

# DARA NEWS



## *What If Goal, Motivation, and Conflict (GMC) Isn't Enough?*

Great storytelling includes characters who battle and triumph a dynamic mix of internal and external conflicts to reach their ultimate goal.

But unputdownable fiction is more than a GMC chart. How your character reacts to each challenge creates a three-dimensional persona who's fictional journey communicates a message of our human existence that resonates of a wide cross-section of readers.

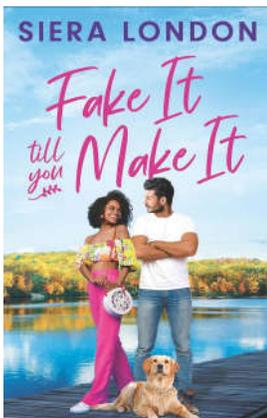
Join USA Today Bestselling Author Siera London as she explores scene and sequel structure in popular fiction.

### Bio:

USA Today Bestselling and Award-winning, Siera London, crafts tales with a message to heal the heart and soul. From contemporary to paranormal, Siera's pen weaves romance in all its forms. Whether mixed with suspense, crime, or otherworld mysticism, all of her stories are an artful blend of emotion, intelligence, and wit. In short, Siera writes heroines you know, heroes you love, and romance you feel.

When not writing, Siera's off to roam, with Mr. Awesome and Frie, her cat muse, traveling the world, exploring every place, and seeking new inspirations to fuel her creativity. Visit her website at:

<https://www.sieralondonauthor.com/>



**Debbie Mason meets Lizzie Shane in this small-town romance where a burned-by-love veterinarian arranges a fake partnership with a down-on-her-luck city girl in order to save his family business.**

Review:

*"What a treat! With Fake It Till You Make It, Siera London delivers an engrossing and deeply heartfelt tale that sparkles with small town charm and grown woman wit." —Tracey Livesay, author of American Royalty.*

**Zoom Meeting For July 27th. 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

### Fireworks!

In the month of July, those of us in America commemorate the Declaration of Independence. On July 4, the celebrations often include food, family, and fireworks. Fireworks usually include sparklers that display red, white, and blue and many other noisemakers.

In romance, fireworks tend to have a different connotation.

In 2022, I served as the VP of Programs for DARA. My job was to obtain engaging speakers for our monthly meetings. In March of that year, I had Naima Simone as our guest speaker. She is a very successful author and continues to add new sub-genres to her arsenal every couple of years. One of the things she is known for is her detailed descriptions of sex scenes.



She spoke about this during her presentation. She even provided us with a couple of handouts to help with writing sex scenes. One handout was titled *Losing Your Inner Vixen: Writing Character Driven Love Scenes*. In this document, Naima shared that our heroes and heroines learn about sex and relationships from their environment, parents, friends, and role models. She provided us with questions to consider as we complete WIPs and develop romantic characters.

These questions include: Did he/she witness intimacy, love, healthy relationships? Who explained sex to them? What are their views on the opposite sex? The document then goes on to suggest that romance writers develop a sexual character arc (I didn't even know there was such a thing) and provides sample questions to consider when doing this.

This handout and the discussion on sex scenes led to the question about how authors describe these scenes in romance novels. Being an experienced writer of intimacy, Naima had a handout for how authors can use a variety of synonyms to describe various body parts and acts. Varying your word choices helps keep the readers engaged and aids in visualization of what is happening in the scene.

I recently revisited this document and can now see why she is a best-selling author and expert on fireworks, intimacy, and sex. Who knew there were so many adjectives and adverbs to describe simple actions and body parts?

Now that I've piqued your interest in romance fireworks, you may be asking how to get a copy of these documents. I will post them on the DARA Facebook page, or you can email me for a copy.

I hope you enjoy your month, fireworks and all.

—Sharon Giddings Davis

## *Clean Thoughts or Dirty Mind—Part II*

### *What Am I?*

1. When I go in, I can cause some pain. I also ask you to spit and not swallow.
2. I'm long and hard. I go down for long periods of time. I'm full of seamen.
3. What's at least 6 inches long, goes in your mouth, and is more fun when it vibrates?
4. All day long, it's in and out. I discharge loads from my shaft. Both men and women go down on me.
5. I am long, you move me around with your lips and tongue, I get wet with saliva, and I get sucked.
6. You put me in your mouth. I might make you gag. I only work if you swallow.
7. What four letter word begins with a F and ends with a K, and if you can't get it, you can use your hands instead.

