

Communique

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Chapter #16 ♥ Volume 18 ♥ Number 01, January 2004

President's Message:

WE'VE COME A LONG WAY, BABY!

I've been a member of NEORWA since 1996 and am amazed with how we have grown over the years. I'm not talking about the size of our group because size isn't what has made us successful. Member contribution, sharing ideas, successes and rejections, showing our support to fellow members, and friendship are what have made our organization truly successful.

I have made many wonderful friends in NEORWA. Friends who understand the "writer in me." No one, not my husband, daughters, sisters, mother, or non-writing friends know how it feels to have my work rejected or requested by an agent or editor, or the thrill of winning a writing contest. But you understand, don't you?

You also understand the importance of personal writing goals, deadlines, plotting problems, etc. Does your best friend really care that your book has a sagging middle or that you can't figure out your character's inner conflict? But you care, don't you?

And I care about you, too. Together, we can grow as writers and as friends. We'll share our joy and our sorrow, and with the support of all the NEORWA members, we will reach our goals, each and every one of us. Here's wishing you all a successful 2004!

Debby Conrad

Meeting Minutes:

There was no official December NEORWA meeting instead twenty-two members and one guest enjoyed a delicious luncheon at Punderson Lodge. Even though lunch was ready around ½ hour earlier than expected members were already in the dining room mingling and catching-up with friends.

After mega-calorie desserts were consumed, certificates were given to President Nancy Plisko, Vice-President and Contest Coordinator Debby Conrad, Secretary Cheryl Fedorcio, Treasurer Eddie Columbia, Newsletter Editor Michelle LeVigne, Publicity Chairperson Barbara Satow and Webmistress Holly Fuhrmann. Rosemary Laurey and Erin McCarthy were given Crystal Achievement awards to commemorate their first sales. Connie Laux announced the new 2004 NEORWA officers: President, Debby Conrad; Vice-President, Barbara Satow; Secretary, Cheryl Kloscak; and Treasurer, Thomas Dukes. Congratulations to the new officers. Members were thanked for their book donations for the Punderson staff. Next names were drawn for the order of choosing a book in our gift exchange.

The luncheon group broke-up around 1:45. A small group stayed behind to work on preparations for an author's luncheon next May.

Respectfully submitted,
Cheryl Fedorcio
NEORWA Secretary

Meetings:

JAN 3RD, 10 a.m., BRECKSVILLE LIBRARY: Join us for a KICK-OFF MEETING and PLOTTING PARTY!

We will have a short business meeting to discuss the upcoming year and then we'll be putting our heads together to plot. Do you have a novel that's been giving you trouble? Can't seem to get past the sagging middle? Whatever the problem is, be prepared to discuss it at the meeting. Guaranteed to be a jolly good time!

FEB 7TH - BRECKSVILLE LIBRARY - Erin McCarthy meets the "Bad Boys." Newly published author, Erin McCarthy, will talk about creating "bad" boys "good" enough to bring home to meet Mom and how to keep the sensuality and sexual tension going from page to page.

MARCH 6TH - SNOW ROAD LIBRARY - Topic TBA

Romance Writers of America®

National Headquarters
16000 Stuebner Airline Rd., Ste. 140
Spring, Texas 77379
(832) 717-5200

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NEORWA Membership -- Annual dues: \$20.00

Any member in good standing with National RWA can join Northeast Ohio RWA

Communique

A publication of the Northeast Ohio Romance Writers of America.

Deadline: Please turn in all articles, member news, news releases or any other pertinent information no later than the 14th of each month to: Michelle Levigne

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RWA® Websites

NEORWA Website:

<http://members.aol.com/hfur/NEORWA.html>

National RWA website:

<http://www.rwanational.com/>

For members only:
Find it in the table of contents.
Fill in your name and RWA membership number.
Choose a password.

Member News:



FROM HOLLY JACOBS:

2003's line-up is: HUNG UP ON YOU, Harlequin Flipside, 2/04 * FAIRLY HUMAN (w/a Holly Fuhrmann), ImaJinn Books, 3/04 * BE MY BABY, Sil. Rom., A Perry Square Romance, 8/04 * LOSING IT (working title), Harlequin Flipside, 10/04

FROM LINDSEY BROOKS:

I finalled in the Oak Leaf Award of Excellence and I just found out I double finalled in the Romancing the Tome contest.



