

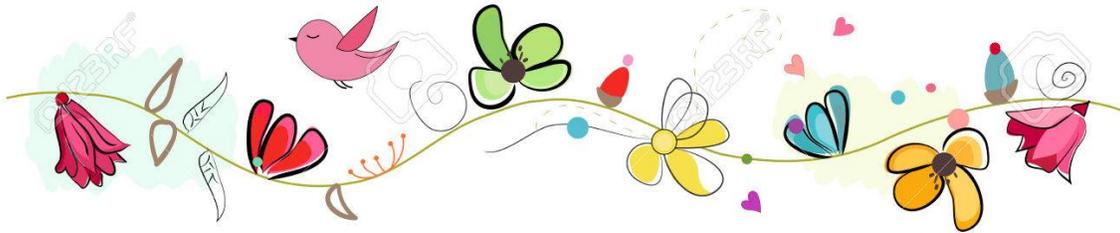


KEYNOTES

The newsletter of the Romance Writers of America / New York City Chapter #6 APRIL 2019

NEXT MEETING: SATURDAY, APRIL 6

LOCATION: TRS, 40 EXCHANGE PLACE, 3RD FLOOR, 12-4PM



Meeting Topic:
**Domestic Violence in Romance: Write the Story
Survivors Deserve**

Domestic Violence in romance novels is a delicate matter that should be handled with care. Using her professional background in advocacy and social work, Adriana will show us how to appropriately address intimate partner abuse in our work without perpetuating harmful depictions of trauma, love, and romance.

Adriana Herrera was born and raised in the Caribbean, but for the last 15 years has let her job (and her spouse) take her all over the world. She loves writing stories about people who look and sound like her people, getting unapologetic happy endings. When's she not dreaming up love stories, planning logistically complex vacations with her family or hunting for discount Broadway tickets, she's a social worker in New York City, working with survivors of domestic and sexual violence.

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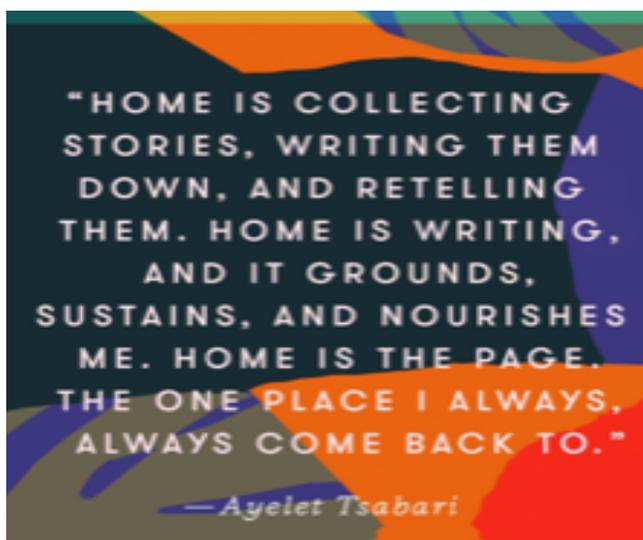
CONTRIBUTING WRITERS

LaQuette, Kay Blake, Maria Cox, Kate Dunn,
 Maria Ferrer, Jean Joachim, Kate McMurray &
 Harper Miller

MEETING INFORMATION

RWA/NYC meets the first Saturday of each month. Meetings are held at TRS, 40 Exchange Place, NYC. 12 noon. Membership is at the discretion of the Board. Annual dues are \$40. Make all checks payable to RWA/NYC. There will be a \$20 fee on returned checks.

ATTENTION: The Board welcomes all comments/suggestions/etc. Please send emails to info@rwanyc.com.



MAY THEME

TIME MANAGEMENT
It's always of concern

PLUS! We welcome articles on all topics, book reviews, conference notes, etc., etc.

DEADLINE: 15th of the month

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KEYNOTES DEADLINE

Send articles to keynoteseditor@gmail.com
by the 15th of the month. All articles
 must be typed and up to 500 words. Send
 pictures as attachments; not in article. Thanks.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE: IT'S COOL TO BE YOU
BY LAQUETTE



In today's publishing market, a social media presence is something the industry encourages authors to have. Unfortunately, many authors take this advice to mean they must create a persona that is wholly different from who they are to sell books. In my opinion, creating a false persona to increase book sales is the worst thing you can do.

