

DARA NEWS



Writing 201:

Fifteen Random Things I've Learned In Thirty Years of Writing

Linda joins us in June to give us tips and/or anecdotes about dialogue, description, pov, among others that may be less obvious from the outline.

She'll share what she's learned over the past 30 years of attending workshops, writing books, and critiquing others' writing. Some of the things she'll share may resonate with you and help with your writing.

Things Learned:

- Everything happens for two reasons
- Use what you *have*
- *Use* what you have
- There are no throwaway lines
- Don't warm up
- Don't wind down
- Where to end a paragraph
- Where to end a chapter
- Not every novel has to be a page turner
- Dialogue is not the same as conversation
- Naked people in empty rooms
- Hooks—Beginning and ending
- Backstory—How much do you need and when do you need it?
- POV—Beyond the basics
- How many sex scenes?

Bio:

Linda Steinberg wrote her first novel when she was living in Nigeria, in longhand, on school tablets, the only available writing paper. It was 1200 pages and has since found its rightful role as a doorstop. When she returned home, she joined West Houston RWA, then, after moving to north Texas in 1993, DARA. That same year she sold her second book to the first editor she submitted it to. *September Spring* was published by Kensington in 1994.

After a long, long dry spell, she joined the Indie Revolution in 2013 by self-publishing a romantic suspense novel, *The French Deception*. That was followed by 21 more books and 5 short stories. When asked if she's still writing, she replies, "Am I still breathing?"

Linda writes relatable, contemporary romances with memorable meet-cutes, authentic characters, and clever banter. No princes, no vampires, no billionaires. Her stories feature heroes and heroines with rich backstories who confront true-to-life problems with humor and warmth. Linda invites you to step behind the curtain into a romance you can believe in.

You can find out more about Linda at: <https://lindasteinberg.com/home.html>

Zoom Meeting For June 22nd. Social Time: 9am. Business Meeting: 9:30 am. Speaker: 10am.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83434280984?pwd=Y2NEZWF1NlhMOFYyaE1JWGM84ckp3UT09>

Meeting ID: 834 3428 0984

Passcode: 548934

President's Letter

What's Bugging You

When I was younger, in the month of June, we would often see these black and white beetle bugs. My mother told us they were Junebugs. Being 100% a girlie-girl, I hate bugs. While all the other kids admired the multi-color shell this bug sported, I loathed it. Not much has changed, as it relates to my disdain for bugs. I don't understand their purpose, and it bothers me to be around them.

What bugs you? We all have pet peeves, or irritants, that get on our nerves, invoke cringes, and cause us to use ugly words. According to Psychology Today, some of the most common pet peeves that people have are people who cut in line, chewing gum with mouth open, talking with food in your mouth, interrupting, walking slow, taking phone calls in public, driving bad, repeatedly clicking a pen, harking and spitting, poor hygiene, and slurping. I'm certain you could add to this list, but you get the idea.

The hot weather combined with the experience of a pet peeve can leave us very testy. It causes us to be impatient and short-tempered. We can't control what others do, but we can control how we respond. When we experience a pet peeve, as with all conversations and actions, we should wait before we react and choose our words wisely. Doing so may help us retain relationships, respond positively, and lessen the possibility of further irritating the situation.

As writers, we can be guilty of irritating our readers with reader pet-peeves (yes, it's a thing). Some common pet peeves of readers include conversations left hanging, characters with similar names, foreign phrases without translation, overused plot devices, giving modern language to historical characters, head hopping, information dumps, and unpronounceable names.

While we all strive to deliver the best story we can, we must be careful not to frustrate our readers. To help avoid these, common, pet peeves of readers consider reading your story out loud to yourself, hiring beta readers, having people with varied backgrounds pre-read your story, and of course, getting a really good content and copy editor.

However you decide to deal with writing/reader pet peeves, and life pet peeves, do so in a manner that won't bug you, or bug others.



—Sharon Giddings Davis



DARA's June Meeting Will Be Hybrid

Don't forget, we will be hybrid for our June 2024 meeting. For those in and around the Dallas/Fort Worth Area we would love to see you in person. If in person is not an option for you, you can still join us online.

Michelle Tanner will host us once again. The location information is as follows: **Grand Treviso, 330 Las Colinas Blvd., E, Irving, TX 75039. There is parking out front, on the first floor of the parking garage, on the street in front of the building, and on Mandalay.**

When you arrive, tell the person at the desk you are here for the meeting, and they will put you in the elevator to the 6th floor.

Follow the signs to the Activity Room.

New Members

We're growing! Yay!

Please welcome our newest members:

Kelley Rose
Camille Crouch
Stephanie Pass.

Thanks for joining Dallas Area Romance Authors.



Dallas Area Romance Authors

Members Spotlight—Anita Learned



Tell us about yourself.

