

DARA NEWS

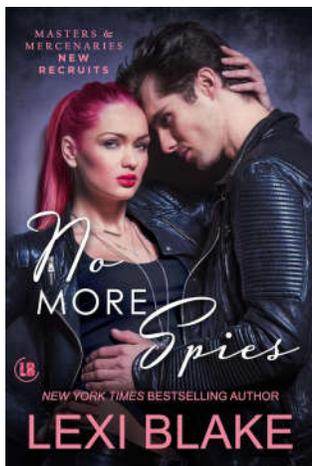


Lexi Blake - Career Longevity: How to Set Yourself Up for Success

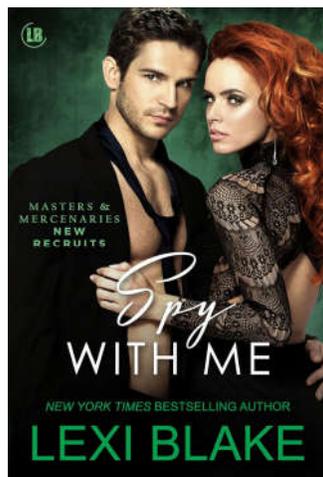
New York Times Best Selling Author talks long-game strategies. The only thing harder than finishing the book is making it work for you long term. Sometimes it's about mind set but it's also about setting realistic goals, knowing your numbers and understanding the publishing landscape. Sometimes the publishing world can feel like a storm, but with a practical set of tools, you can learn how to ride the wave. Topics include building your backlist and brand, how to ride the highs and lows, agents and publishers and what kind of team do you need around you. As a 15-year veteran of the author game, Lexi can offer hints and advice on how to ensure your author longevity.

About Lexi: LEXI BLAKE is the author of contemporary, romantic suspense, fantasy and urban fantasy romance. She started publishing in 2010 and has gone on to sell over three and a half million copies of her books. Her novels have appeared forty-two times on the *USA Today*, *New York Times*, and *Wall Street Journal* bestseller lists. She lives in North Texas with her husband, kids, and three rescue dogs who are all named after Lord of the Rings characters. Yeah, she's a nerd.

Visit her website at <https://www.lexiblake.net/>



The Latest in the Masters and Mercenaries: New Recruit Series



Title: No More Spies - Released March 18, 2025

When Cooper and Kala are assigned to a mission, they find themselves locked together and forced to face their problems. As the truth of that long-ago night slowly comes to the surface, Cooper has to admit that Kala might be further from him than ever.

Title: Spy With Me - Release Date: Sept 16, 2025

Devi Taggart thought she finally found the man of her dreams. Spending a long weekend with Zach filled her soul and satisfied all her deepest desires. But dreams turned to nightmares when she discovered he betrayed his team, including her brother.

President's Letter

"The scariest moment is always just before you start." –Stephen King

I can't believe it's September already with the Labor Day holiday and the reflection of 9/11. While September's cool morning air starts to push out summer's heat waves, and vacations become memories, the holidays will be upon us in no time. Soon, we'll have more distractions to pull us away from writing. NaNoWriMo may have gone under, but there are other writing challenges for our members take advantage of to support their goals.

Our Secretary, Janet Leigh, host the writing sprints every Monday night. Jennifer August has lined up excellent speakers this year, and the start of 2026 is looking good. I encourage you to show up at the meetings, and hopefully you'll leave with publishing knowledge and motivation for improving your writing.

I said this last month and I'll say it again. We need volunteers to keep the chapter going. Below are positions that are still open. You can email our Elections Coordinator, Michelle Tanner at michelle@tannercomm.com, and volunteer.

- ◆ President-Elect
- ◆ Treasurer
- ◆ Program Coordinator
- ◆ Communications (Newsletter / Website)
- ◆ Membership Coordinator

Everyone has their own unique skill for every job. Show us your skills by volunteering. DARA is full of talented writers who want to support each other and help make the chapter the best it can be.