Should you have a persona online? Yes. But build it using the foundation of who you naturally are. Don't craft a fake personality designed to entice readers to purchase books. If you do, it will automatically seem phony, or worse, weird.

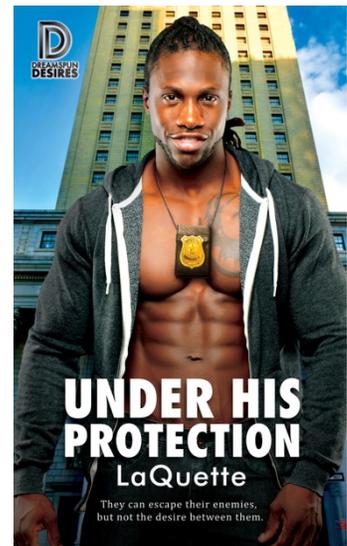
The reality of the situation is we can only keep up the act of being someone we're not but for so long. Eventually, the real you will surface, or worse, you'll want the real you to surface, but your career will be so deeply connected to the fake persona you won't be able to disengage without causing damage to your author brand.

Creating a fake persona leads down the dark path of crafting dishonest stories to support the fraudulent person you've created to represent your author brand. You don't want to place yourself in a situation where it's evident you're lying. Getting caught in a lie can do more than leave you looking messy and embarrassed in public. It can mean a clear ending to your career.

Is the gain worth the risk? Only you can decide. But in my experience, honesty really is the best policy. If you don't lie, then you won't have to keep all your lies straight. A better alternative is just to be yourself. It may sound too simple, but the truth is being yourself is much easier than pretending to be someone else.

Instead of being the fake you, polish a professional (please remember to keep it professional. Over-sharing, or sharing inappropriate things can damage your brand too), but personable version of your own voice when you're sharing on social media. Readers are more likely to be drawn to a genuine version of you than something crafted in a think tank. Keep it sexy! 💋

LaQuette-President of RWA/NYC, is the 2016 Golden Apple Award Author of the year winner. She writes bold & sexy tales for diverse characters who are confident in their right to appear on the page. Represented by Latoya C. Smith of the LCS Literary Agency. Websites: LaQuette.com , LaQuette@LaQuette.com.♥





NEW MEMBER

Lucy Eden

CHAPTER MINUTES: MARCH 2, 2019
BY SECRETARY KAY BLAKE

Attendance: 13 members

LaQuette called the meeting to order at 12:16pm**Board meeting** was held on March 2, 2019.**Treasurer's Report (Alexis):** \$4,692.71 in account (via PayPal)**Secretary's Report (Kay):** 106 Members to date. Members are encouraged to invite authors to the meeting. For information about membership or access to the Yahoo Loop, please contact Kay Blake at info@rwanyc.com**VP Report (Harper):** Contest went live on March 1, 2019. People have already started to sign up for the contest. Social media graphics are in the file on the loop. Need more judges to sign up. There is a discounted fee for non RWA NYC members who enter the contest and sign up to judge. RWA/NYC's member's first entry is free. Booked for 3 months of promo for RWR Editor and RWA National website. Any questions should be directed to vicepresident@rwanyc.com**VP Report (Adriana):** Contacted Bloom's Tavern. No news yet for the May Brunch. Adriana is working on it. The nomination form for the Golden Apples has been sent out on the loop/email. Note: nominations are for people who **have not** been nominated for the past 5 years.**Chapter Dues:** RWA no longer accept checks for payment. No longer have early bird dues. RWA NYC dues are now paid through the RWA National site. Any problems with payment, membership, or website issues need to be brought to the RWA National board. Member dues are due February 28th via the RWA Nationals website. However, RWA does have a month grace period. If there is any questions about payment, membership, or accounts, members are asked to contact RWA National directly. RWA NYC has no access to member's accounts and information.**Blog, Social, Newsletter:** Andrea handles FB and Twitter. Shoot her your information via the RWA Yahoo Loop if you have news to share.**Brooklyn Book Festival (Michael):** Early bird fee for the festival this year has been paid. Will have more details soon.

