2019 NEORWA CLEVELAND ROCKS ROMANCE CONTEST
Scoresheet

Note: Before judging, please read the judging guidelines carefully. 100 points would be a perfect score. Each individual element is scored from 1 to 5. You must provide comments for any score lower than 4. Note that you cannot give a zero on any element.

Please take into consideration the idea that every element isn't supposed to be difficult. There are elements intended to "help" the author's score. See the fuller judging guidelines and training for this, but the judge's goal is to reward the author with points, when possible, not the opposite.

Additionally, please note the overall guidelines for final scores and make sure the total score you give reflects the manuscript as a whole. Remember that the lowest possible score is a 20. For numerical guidelines see the table below:

Individual Element (5 points)	Full Score (100 points)
5: Submission ready	**90-100:** Submission ready
4: Minor edits required	**80-89:** Close to ready-minor edits needed; close to ready except for one medium to large fixable craft issue; or if the submission is well crafted but has some content issues
3: Moderate edits required	
1-2: Extensive edits required.	
	70-79: In moderate need of edits
	60-69: Several major craft issues
	20-59: Extensive craft issues

Entry: **Code:**

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

FINAL SCORE:

ELEMENTS:

_____ **Opening** *(5 points)* (Does the opening "hook" the reader? Is it appropriate for the story?)

_____ **Setting and Backstory** *(5 points)* (Is the location/setting as well as necessary backstory clearly established? Has it been established in a way that is integrated into the story, *i.e.*, not an information dump?)

_____ **Character basics (5 points):** (The reader should know within a reasonable time who the romantic leads in the story are). *[Note-only one lead is necessary in Mainstream.]*

_____ **Main Character 1 (5 points)**: (Is the first lead distinct, interesting, and engaging to the reader? Can you picture them and should be able to see yourself invested in their story?).

_____ **Main Character 2 (5 points)**: (Is the second lead distinct, interesting, and engaging to the reader? Can you picture them and should be able to see yourself invested in their story?).*NOTE-a second lead is not necessary in Mainstream. For that category judge, place your score from the prior question in this space as well. Further, it is reasonable in YA/NA to have one main character be primary as well though there should still be a clear indication of romance, thus it is permitted to treat a YA/NA entry like a Mainstream.*

_____ **Chemistry (5 points)** (Is there some indication of romantic chemistry between the leads that feels natural for the story?)

_____ **Supporting Characters (5 points)** (Supporting characters aren't necessary in every story in the very beginning, but if they are absent, is there a good reason for it? Likewise, if they are present are they realistic and have they been used judiciously? Do they overshadow the leads?)

_____ **Concept (5 points)** (Is the plot concept clear, fresh, and hooky?)

_____ **Story-level goals (5 points)** (Does each lead have an established big goal that will last the entire story outside romantic interest?)

_____ **Scene level goals (5 points)** (In each scene, does the POV character have a clear small-level goal?)

_____ **Motivation (5 points)** (Throughout the piece, are the POV character's choices realistic and clearly in line with their motives?)

_____ **Story-level conflict (5 points)** (Is there clear, realistic conflict introduced that can be sustained through the entire story?)

_____ **Pacing (5 points) (**Does each scene have a clear purpose? Is each scene necessary to tell the story? Does each scene move the reader forward?)

_____ **Dialogue Style (5 points) (**Is the dialogue natural? Is it clear who is speaking and does each character have a distinct voice?

_____ **Dialogue Use (5 points)** (Is dialogue used appropriately? Does it move the story forward? Is there a good mix of introspection, narrative, and dialogue? Does it make sense?)

_____ **POV (5 points) (**Is each POV clear and distinct? Is it free of "head-hopping?" Is it deep enough for the reader to connect or is it filled with filter words? Is the narration heavy or distracting?)

_____ **Voice (5 points**) (Is the voice clear, unique, and readable?)

_____ **Sensory details (5 points)** (Are multiple senses used to set the scene? Are the descriptions interesting?)

_____ **Professional Presentation (5 points)** (Grammar, punctuation, spelling, word usage, sentence structure)

_____ **Category Appropriateness (5 points**) (See guidelines below)

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.)

Published Author: 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 novel?

Mainstream: Does the opening chapter clearly establish the probability of a broad story? Is there focus on character growth and development? If no romantic interest has been introduced in the entry, is there at least the potential for life change/character growth that will lead the character in new directions and ultimately to love?

Young Adult/New Adult: Is the story theme and conflict something YA or NA readers can identify with or care about? Will YA or NA readers find the characters sympathetic and believable? Do the behavior and emotions of the characters reflect their ages? Is the language understandable to and reflective of that of Young Adult or New Adult?

Additional Judge's Comments
(Be informative and factual, don't hide problems, but use a constructive and tactful tone. Writing is hard and there is plenty of rejections, bad reviews, and the insanity that is Goodreads. These contests are designed to be supportive and lift each other up, not tear each other down. Always remember that there is a real, vulnerable person reading these comments and scores and behave accordingly.)