

KEYNOTES



The newsletter of the Romance Writers of America / New York City Chapter #6 DECEMBER 2020



HOLIDAY PARTY SATURDAY, DECEMBER 5th LOCATION: ZOOM 12PM



Join RWA/NYC on Zoom as we celebrate the end of the year in style. We'll introduce the 2021 Board of Directors, Announce Kathryn Hayes' Member of the Year Award and the Big Apple Contest winner. Plus, we'll have fun making a **Hot Toddy** drink, recipe is located at the end of the newsletter.

WELCOME TO THE 2021 RWA/NYC BOARD OF DIRECTORS



President:	Ursula Renee
VP Programs:	Maria Ferrer
VP Contest:	Mimi Pizarro-Logsdon
Treasurer:	Jean Joachim
Secretary:	Maria Cox

BOARD OF DIRECTORS BIOS



President: Ursula Renée crafts stories with diverse characters who must question their beliefs to find their happily-ever-after. She prefers the early to mid-twentieth century, when people began challenging society's conventions and expressing their individuality.

Ursula loves to travel and hopes to visit every state in the union. After each adventure she returns to New York where she lives with her son and two cats. When she is not writing, she enjoys gardening, photography, stone carving and model building.



Vice President, Program: Maria Ferrer is the Vice President in charge of Chapter Programming. She is a Charter Member of RWA/NYC and has held every position on the Board except Treasurer. Maria is proud of the Chapter's continuing legacy of inclusion and diversity. She is looking forward to a better, kinder New Year. Her resolutions... write, network, submit, repeat.



VP Contest: Mimi Pizarro-Logsdon is a loyal member of RWA NYC. She writes novels about interracial relationships that take the reader on the emotional rollercoaster of getting to know each other, accepting their differences, falling in like and finally love. She prefers writing Paranormal and Contemporary Romantic Comedy. She is currently a member of the BTS Army, and is obsessed with Sushi and Vanilla Seltzer. Mimi lives in New York with her two cats, Isabella and Fluffy; where she indulges in art, design, fashion, music, visual media and reading. Widowed in July 2020, she's learning to carry on in her own way and live life to the fullest.



Treasurer: Jean Joachim is an award-winning, USA Today best-selling romance author whose books have hit the Amazon Top 100 list in the U.S. and abroad since 2012. She writes sports romance, small town romance, big city romance, and romantic suspense. Jean has over 60 books in ebook, print and audio. She writes fulltime, never far from her secret stash of black licorice. An avid bird and dog fan, she has a fondness for chickadees and pugs. A music lover, especially classical, she's married, has two grown sons and lives in New York City. She'd love to hear from you, email her at: sunnydaysbook@gmail.com Find her books on her website: <http://www.jeanjoachimbooks.com>



Secretary: Maria Cox is an award-winning romance writer. 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.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

BY URSUAL RENEE



A Holiday Wish to You!

Though I wrote the following article several years ago, I want to rerun it for my wish to everyone is the same.

Harry Harrison's "May You Always" has become a holiday tradition for me. In the spirit of one of my favorite recordings, I would like to present my wish list to you.

- May you get that one hour each day you need to write your work-in-progress.
- May you sit in front of the computer and your writer's block disappear.
- May that plot twist that came to you before you went to sleep at night be with you when you wake up in the morning.
- May you find the inspiration to complete the work-in-progress you had been putting off for years.
- May you find a critique partner who offers you constructive criticism that helps strengthen your work.
- If you get a rejection, may you find someone who'll offer you a shoulder to cry on as well as give you the push you need to get back out there.
- May your dream editor love your manuscript and offer you a contract.
- May your edits go smoother than you expected.
- On that stressful day, when nothing seemed to go your way, may you get a five-star review.
- And, last but not least, may you experience good health and happiness during the holiday season and throughout the New Year.

THIS JUST IN!

Starting in January 2021, membership dues will go back to \$40 and will be due by 1/31/21. For payment, visit our website at <https://rwany.rwa.org/>

EARLY BIRD SPECIAL: \$35 from December 1st through December 31st



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

December 5, 2020 Chapter Holiday Party

December 16, 2020 Q&A with Norma Perez Hernandez, Assistant Editor, Kensington Books

January 9, 2021 Chapter meeting:

- Speakers: Authors Laura Bradford & Toni Shiloh
- Moderator: Barbara James



January 20, 2021 Q&A with Melissa Endlich, Senior Editor, Love Inspired

February 6, 2021 Chapter Meeting, Hot and Steamy Romances

- Speakers: Authors Cris Anton & Rose C. Carole

LIAISONS AND COMMITTEES

Keynotes Editor: Rose A. Jacobs
Blog/Social Media: Maria Ferrer
Critique Group: Mimi Pizarro
Publicity: Maria Cox,
Jean Joachim
Michael Molloy
Website: Ursula Renée



FROM THE EDITOR ROSE A. JACOBS

Welcome back to the Keynotes newsletter. I'm so excited to start this role with RWA/NYC and look forward to many exciting issues to come. This year, 2020, will forever live in history books as one of the most challenging years of the 21st century. Among other trying events, facing a pandemic was no easy feat and it continues to challenge us as we navigate staying apart. But 2020 has also taught us that we are a resilient people who will do everything to help each other out. We discovered new opportunities to do business, zoom anyone? And found that writing in the midst of chaos, was both our only choice and a testament to our dedication to the written word. Cheers to 2021 and making it the best one yet.