RWA National Conference: Non-Prom For those who don't have a publisher party will tentatively be held on Thursday. Registration has already open. Early bird fee ends on April 17, 2019. RWA/NYC is also thinking about renting a room to help members change for the RITA Awards Ceremony. Encourage members to come and represent for the chapter.

Keynotes topic for next month: THE SOCIAL YOU Social Networking: Pros and Cons Send articles to Falguni at keynoteseditor@gmail.com Deadline the 15th of the month.

Get Involved! Volunteer Participate or write for Keynotes. Members are encouraged to participate in their chapter. It's your chapter!

Meeting adjourned at 12:30pm. Round Robbins Begin.

Speaker: LaQuette – Let's Talk About Sex in Romance Novels. ♥



Our annual Kathryn Hayes "When Sparks Fly" Contest is underway! Launched on March 1st.

What is it we're looking for? OFF THE CHARTS HOTNESS!

If you've published a romance in 2018 and believe your MCs have what it takes, by all means, send us your MS. Tell your writer friends!

We could also use judges. If you love reading romance you are more than welcome to judge! For full contest details and to sign up as a judge please visit: www.rwanyc.com

Please help promote the Chapter Contest on Twitter and Instagram. Here are some Hashtags to use on Twitter: #romance #romancereaders #romancewriters #RWA #kissingbooks #books #amwriting #librarians #agents.

Hashtags for Instagram: #romance #romancenovelist #romancewriters #RWA #authorsofinstagram #writersofinstagram #romancebooks #kissingbooks.♥

CRITIQUE GROUP INFORMATION**BY KATE DUNN**

The next critique group will meet on Monday, April 29, from 6-8pm (5:30 for eating/ chatting) on the second floor of Smiler's, 54th and Madison. If you would like to participate, please let us know and we will send you an invitation to the Google Group. All submissions are due by April 18. The rest of the critique group dates for 2019 are listed below. If you have any questions, please email us offline and we will be happy to chat with you. Happy writing! Kate and Candace ♥

June 3

July 1

August 12

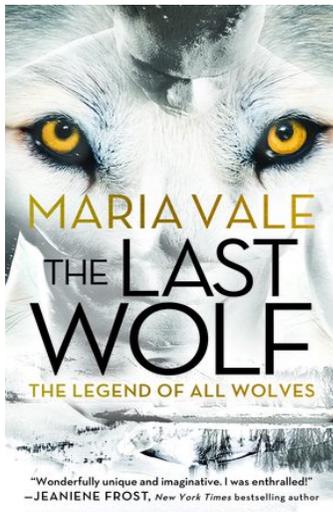
September 16

October 21

November 18

December 16

MEMBER NEWS

**CONGRATULATIONS!**

Maria Vale got two RITA nominations -- Best First Book & Paranormal Romance -- for her novel, **THE LAST WOLF**.

Susan Lee who is a Golden Heart finalist for her Young Adult Romance, **DRAGGED**.

Let us cheer these Ladies on during the RWA National Conference in July here in our backyard!

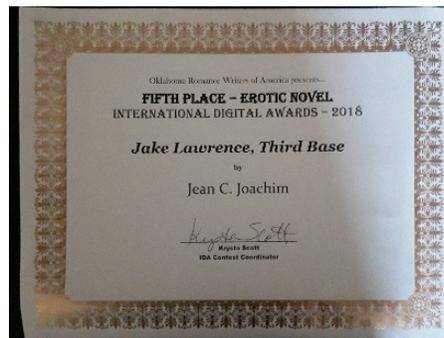
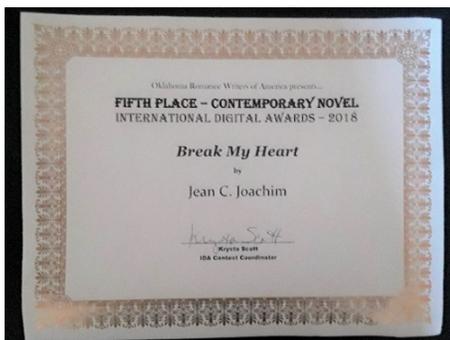


Triple congratulations to **Jean Joachim** for winning THREE 2018 International Digital Awards from the Oklahoma RWA. They are:

Contemporary Novel - 5th place - *Break My Heart*

Erotic Novel - 5th Place - *Jake Lawrence, Third Base*

Erotic Short Novel - 2nd Place - *Liz & Nick: No Regrets* ♥



**WELCOME TO MY WRITING DEN!©
WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH
BY MARIA COX**

Thank you Abuelita!