I grew up in Clarksville, Texas. I graduated in June and went to work for Southwestern Bell the following month. I retired in December 2020 at age 38 with 41.5 years of service. (Creative accounting on my part) I either wanted to be a lawyer or a hairdresser. I'm divorced with no children, but 2 onery cats, and 1 spoiled 101 lb dog. I spent the 1st 20 years of my career in Operator Services, being first a TSPS Operator (the person you used to get when you dialed 0) then a Directory Assistance Operator. I received a Certificate of Electronics from Collin County Community College in a course only designed and offered to Southwestern Bell Employees. After graduation from CCCC, I transferred to be a Network Center Technician in Richardson, TX, (I sat at a computer, tested special circuits remotely then dispatched the ticket to the central office or to an outside technician – basically, I told people where to go and what to do when they got there.)

For over 30 years of my career, I served as a representative of CWA (Communications Workers of America). I represented employees to the company, acting as a lawyer on their behalf. I started as a job steward, then was elected to Chief Steward (4 times) – Vice President (twice) and Treasurer (twice). The last 6 years of my employment with what is now known as AT&T, I served as Treasurer of the second largest CWA local in District 6 (Texas and MOKA – Missouri, Oklahoma, Kansas and Arkansas).

What kind of romance do you write?

My first was a western romance set in 1862 – it's buried deep under my bed where it may never be discovered. It has every mistake a beginning author could make, multiplied over and over again! My next book was a time travel set in the old west. It garnered me an agent for a short while – and I got some very nice rejection letters. It's currently sitting on a shelf (well, technically on my computer), and perhaps one day I will re-write it because I love their story. Currently, I'm working on a suspense with romantic elements.

What kind of romance do you read?

My first pick is romantic suspense. Next would be historical, then time travel – not necessarily in that order.

What is your favorite food?

I love a good cheeseburger.

If you could visit anywhere in the world, where would it be?

I'd like to visit Scotland and Ireland.

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Continued—Anita Learned

If time, talent, and money were of no consequence – what would you be doing with your life?

I'd be a famous author that sells every book she writes to movie companies for millions of dollars starring people like Chris Hemsworth, Alan Ritchson, Sam Heughan, Emily Blunt, Jennifer Garner, Jennifer Lopez, etc. – all of which I become good friends with.

Who would be invited to your dream dinner party (alive or dead individuals)?

Julie Garwood, John Douglas (FBI), Luke Bryan, Jennifer Garner and my mother.

What is your favorite quote or saying?

"I have not failed. I have found 10,000 ways that do not work." Thomas Edison

Finish this sentence: I wish DARA...would grow to 300 members!

Finish this sentence: I wish I had a body like Jennifer Lopez.

Finish this sentence: What I love most about romance is ...HEA.

Finish this sentence: My favorite movie is...You've Got Mail and also Peppermint.

Finish this sentence: My favorite book is ...Texas Destiny by Lorraine Heath (I have many, many more – but this is one I have read many times).

Finish this sentence: My favorite author is...I can't name just one – I have many that I read everything they write.

Finish this sentence: When I was little, I used to...make up stories all the time.

Finish this sentence: I write best when...I first get up – or in the late afternoon after a nap.

Finish this sentence: Life would be great if...I continue to wake up each day.

Upcoming Meetings

July 27 - From Indie to Hybrid—Siera London

August 24 - Developing Your Business Plan - Jacki Renee

September 28 - Blurbs: The Tiny Terror or Your Main Marketing Marvel? - Amanda Reid

October 26 - A Deep Dive into Developmental Editing—Sue Toth

December 7 - TBD

Jan 25, 2025— Developing Skills as a Beta Reader as a Way to Better Your Own Writing—Lara Zielinsky

Music Match



Nothing sets a romantic mood for a romantic encounter like mood music. Do you know your love songs? These are songs from the 1960's to present. See how well you do with matching the song to the artist.

1	Make You Feel My Love	A	The Supremes
2	Leave The Door Open	B	Cyndi Lauper
3	Let's Get It On	C	Van Morrison
4	Can't Help Falling In Love	D	Marvin Gaye
5	This Magic Moment	E	Faith Hill
6	The Biggest Part of Me	F	Ed Sheeran
7	Always	G	Teddy Pendegrass
8	Thinking Out Loud	H	Bruno Mars/Silk Sonic
9	You Should Probably Leave	I	Etta James
10	At Last	J	Frank Sinatra
11	Someday We'll Be Together	K	Bon Jovi
12	Time After Time	L	Adele
13	This Kiss	M	Ambrosia
14	Brown Eyed Girl	N	Jay and The Americans
15	Turn Out The Lights	O	Elvis Presley
16	My Funny Valentine	P	Chris Stapleton

New Releases / Member's News

Title: Just Like A Woman

Author: Linda Steinberg

Date of Publication: May 3, 2024

Print Length: 261 Pages

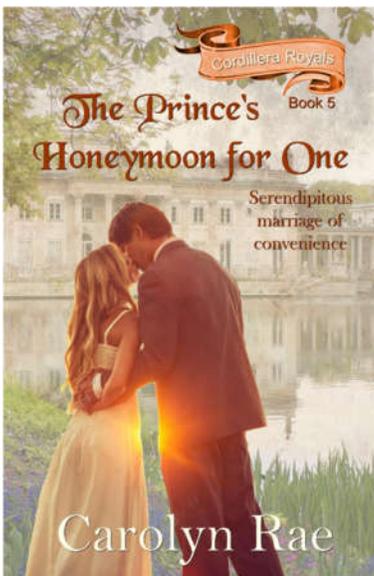
Type: Novel

First Sale / Subsequent: Subsequent sale.

