

# DARA NEWS

## March Speaker: Krissi Dallas

### Kindle Vella: Growing Your Readership One Episode At A Time



Get an insider peek at Kindle Vella, Amazon's hot new serial fiction platform, with Top Faved author Krissi Dallas whose stories have stayed in the Top 25 Faved titles for two years--even hitting #1. Attendees will discover how serial fiction is different from novel writing and how you can grow your readership through Kindle Vella whether you're a bestseller or a debut author.

Bio:

Krissi Dallas loves pop music, mismatched socks, and Tex-Mex food. She is wife to Dr. Sam Dallas, mom to two strong-willed little boys (plus a Yorkie and a Goldendoodle), and former junior high teacher of sixteen years. Her most recent passion project is stepping into screenwriting through the collaborative 100 Pages Movie project.

She has five books in the Phantom Island series with the sixth and final installment on the way. Her Kindle Vella spy thriller, *Icarus Flight School*, spent eleven weeks as the #1 Top Faved story in Teen and Young Adult and just released in paperback and hardcover. Her ongoing serial romantic comedy, *Wish*

*Upon A Streaming Star*, is a consistently Top 25 Faved story on Kindle Vella where new episodes release every weekend.

Visit her website at <https://krissidallas.com/>



**Zoom Meeting For March 23rd. Social starts at 9am, business meeting starts at 9:30 am CST.**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83434280984?pwd=Y2NEZWJlNlhMOFYyaE1JWG84ckp3UT09>

Meeting ID: 834 3428 0984

Passcode: 548934

## President's Letter

### Networking

As we start to experience warmer weather and prepare for spring, it will soon be conference time. Writing conferences are scheduled throughout the calendar year, but really start to pick up in the spring.

This is good news if you are looking for opportunities to grow, learn more about your craft, meet new people, and improve your writing. However, many writers shy away from networking events – because they are introverts and don't quite know how to navigate at a conference.

An estimated 59% of writers are introverts. This may be because introverts can create new worlds and characters in their head, are great observers, are comfortable with solitude, and are good thinkers.

Well-known writers that have identified as introverts include: J.K. Rowling, Agatha Christie, Charlotte Bronte, William Shakespeare, Edgar Allan Poe, and Jane Austen. Knowing this begs the question, how did they manage to navigate public appearances, and go on to become household names?

Perhaps they learned a few needed networking skills to aid in the publishing, promoting, and sale of their books.

Networking doesn't have to be hard, nor does it require that we pretend to be someone we are not. With a plan, your interaction with others, at a networking event, can be seamless, productive, and informative. Below are a few tips that may prove useful for your next networking event.

1. Decide in advance what you want to achieve from the event (speak with a publisher, get editor contacts, join a critique group, etc.)
2. Gather intel on specific individuals you hope to connect with (Google them, check their LinkedIn profile, ask others about them).
3. Develop your elevator speech about who you are and what you write.
4. Bring business cards (bookmarks, postcards, etc.)
5. Prepare for safe-subject small talk (food, weather, marketing strategies)
6. Listen more than you talk.
7. Start conversations with strangers by complimenting them (hair, jewelry, t-shirt, nail polish – people love to talk about themselves)
8. Ask questions (What genre do you write? What do you do for fun outside of writing? What tips do you have for a newbie? Do you recommend self-publishing? Who's your favorite author? What resources do you use to help with love scenes? What, or who, inspires your stories?)
9. Focus on how you can benefit them and not just on your needs/wants.

Whether you are an introvert or an extrovert attending and participating in networking events can be a gamechanger for your writing career.

The key to your networking success is to be natural, be sincere, and enjoy getting to know new people.