“Speaking of romance,” my mother said over coffee one morning, “Your grandmother was quite the romantic writer.” “Grandma?” I shrieked. The reference caught me off guard, Grandma –the matriarch in our family – had been deceased for years and my mother rarely spoke of her. “Yeah” she answered. “Your grandmother wrote love letters to your grandfather when he was away on business.” “She did?” I never heard this before. “Yeah, didn’t you know?” Mom continued, “She placed first in a writing contest.” Love letters? Contest? *Whoa*. I had no idea.

When I started to write romance in my twenties the genre fascinated me. Intrigued by such appeal I often questioned from where my desire to write emerged. After my mother’s revelation I thought long and hard about my grandmother’s writing. When did she start writing? What inspired her to write?

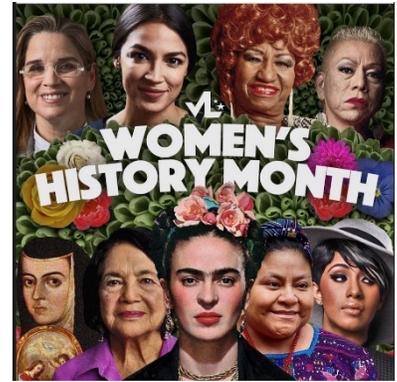
Mystified as I was to learn about my grandma’s writing prowess one thing was for sure, it offered a new perspective: Romance writing was in my genes!

My grandmother would have been ninety-nine years old this year and I still think of her when I write, I can hear her giggle as I’m crafting a sexy scene. “Gracias Abuelita for your gift of writing.”

Here’s to all the women who inspire us!♥



Maria Cox is an award-winning romance author. Maria is also a PRO member of Romance Writers of America and the past Treasurer of RWA/NYC. Maria served two terms as President of the Phoenix Writers Club. Maria has been writing stories since she was a young girl. She picked up her first romance novel when she was just eleven years old and has loved the genre ever since. Maria writes sensual romance, stories that showcase strong, sassy, and sexy characters. When not writing fiction, Maria works as a technical writer. She lives in Queens, New York. Please visit her site www.mariacox.net and/or follow her on [Twitter](https://twitter.com/mariacox).



MONTHLY THEME: THE SOCIAL YOU

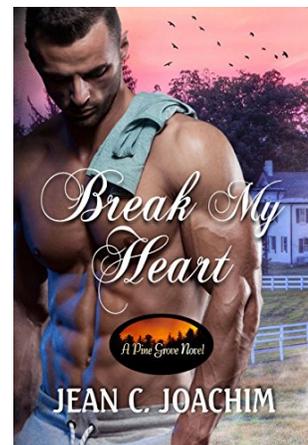
**SOCIAL CONNECTIONS
BY JEAN JOACHIM**

Social media is a place to connect with people. With all the negativity slapping you in the face at every turn, I take a positive pov. I post mostly happy, upbeat posts on Facebook. Add plenty of pictures, too. I use many that I've taken and some from stock photo sites. Asking a question will elicit responses from readers, helping you to connect. Some of my favorites are:

- 1) What's your favorite winter drink? (or summer)
- 2) What's your dream vacation spot?
- 3) Favorite candy?
- 4) Favorite dessert?
- 5) Favorite restaurant

You get the idea. Then I like everyone's post. I do admit that I've become a little controlling about my page. If anyone posts anything negative or tries to hijack the thread, I delete their post. Facebook is my favorite place to reach out to readers.♥

Jean Joachim is an award-winning and multi-published author of the First & Ten series (football romance); contemporary & military romances; and romantic suspense & sweet romances. Visit her at www.jeanjoachimbooks.com.





TEN TIPS FOR SOCIAL MEDIA

BY MARIA FERRER

When navigating Social Media, Be Brave, Be Bold! There are many ways to interact on social media and so many platforms. You probably know these tips and use them intuitively, but it doesn't hurt to hear them again.