NEORWA 2003 Resolutions

Will everyone please report on how you did, for the February newsletter?

Holly Jacobs

My basic goal is to write more books, hopefully better ones, and to survive next 2003. It looks to be a crazy year.

Tom Dukes

My new year's resolution is to spend a lot more energy on writing and things like this and far less saying YES at work and at church!! 1) finish a draft of at least ONE of my novels 2) finish a draft of both of them 3) lose 50 lbs.

Debby Conrad

This is my year! I plan to sell a book by the time RWA National rolls around or I'm going to shuck it all and become a brain surgeon. (Just kidding!) Seriously though, I plan to submit, submit, submit until someone says yes.

I hope to do a good job as VP this year. (If you have suggestions of how to make NEORWA a better organization, I welcome them.)

Eddie Columbia

To get published. Find an agent. Complete another full manuscript.

Rosemary Laurey

Complete the two novellas I've committed to, and get in by the respective deadlines

Write one more novella on spec for another publisher (probably Brava)
Write and send out five short stories
Recycle a minimum of five rejected stories, or resales
Write a rough draft of next novel.
Submit to at least two new markets
I've never even considered before

Erin McCarthy

I'm not sure I can top 2002 but I'm going to try. <g>

1. Write 3 books.
2. Sell 3 more books. I'd like to be writing for 2 publishers.
3. Go to NY for nationals.
4. Get a website.

I think that will keep me busy. <g>

Lindsey Brookes

2003 is going to be my year. I am going to have that pink ribbon for New York. (How's that for being optimistic? <g>) I want to finish two more books in 2003, hopefully for Flip Side, the new Harlequin romantic comedy line. I'm going to keep up with my step aerobics class no matter how much I hate to exercise. <g> And just keep on writing.

Barbara Satow

I would like to make my National experience a productive one. So, before the July conference, I would like to:

- 1.) Finish my current work in progress
- 2.) Write at least a rough draft of another Regency manuscript — this one geared strictly toward the market, so that will require some research, as well.
- 3.) Pick some editors and agents to target and practice pitching and shmoozing. (I suck at shmoozing... I don't even know how to spell it. :))
- 4.) Revise my completed fantasy manuscript then query Tor and H/S's new fantasy line about it. Post-National, I hope I will be submitting to the target editors and agents, selling a book or two, marrying a handsome-yet-sensitive, millionaire prince and be living happily ever after. :)

No More Lost Pages

By Susan Gable

It's happened at one time or another to most writers. Generally it's after you've just sweat blood and tears, having written the most fantastic ten pages of your entire career, then something happens to your computer: The hard-drive crashes. The file becomes corrupt. A mutant virus gets past your anti-virus software and eats everything on your computer. Maybe it's something only Bill Gates knows how and why, but the results are the same:

Your pages are gone.

And your last back-up was three days ago.

So now you're stuck trying to recreate the lost material, swearing at the computer, swearing at yourself, and promising that in the future you will back-up more often.

Do I have a gadget for you! Easy-to-use, so it's perfect for daily back-ups; small, portable — you can take your WIP with you when you leave the house. (No more of those What-Happens-If-The-House-Burns-Down? nightmares.)

It's called the Flash Drive. Some are shaped like pens (some of them even have ballpoint pens at one end), others actually come with a keychain attached. All you do is plug the Flash Drive into your computer via the USB port, and your computer recognizes it as an external hard-drive. Drag-and-drop your document, and presto, instant back-up copy. They work with both PC and Mac, and they also make it easier for you to move a document from one computer to another, a great help

Nancy L. Schuemann

Reporting on 2002 Resolutions/Goals:

1. The d__n book has yet to be published and I'm beginning to wonder if "under consideration" is some sort of brush-off rejection.
2. Didn't finish my historical, GOODBYE TO YESTERDAY, for the, embarrassing to say, umpteenth year.

for a writer (or a student) who works on more than one machine.

Flash Drives come in assorted sizes, from 8 MB to 2 gigabytes (at the time of this article) with prices also in assorted sizes. I purchased 128 MB for just \$30 — well worth the peace of mind a daily back-up provides. Some drives offer password protection — a good thing if you happen to misplace this tiny marvel. After all, you don't want just anybody reading your WIP.

