

# DARA NEWS



## *Susan Gable*

### *Using Mottos to Power Story*

Want to create characters that feel real—and stories readers can't put down? In this interactive workshop, *USA Today* bestselling author Susan Gable shares her *Motto Method*, a powerful tool for crafting three-dimensional characters who come alive on the page. Learn how to craft meaningful mottos that reveal your characters' core beliefs and use them to shape plot, deepen setting, intensify conflict, and add emotional punch. Whether you're plotting a new story or revising a draft, this technique will help you bring out what matters most to your characters...and to your readers.

**About Susan:** SUSAN GABLE is a *USA Today* bestselling author known for her emotionally layered, character-driven romance novels. With experience in both traditional and indie publishing, Susan brings a deep understanding of story craft to her workshops. She's passionate about helping writers create 3-D characters that come alive and drive the plot, setting, and emotional heart of the story—because compelling characters keep readers coming back for more. If she's not writing or teaching, she's probably geeking out over story structure, tech tools, or the perfect opening line.



#### **Title:** Firefly Wishes - Book 1

Broken-hearted teacher Rachel Thompson isn't sure volunteering at Camp Firefly Wishes, a special summer camp for transplant kids and their families, will help her put the pieces of her life back together.

#### **Title:** The Pregnancy Test - Book 2

Free-spirited Jenna Quinn, Sloan's new neighbor, believes life's short, so eat dessert first. However, the tall, handsome Texan is off the menu—forbidden fruit. Kids are not in her plans.

## President's Letter

*"It is never too late to be what you might have been." –George Eliot*

It's August already, which means another RWA conference is in the books. I enjoyed the Chapter Leadership workshop where we discussed recruiting new members and growing the chapter. The schedule of workshops was a great blend of career, business, craft, and writing life. The hotel was its own character. Elegant and historical, The Brock Hotel had wonderful views of Niagara Falls and the nightly fireworks. My main takeaway from it all is the interaction with a community of writers, and the different perspectives on publishing.



The location for RWA2026 will be in Albuquerque, New Mexico. For DARA in 2026, the most important thing is our elections for board of directors. I sent out a mass email to all members with the self-nomination form attached. Please consider paying it forward. We need fresh faces and fresh ideas.

- ◆ Are you comfortable with accounting? Consider running for Treasurer.
- ◆ Do you like connecting with published authors? You'll be great as Program Coordinator.
- ◆ Would you like to get to know the members? Membership Coordinator will help you do that.
- ◆ Do you enjoy reading the newsletter? Volunteer for Newsletter Editor and create your own cool designs.

You see where I'm going with this, right? 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 August 23rd. 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 Jenny Rae

*Submitted by Donna McGoldrick*



Winner of the Vivian Aytes Thomlinson Short Story award, Jenny writes historical fiction set in Regency England with a little romance and adventure. History has been her lifelong passion. Extensive travel in England and Europe brought that history to life.

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

### **Tell us a little about yourself.**

I've always loved scribbling away at stories from a very young age. Now it's tapping on a keyboard. I do miss the scribbling. During COVID, with more time on my hands than normal, I entered a short story writing competition and, to my enormous surprise, won first place. That led to my publishing my first book, onwards from there! I do work full-time as a business analyst, so writing is my hobby until I can retire and dedicate more time to it. Retirement is on the horizon.

On a more personal level, I got married on April 12<sup>th</sup>, 2025, in my very own romantic love story. We met just over 30 years ago while we were both traveling in Europe. Long distance romance was hard with no internet, email, or the ability to make phone calls regularly due to cost. We drifted apart. Fast forward to... COVID, and I was searching for some information online. I read a newsletter put out by a company, and low and behold, I saw a picture from 30 years ago. A little grey at the temples, but the same smiling face. It took me a few weeks to decide if I should email just to say hello. I assumed he was happily married, with kids, a white picket fence- you get the drift.

We were both single, still long-distance, but Facetime, email, and the ability to travel all just fell into place...and on NYE 2023, he surprised me with a proposal, on one knee in front of the entire church congregation!