- 1) **Educate yourself** as to the social platforms available and pick the best one for you. There's Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest, Twitter, Tumbler, etc etc etc.
- 2) **You don't have to be on ALL of them.** Pick the one or two you know you will enjoy, and stick to those.
- 3) **Be consistent.** You don't have to be on everyday so pick the days and times that again work best for you. Make yourself a schedule and set your calendar alerts.
- 4) **It's all about You.** Share your photos, favorite quotes, writing tips, comments on TV shows, etc. You want the public to get to know you so share as much as you are comfortable with.
- 5) **Sharing is NOT selling.** Don't over sell yourself. Yes, announce that your book is coming out in April, and yes post links to all the great reviews you are getting, but don't hammer the public with posts of buy my book, buy my book, buy my book. If you do, they won't.
- 6) **Don't follow others blindly.** You will get numerous requests for follows and friending. Check out the person's profile, look at their posts. If you share the same views, then Yes follow and friend. If you don't, then think about it. You can say NO to a friend or a follow.
- 7) **Comment on other people's posts.** Also, like and love their posts too. It will help build your audience. But again, don't do it blindly.
- 8) **Share and Retweet other posts.** Again, it will help build your audience and help you make new friends.
- 9) **Keep a website.** You need a place to "store" your profile, books, articles, photos, etc. Keep a website for all these things. Update it often. When the public wants to know more about you they will have a place to look.
- 10) **Be Sincere.** The public wants the real you. You don't have to share your whole life story, just the bits and pieces you are comfortable sharing. ♥

Maria Ferrer has settled on Twitter as her main social platform. She feels she can get her message across in 140 characters or less.





SOCIAL MEDIA BEST PRACTICE: BE YOURSELF

BY KATE MCMURRAY

My mom was on Facebook before I was. I didn't really get the point of it, if I'm honest. I graduated from college a few years before Facebook was a thing, and in its early years, it was a social network intended for college kids, so you needed a university email address to even sign on.

When Facebook opened up for everyone, my mother, who ran a popular political blog at the time, got on Facebook to promote herself.

That's the approach I think most authors take to social media. It's a means to an end. *I'm here to promote myself!*

And you are. But I want to dispel a few myths, because what I've learned in my 10+ years on Twitter—my mother will tell you there are Facebook people and Twitter people, and I am most assuredly a Twitter person—is that a lot of authors who use social media do it in wildly ineffective ways, ways that waste time and accomplish little. The real trick to any social network is to grow your followers organically and make them interested in what you have to say. How do you do that? Be yourself.

Before I get into what I mean by that, let me walk you through a few myths.

Myth #1: “I must promo all the time” OR “If I post a lot of promo people will think it’s spam”

The truth is actually somewhere in the middle. Some authors set up a bunch of recurring scheduled tweets about their books and then walk away. Maybe these authors are social media wary and this is an easy way to get their message out there. By now, though, you've probably also heard the advice that all promo all the time is annoying to followers—and it is. When new people follow me, I scan their most recent ten posts or so, and if their feed is all promo, I don't follow back. (Related, if the feed is entirely retweets, I don't follow, because it feels like the person has nothing original to say. If I follow you, I want to know about *you*.)

But I think now some authors swing the other way. They are paranoid about posting too much promo for fear of alienating readers. The trick is to find a balance. Consider this. On Twitter, a lot of my tweets get around 250 impressions each. This means that each tweet is only seen by around 10% of my followers. So if I only put up one promo post, and only 250 people see it, that's not very effective promo. But if I post different promo posts at different times on different days, that ups the odds more of my followers will see it.

For each book, I usually make a half dozen social media graphics. I've played around with posting times and have figured out that the times of day that get the most engagement for me. So, if I put a promo post up at 10:30am on release day, and then a post with a different graphic at 6pm the same day, then a post with a different graphic at 1pm the next day, and so on, I'm varying who sees the post, and I'm not just posting the same thing over and over.

This is just for Twitter, though. The algorithms on Instagram and Facebook are mysterious to me. Which actually leads me to...



Myth #2: “I must be on all the platforms all the time.”