To start researching and shopping, do a search on "flash drive" at your favorite Internet search engine.

Here's a site to get you started:

www.wolverinedata.com or http://secure.serverlab.net/shop/merchant.mvc?Screen=CTGY&Store_Code=T00107&Category_Code=FlashDrives

Read carefully to make sure it works with your particular Windows/Mac system.

Make lost pages a thing of the past. There's even a Flash Drive that's incorporated into a wristwatch.

And you thought only James Bond got to have cool toys.



Award-winning romance author Susan Gable put a Flash Drive at the top of her Christmas Wish List. Her next novel, Whose Child?, will be released by Harlequin Superromance in May of 2004. Visit her website at www.susangable.com for more writing articles.

3. Still working on the mainstream, THE TENTH COMMANDMENT. Not finished yet.

4. DID finish a then unknown manuscript. It's a humorous paranormal mutant story called SAM WHAT AM.

5. HAVE been doing a great deal of writing for PROPERTIES and, now, for some of their clients, as well as getting \$ for reprint rights. DO have

The First Twelve Months After The Call - A Tale of Ten Pounds

By Erin McCarthy

♥ October 10-

Go shopping at Target, come home to email from Kate Duffy at Kensington asking me to call her. I do, and she wants to buy Hard Drive, my novella in Lori Foster's contest, which I didn't even know she had. First thought- "Yes, yes, yes!" Second thought- "FINALLY! Someone wants to pay me to write." Followed by- "Have I fallen during cleaning and hit my head on toilet and imagined it, a la Dorothy in the Wizard of Oz?"

♥ October 11-

Kate Duffy wants to buy Hard Drive plus two other 'online' novellas and two single titles. Yowza! Euphoria followed by full-fledged panic; go to dinner to celebrate and spend three sleepless nights staring at ceiling trying to think of online ideas. The ceiling has no answers but brainstorming with my husband helps, since his ideas are so off the wall, I feel reassured that I know what I'm doing.

♥ October 14-

Our house sells, leaving us with three weeks to find a new one, pack, and move, with very first deadline looming over my head; but it's all good. I'm a published author.

♥ December/January-

Have wonderful Christmas in new house with boxes stacked to the ceiling, husband beaming proudly and bragging about my sale to any and all relatives. Cover for BAD BOYS ONLINE lands in my email and it's

beautiful, gorgeous, and my name is HUGE! Meet deadline on 'online' novellas and my editor actually likes them, alleviating huge anxiety. I hire an agent, and eat too many cookies while ignoring the drapes that still need to be hung.

♥ February/March-

Strep germs invade our house and won't leave. A total of seven cases of strep infect and reinfect my children, for a combined 11 missed days of school, none of which overlap. I write SMART MOUTH while children nap in fever induced acetaminophen comas. My pants have shrunk. All of them.

♥ April/May-

I have a website! I'm feeling very legit now, and my editor offers me two more novellas, both in anthologies with Lori Foster, which is a thrill.

♥ June/July-

Have discovered it is difficult to write sensual love scenes while nine boys play Nintendo Game Cube in my family room. Four girls painting fingernails in kitchen serve as no inspiration either. Going to Girl Scout camp for three days and returning less than a day before leaving for RWA Nationals is also not a good plan; But New York is fabulous and my first conference is a blast. I meet lots of people, including my editor and agent and other Brava authors, and have fun with good friends. Even sneak in a Broadway show.

♥ August/Sept-

It's early, but it's there! BAD BOYS ONLINE is on the New Releases shelf at Borders, Barnes and Noble, and Waldenbooks. I have goosebumps and a strange out of body feeling. Feel urge to stop shoppers and announce I wrote this book. Reviews have been pouring in, the majority good, including a Top Pick from RT, and a little Debut Author blurb about me. A couple of online reviewers pan me, but I don't read them. I have an exciting first booksigning with Lori Foster and Catherine Mann, who are both awesome ladies in addition to being wonderful writers.

♥ October-

One year later: my editor loves the book I just turned in, and it gets the great title, HOUSTON, WE HAVE A PROBLEM. All my covers have been fabulous and I can't wait to see this one. As we're about to step on the plane for a Disney World vacation, my agent calls my cell phone to tell me Kensington has offered me another three single titles. I bask in the Florida sun, thinking it's been a wonderful, exciting year. Even if my pants don't fit.



www.erinmccarthy.net

BAD BOYS ONLINE- Available now!