Blurb: *No good deed goes unpunished.* After finding and reporting irregularities in her company's new software, programming analyst Caitlyn O'Malley is fired from her job. On the flight home to Texas, she searches the dark clouds outside her window for a silver lining. Instead, she becomes trapped inside a lavatory. When the stuck door finally bursts open, Caitlyn falls, relieved but embarrassed, into the arms of the handsome, disarming captain.

Airline pilot Tim Deluca has a blonde or brunette waiting for him in nearly every city in America. Redheads are not on his radar. When he breaks down a jammed restroom door to rescue a flaming-haired passenger, she barely registers on his attraction meter. But when the new poker player at his regular game turns out to be the lady in the lavatory, he suddenly finds himself all in.

Denying her attraction to the inveterate womanizer, Caitlyn refuses to go out with him. But, intrigued by his terse, cryptic snark, she can't resist digging beneath Tim's emotional armor, discovering a depth he's never shared with anyone. The man who's always rejected intimacy finds himself wanting, for the first time in his life, a real relationship. But to win Caitlyn's love, Tim will have to confront and combat the emotional scars of his past.



Title: The Prince's Honeymoon For One

Author: Carolyn Rae

Date of Publication: June 29, 2024

First Sale / Subsequent: Subsequent sale.

Blurb: Prince Julian and Rachel share a push-pull attraction they can't ignore. She wants a rewarding career as a social worker, but he wants her to travel with him so he can enjoy life as a carefree prince before he inherits his father's business, a thriving Santiago Hotel in Cadiz, Spain.

Thrown together on a cruise ship to Hawaii, Social Director Rachel Bartholomew encourages handsome Prince Julian from Cadiz, Spain, to enjoy his trip. She helps him escape his domineering parents, who want him to marry Princess Katarina from Lindstrom, a neighboring country to connect their countries with a Santiago hotel chain. A hushed secret marriage while the sun sets on the ship thwarts his parents, but can their marriage survive doubts and distractions in Book Five of the Cordillera Royals?

New Releases / Member's News



Title: The Sorcerer's Daughter

Author: Michelle Miles

Date of Publication: June 4, 2024

Available In: eBook, Paperback, Audiobook

First Sale / Subsequent: Subsequent sale.

Blurb: *A sorceress with no magic. A stolen crystal that holds the key to her future. And in a court of royals...a treacherous fate she can't escape.*

Seventeen-year-old Violet Winthrop is destined to marry a nobleman, if her father has anything to say about it, and he usually does. But Violet yearns for more out of life than being a wife and mother. She dreams of being a powerful sorceress.

The problem is she has no magic.

Until the day she stumbles upon a fragment of a crystal that appears to have stars inside. Enthralled, Violet is compelled to steal it from her father's study and keeps it hidden on her person.

When her father is suddenly called to court as the king's royal sorcerer, he packs her up and heads to the castle. Nothing has prepared her for the treachery, machinations, and deceptions thrown at her in the royal court.

When the crystal she's been hiding suddenly springs to life, responding to her every whim, Violet's dreams of becoming a powerful sorceress seem to be within her grasp. Or will her ultimate power prove to be her ultimate destruction?

Don't Forget Our Challenges!



Thankfully, we are growing!

For the last couple of months, we have had new members join our chapter and existing members renew their membership. Let's keep the momentum going. We will recognize the member who invites the most members to our meetings and the member who gets the most new members to join. Recognition will take place at our December meeting.

We are also challenging our members to read. We are asking DARA members to send in the books you read each month to info@dallasarearomanceauthors.com. This is our opportunity to compete on who reads the most. This is a year-long reading challenge to see who reads the most books, in our chapter.

Do you accept the challenges?

DARA Newsletter

Our Mission: To inform the membership about chapter events, RWA news and classes, our member’s good news, and other things important to our members.

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 news-
letter 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 Mary Karlik at mary@maryjwilson.com

Please include your name, title, date of publication (if known), publisher, and whether or not it’s your first publication.



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DARA Board of Directors for 2024

- President—Sharon Davis
- President Elect—Donna McGoldrick
- Treasurer—Terry Gene
- Secretary—Janet Leigh

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- Membership—Carolyn Williamson
- Member Awards (Roses) - Mary Karlik
- Communications (Newsletter / Website) - Donna McGoldrick
- Pan Liaison—Open
- Pro Liaison—Open