—Sharon Giddings Davis

## *Writing Conferences - Opportunities to Network*



Romance Writers Spring Fling Chicago, IL	April 18 – April 20, 2024
Inkers Con Dallas, TX	June 7 – June 9, 2024
RSJ Writers Conference Virtual	July 11 – July 13, 2024
RomantiConn 2024 Trumbull, CT	July 26, 2024
Contemporary Romance Writers Conference Virtual	July 27 – July 28, 2024
<b>Romance Writers of America Austin, TX</b>	<b>July 31 – August 3, 2024</b>
SteamyLit Con 2024 Anaheim, CA	August 2 – August 3, 2024
Bookery Con Romance Book Convention Salt Lake City, UT	September 5 – September 7, 2024
American Christian Fiction Writers New Orleans, LA	September 5 – September 8, 2024
Romance Con Milwaukee, WI	September 6 – September 7, 2024
Faith, Hope & Love Christian Writers Phoenix, AZ	September 27 – September 29, 2024
Romantasy BookCon & Midnight Masquerade Lake Buena Vista, FL	October 3, 2024
DFW Con Hurst, TX	October 5 – October 6, 2024

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# Six Ways To Create A Winning Pitch

by Carolyn Rae, author of *Searching for Justice*

You can write a winning query letter, excite an editor or agent with a verbal pitch at a conference, or get their attention at pitch fests, such as those held by Savvy Authors. You can enter a contest and let your chapters showcase your talent. If you plan to self-publish, when the book is ready to be published, write attention getting back cover copy and a compelling book description to pitch your book to interested buyers.

## **Write a winning query letter**

Check the publisher website or agent website to see what to submit. Choose someone who handles the genre and type of story you are pitching. Research that editor or agent. In the first paragraph, tell why you chose to write that person. Perhaps you met the editor or agent or heard the person speak. You can say you believe he or she would like the type of story you have written. Be sure to give the title, the genre, and the word count of your novel. If submission guides ask to include pages, be sure to attach only the number requested.

In the next paragraph or two, tell what the main characters want, what obstacles they face, and what keeps them from achieving a happy ever after. You could write a paragraph about the heroine and another about the hero. End with a question to intrigue the editor or agent enough to ask for pages from you. Have the whole manuscript finished just in case you are asked for all of it.

Here's an example: Rebellious Rachel, who wants a promotion, skates into, and knocks down ambitious Jonathan Stone at an ice rink. Attraction flares, but their company's no-fraternization policy is an obstacle. Can they have a relationship without risking getting fired?

In the last paragraph, mention your membership in writer's groups and any writing credentials you have. Finish by thanking the editor or agent and asking if they want to see more pages. Keep the letter to one page.

## **Excite an editor or agent with a verbal pitch at a conference**

Mention the two main characters' names. An adjective such as feisty, determined, or optimistic helps create an impression of the character type. Tell what they want, and the obstacles they face in achieving goals and reaching a happy ever after. Keep your pitch to three sentences and make them as snappy as you can. End with a question such as "Can this feisty, independent heroine and a hero with controlling tendencies ever be happy together? Be ready to answer questions about your story. Also have ready a one sentence elevator pitch to recite when asked, "What do you write?"

## **Get attention at pitch fests, such as those held by Savvy Authors.**

Mention main characters' names, type of character, what they want, and obstacles they face in achieving goals and reaching a happy ever after. Keep your pitch to three sentences and end with a question to make

*Six Ways To Create A Winning Pitch—Continued*

the editor or agent wonder what will happen. Follow directions as to number of words and number of sentences.

**Enter a contest and let your chapters speak for you**

Pick a contest being judged by an editor or agent whose attention you are seeking. Follow all directions. If you win first, second or third place, send a query letter asking if he or she would like to see more. Be sure to have the novel finished or mostly finished just in case you are asked for the whole manuscript.

**Write attention getting back cover copy**

A traditional publisher's editor may ask you to write this. If you self-publish, make your back cover copy intriguing so it will sell your book to the buyer. Mention main characters' names, type of character, what they want, and obstacles they face in achieving goals and reaching a happy ever after. Write a paragraph about each main character. Only write about two characters. Finish with a question about the characters being able to reach a happy ever after. Print up your back cover copy using the same margins as would be used on your chosen print cover size so you can be sure it's not too long. Leave room at the bottom for the bar code.

**Write a compelling book description**

Mention main characters' names, type of character, what they want, and obstacles they face in achieving goals and reaching a happy ever after. Remember to make the first sentence intriguing because that's all the prospective buyer will see online unless he or she clicks to read more. Read it to someone else to see if they would consider buying your book.

Using these suggestions, you should be able to interest an editor or agent in your novel enough to ask for several pages or the whole manuscript. If you self-publish, your book description should entice a buyer to pay money for your book, so you can receive royalties.