No. You don’t. Pick one or two things you actually like and put your energy there. Social media should be fun, because if it feels like a slog for you, your readers will notice. Maybe you’re a Facebook person like my mother and do your best work there. I put the bulk of my effort on Twitter. (I also have Facebook and Instagram accounts, but I do less

with these and they are consequently less effective for me. Some authors kick ass at Instagram. Some thrive elsewhere. It’s not a one-size-fits-all situation—you really have to work at and cultivate engagement in whichever platform you focus on.)

I have an account at bit.ly, which is a website you can use to create short URLs and track how many clicks they get. According to bit.ly, for my last new release, I got much more traffic from Twitter than Facebook. Which makes sense; I’ve scaled back my Facebook engagement, I post to Twitter far more frequently, I have twice as many followers on Twitter than Facebook, and I’ve cultivated relationships with people on Twitter who then shared my new release posts.

(You *can* really work it on more than one platform, but it’s a tremendous time suck. Social media is not the be-all/end-all of promo, so do what you can and don’t beat yourself up if it’s too hard to do it all. It’s really better to write your next book than to try to game the Facebook algorithm, which is a moving target anyway.)

**I’m here to
promote
myself!**

Myth #3: “Friend all the authors!”

I do think that social media can be an excellent way to network with other authors and industry pros. (I actually followed a bunch of agents when I was querying so I could get a feel for who I’d work well with.)

However, and I really want to emphasize this point:
Don’t promo to other authors.

It feels safe, I know. Some of these other authors are your friends and chapter mates. But cultivating relationships with other authors is better for professional development than for direct promo. It’s definitely good to connect with other authors on social media! And if you engage with those authors in a genuine way, when your new book comes out, they are likely to share your promo post with their own followers and help get the word out about your book. Which is awesome! But this should not be the primary reason you befriend authors on social media. (I know authors are readers, too, but I only read thirty books last year. I’m busy, and half of what I read was research for my own books. Compare me to a reader who read 300 books last year. Who are you more likely to sell a book to?)

Myth #4: “The only way to be effective is to have thousands of followers.”

Here’s a secret: I hardly ever follow or friend people on social media. If I do, it’s because I genuinely want to read what that person has to say.



Here's what I've learned: the number of followers you have doesn't really matter if the people who follow you are genuinely interested in what you have to say. This is another way that following a lot of authors can be counterproductive. If all those authors are only interested in using social media to promote their own projects, then they aren't really paying attention to your feed.

Or, consider this. I'm on an email loop for other authors in which someone decided that everyone on this loop should follow each other's BookBub profiles. That would increase everyone's follower counts! Cool, huh?

Well, think about who those followers are. Say I have 150 BookBub followers and Jane Author has 150 BookBub followers. I haven't asked anyone to follow me there, I've just let readers find me and add me because they liked my books or want to know about my new releases. Jane Author has been friended only by other authors who were looking to boost their follower counts. Whose group of followers is more likely to read and click on the new release alert when it goes out? Whose group of followers is more likely to buy books?

It is far more effective to grow followers organically, to have followers who follow you because they're interested in you or like your books. So if you have 1,000 followers who are just following you for the sake of you having more followers or 100 followers who are genuinely interested in *you*, those 100 followers are far more valuable.

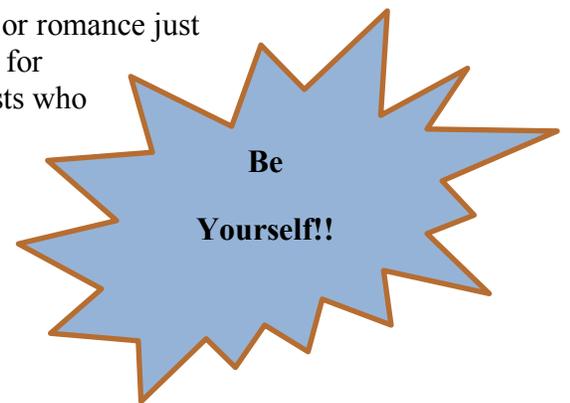
I also follow a bunch of accounts that aren't related to writing or romance just because I have other interests and that makes social media fun for me. And I've made friends with people who have those interests who then went on to become a fan of me as a writer. So that's another thing to try.

So how do you get more followers?

Be yourself!