## *New Members*

*We're growing! Yay!*

*Please welcome our newest member:*

*Sonya Dow*

*Thanks for joining Dallas Area Romance Authors.*



## *Upcoming Meetings*

**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** - *Cindy Dees*—TBD

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

# Dallas Area Romance Authors

## Members Spotlight—Michelle Miles



### *Tell us about yourself.*

I was born and raised in Dallas, Texas and moved west to Fort Worth in the late 1990s. I've been there ever since. When I was a kid, I wanted to be a Dallas Cowboys Cheerleader or an archaeologist. Later, when I got into high school, I realized I wanted to write and create stories. My then-best friend and I used to write Indiana Jones comic books and Star Trek fanfiction. Since then, I have always wanted to write. I never got serious about it until around 2001 when my son was born and by 2004, I joined RWA. I immediately immersed myself in the organization and learned so much from so many different people, made lifelong friends, and became a published author in 2006. My love has always been fantasy fiction. I wanted to write that more than anything. But it took a long time to learn how to not, only, world build, but craft a good story. I'm mostly an Indie author but have just signed a 3-book contract with Dragonblade Publishing. I guess that means I'm hybrid now!

I'm married and have one son who is a college student studying Chemistry at UTA. I currently work as an executive assistant for a major financial institution (but am hoping to quit and write full time in the near future!).

### *What kind of romance do you write?*

I write urban fantasy, adult and YA fantasy and paranormal romance.

### *What kind of romance do you read?*

Mostly fantasy/YA fantasy romance. I love a good story with magical elements and a good twist.

### *What is your favorite food?*

I love a good steak and baked potato

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

There are so many places, but Scotland is at the top of the list (and going this September!)

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

Writing full time! It's all I've ever wanted to do.

### *What is your favorite quote or saying?*

Instant gratification takes too long (Carrie Fisher)

### *Finish this sentence: My favorite movie is...*

Raiders of the Lost Ark!

*Continued - Next Page*

*Continued—Michelle Miles*

***Finish this sentence: My favorite book is ...***

My two favorite series Fever series by Karen Marie Moning, and Throne of Glass by Sarah J Maas

***If you are published, what are the names of your books and where can we find them?***

I have numerous series and 30+ books. You can find a list of them on my website: <https://michellemiles.net/>



Thank you to our DARA member, Linda Steinberg, for sharing her knowledge, insight, and experience at the June 2024 meeting. Also, thanks to Michelle Tanner for hosting the meeting at her location. Next hybrid meeting is in September.



## ***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](mailto: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?

## *New Releases / Member's News*



**Title:** Once Upon A Midnight Clear

**Author:** Michelle Miles

**Release Date:** July 9, 2024

**Available In:** eBook, Paperback, Audiobook

**Genre:** YA Fantasy Romance

**First Sale / Subsequent:** Subsequent sale.

**Blurb:** *A pair of enchanted glass slippers. A dark and dangerous queen. And the fate of a kingdom hangs in the balance.*

Ella Rose Tremaine lives a life of drudgery as a servant in her own home, catering to the whims of her stepmother and stepsisters. All she wants is a life to call her own, but with no way out, she's trapped. Even when the royal ball is announced, she is forbidden to attend.

Left alone on the night of the ball, a mysterious package arrives addressed to her. Inside, a pair of beautiful glass slippers. When she puts them on, she's transformed and whisked off to the ball by none other than her fairy godmother—but with a warning. Remove the slippers before the last

stroke of midnight to break the spell and all will be as it was before.

Lost in the magic of the evening while dancing with a handsome stranger, she is heedless of her fairy godmother's warning. With the last strike of midnight, she is transported to the Christmas realm of Rovenheim.

Her arrival garners the attention of a dangerous queen determined to have the slippers for herself. She'll stop at nothing to get them by issuing an ultimatum—bring her the slippers or she'll destroy the enchanted realm and the Spirit of Christmas itself.

With time running out, Ella embarks on a perilous journey through the mystical realm on a quest to save it. She must embrace her destiny and discover the power of love and magic. But will it be enough to overcome the darkness that threatens to consume them all?