SMART MOUTH- April '04

BAD BOYS IN BLACK TIE- May '04

PERFECT FOR THE BEACH- June '04

HOUSTON, WE HAVE A PROBLEM- Sept '04

RESOLUTIONS - cont'd from 3 articles out at other publications as well. FOCUS is to make a January debut.

6. Did not attend the RWA convention on Denver.

7. Did do more critiquing and plan on being involved in more.

8. Did enter NEORWA's contest without a win, place, or show, but did get feedback. Still won't enter other contests.

9. Heck, I've tried to attend NEORWA meetings.

The wrap up: My non-fiction work has been my top priority since it is

actually paying good money. It has cut into my fiction writing time. I'm still managing to work on fiction (I seem to be writing humorous paranormal and mainstream), my first love.

Goals for 2003? I'll be more realistic.

1. I'd still like to get a d _ _ _ n book published.

2. To finish THE TENTH COMMANDMENT and TWO HANDS, ONE HEART, both mainstream novels under construction.

3. Attend more NEORWA meeting and critique sessions with June.

4. Keep making \$\$ with the non-fiction to support my fiction habit and the little luxuries in life.

Michelle Levigne

1. Finish my commitment for the Red Queen books at ImaJinn. And see at least 2 in print!

2. Get all my rough drafted books polished so I don't go into panic mode the next time somebody says "Send it!"

3. Wear a slinky dress to Nationals. (and look GOOD in it!)

4. Send out at least one proposal or query every month.

Profile of Siana Johnson

By Nancy Loyan Schuemann

While most of us are either left-brained or right-brained, longtime NEORWA member Siana Johnson is both. With degrees in electronic engineering: hardware and systems design, she also possesses an abundance of creativity.

"I'm an artist. Unlike most who find a blank screen or paper intimidating, I see it as another canvas upon which to explore the images within my mind. Whether by pen or keyboard, these are just two mediums with which to give voice to my need to create. I can't tell you when I started. For as long as I can remember, I've always carried a writing notebook and artist tablet," Siana explained.

Siana presently enjoys writing science fiction with a touch of technological horror. Though creating universes, realities, and worlds takes a great deal of time, she's at work on

several manuscripts. She is also active in the Fantasy and Paranormal on-line chapter of RWA. Her non-fiction reading choices are wide and varied. In fiction, she enjoys reading Octavia E. Butler, Catherine Asaro, Malanie Rawn, and Susan Krinard. In addition to art and writing, Siana's creativity is expressed through spinning her own yarn (merino wool, alpaca, silk) and weaving.

Her creative work is built around her work schedule. Siana handles the computer end and in-house art design needs for her family's firm, Laubaine Interiors. They are an interior design workroom, creating designs brought to them by interior decorators, designers, and textile industries. Their work can be found in hotels, universities, corporate headquarters, medical, and commercial facilities.

"I remember seeing a *Romance Writers Report* someone must have left on the magazine stand in a store while my family and I were on the road," Siana said. "The image stayed with me and wouldn't leave me alone. It was when I first realized there might be an organization which supported writers of romance. It wasn't long before I joined the national organization. Then, a bit later, our local chapter (NEORWA)."

Being a member offers her a connection to other writers seeking publication, a place to share, and a place to learn.

"It's ironic that my work schedule prevents me from attending meetings as often as I'd like. But thanks to my newsletter and the loop, I still feel connected," Siana summed up.

Notes from the President

"DUES ARE DUE" - It's that time of year again. The 2004 NEORWA membership "dues" are "due" no later than January 31, 2004. Please bring your check in the amount of \$20 made payable to NEORWA to the January meeting, or you may mail your check to the new treasurer: Tom Dukes, 4740 Broadview Rd., Richfield, OH 44286. Thanks for your support.

