NEORWA CLEVELAND ROCKS ROMANCE CONTEST
Scoresheet
(Paranormal Romance, Historical Romance, Contemporary Romance OR Romantic Novella Categories)

Note: Before judging, please read the judging guidelines carefully. 100 points would be a perfect score.

10 Points	15 Points
9-10 = Submission ready 7-8 = Minor edits required 5-6 = Moderate edits required 4 = Extensive edits required	13-15 = Submission ready 10-12 = Minor edits required 7-9 = Moderate edits required 5-6 = Extensive edits required

Entry: **Code:**

Judge #:   **Judge's Name (optional):**

FINAL SCORE:

ELEMENTS:

_____ **Opening** *(10 points)*: Does the opening sentence/paragraph attract attention and entice the reader to continue? Is there immediate action or interesting dialogue? Does the opening scene create a sense of pending conflict or action?

_____ **Setting and Backstory** *(10 points)*: Is the location/setting clearly established within the first chapter? Is backstory integrated into dialogue or action (that is, not an information dump)? Is character background integrated into dialogue or action?

_____ **Characters** *(15 points)*:
- Are the heroine and hero distinct, interesting characters from the beginning?
- Are the hero and heroine sympathetic?
- Are the behavior of the hero and heroine realistic and believable (for example, not TSTL [too stupid to live])?
- Is it clear in the first few pages who the heroine is?
- Is it clear early in the story which character is intended as the hero?
- Are the hero and heroine described sufficiently for the reader to picture them?
- Is there obvious and believable "chemistry" between the hero and heroine? (That is, is their romantic attachment based on realistic and believable interactions?)
- Are the way the characters act or react plausible?
- Do supporting characters have distinct personalities?
- Do all the supporting characters appear to have a purpose in the story?

_____ **Story (Goal, Motivation, Conflict)** *(15 points)*:
- Were you hooked by the plot? Is it fresh and original?
- Do both hero and heroine have clearly defined goals/problems?
- Is the motivation of the main characters for their goals obvious and well-presented?
- Is a major conflict presented early in the story?
- Is the conflict credible and believable and arising out of the characterization and circumstances? (For example, *not* a simple misunderstanding, a clichéd big

misunderstanding, or something that could be cleared up by h/h simply talking honestly to each other.)
- o Do the characters make credible choices?

_____ **Dialogue** *(10 points)*:
- o Is the dialogue natural, not stilted or overly narrative?
- o Is each character's voice distinct and consistent?
- o Does the dialogue move the story forward?
- o Is there an appropriate mix of dialogue and narrative?

_____ **Craft** *(10 points)*:
- o POV: Is the point of view clearly related to one character in the opening? Are switches in point of view or emphasis easy to follow?
- o Does the story move along at an appropriate pace, without rushing or dragging?
- o Is there good use of all five senses in descriptions?
- o Is the writing active?
- o Does the author 'show' rather than 'tell'?

_____ **Romance** *(10 points)*:
- o Does the story have a clearly defined romance or potential for romance?
- o Does the romance move along at an appropriate pace, without rushing or dragging?
- o Is the romance an integral, driving force in the plot?
- o Is there strong romantic tension between the hero and heroine?

_____ **Professional Presentation (Grammar, punctuation, spelling, word usage, sentence structure)** *(10 points)* *See judging guidelines!*

SPECIAL ELEMENTS (10 points)
*Score **only the one** that applies to the entry category.*

_____ **Paranormal Romance:** Does the entry create an expectation of a romantic story? Does the entry clearly establish the paranormal aspect to the story? Is the world-building logical, well-explained, consistent, and integrated into the story?

_____ **Historical Romance:** Does the entry create an expectation of a romantic story? Does the entry include historical details that clearly set the story apart from a contemporary plot and clearly indicate the historical period/setting?

_____ **Contemporary Romance:** Does the entry create an expectation of a romantic story? Does the entry include contemporary details/language to clearly indicate a contemporary setting? (Keep in mind the Contemporary category includes, series length, single title length and romantic suspense entries in a contemporary setting.)

_____ **Romantic Novella:** Does the entry create an expectation of a romantic story? Do the opening pages clearly establish a single, well defined plot or story problem that appears to be resolvable within the bounds of a novella length work of less than 40K words?

Judge's Comments
(Be informative and factual, don't hide problems, but use a constructive and tactful tone.)