

# DARA NEWS

*May Speaker: Troy Lambert*

*Plottr*



## **Visualize Your Plot Points**

Plottr lets you easily arrange (and rearrange) your scenes, plots, and character arcs so you can quickly find your way to the end of your tale—no corkboard required.

- Quickly outline your book with visual story cards
- Filter your timeline by characters, places, and tags
- Color-coordinate your storylines to keep them organized
- Flip the timeline to view it vertically or horizontally

## **Create Your Story Bible**

Can't remember the name of the diner in Chapter 3—or where the diner is? Don't waste time combing through old notes and index cards. Track your character and places with Plottr.

- Visually organize your characters and places
- Link your characters and places to your scenes
- Create custom attributes to track specific details, like special powers or geographical trivia

### Bio:

Troy Lambert is a freelance writer, author, and editor. He's written over 30 novels, and several works of non-fiction. He's helped countless writers and others tell their stories. Troy offers thrilling fiction with heart rich characters, deep stories, and twists that make you wonder just how you never saw them coming. He loves story. Especially story structure, which helps you take apart a story and see how it really works (or doesn't). He's helped a lot of writers, and he can help you, too.

Troy lives, works, and plays in the mountains of Idaho with his very talented dog. He's also a big fan of the Big Lebowski, as you will see, and is known to some as "the plot dude."

You can find out more about Troy at: <https://troylambertwrites.com/>

Plottr software site: <https://plottr.com/>

**Zoom Meeting For May 25th. Social Time: 9am. Business Meeting: 9:30 am. Speaker: 10am.**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83434280984?pwd=Y2NEZWF1NlhMOFYyaE1JWGF84ckp3UT09>

Meeting ID: 834 3428 0984

Passcode: 548934

## President's Letter

### Stop Seeking Perfection

Knowing my love for action movies, my son recently downloaded *Fast X* for me to watch. The movie has no literary value and most of the stunts are unbelievable, but sometimes you just need a muscle fix. With Vin Diesel, Jason Momoa, Dwayne Johnson, and John Cena – I got my fix.

The movie has made over \$603M dollars, to date. What's so amazing about that is the movie isn't very good. In one scene Dom's car is on fire inside and out – in the next scene there is no evidence of burning in the car, outside the car, on his clothes, or on his tires. Everything is intact. In another scene, Tess is talking but her mouth is not moving.

There are over 70 known flaws, like these, in this movie. This means that it's not perfect. Yet, in its imperfection, the script was written, the script was purchased, director was secured, and the movie has grossed over half a billion dollars!

Some of the quotes about the movie, from BBC journalist Nicholas Barber, include:

“*Fast X* takes stupidity and excess to new heights.”

“*Fast X* is colossally noisy, frantic, and preposterous from beginning to end.”

“The heroes never suffer anything more than a scratch, which is the film's fundamental flaw.”

“The dialogue is pared down to a few catchphrases and goofy jokes.”

I point this out to show that we don't have to strive for perfection. We need to strive for completion. There are so many books that are great – in your head – but the world will never have the opportunity to experience them because you are striving for perfection.

Some writers can't finish a paragraph without editing it.

I'm not advocating that anyone, knowingly, publish a book with errors. However, I am advocating that we stop delaying finishing our manuscripts. Perfectionism is a form of procrastination.

Our speaker last month, Jessica Snyder, said, “The only way to get better at writing, is to write.” So, what if it doesn't come out perfect? At least it will be done, and you will be better next time. And, if we had an imperfect story that grossed over \$603M, like *Fast X*, I think we would be good with that.

Stop striving for perfection and strive for completion. You pay editors to find and fix the mistakes. Let them earn their money.

—*Sharon Giddings Davis*



# *DARA In The Community*

On May 18, 2024, DARA will be hosting a public event. The event, *Spring Into Romance*, will be a panel discussion with several of our published authors. It will be open to the public. It is an opportunity for us to showcase our authors, share information about writing and publishing romance, recruit members, and give away romance novels to participants. The event will take place on May 18, 2024, at the Forest Green – Dallas Public Library, 9619 Greenville Avenue, Dallas, TX at 10:00am.



Please come out and support our members.

# May Flowers



The term April showers bring May flowers was originated in the United Kingdom. We often use flowers in our writing, and not always correctly. Below is the etymology and symbolism of frequently used flowers.