—*Donna McGoldrick*

Zoom Meeting For September 27th. 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 September

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

Author Interview with Amanda Reid



Submitted by Donna McGoldrick

Author of the Flannigan Sisters Psychic Mysteries, Amanda Reid is a participating author in the Enchanted Rock Immortals world of paranormal romance novellas. At an early age, she was an avid reader of mystery, sci-fi, romance, and paranormal. Prior to delving into the publishing world, she spent twenty-four years as a federal agent. Her investigations of murders, fraud, identity theft, drug trafficking, and many other crimes provided her a wealth of inspiration for her mystery and paranormal romance stories.

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

Tell us a little about yourself.

I grew up as an Army brat which allowed me to live in interesting places like Hawaii, Teheran, Iran, and DeRidder, Louisiana. Probably because of my upbringing, I love to travel and explore different cultures. I'm retired federal agent, and love visiting my grandgirls and, when the Texas heat turns on, I like spending time in Colorado with my husband and two gonzo Australian shepherds

What is your favorite aspect of writing Mystery/Paranormal Fiction?

Writing paranormal stories, whether it's psychic cozy mysteries or paranormal romance, is so interesting to me for two reasons. First, I love the world building. I set the parameters and get to make up all the fun things that can happen, like in one of my cozies where the female main character's paranormal power is odd—she has to find objects to return to their owners. The ability gets her into all kinds of tight places! Second, I love to be able to use my investigations background since both genres have an aspect of mystery in them.

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

I love crafting a fast-paced story with plenty of twists and turns. A friend of mine said if a police procedural and paranormal romance had a baby, my writing would be it, and I can't think of a nicer complement!

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

I find every excuse to not to write—in fact, the more pressure I put on myself to put words on a page, the cleaner my house becomes. Recently, I ask myself to just open the document and complete a paragraph. Usually if I can just do that, I'll end up writing 1K or more. I also find that putting my goals in public, like announcing a release date, is a huge motivator



Amanda Reid Continued

for me. As for tools, I love to write in Scrivener. I have all of my research and character studies right there. I'm typically not a plotter, but someone recently suggested putting the goal for the character in the notes section for the chapter and it's helping me stay focused since it stays right in front of me the whole time.

How do you keep details straight while writing a series?

I've written two series (one 9-book and the other 12-book) and I had not started with a series bible. In retrospect, this was a bad choice since I really needed it about four books in. I'm investigating some software options since I have two new series in production.

What is it like as an Indie published author? What challenges have you faced?

As an independently published author, I think the biggest challenge is being seen, especially in romance, which is a HUGE genre. I still haven't cracked the nut, but I am moving forward each day.

Can you talk about your current work in progress?

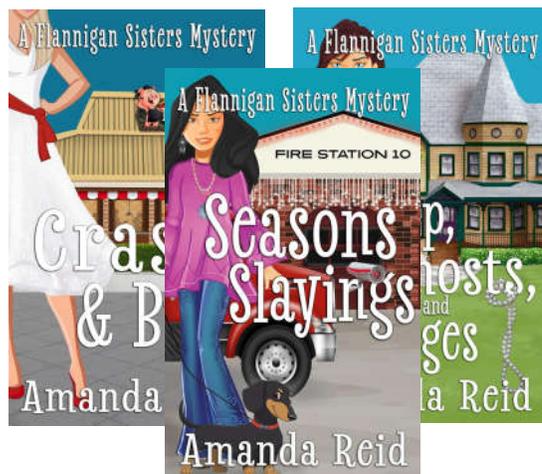
I have two manuscripts I'm working on right now. One is a story for an anthology I'm projecting to be around 16k words, a historical shifter romance along the lore of the Irish Ossory wolves. I am considering expanding it to a full book next year as a start to a series. The other MS is a re-write of the first book I ever completed, a start of an elemental PNR series. It's been through my developmental editor, but there was still something that wasn't working for me. It stayed in the drawer for a while, until last fall and a conference where I realized the voice probably need to go from 3rd to 1st. I asked a friend to beta read the book and submitted a sample re-write. She agreed with my assessment, so I have a bunch of work ahead of me, especially since I have two other books already completed in the series and they will have to change as well.

Where to find me:

Website: <https://amandareidauthor.com/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/AReidWrites>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/AReidWrites/>



Get Your Raffle Baskets Ready!