<https://michellemiles.net/book/once-upon-a-midnight-clear/>

## *New Releases*



Send your new release information by the 10th of the month to Mary Karlik at: [mary@maryjwilson.com](mailto:mary@maryjwilson.com).

Please include your Name, Title, Release Date, Available In (what format), Genre, and whether or not it's your first publication.

Please also include a blurb and your website.



We all know that July is when we celebrate Independence Day, but did you know that the month of July has been set aside to honor many other special days? Below are other designated special days that take place in July. Perhaps you can utilize some of these special days in your novels. Check them out.

- **July 1:** International Joke Day, American Zoo Day, Creative Ice Cream Flavors Day, National Postal Worker Day, Canada Day
- **July 2:** National I Forgot Day, World UFO Day
- **July 3:** Disobedience Day, International Plastic Bag Free Day, National Stay Out of the Sun Day, National Eat Beans Day
- **July 4:** Independence Day
- **July 5:** National Bikini Day, National Graham Cracker Day
- **July 6:** International Kissing Day, National Fried Chicken Day
- **July 7:** Tell the Truth Day, National Strawberry Sundae Day, World Chocolate Day
- **July 8:** National Video Game Day, Math 2.0 Day, Liberty Bell Day, National SCUD Day (also known as National Savor the Comic, Unplug the Drama Day)
- **July 9:** National Sugar Cookie Day
- **July 10:** Teddy Bear Picnic Day, National Kitten Day, National Piña Colada Day, Don't Step On a Bee Day
- **July 11:** Cheer Up the Lonely Day, Marine Corps Creation Day, National Clerihew Day, World Population Day
- **July 12:** Simplicity Day, Etch a Sketch Day, National Eat Your Jello Day
- **July 13:** Embrace Your Geekness Day, National French Fry Day
- **July 14:** Bastille Day, Shark Awareness Day, Cow Appreciation Day, National Mac and Cheese Day, Pandemonium Day
- **July 15:** Be a Dork Day, Gummi Worm Day, National Give Something Away Day, National Pet Fire Safety Day
- **July 16:** World Snake Day, National Corn Fritter Day, National Atomic Veterans Day
- **July 17:** Wrong Way Day, World Emoji Day, National Lottery Day
- **July 18:** World Listening Day, Nelson Mandela International Day, National Caviar Day, National Tropical Fruit Day
- **July 19:** National Daiquiri Day, National Ice Cream Day (third Sunday)
- **July 20:** National Moon Day, Space Exploration Day, International Chess Day, National Lollipop Day
- **July 21:** National Junk Food Day
- **July 22:** Spoonerism Day, National Hammock Day
- **July 23:** Gorgeous Grandma Day, National Hot Dog Day

- **July 24:** International Self Care Day, Tell An Old Joke Day, National Cousins Day, National Drive-Thru Day, National Tequila Day
- **July 25:** National Thread the Needle Day, National Hot Fudge Sundae Day, National Wine and Cheese Day
- **July 26:** National All Or Nothing Day, National Aunt and Uncle Day, National Parents Day (fourth Sunday)
- **July 27:** National Creme Brûlée Day, National Scotch Day, Bagpipe Appreciation Day
- **July 28:** National Milk Chocolate Day, National Hamburger Day (one of three celebratory days in the year)
- **July 29:** International Tiger Day, Rain Day, National Chicken Wing Day, National Lasagna Day, National Lipstick Day
- **July 30:** National Support Public Education Day, National Cheesecake Day, International Day of Friendship, National Chili Dog Day, National Father-in-Law Day
- **July 31:** Talk In An Elevator Day, Harry Potter's Birthday Day, National Avocado Day, National Mutt Day



## *Answers To Clean Thoughts or Dirty Mind*

1. Dentist
2. Submarine
3. Toothbrush
4. Elevator
5. Straw
6. Pill
7. Fork



**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](mailto:info@dallasarearomanceauthors.com). We want to hear from you.

**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](mailto: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 in-formation to Mary Karlik at [mary@maryjwilson.com](mailto:mary@maryjwilson.com)

Please include your Name, Title, Release Date, Available In (what format), Genre, and whether or not it’s your first publication..



**DARA’s Website:**  
[dallasarearomanceauthors.com](http://dallasarearomanceauthors.com)

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**DARA Board of Directors for 2024**

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

**DARA Leaders**

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