

# DARA NEWS

## *January Speakers: Gunnar Qualen & Jenna St. Claire*

### *All About Audiobooks*

#### **January 27th at 10am CST**

Learn all about:

- Audible, Spotify, Chirp and more.
- Narrators, how to work with us.
- Future Tech, what's going on in the industry (there is lots).
- Resources for you: Materials you can refer back to, **YOURS TO KEEP!**
- Q & A—Everyone can talk, comment, all they want (or you can just lurk and listen).



You'll learn how to use the Audiobook Retailer, how to get your book into Audio and into your fans ears. Every step from Audible to Spotify, in depth with support materials you can keep.

You must register to attend this workshop, which is taking place in a Sessions meeting. Click this link to register for the workshop: <https://shorturl.at/jltvA>.

Gunnar Qualen and Jenna St. Claire are America's most severely respected narrators 🗣️🎧. They were both born at a very young age, and in the very same hospital (yes it's true)! They enjoy using their mouths for money, and take life extremely seriously. Ask us anything, and we will make something up. Married for 34 years ❤️💕💕.

We have narrated every production entirely in Duet, and we've been narrating for over 7 years.

Currently a lot has been going on at Spotify for us. So if anyone wants to know Findaway/Spotify we are ready for questions.

Our course will cover ways to make money with Audiobooks. Findaway, Audible, and much more. 🎧

\*\*\* DARA will have the January Zoom Meeting from 9am—10am. You will then leave the Zoom meeting and log into the Sessions meeting for the Audiobook workshop. Be sure to register for the workshop at <https://shorturl.at/jltvA>. See the next page for the Zoom meeting link. \*\*\*

## President's Letter

### Take The First Step

While talking with a colleague about old movies we somehow ended up on the subject of Indiana Jones. I shared with my colleague that I often use the movie, Indiana Jones the Last Crusade (starring Harrison Ford and Sean Connery – two of my favorites), to describe faith. In the movie, everyone is after the Holy Grail, both the good guys and the Nazi's. To incentivize Indiana Jones to walk across a chasm on an invisible walkway, they shoot Indiana's dad. The only way to save his dad is to cross the chasm, get the Holy Grail, bring it back, and allow his dad to drink from it (legend has it that drinking from the Holy Grail restores life, youth, and provide powers). Stay with me, I'm going somewhere□.



Indiana Jones goes to the edge of the side of the chasm. He looks back at his dad, who is bleeding and in pain. He looks at the other side, at least 30 feet away, and he looks at the drop down. If he walks out and nothing appears he will drop 100 – 200 feet down, to his death. If he doesn't walk out his dad will die. It's his movie so you know he didn't fall to his death. He took the step. When he took the step, the walkway appeared, one panel at a time, until he was on the other side.

Few of us must take risks that will physically end our life, or the life of a loved one. However, when we fail to take advantage of opportunities that move us closer to our dreams, we die a little on the inside. This is how I felt about writing.

Nothing in my past or background would lead one to think that I should be writing romance novels, but it was my dream. I took the step. The path has continued to appear for me.

What about you? Are you procrastinating in taking the first step? Are you waiting for the perfect story, perfect editor, perfect time, to get your novel out? There is no perfection. If you continue to delay, you may never move forward. Have faith in yourself. Take the first step. You don't have to know how the story ends, or even the second step – just start. Start outlining, start sketching characters, start your writing journey.

The story will develop, your confidence will grow, and your writing will improve – but you must take the first step!

—*Sharon Davis*

**Zoom Meeting For January 27th. DARA meeting starts at 9am CST.**

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

Meeting ID: 834 3428 0984

Passcode: 548934

One tap mobile

+13462487799,,83434280984#,,,,\*548934# US (Houston)

+12532158782,,83434280984#,,,,\*548934# US (Tacoma)

## How Can You Help An Author?

As the marketplace continues to be flooded with new books, daily, it is often difficult for authors to get the recognition and accolades they need and deserve. Here are a few ways you can assist our authors.



1. Purchase their book.
2. Leave them a five-star review (Amazon only recognizes the review if you are not their FB friend).
3. Leave a five-star review on Goodreads.
4. Tell others about their book.
5. Share information about the book on your social media pages.
6. Suggest their book to your book club.
7. Donate their book to a local library.

## Romantic Gift Ideas

Valentine’s Day is around the corner. Have you decided what gift to provide to your love interest? Below are a couple of romantic, or maybe sexy, suggestions.

1. Dance Lessons
2. Chocolate body paint
3. Sexy Truth or Dare Game
4. Love letter
5. A role-play date
6. Personalized love coupons
7. Customized lingerie
8. Silk sheets
9. Couples massage
10. Weekend getaway



Have fun!!

## Troupes

Trying to decide what tropes to include in your next novel/novella? According to Reedsy.com the most common tropes, used in romance novels, beloved by readers are listed below:

1. The Meet-Cute
2. The Love Triangle
3. Enemies Become Lovers
4. The Fake Relationship
5. Trapped in an Elevator
6. Escape from the Friend Zone
7. Belated Love Epiphany
8. Destined to Be Together
9. Second Chance Romance
10. Forbidden Love
11. Trouble in Paradise
12. The Bad Boy
13. The Secret Billionaire



Explore these tropes to hook and reel-in your readers. Happy writing!



## What's Next?

- In the February newsletter we will have a member spotlight
- We will meet face-to-face in March. Details coming soon!
- We're starting a critique circle to help our writers improve their stories. Stay tuned.

Congratulations!

Anita Learned is the 2023 recipient of the Robin Teer Memorial Service Award. Thank you for all you do for DARA!

*The Robin Teer Memorial Service Award is given to a DARA member who has contributed a body of service to the Chapter.*



### 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) )

**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 in-formation 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)

**Mailing Address:**

Dallas Area Romance Authors  
PO Box 833092  
Richardson, TX. 75083-3092

**DARA Board of Directors for 2024**

- President—Sharon Davis
- President Elect—Donna McGoldrick
- Treasurer—Terry Gene
- Secretary—Janet Leigh

**DARA Leaders**

- VP Programs—Anita Learned
- Membership—Carolyn Williamson
- Member Awards (Roses) - Mary Karlik
- Communications (Newsletter / Website) - Donna McGoldrick
- Pan Liaison—Open
- Pro Liaison—Open