HAVE YOU READ THE BYLAWS? - As the new chapter president, I thought it might be beneficial to become familiar with our bylaws. A

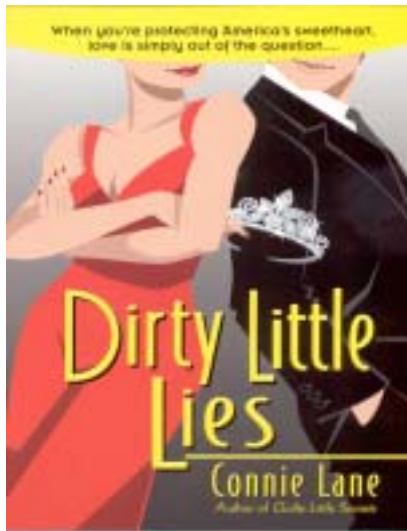
couple things jumped out at me and I thought I would mention them.

#1 - The NEORWA Membership roster is for our members' use only, and is not to be used by anyone who plans to solicit members for profit. Nor is this list to be given to anyone who is not a NEORWA member in good standing. Please respect everyone's privacy. (I haven't heard of anyone abusing the roster, but it doesn't hurt to remind everyone.)

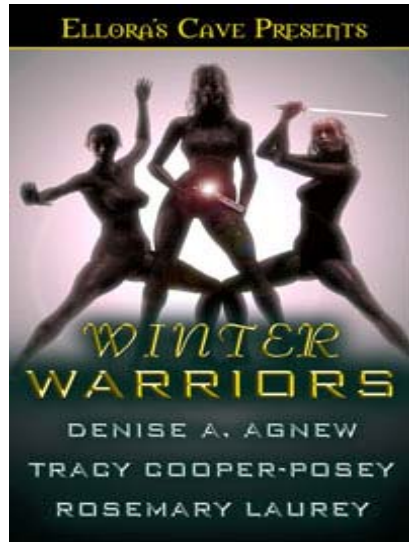
#2 - An Appeals Committee will be appointed at the January meeting. The purpose of the Appeals Committee is to

consider appeals of Board decisions regarding expulsion from membership or removal from office of a Board member by an action of the Board. The committee will be chaired by our Vice President, Barbara Satow. We will draw 4 additional names at the meeting to serve on the committee. In the event your name is drawn and you refuse to serve, an alternate will be selected. (Again, I don't remember anyone being excused from office, but it certainly won't hurt to have the committee in place.)





