

DARA NEWS



Alex langley - *The Alex Langley Amazing, Spectacular, Uncanny Guide to Being a Professional Writer & Nerd*

Author, Psychologist, and lifelong nerd Alex Langley presents a guide to writing gooder, making sentences purty, and staying, like, you know, focused and determined or whatever.

Bio: Alex is an author and psychologist, dual-wielding both professions to do his best to write in ways which connect with the reader and reveal useful truths about the human condition. He's the author of *Make a Nerdy Living*, by Sterling Publications, *The Geek Handbook*, *The Geek Handbook 2.0*, *Geek Lust*, and *The 100 Greatest Graphic Novels*, all by Penguin/Random House, co-editor/co-author of *Spider-Man Psychology: Untangling Webs*, and a co-contributor to *Stranger Things Psychology: Life Upside Down*, *Star Wars Psychology: Dark Side of the Mind*, and *Captain America vs. Iron Man: Freedom, Security, Psychology*. He is the writer/creator of the young adult graphic novel *Kill the Freshman*. Thousands follow his work online, and he's been a speaker and celebrated guest at fan conventions, including Wonder-Con, Galaxy Con, and San Diego Comic-Con International. His published works also include academic papers, and he thinks you're doing great.

June 27, 2026 Meeting Information

Join us at the **Vickery Park Branch Library, in classroom 1, on June 27h** for our quarterly in-person meeting. The library is located at **8333 Park Ln, Dallas, TX 75231**. The meeting will also be broadcasted on Zoom for those members who can't be there in-person.

Social time is between 9-9:30am, followed by a business meeting at 9:30am. Our speaker begins their presentation at 10am.

Non-members are invited to attend two (2) free meetings. If you want to attend a third meeting, you're required to join DARA and RWA. Go to <https://www.dallasarearomanceauthors.com/> and click the button to register for the meetings. After you fill out the Google Form and submit it, you'll receive the Zoom link in the summary.

President's Letter - *Staying the Course*

June always feels like a midpoint.

The rush of the new year has faded. Spring momentum has settled into routine. Summer stretches out ahead of us with longer days, shifting schedules, conferences, vacations, deadlines, launches, and—if we're being honest—a little exhaustion creeping in around the edges.

This is often the time of year when writers begin to question themselves.

The excitement of a new project may have dimmed. Progress may feel slower than expected. Goals that looked clear in January suddenly seem farther away in June. And somewhere along the line, many writers begin asking the same quiet question:

Am I even doing this right?

If you've felt that way recently, you're not alone.

Writing is a long game. Not just creatively, but emotionally. It asks us to continue showing up even when inspiration flickers. Even when the market shifts. Even when comparison gets loud. Even when the words come slowly and doubt comes fast.

That's why June feels like such an important month to talk about perseverance—not the dramatic kind, but the quiet kind.

The kind that opens the document anyway. The kind that revises the chapter one more time. The kind that keeps learning, experimenting, growing. The kind that stays.

Romance writers understand this better than most.

We write characters who choose love not once, but repeatedly. Through setbacks. Through uncertainty. Through moments when walking away would be easier.

There's something deeply familiar in that.

Because building a writing life also requires repeated choice. We choose the work again and again. We choose to keep telling stories even when the path feels unclear.

And somewhere along that path, something remarkable begins to happen:

We find our voice.

Not all at once. Not like flipping on a light switch.

Voice develops slowly—through practice, experimentation, failure, risk, revision, and persistence. It grows stronger every time you write something only *you* could have written.

I think many writers imagine “finding your voice” as a destination, when really it's a process of becoming more fully yourself on the page.

It's the rhythm of your sentences. The emotional truths you return to again and again. The kinds of characters who haunt your imagination. The themes that matter deeply to you, whether you realize it consciously or not.

Voice is not perfection. Voice is authenticity.

And authenticity takes courage.

Especially in a world that constantly encourages comparison. It's easy to look around and wonder if you should sound more like someone else. Write faster. Publish differently. Follow trends more closely.

But readers don't connect to imitation.

They connect to sincerity. To emotional truth. To stories that feel alive because the writer poured something real into them.

That's what makes romance so powerful at its best. Readers remember the stories that made them feel seen. Understood. Hopeful. Brave enough to believe in love again.

Those stories stay with people.

And they stay with people because the writer's voice was present in every line.

So if June finds you discouraged or uncertain, I want to encourage you not to mistake “still growing” for “failing.”



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President's Letter Continued

Growth is the job.

Every book teaches you something. Every scene sharpens your instincts. Every challenge strengthens the creative muscles you'll need for the next story.

And every time you continue despite the doubt, you become more fully the writer you're meant to be.

As a chapter, I hope we continue creating space for that kind of growth—for learning, experimentation, encouragement, and honest conversation about the realities of the writing life.

Because none of us arrives fully formed.

We evolve through the work. Through community. Through staying the course long enough to discover what our stories sound like when we stop trying to write like anyone else.

Summer is a season of energy and brightness, but it's also a season of endurance. Of tending what we've planted earlier in the year and trusting that growth is still happening, even when progress feels slow.

So wherever you are this June—drafting, revising, querying, publishing, resting, or simply trying to reconnect with the joy of storytelling—I hope you'll give yourself permission to keep going imperfectly.

Trust your voice. Trust your process. Trust the stories only you can tell.

They matter more than you know.