<u>Flowers</u>	<u>Symbolism</u>
Red Rose	Love, passion
White Rose	New beginnings, sympathy, and spirituality
Yellow Rose	Friendship and caring
Pink Rose	Admiration, joy, and gratitude
Orange Rose	Passion, energy, desire, fervor
White Lily	Modesty or virginity
Pink Carnation	Love of a mother or woman
White Carnation	Innocence or pure love
Yellow Carnation	Rejection or disappointment
Striped Carnation	A refusal
Poppies	Sleep, peace, and death
Orchid	Thoughtfulness, refinement, mature charm
Sunflower	Pure thoughts, adoration, and dedicated love
Tulip	A declaration of love

## New Releases / Member News

**Title:** Immortal Seduction: An Enchanted Rock Immortals Box Set Vol 3.

**Author:** Amanda Reid

**Date of Publication:** May 7, 2024

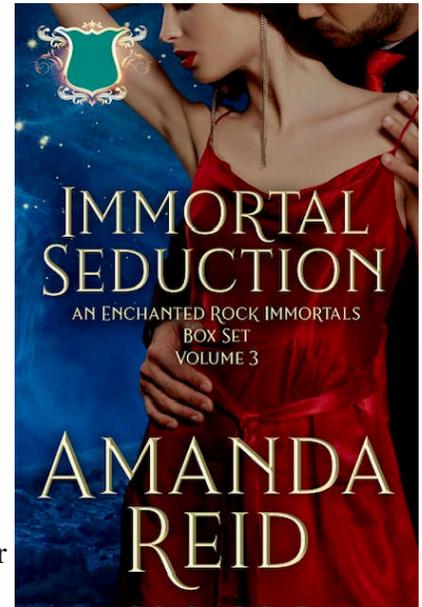
**Print Length:** 364 Pages

**Type:** Kindle

**File Size:** 4306 KB

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

**Blurb:** If you long for an action-packed, PNR series, you'll love this box set which includes three previously-published books from Amanda Reid's contributions to The Enchanted Rock Immortals shared world: *The Demon's Choice*, *The Vampire's Vendetta*, and *The Fae's Future*. Though they may reference other storylines and contain characters within the larger world, all can be read as stand alones, all have deep world-builds, and all have a happily ever after!



### The Demon's Choice

Human paranormal Terri Porter did a monumentally stupid thing—she betrayed her North American Council Security coworkers to free her brother from loan sharks. Now one of those coworkers, the handsome demon Berith Lequare, is assigned to keep her alive long enough for redemption.

In a paranormal world where nothing is guaranteed, blood is a commodity, and threats lay around every corner, can Terri and Berith stay alive long enough to defeat the ghosts of their pasts and choose true love?

### The Vampire's Vendetta

Former CIA operative Caro Kavanaugh finished her mission: contract to become a vampire and kill the biter who murdered her sister. Now a free vampire, she encounters everything she doesn't want to need—panty-dropping demon, Westryn Naitain.

West could use Caro's skills, but but he hasn't been alive this long not to recognize such an intriguing temptation might be a rival blood-smuggler's assassin.

When Caro proves herself indispensable both in the heat of battle and in the resurrection of his cold heart. Can West reveal his secret to her, or will his inability to trust cost the lives of thousands...including his own?

### The Fae's Future

To rescue his sister, notorious jewel thief Xavier Roundtree kidnaps a crack psychic information analyst, "Cheese." Shocked by her beauty and intelligence, he fights his attraction—his sister's life is too valuable to be sidetracked by this voluptuous enchantress.

Brie is happy to help this handsome elf since he'll pay more than her salary. Though initially wary of his playboy charm, she soon finds the notorious fae not just an enigma she must solve, but also an irresistible temptation.

When each holds the the key to the other's salvation, can they trust each other and find their future together, or will their pasts destroy any chance at love?

# Dallas Area Romance Authors

## Members Spotlight—Sharon Snyder



***Tell us about yourself.***

I was born and raised in Texas and currently reside north of the Dallas metroplex with my husband, Jack, two Arabian horses, thirteen rescue cats, and a pampered Pomeranian. I have one son, who is an officer in the Navy stationed in San Diego and a stepdaughter, who is an engineer with L3 Harris in Greenville.

I had a long and fulfilling career with a Fortune 100 Insurance Company, traveling coast to coast. As a Catastrophe Claim Specialist, I was exposed to a diverse range of cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds and found purpose in helping others rebuild their lives after natural disasters. I experienced life through the eyes, hearts, and homes of those who, in many cases, had lost everything to Mother Nature. It was to be the career that defined me.

