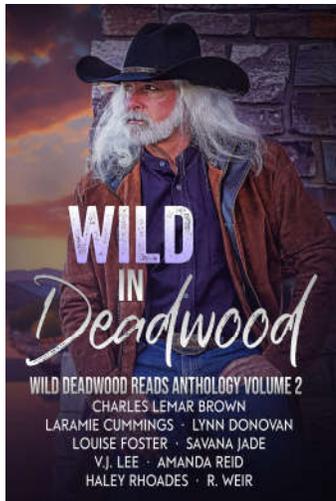
Title: Once Upon An Enchanted Castle
Author: Michelle Miles
Genre: YA Fantasy Romance
Release Date: May 30, 2025
Available In: Kindle
Length: Novel (296 Pages)
First/Subsequent Sale: Subsequent

Isabella “Bella” Rinaldi has an enchanting gift—the ability to translate any ancient text from old, forgotten languages. She spends her days in extravagant libraries of the most affluent who pay exorbitant sums for those books and her services. But when her father's merchant ships are destroyed and their port city home burned to the ground, they uproot and move to a small countryside town to start anew.

The reclusive Prince Leopold has long suffered a terrible curse—to live as half man, half beast. Every full moon, he transforms into a majestic yet fearsome werewolf. For decades, he has looked for a way to free himself from his horrifying transformation but to no avail. When his path inadvertently crosses with Bella in the village's book shop, he realizes the text she is trying to sell may be the key to breaking his curse. He convinces her to keep the book and hires her to translate it for him.

As she delves into its pages, Bella realizes the text holds the key to breaking the curse that bound the beast each full moon. Time becomes their greatest adversary, and the curse threatens to consume Leopold for all time. Their destinies intertwine in ways they never imagine. As she begins to unravel its mysteries, they journey through the pages of a dark enchantment that requires trust, courage, and love—the most powerful magic of all.

New Releases—Continue



Title: Wild in Deadwood, Volume 2
Genre: Anthology - Multi/Story - Historical Paranormal Romance
Author & Story Title: Amanda Reid / The Wolf’s Gamble
Release Date: May 20, 2025
Available In: Paperback
Length: Novella
First/Subsequent Sale: Subsequent

Ossory wolf Aaron Monaghan travels to Deadwood after he receives word his cousin was murdered, only to find a beautiful psychic confounding his every turn with a secret of her own. When he realizes she's his mate, will it be too late to protect her and her incredible secret from the killer’s crosshairs?

Contest Submissions



Fenley Grant

My book baby is a winner! Jingled, Jangled, and Jinxed: A Love Story won in the Specialized Romance category of The Carolyn Readers' Choice Award. I am humbled, because I know who my competition was, and readers decide the winners.

Let us hear from you!



If you have ideas for DARA or would like to help us improve our organization, please share them with our board. Send your suggestions to info@dallasarearomanceauthors.com. We want to hear from you.

DARA Newsletter

Our Mission: DARA is focused on providing education and marketing opportunities to the members. With monthly programs on writing craft, publishing business, and writing tools, we strive to improve our writing skills. We support and encourage our members no matter their writing level.

DARA welcomes letters, comments, and articles on writing and publishing. The DARA News is seeking articles that cover self and traditional publishing, author interviews, genre and subgenre writing techniques, grammar, reports from conferences, marketing / promotions, social media, and many other writing advise and tips. You don't need to be a published author to submit an article. Send your submissions in MS Word format to Donna McGoldrick at dsmcgold@donnamcgold.com

The DARA News is published monthly from January through November. DARA does not publish a newsletter in December. **DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION is the 10th of each month.**

SUBMISSION POLICY

In the interest of good journalism the editor reserves the right to refuse or edit any material that could offend our readers and the right to edit to meet space requirements. Accuracy of the articles, announcements, and informative statements are the sole responsibility of the submitting author and not this publications or its supporting Executive Board. DARA does not endorse any person, firm, partnership, or corporation mentioned in this newsletter. Readers are urged to determine for themselves the reliability, integrity, and financial responsibility of those with whom they deal. DARA makes no warranties or representation, either expressed or implied.

To our sister Chapters: We invite you to use any part of our publication with proper credit to the author and chapter.

If you have a new release, send your information to Michelle Miles at mlmiles21@gmail.com.

Please include your name, title, date of publication, publisher, format, and whether or not it's your first publication.



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DARA Board of Directors for 2025

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President Elect—Michelle Miles

Treasurer—Dren James

Secretary—Janet Leigh

DARA Leaders

Program Coordinator—Jennifer August

Membership—Donna McGoldrick

Member Awards (Roses) - Michelle Miles

Communications (Newsletter / Website) - Donna McGoldrick

Pan Liaison—Open

Pro Liaison—Open