Our Holiday Party will be December 6th at the Hampton Inn by Hilton Dallas Central/North Park on 10370 N. Central Expressway, Dallas.

Jane Porter is our guest speaker with *Ten Keys to Success & Survival: What Every Romance Author Should Know*.

If you're interested in donating a basket, please contact Anita Learned (anita61@swbell.net), or Jennifer August (jennifer@jenniferaugust.com).

Nominees for the 2026 Board of Directors

Secretary:



Fenley Grant has always loved the written word. In her youth, books traveled with her on family adventures to various Army bases. North Texas is home these days, where she lives with her husband, two human children, and a furry dog kid. A perfect day includes writing, reading, family, friends, and sunshine. No snow. After a long stint in the northern climes, she’s shoveled her last driveway.

Favorite books involve magical worlds, action, adventure, intrigue, and, of course, love. Fenley is an award-winning author, a 2019 Golden Heart® finalist, a 2024 double Diamond Heart® finalist, winner of the 2023 and 2024 PRISM award in paranormal romance, and she writes urban fantasy, time travel, and paranormal romances. Find Fenley on Facebook at FenleyGrant.Author, on Instagram at fenley_grant, on BlueSky at <https://bsky.app/profile/fenleygrant.bsky.social>, and on her website, www.FenleyGrant.com.

President:



Michelle Miles I believe every story should have a little magic, a dash of danger, and a whole lot of heart. I write fantasy, paranormal, and young adult adventures filled with fierce heroines, unforgettable heroes, and the kind of romance that makes you believe in happily-ever-after. From angels and demons to dragons, elves, and time travelers, my books invite you into worlds brimming with epic quests, high stakes, and enchanting possibilities. Visit Michelle’s website at: <https://michellemiles.net/>

Note: The membership will not vote for the President. The President-Elect moves into this position.

DARA Elections - October 10th!

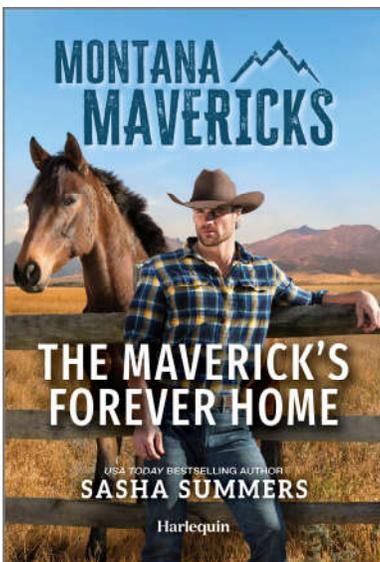


We still need to fill 2 board positions by October 8th - President-Elect and Treasurer. If no one steps up, the Secretary and President will have to do the work of four people.

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: The Maverick’s Forever Home
Author: Sasha Summers
Genre: Contemporary Romance (Cowboy)
Release Date: August 26, 2025
Available In: Kindle and Paperback
Length: 223 Pages
First/Subsequent Sale: Subsequent

FROM BACHELOR TO FATHER TO...HUSBAND?

Rancher Braden Parker has just returned to Tenacity with a five-year-old daughter he didn’t know existed, and he’s terrified. After all, he’d spent years away from the End of the Road Ranch, avoiding his own curmudgeonly father! Instant fatherhood was not on his bingo card. Neither was meeting single mom Maggie Cooper. Maggie is trying to adjust to civilian life back in quiet little Tenacity after working overseas. She feels for Braden and Delilah, but she has to make her son, Cody, her first priority. It will take a huge leap of faith for the two wary parents to find their way to each other—and to the perfect blended family that could make them all complete.



Miles Beyond The Page:

Miles Beyond the Page dives deep into the world of writing and publishing. Each week, host Michelle Miles sits down with authors at every stage of their journey—whether they’re just starting out, building their readership, or seasoned pros with stories to share. Listeners are invited to explore the creative process, uncover valuable tips and insights, and celebrate the highs and lows of the writing life. So grab your favorite beverage, settle in, and join Michelle as she takes you Miles Beyond the Page.

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

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

President—Donna McGoldrick

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