—Michelle Miles

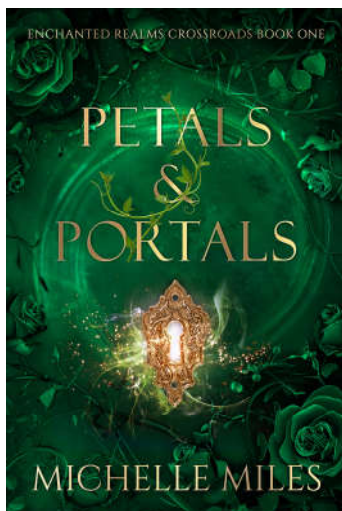
Our Authors at “Reader Author Get Together” Booksigning

RAGT26
Reader & Author Get Together



Member's Corner

A place to celebrate success, recognize our members, and welcome new members



Title: Petals & Portals

Author: Michelle Miles

Genre: Cozy Fantasy

Release Date: June 23, 2026

Available In: Kindle & Paperback

First/Subsequent Sale: Subsequent

Magic brought her home. Love might make her stay.

Piper Wakefield hasn't set foot in Hickory Hollow in a decade. But when her Aunt Alice dies, Piper inherits a house, a flower shop—and a destiny she never asked for. Alice wasn't just the town florist; she was the Guardian of the Crossroads, the one who kept monsters from slipping through the veil. And now Piper is next in line.

The only person willing to help her? Owen McAllister—childhood friend, longtime admirer, and the one man determined to show Piper that coming home might be exactly what she needs.

But danger is rising along the magical highway, and Hickory Hollow's quaint charm hides far darker secrets. When a gate breaks open, unleashing a threat that could destroy the town, Piper and Owen must trust each other—and the spark growing between them—before the road to hell runs right through Hickory Hollow.

Perfect for fans of childhood friends-to-lovers romance, small-town magic, inherited destinies, and portal fantasy with heart.



Title: The Second Coming

Author: Stephanie Pass

Genre: Romantasy

Release Date: June 30, 2026

Available In: Kindle

First/Subsequent Sale: Subsequent

She gave herself to Heaven to save the Devil.

Now Evie is trapped in the Beloved, a beautiful prison built to break women gently, where the First Light means to turn her into something He can keep. But Evie is not as helpless as He believes. The more He tries to claim her, the more an ancient power inside her begins to wake.

And Lucifer is coming for her.

To reach Evie, he must unravel the lies Heaven built its kingdom upon and face the truth of what he really is. Because the woman he loves is more than mortal, the bond between them is more dangerous than Heaven ever intended, and the war that began long before sin is about to begin again.

The Second Coming is a dark romantasy filled with forbidden love, ancient gods, mythic power, obsession, sacrifice, and a hero willing to burn down paradise for the woman he loves.

Member's Corner

A place to celebrate success, recognize our members, and welcome new members

Book Signing Events

June 27-28th - Stephanie Pass - Texas Horror Lit Fest. Irving Convention Center at Las Colinas in Irving, TX.

July 18th

Michelle Miles, Janet Leigh, Amanda Reid - RWA Conference, Albuquerque, NM

July 18-19th - Sharla Wylde & Stephanie Pass— Texas Book Lovers Con, Denton Civic Center, Denton, TX.

July 26th - DARA Authors:

Amanda Reid, Fenley Grant, Carolyn Rae, Stephanie Pass, Jennifer August, Mary Karlik, and Janet Leigh - From 1pm-4pm, DARA authors will be signing their books at Half Price Books in Dallas at the Flagship Store on 5803 E. Northwest Hwy, Dallas, TX.

Congratulations!



RWA Service Award



Congrats to **Mary Karlik** and **Anita Learned** on their RWA Service Award. They'll receive the award on Saturday, July 18th at the Awards Dinner and Ceremony during the RWA Conference in Albuquerque.

RWA 2026 Annual Conference

Why Attend?

- Inspiring workshops, deep dive sessions, and insider access sessions
- Pitch appointments with agents and editors actively acquiring romance manuscripts
- Networking events that bring writers and industry professionals together
- Author Book Signing open to the public
- Prestigious Golden Heart Awards, Diamond Heart Awards, and more at our Saturday Awards Dinner & Ceremony
- Marketplace featuring vendors July 16-18
- Exclusive discounts for local businesses and restaurants
- Plus... the always-popular **Scavenger Hunt** and unforgettable after-hours fun!



Tentative Conference Schedule Outline (The official schedule is now available on RWA's website.)

- **Wednesday, July 15:** Retreats, Deep Dive Sessions, Chapter Expo, Welcome Reception
- **Thursday, July 16:** Workshops, Pitch Appointments, Vendor Marketplace, Evening Get Together with Featured Speaker, After Hours Networking & Fun
- **Friday, July 17:** Workshops, Pitch Appointments, Vendor Marketplace, Librarians & Booksellers Event, Evening Get Together with Featured Speaker, After Hours Networking & Fun
- **Saturday, July 18:** Workshops, Pitch Appointments, Vendor Marketplace, Author Book Signing, Awards Dinner & Ceremony, After Party Celebration

Conference Hotel

Embassy Suites by Hilton Albuquerque, 1000 Woodward PI NE, Albuquerque, NM 87102

Writing Sprints 2026 ZOOM Link

Janet Leigh host the Writing Sprints every Monday night at 7:30 CST. Look for the link in Circles and on DARA's Facebook. Join the sprinting action on Zoom.

If you can't click it, highlight the link and paste it in a browser.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86099936742?pwd=ApZiLtnB0J0PX30lcia4fHbHuXWeab.1>

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 advice 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 publication 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, the title, the genre, release date, format, and whether or not it's your first publication.



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dallasarearomanceauthors.com

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DARA Board of Directors for 2026

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Member Awards (Roses) - Michelle Miles

Communications (Newsletter / Website) - Donna McGoldrick

Pan Liaison—Open

Pro Liaison—Open