### **What is your favorite aspect of writing Regency Fiction?**

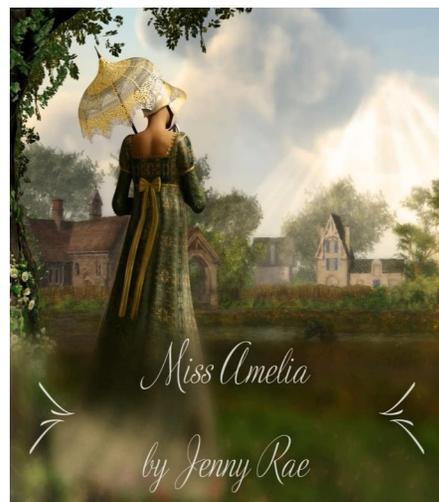
The research - I just love history. I love to sprinkle real history throughout my books.

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

Interesting characters, historical facts and tidbits, a bit of adventure, a sprinkle of clean romance.

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

I write in Google Docs. It's so portable. I typically get an idea, it has a mind and life of its own. I will jot down a very high-level outline, but I



*Jenny Rae Continued*

will let the story write itself. I research, lots of research, especially for little-known facts I can add in as the story progresses. I enjoy writing; it is a way for me to relax from my full-time job, so it is easy to focus for the dedicated hours I put aside to write.

**How do you keep details straight while writing a series?**

My four books are currently a series. I have note cards on each character, I can refer back to a book if I want to check something in particular. So far, I have been able to keep the details straight.



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

I use KDP (Kindle Direct Publishing), and it is very easy to use. The biggest challenge is the amount of time needed to do marketing and promoting your books. Enrolling in Kindle Unlimited is a good way for people to be able to read your book without buying it (and you get a small amount for each page read). It takes time & effort to find a traditional publisher that will take your work, and a lot of rejection, a lot of time and effort to do your own publishing, marketing, and promoting.



**Can you talk about your current work in progress?**

March 23, 2025 saw my fourth book, Lord Ridley, published. I took a break for the wedding, and book five, Lord James, is in its infancy of the thought process and high-level outline.

**Where to find me:**

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

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/jennyrae2021/>

Blog on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/351029483416102>

## DARA Elections - October 10th!

We have two months left to select nominees for the 2026 Board of Directors and volunteers.

**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:** Once Upon A Silver Strand  
**Author:** Michelle Miles  
**Genre:** An Enchanted Realms Novella  
**Release Date:** July 25, 2025  
**Available In:** Kindle  
**Length:** 121 Pages  
**First/Subsequent Sale:** Subsequent

*A girl with hair spun from starlight. A fallen guardian bound to a shattered realm. And a tower that was never meant to protect her.*

High above the mortal world, Ariadne lives alone in a tower touched by the stars. Her silver hair, glowing with ancient magic, is said to be cursed—never to be cut, never to be touched. But when a celestial storm rains fire across the sky, a stranger crashes into her world. Cassian is a guardian from a forgotten realm, drawn by a prophecy and the shimmering strands that hold the key to awakening long-buried power.

As Ariadne's magic begins to stir, the truth unravels—she is not cursed, but chosen, a living bridge to the lost kingdom of Starna. And the tower that binds her is not a sanctuary, but a prison built to contain the magic threatening to tear the realms apart.

With the stars falling and darkness rising, Ariadne must decide whether to sever her past... or embrace the magic woven into her very soul.

*If you love quiet heroines discovering untold power, brooding guardians with hidden hearts, and towers hiding secrets written in the stars—you'll love this Rapunzel reimagining.*



**Title:** That Last Summer - A Second Chance Romance Novella  
**Author:** S.K. Snyder  
**Genre:** Historical Romance  
**Release Date:** June 3, 2025  
**Available In:** Kindle Unlimited, Paperback, Hardcover, and soon in Audible  
**Length:** 220 Pages  
**First/Subsequent Sale:** Subsequent

Aristocratic rank separated them. A scandalous secret kept them apart. Can Maxmillian and Madeline find their way back to one another without causing a scandal that might ruin both their noble families?

Max discovers tranquility and recovery in the land at Lindenwood Park, the country seat of the Clavering family. After two years of healing, he believes the years of profound losses and disappointments are behind him and embarks upon a new life of contentment and peace.

When Lady Madeline Manners is summoned to care for her niece, arriving unannounced, Maxmillian's serenity is shattered. But will the secret she has kept for five years revive their lost love and bring them together, or destroy their love forever?

## [Other Announcements!](#)

### ***RWA Free Zoom Event:***

Celebrate Romance Awareness Month with Us!