In my spare time, I travel to discover cultures outside the U.S. In my younger days, I found joy in tennis, scuba diving, snow skiing, sailing, and the ostentatious world of exhibiting Western pleasure horses.

As a child, I loved to create fictional worlds as a refuge from the arduous reality that life was not always fair. I credit my parents for allowing me to explore my imagination.

In retirement, I have found the time to finish those stories and share them with others, creating another chapter in this crazy thing we call life.

My time is devoted to my family, pets, and rescue cats, as well as reading, researching, and creating the imaginary world of fictional historical romance characters.

***What kind of romance do you write?*** Fictional Historical Romance – The Regency Era

***Who is your dream guy/girl?*** Wulfric Bedwyn, The Duke of Bewcastle.

***What is your favorite pastime?*** Reading

***If you could visit anywhere in the world, where would it be?*** Chatsworth House and Belvoir Castle, England.

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*Continued—Sharon Snyder*

***What is something about you that no one in DARA knows*** I have a terrible shoe fetish, which requires a closet all their own.

***If you had a magic wand and could change one thing, what would it be?*** Remove intolerance from the world.

***What is your favorite quote or saying?*** Life isn't about finding yourself; it's about creating yourself!

***Finish this sentence: I wish DARA...***had over 100 active members.

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

***Finish this sentence: My favorite book is ...***Friday's Child – Georgette Heyer

***Finish this sentence: My favorite author is...*** Georgette Heyer

***Finish this sentence: When I was little, I used to...*** daydream.

***Finish this sentence: I write best when...***I first wake up.

***If you are published, what are the names of your books and where can we find them?*** Born For You, and hopefully by the end of May, Born For Love. Available on Amazon, B&N, iBooks and Google play.



## **Upcoming Meetings**

**June 22** - Blurbs: The Tiny Terror or Your Main Marketing Marvel? -  
Amanda Reid

**July 27** - TBD

**August 24** - Developing Your Business Plan - Jacki Renee

**September 28** - Writing 201: 15 Random Things I've Learned in my 30  
Years of Writing - Linda Steinberg.

**October 26** - TBD

**December 7** - TBD

# *Are You A Perfectionist?*

## *(From Dynamic Healing Psychotherapy)*

1. Do you feel like you'll never be good enough, no matter how hard you try?
  - A) Yes, I often feel this way.
  - B) I sometimes feel this way.
  - C) No, I don't usually feel this way.
2. Do you struggle to let go of control?
  - A) Yes, I often struggle to give up control.
  - B) I sometimes struggle to give up control.
  - C) No, I don't usually struggle to give up control.
3. Do you have difficulty relaxing, even on the weekends or over a vacation?
  - A) Yes, I often have trouble relaxing.
  - B) I sometimes have trouble relaxing.
  - C) No, I don't usually have trouble relaxing.
4. Do you procrastinate out of fear of failure or things not turning out exactly how you want them to?
  - A) Yes, I often procrastinate for this reason.
  - B) I sometimes procrastinate for this reason.
  - C) No, I don't usually procrastinate for this reason.
5. Do you tend to take things personally, including constructive feedback?
  - A) Yes, I often take things personally.
  - B) I sometimes take things personally.
  - C) No, I don't usually take things personally.
6. Do you experience unexplained physical symptoms like headaches, stomach issues, muscle pain, tiredness, or sleep problems?
  - A) Yes, I often experience these symptoms.
  - B) I sometimes experience these symptoms.
  - C) No, I rarely experience these symptoms or I experience these symptoms, but they're related to an existing medical condition.
7. Do you see yourself as very detail-oriented?
  - A) Yes, I identify as very detail-oriented.
  - B) I think I'm somewhat detail-oriented.
  - C) No, I don't see myself as super detail-oriented.
8. Do you avoid taking risks?
  - A) Yes, I often avoid taking risks.
  - B) I sometimes avoid taking risks.
  - C) No, I can take healthy risks without a problem.



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*Continued: Quiz*

- 9. Have you received praise for being goal-oriented, high-achieving, or meticulous?
  - A) Yes, I've often received this feedback.
  - B) I sometimes hear this from others.
  - C) No, I get complimented on other traits more often.
  
- 10. Do you struggle to ask others for help?
  - A) Yes, I often struggle to ask for help.
  - B) I sometimes struggle to ask for help.
  - C) No, I can usually ask for help when I need it.