**NEORWA
PUBLISHED
AUTHORS**

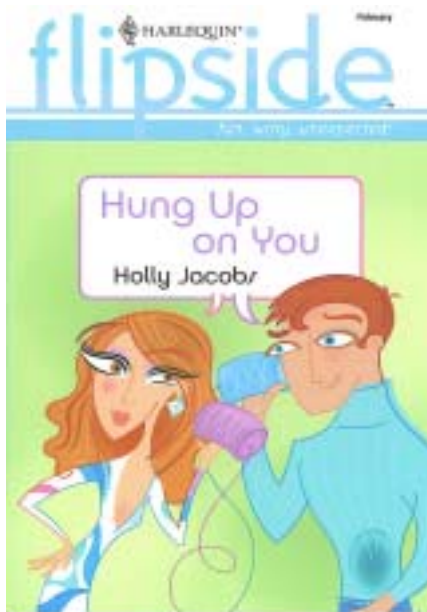


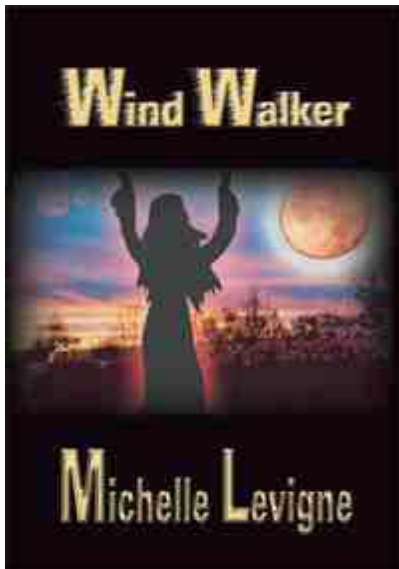
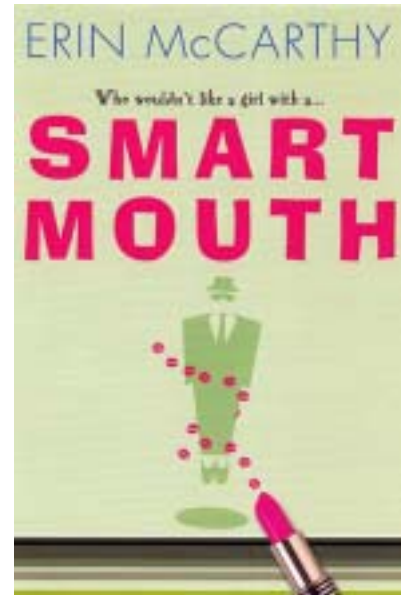
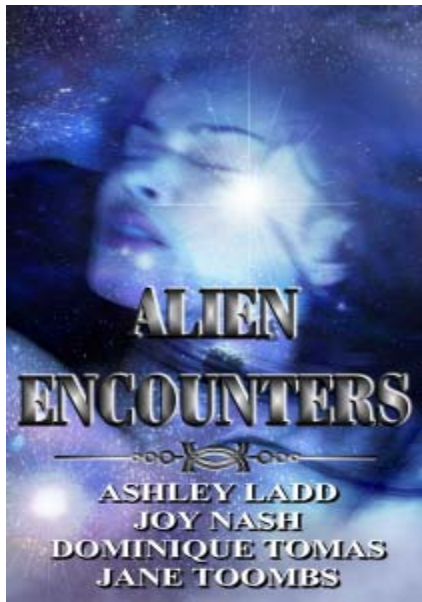
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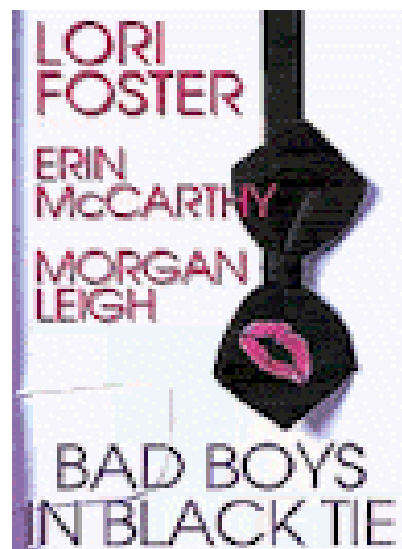
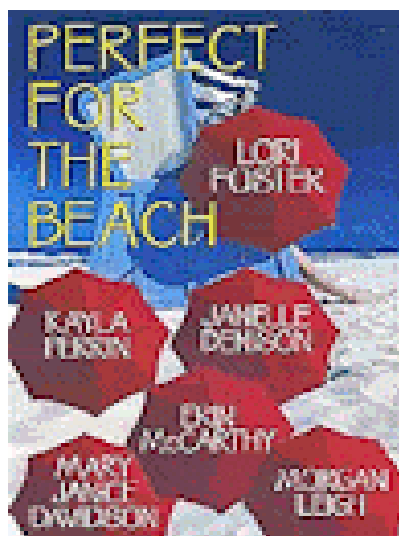
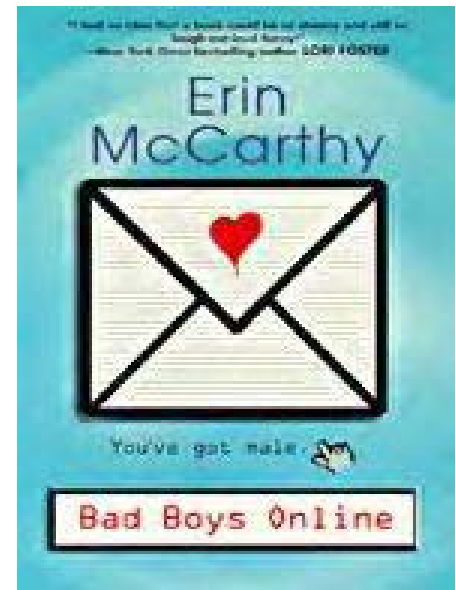
2004

COVERS





Note: Not all NEORWA Authors' covers for books released in 2003 or to be released in 2004 are included here.



2004 Goals:

FROM HOLLY JACOBS:

I have five books scheduled to write in 2004, so basically my goal is to...write! <g>

FROM ROSEMARY LAUREY:

Write three novellas, (Paradox III, RSVP for Elloras Cave, and another vamp bad boy), finish one vampire book and start the second, write and send out one short story a month, and do two chapters of Mina's book.