People respond to authors who seem genuine, who show their personalities. Don't feel like you have to share too much of yourself if you're not comfortable doing so; I rarely post about my personal life. But there's a lot you can do and say without saying too much.

Possible topics: your writing process, your character inspirations, topics related to your books, your pets (people love cute animals), silly things your kids say, sports teams you're a fan of, books you really love, TV shows you watch, crafts you do, stationery and planners, your triumphs in the kitchen, observational humor about where you live, video games, movies, and so on. And use hashtags, because that's how others will find you!



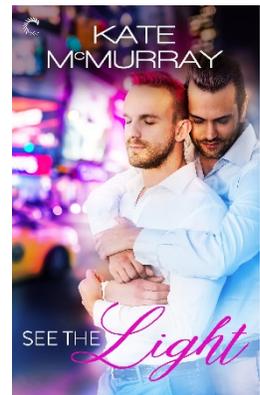


You can convey that you are a real person with hobbies and passions and interests without giving too much of yourself away. And you'd be surprised at the overlap in the Venn diagrams for other interests and romance readers. There are huge overlaps of hockey fans and romance readers, for example, or knitters and romance readers. Talking about your interests makes you seem like a real person while also potentially broadening your audience.

It's also important to engage. Share the promo posts of authors you like or talk up their books in your own feed. Participate in chats or start discussion topics yourself. Reply to someone or respond to something generally. Sometimes it feels like you're interrupting, but if you can see a post, the person who wrote it wants to engage. Set goals. Maybe one tweet per day, or one photo on Instagram per day for a month, or thirty minutes participating in FB groups per day, whatever feels manageable. Have fun with it!

If you take nothing else away from this very long treatise on how to interact online, let it be this: grow organically. Be yourself and people will come to you.♥

Kate McMurray is an award-winning author of gay romance and an unabashed romance fan. When she's not writing, she works as a nonfiction editor, dabbles in various crafts, and is maybe a tiny bit obsessed with baseball. She is Past President of RWA/NYC. She lives in Brooklyn, NY. Visit her at www.katemcmurray.com.



WANTED: MEMBERS' SOCIAL LINKS BY CHAPTER KAY BLAKE

For new members, and members who have been with RWA NYC, I am sending a call for social media links. If you have any website links, Twitter links, Instagram links, or Facebook links that wasn't given or you just want to update them, please send the links to me at info@rwanyc.com. Thank you. ♥



FREE PUBLICITY!



TAKE ADVANTAGE OF US! Have a new book out? Entered and won a contest? Have an interesting topic, research, tips you want to share? An event, book, conference you'd like to review?

Keynotes is a FREE Promotion Opportunity. We welcome all subjects. Send in your articles, news, book covers, reviews, etc., to keynoteseditor@gmail.com. Articles will also be published on

the Chapter Blog for DOUBLE the promotion!

Deadline: the 15th of every month. ♥

**ABOUT PAN
(PUBLISHED AUTHOR NETWORK)**



The purpose of the Published Authors Network (PAN) is to establish within the RWA framework a network of communication and support to effectively promote and protect the interests of published romance authors; to open channels of communication between those romance authors and other publishing industry professionals; and to encourage professionalism on all levels and in all relationships within the publishing industry.

To be eligible for General PAN Membership: RWA General or Honorary members in good standing should have earned at least \$1,000 on a single novel or novella that meets the definition of Romance Fiction.

To be eligible for Provisional PAN Membership: RWA General or Honorary members in good standing should have: (1) contracted for the publication of a novel or novella for an advance of at least \$1,000, but said work is not yet commercially available ("Option One"); or (2) published a novel or novella, but not yet earned \$1,000 ("Option Two"). Works offered through Predatory Publishing companies shall not qualify.♥

About PRO



The purpose of the PRO Community of Practice is to establish within RWA a network of communication and support to effectively promote and protect the interests of romance writers in the areas between manuscript completion and PAN eligibility.

To help members reach the next level, PRO focuses on the business side of writing rather than craft. This program is available to any active General or Honorary member who: (1) is not PAN-eligible and (2) has one complete original work of romance fiction of at least 20,000 words, or multiple complete original works of romance fiction which combine for a total of at least 20,000 words.♥