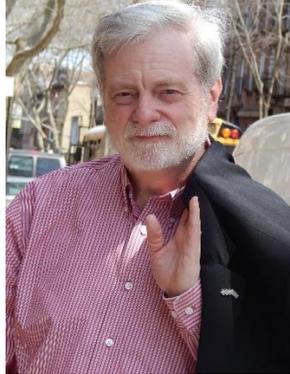
As a quarterly publication, look for your next Keynotes edition in March, where we will continue to report on everything you love about the Romance Writers of America/New York City, Inc. chapter and more.



MEMBER NEWS

Kathryn Hayes' Member of the Year Award

RWA/NYC is pleased to announce that the Kathryn Hayes' Member of the Year Award goes to **Michael J. Molloy**.



Michael has been a faithful and strong member of RWA/NYC for over a decade. Recently, he has served as Chapter Secretary. He also hosts the weekly Writing Sprints on our Chapter Facebook page, and has organized the Chapter's table at the Brooklyn Book Festival for several years.

RWA/NYC thanks Michael for his continuing years of service.

It seems apropos for Michael to win the award, which is newly named for RWA/NYC's Founding Mother and First Chapter Secretary -- Kathryn Hayes. In addition to organizing and launching Romance Writers of America, New York City, Inc. in the early 1980s, Kathryn made it her job to welcome new members and was often a workshop speaker. Kathryn was best known as Kathryn Hitte, children's books writer.

Congratulations to Michael on this honor.



Congratulations to our RWA NYC members on these recent accomplishments!



Candace Lucas

3rd Place Orange Rose contest (OCCRWA chapter) for *Heart Burned*
Honorable Mention in Mid America Romance Authors (MARA) for *Lucky's Ladies*
Finalist with Gateway to the Best (MORWA chapter) for *Baby and the Bank Robber*. This has resulted in a *FULL manuscript request* from Gateway.

Jean C. Joachim

Finalist 2020 Book Buyers Best (OCCRWA) with *You Belong to Me*
3rd Place International Digital Award (OKRWA) for *Hanukkah Hearts*

Anna DePalo

Anna DePalo's next book in the Serengetti Brothers series, *So Right...With Mr. Wrong*, will be out from Harlequin Desire in April 2021.

You did it!
Congratulations

A yellow star graphic is positioned behind the word 'Congratulations' in the logo. The star is a simple, five-pointed shape with a slight gradient, and it is centered behind the text.



Congratulations to the 2020 Big Apple Contest WINNER! Way to Go!

PHILIP WILLIAM STOVER

MYLES OF STYLE

“It had a good premise, and was quirky with good characters.”- Steve Zacharius, CEO & President of Kensington Books Publishing and Final Judge

Prize \$50

Bonus: Kensington Editor asked to see Full Manuscript!

FINALISTS

A TIME FOR LOVE by Jennifer Wilck

VIPER - TOO DANGEROUS TO LOVE by Kristie Wolf

THE WALLFLOWER VISCOUNT by Alice Gaines

RESCUE ME by Marnie Blue

SEXY AND TWISTED by Kristie Wolf



Warm thank you to all the judges who participated in this contest, especially to Steve Zacharius, CEO & President of Kensington Books Publishing, and his editors, for selecting our Big Apple Contest winner.



PROVOCATIVE QUESTION:



Writing Contests. Love them or hate them? Is there any value in them?

“I believe contests are valuable. They let readers know someone, besides your best friend who wrote a glowing review, thought your book was worthwhile. More than that, better than others in the same category. It’s a stamp of approval from readers who don’t know you. It helps people who haven’t read a work decide to take a chance on you—or not. A big help with promotion as well. Got for it. Take a chance. What have you got to lose?” –Jean Joachin

“I generally find them helpful in terms of pointing out weaknesses in my goals and motivations.”
- Candace Lucas

“Semi-Love. I only join the ones that promise feedback—a scoresheet or written paragraphs. Winning or placing is great, but the feedback is king.” – Maria Ferrer

“Love them. I recently participated and found that the ones that offer feedback are extremely worth it. It’s also a great incentive to get those pages finished and out into the world.” – Rose A. Jacobs

“Writing contests are useful for getting feedback, getting your author name out there, and getting some validation. They have a role—it’s up to you to decide how much.” –Anna DePalo

“Though they aren’t for everyone, consider entering a contest, #Writers for that set of “fresh eyes” to help improve your #Writing”- Tabitha Gibson, Twitter post on entering RWANYC’s “The Big Apple” Contest.