*On Perfectionism*

**Toni Morrison -**

If there is a book that you want to read, but it hasn't been written yet, then you must write it. It is what you don't write that frequently gives what you do write its power. Teaching is about taking things apart, writing is about putting things together.

**William Faulkner -**

If a story is in you, it has to come out. Get it down, take chances. It may be bad, but it's the only way you can do anything really good.

**Stephen King -**

The scariest moment is always just before you start.

**Silvia Plath -**

The worst enemy to creativity is self-doubt.

**Jack London -**

You can't wait for [inspiration](#). You have to go after it with a club.

**Sylvia Plath -**

I love my rejection slips. They show me I try.

**Amy Poehler -**

It is a small, slow crawl to the finish line. Honestly, I have moments when I don't even care if anyone reads this book. I just want to finish it.

**Brene' Brown -**

Healthy striving is self-focused: "How can I improve?" Perfectionism is other-focused: "What will they think?"

# THE DIAMOND HEART®

*The Diamond Heart Award for Excellence in Published Romance Writing*

## Unveiling the Diamond Heart Awards – A New Chapter in Honoring Excellence

### **Purpose:**

The Diamond Heart Awards recognize authors who have mastered the craft of romance writing and showcase their talent and creativity in producing romances that are equitable and inclusive and are exemplary models of the romance genre. We celebrate the power of the romance genre with its central message of hope and love, because romance is for everyone.

### **Vision:**

Envisioning a celebration of romance in its myriad forms, we aspire to recognize, honor, and elevate the craft of romance writing in all its diversity, inclusivity, and equity. Through the Diamond Heart Awards, we aim to recognize and honor those storytellers who beautifully weave narratives of love and hope, breaking barriers and embracing all shades of the human experience. We champion authors whose writing redefines the contours of the romance genre, contributing to a literary world where “happily ever afters” or “happy for nows” are for everyone. Our vision is to illuminate the power of romantic narratives that transcend differences, foster connections, and inspire hope, while ensuring the rich tapestry of our collective experiences is reflected and respected in every romantic tale we celebrate.

For more details and dates, go to: [https://www.rwa.org/Online/Awards/The\\_Vivian/Online/Awards/The\\_Vivian/Diamond\\_Heart\\_Award.aspx?hkey=eec58833-3be8-431e-bba9-9ab33cfcf985](https://www.rwa.org/Online/Awards/The_Vivian/Online/Awards/The_Vivian/Diamond_Heart_Award.aspx?hkey=eec58833-3be8-431e-bba9-9ab33cfcf985)

# THE GOLDEN HEART

*The Golden Heart Award for Excellence in Pre-published Romance Writing*

## Reintroducing the Golden Heart Awards Contest

### **Purpose:**

The Golden Heart Awards recognize authors who have mastered the craft of romance writing and showcase their talent and creativity in producing romances that are equitable and inclusive and are exemplary models of the romance genre. We celebrate the power of the romance genre with its central message of hope and love, because romance is for everyone.

### **Vision:**

Envisioning a celebration of romance in its myriad forms, we aspire to recognize, honor, and elevate the craft of romance writing in all its diversity, inclusivity, and equity. Through the Golden Heart Awards, we aim to recognize and honor those storytellers who beautifully weave narratives of love and hope, breaking barriers and embracing all shades of the human experience.

For more details and dates, go to: [https://www.rwa.org/Online/Awards/Golden\\_Heart/GH\\_Award.aspx](https://www.rwa.org/Online/Awards/Golden_Heart/GH_Award.aspx)



DARA would like welcome a new member.  
Say hello to Kathy Crouch



*Perfectionist Quiz Responses*

- **Mostly A's:** You identified with many common signs of perfectionism. It's likely that perfectionistic tendencies affect many areas of your life. While they've probably helped you in certain ways, it's quite possible that they might be starting to cause more harm than good.
- **Mostly B's:** You identified with some common signs of perfectionism. While you might not be a full-blown perfectionist, this behavior can still cause pain and discomfort at times. You might be wondering if making some changes could better serve you.
- **Mostly C's:** You didn't identify with many common signs of perfectionism. However, something led to you seek this quiz, so I encourage you to trust your instinct. It sounds like you might be looking for an opportunity to turn inward and reflect on your patterns, regardless of whether you're a perfectionist or not.

**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 men- tioned in this newsletter. Readers are urged to determine for themselves the reliability, integrity, and finan- cial responsibility of those with whom they deal. DARA makes no warranties or representation, either ex- pressed 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, 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

**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