Carolyn Rae's passion is writing romantic suspense and delving into the minds of stalkers, bombers and terrorists that threaten the course of true love. Her published romantic suspense novels include her *Witness Protection Series*, *Hiding from Love*, *Protected by Love*, and *Tempted by Love*, the Cordillera Royals Series with *Pretend Princess*, *Royal Wedding Scoop*, *Forgotten Princess*, and *Holiday with a Royal*.





## New Releases / Member News

**Title:** The Shifter's Sorcerer, An Enchanted Rock Immortals Novella.

**Author:** Amanda Reid

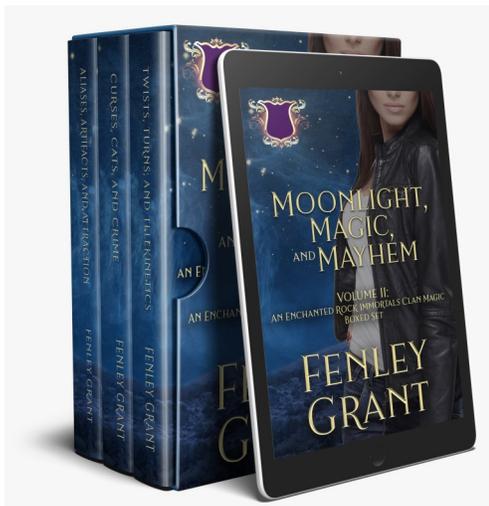
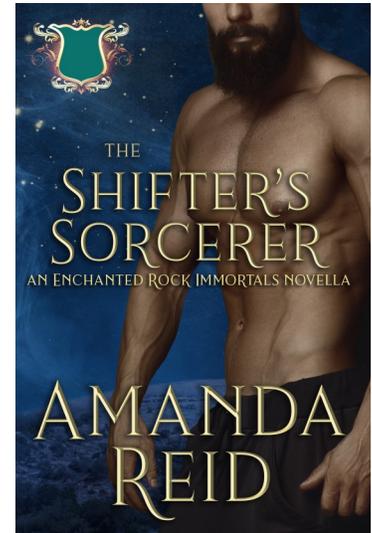
**Publisher:** Enchanted Rock Publishing

**Date of Publication:** March 5, 2024

**Length:** 120 Pages

**Type:** Novella

**First Sale / Subsequent:** Subsequent sale. The 11th in a series within the Enchanted Rock Immortals world of authors.



**Title:** Moonlight, Magic., and Mayhem--Volume II: An Enchanted Rock Immortals Clan Magic Boxed Set.

**Author:** Fenley Grant

**Publisher:** Midnight Wanderings Publishing LLC

**Date of Publication:** February 6, 2024

**Length:** 366 Pages

**First Sale / Subsequent:** Subsequent sale. Three previously published novellas are in this set: Twists, Turns, and Telekinetics: A Love Story, Curses, Cats, and Crime: A Love Story, and Aliases, Artifacts, and Attraction: A Love Story.



## *New Releases*

This year Mary Karlik will take care of the Rose Presentation at the monthly meetings. Send your new release information to her at: [mary@marykarlik.com](mailto:mary@marykarlik.com).

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



White Rose = First Novel Sale

Pink Rose = Subsequent Novel Sale

White Carnation (or Tulip) = Subsequent Novella Sale

Sunflower = Short Story

Gold Rose = Diamond Heart Finalist (Formally called the Rita, and most recently, the Vivian. See RWA's site for details. [https://www.rwa.org/Online/Awards/The\\_Vivian/Online/Awards/The\\_Vivian/Diamond\\_Heart\\_Award.aspx](https://www.rwa.org/Online/Awards/The_Vivian/Online/Awards/The_Vivian/Diamond_Heart_Award.aspx) )

## **Did You Know**



- 18% of romance readers are men?
- 99% of romance authors are female?
- 50.45% of all authors are women?
- The most popular romance sub-genre today is erotica?

### **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 information to Mary Karlik at [mary@marykarlik.com](mailto:mary@marykarlik.com).

Please include your name, title, date of publication (if known), publisher, 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