THE WRITE CORNER

Welcome to My Writing Den!

By Maria Cox

Years ago, I wrote for hours on end in complete silence, just my dogs by my side. In recent years, I have switched over to writing with background music. So, which one do I prefer? Both, actually.

Writing in silence gave me a quiet space to think while listening to music helped stimulate my creative side. In the vein of uniqueness, there are also those writers who instead of writing at home prefer to write in coffee shops and/or libraries. There's no one is better method, just different methods.

It seems logical that we should all have our own style, yet, often we compare our processes to that of other writers.

What I think is important is that we continually assess our writing skills because understanding our strengths and weaknesses helps identify a path toward improvement. And, so the sooner we can admit to a deficiency the sooner we can address it.

Goal-setting can be an anxiety inducing activity, but devising and a plan comes with its own set of rewards once executed. Remember, achieving a goal takes commitment, discipline, and a whole lot of guts, so don't ever undermine your progress however small.

Happy writing!

Maria Cox is an award-winning romance writer. 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](#).

INDUSTRY NEWS



RAMP!

Romance Writers of America is launching a mentorship program called RAMP. It connects experienced self-published and traditional author mentors with mentees who are unpublished as well as self-published or traditional authors whose career needs a boost. Visit www.rwa.org, under Awards and Programs, for more details.

Audible's Exchange Policy

Romance Writers of America has joined with the Authors Guild, along with author organizations and authors themselves, in signing a letter to Audible expressing their grave concern over Audible's exchange policy, and to ask that they immediately end their attempt to expand its Premium Plus subscriber program at the expense of author's income.

RWA Leadership change

Avery Flynn, current RWA President is taking a leave of absence. The new President-Elect is LaQuette.

Vivian Contest

The Vivian recognizes excellence in romance writing and showcases author talent and creativity. The 2021 Vivian Contest has closed to entries with a final cap of 850 submissions. Visit www.rwa.org, under Awards and Programs, for more details.



RWA/NYC CHAPTER BENEFITS



Chapter Meetings

On the first Saturday of each month (except when that Saturday falls during a holiday weekend) we have a chapter meeting to update the membership on our state and upcoming events. We also offer each attendee a chance to share their news during the Round Robin. Finally, we have guest speakers who offer tips on craft, marketing, etc. In the past, we have also invited editors, agents and booksellers to speak about the industry.

RWA/NYC Members Only Q&A

On the third Wednesday of the month, we invite industry professionals for a one-hour RWA/NYC Members Only Q&A.

Critique Partner

We have created a critique partner spreadsheet to help members find someone to work with one on one. If you would like to be added to the spreadsheet or review the members looking for partners, please fill out the form in the Members Only section of the website. If you forgot the password, please email Ursula Renee president@rwanyc.com.

Monthly Critique Meetings

Starting January 2021, RWA/NYC will have monthly critique meetings for members to receive and offer constructive feedback on works-in-progress. The instructions, date and time will be posted on the chapter's forum.

Weekly Writing Sprints

To encourage members to write, we offer a Wednesday evening writing sprint. These are hosted by Michael Molloy on the chapter Facebook page. If you are not a member of our Facebook group, please email rwanycweb@gmail.com.

Writers Support Group

Between the ever-changing publishing industry, finding the right words to put on paper and dealing with our audience, writing is not an easy profession. RWA/NYC has formed a support group to give members a chance to discuss problems they may have in the industry; air grievances or find a shoulder to cry on. The gatherings are informal. The dates and times will be posted on the RWA/NYC forum and on the chapter's Facebook page.

Contests

Yearly BIG APPLE contest.

Announcements

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?

Send your good news to Keynotes. We welcome all writing and publishing 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!

Social Media: Opportunities to be featured on the chapter blog, Twitter and Facebook pages.

~~~~~HOT TODDY RECIPE~~~~~

Ingredients

- 3 cups water
- cloves 3-5
- cinnamon sticks 2-4
- star anise 2-3 (optional)
- favorite bourbon or whiskey
- 1/2 cup apple cider or Honey
- garnishes: cinnamon sticks & round slices of lemon



Directions

- Boil water with cloves, cinnamon sticks & star anise
- pour into cups (2/3 full)
- add favorite bourbon or whiskey to taste
- add splash of apple cider or honey
- garnish with cinnamon stick & slices of lemon
- let drinks steep for a couple of minutes before serving

FINAL WORD:

“There is no wrong or Right. Just Write.” - unknown