<http://www.rosemarylaurey.com>

FROM EDDIE COLUMBIA:

Get Published (can't hurt to stick it at the beginning, since I missed it in 2003) Rewrite beginning of Knight TT and send out. Finish writing Western TT and send it out. Finish 2nd Regency and hopefully send it out. (That ought to keep me busy!)

FROM DIANNE MILEY:

Find a publisher for Lilacs for Laura, attend a conference in February (in Florida — woo hoo!), and complete Roses for Rachel. Just a few small things. hehe

FROM CHERYL KLOSCAK:

To complete and mail in a category romance or two. To lose some weight (notice I'm being very non specific as to the amount). To attend at least one workshop that will help me grow as a writer.

FROM DEBBY CONRAD:

My goal for 2004 is to finish my romantic suspense EVERY BREATH YOU TAKE by March 31st. I would also like to finish at least 2 more projects throughout 2004.

2003 Accomplishments:

FROM ROSEMARY LAUREY:

2003: It didn't do too badly when all's said and done...didn't send out anywhere near as many short stories as I hoped to. And I didn't start my Mina Harker/Dracula book. Did write the prologue though, and got it published in an anthology published by the Dracula Society in the UK.

FROM DIANNE MILEY:

Became a member of NEORWA. Met 3 new critique partners. :)

Completed Lilacs for Laura. Wrote 12 chapters of sequel, Roses for Rachel. Began total rewrite of Lilacs for Laura. [almost completed — the year's not over yet :)] Attended Donald Maas conference.

Writing that out really makes me feel good!!!! Didn't even realize I'd accomplished so much this year. :))))

Book Recommendations:

Craft:

FROM ROSEMARY LAUREY:

Techniques of the Selling Writer- Dwight Swain

On Writing Stephen King

One Writer's Beginings Eudora

Welty

If You Want To Write Barbara

Ueland

Elements of Arousal by Lars

Eightner - Out of print, but worth the effort to find. Don't be put off by the rest of the title "How to Write and Sell Gay Men's Erotica".

Although dated (Selectic typewriters are praised as a wonderful innovation for example) The advice on writng, studying the markets and the realites of selling are spot on, and apply to any popular fiction genre.

Starting from Scratch Rita Mae

Brown

Guide to Fiction Writng Phyllis

Whitney

FROM DIANNE MILEY:

Writing the Breakout Novel by

Donald Maass. :) [I know, everyone already knows this one. sorry.]

FROM ERIN MCCARTHY:

And I have a recommendation for the newsletter... if you are interested in category writing, Luna, or HQN, head to www.eharlequin and cruise around their writer's community. The information and support there is invaluable.

FROM MICHELLE LEVIGNE:

Seven Steps on the Writer's Path, by Nancy Pickard and Lynn Lott. This was one of the free books at

conference. If you picked it up in New York, put it on the top of your to-be-read pile.

The Artist's Way by Julia Cameron. This is one that should be re-read every other year.

The Writer's Journey, by Christopher Vogler. Ditto.

Wild Mind and Writing Down the Bones, by Natalie Goldberg.

Musings on being a writer, on creativity, on frustration and finding your way to write.

Bird by Bird, by Anne Lamott. Ditto.

Romance:

FROM ROSEMARY LAUREY:

I Burn For You, by Susan Sizemore

FROM MICHELLE LEVIGNE:

Light and Shadow, by Jayne Anne

Krentz. A touch of paranormal, a detective starting over, secrets, murder, trouble. Fast read.

The Big Bad Wolf Tells All, by

Donna Kaufman. Another freebie

from New York. Modern, fast-

moving. Jaded woman newspaper columnist writes about her frustration with relationships — she's looking for a wolf, but she's attracted to this guy who is 100% sheep. Or is he? <G>

Non-romance:

FROM ROSEMARY LAUREY:

Midnight Harvest, by Chelsea

Quinn Yarbro

FROM DIANNE MILEY:

Tending Roses by Lisa Wingate

(recommended to me by Nancy Plisko — thanks Nancy!)

FROM MICHELLE LEVIGNE:

The entire Rhapsody series by Elizabeth Hayden. Magic, prophecy, saving-the-world, rewriting history. Three books: Rhapsody, Prophecy, Destiny. Thick books, but well worth the effort. And gosh darn it, there's a romance that runs all through the book and doesn't get resolved until the very end. I picked up the first book as a freebie at the Washington conference, and it was well worth the wait to get the other books.