Join us on Saturday, August 16 at 12:00 PM Central Time for a FREE event dedicated to the power of romance! Whether you're a lifelong romance reader or just curious about the genre, come celebrate with us and connect with fellow fans and authors.

Space is limited, so reserve your spot now before it's gone! [bit.ly/rwa-lets-celebrate](https://bit.ly/rwa-lets-celebrate)

DARA's Michelle Miles is on this panel with other incredible people.



### ***Writers Retreat:***

Are you ready to invest in yourself *and* your sanity? Our exclusive writing retreat is where passion meets productivity in an intimate, inspiring setting filled with like-minded women, exciting brainstorming, and creative vibes that spark magic!

From aspiring authors to international bestsellers, this retreat welcomes women of all experience levels. This is your moment to *prioritize your creativity* and immerse yourself in a community that gets it.

Don't wait – there are four openings left. Sign up now and give your creativity the time and space it deserves!

Retreat starts on Thursday, October 23rd to Sunday the 26th.

Email Stephanie Bazzell at [stephbazzell@yahoo.com](mailto:stephbazzell@yahoo.com) - [Ponder Place Retreat](#)



[Inside the Ponder Retreat work area](#)

### ***Local Author Crawl:***

Carolyn Rae (Williamson) will be reading from her novel, *Prince Julian's Solo Honeymoon Cruise*, and selling books at the DFW Writers' Workshop. There will be 20 authors from the DFWWW community participating in this collaboration with Half Priced Books. Authors in attendance will participate in readings. There will be a scavenger hunt across the book signing tables for a chance to win a Half Priced Books gift card.

Flagship Half Price Books, 5803 E NW Hwy, Dallas, TX 75231. Saturday, August 16th from 3-7pm.

[Local Author Crawl—DFW Writers' Workshop](#)

## Other Announcements! (continued)

### *Author Event:*

#### **Book Me Romance**

Lisa Fenley (aka Fenley Grant) and Amanda Reid will be signing their books at the Book Me Romance event in Fort Smith, AR on August 16th.

Check the website for tickets and information.

#### **Book Me Romance Events**

**BOOK ME ROMANCE**  
 FORT SMITH, AR *Author Event* AUGUST 16TH, 2025

ASHLEY Z/ KACI BELL	HEATHER STEVENS	LASHELL RAIN
A.N. CAUDLE	JADE DOLLSTON	ABBIE LYNN SMITH
AMANDA REID	JANE POLLER	LAUREN SEVIER
ASHLYNN PEARCE	JERE ANTHONY	MAEGAN ABEL
AURELIA YATES	JEWELZ BAXTER	MANDIE THOMPSON
BR CURRY	JM ELLIOT	MJ HUGHES
BRITNEY BELL	JULIET MCKINLEY	NADIA BRAECKEL
BROOKE TAYLOR	JUNE GRAY	NANCY CHASTAIN
C.R. JOHNSON	KANDICE YOUNG	NICHOLE ROSE
CAT COLLINS	K. MALADY	PAULA LENOR WEBB
CECILY QUINN	KELLY SEIBOLD	ROSLYN B. WILDER
CHIMIA HILLBURTON	KIT MCKENNA	ROUX CANTRELL
CHRISTAL GILKEY	LANDRA GRAF	RANE WILLIAMS
CHRISTINA BERRY	SUSAN PERSON	SABRINA A. FISH
COLLETTE CARMON	TICH BREWSTER	SABRINA BLACKBERRY
CRYSTAL INMAN	TIERNEY JAMES	SARAH BALE
DARLEY COLLINS	T.L. BROOKS	S.D. SAMPLEY
DEDE RAMEY	VIC LEIGH	SOPHIE STERN
SHAI AUGUST	ANGELA M. JOHNSON	SULEIDY MERCED
FENLEY GRANT	VICTORIA PATTON	THIA MACKIN
LAUREN SMITH		
EMMA CASTLE		



**MILES BEYOND THE PAGE**

BEYOND THE WORDS  
 AUTHOR INTERVIEWS

HOSTED BY  
 MICHELLE MILES

www.michellemiles.net

### *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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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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Secretary—Janet Leigh

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Membership—Donna McGoldrick

Member Awards (Roses) - Michelle Miles

Communications (Newsletter / Website) - Donna McGoldrick

Pan Liaison—Open

Pro Liaison—Open