

# NINK

September 2006  
Vol. 17, No. 9

---

## *Greener Pastures or Career Catastrophe? The Truth About Switching Genres*

By Cindi Myers

If you've been writing in one fiction genre for a while, you may find yourself toying with the idea of writing in another genre, either because you're bored or feeling unfulfilled in your current specialty, or because you have a different kind of book idea begging to be written. For an author established in one genre, making the leap to a new area can be a daunting prospect. Is the grass really greener on the other side of that fence, or will you be killing your current career altogether by branching out?

Ninc turned to those writers who've made the switch from one genre to another—or who simultaneously write in more than

one genre – to learn the truth about making the switch. Authors Laura Bradley, Lillian Stewart Carl, Janet Evanovich, Patricia Gaffney, Linda O. Johnson, Pam Morsi, Laura Resnick, and Lawrence Watt-Evans generously shared their experiences and advice.

### **Breaking Out, Breaking Down, Breaking Rules**

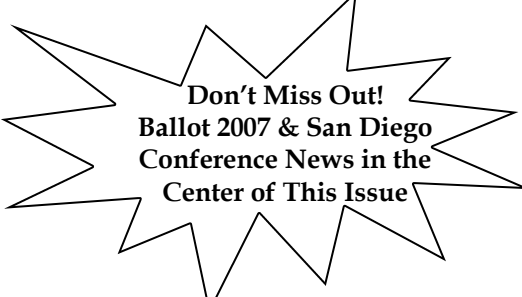
Like the writing process itself, each author's transition from one genre to another is unique, but the reasons behind the move fall loosely into four categories: changing market conditions, serendipity, a lack of success in one genre, and the author's need for variety.

Janet Evanovich (*Twelve Sharp*) was writing for Loveswept when that line began dying. "I tried to

move to romantic adventure and bigger books," she says. "But none of the romance editors would give me a contract. It became clear to me that my career wasn't going anywhere writing series romance. I wanted to enlarge my audience, and there was no way open to me in romance, so I jumped ship."

The changing market led historical romance author Pam Morsi (*The Cotton Queen*) from romance to women's fiction. Pam was a best-selling Western-set American historical romance author when the market for these books took a downturn. "Although my numbers were going up, not down, my publisher was concerned about the future of historicals generally," Pam says. "[The publisher] offered me a contract worth significantly

*Continued on page 3* ▶



**Don't Miss Out!  
Ballot 2007 & San Diego  
Conference News in the  
Center of This Issue**

---

**INSIDE:** *President's Voice: Possibilities and Progress...2, Bits'n'Pieces...6, 17, 20*  
**CENTERFOLD:** *San Diego Conference [white pages], Ballot 2007 [green pages]*  
**NINK Interviews:** *Janet Evanovich...15, Introducing...16, BOOKS: Tipping Point...17, Girls in the Basement: Celebrating The Work...18*

## Novelists, Inc.

FOUNDED IN 1989

### Advisory Council

Rebecca Brandewyne*	Victoria Thompson
Janice Young Brooks*	Steven Womack
Jasmine Cresswell*	Barbara Keiler
Maggie Osborne*	Pat Rice
Marianne Shock*	Anne Holmberg
Linda Barlow	Jean Brashear
Georgia Bockoven	Vicki Lewis Thompson
Evan Maxwell	

\* Founder

If you have questions regarding Novelists, Inc., please contact a member of the Board of Directors.

### 2006 Board of Directors

**PRESIDENT:** Brenda Hiatt Barber  
9241 Castle Knoll Blvd.  
Indianapolis IN 46250-3484  
317-849-3356  
brendahb@aol.com

**PRESIDENT-ELECT:** Patricia McLaughlin  
3506 Dickerson St. N.  
Arlington VA 22207-2908  
703-237-2543  
pmclinn@aol.com

**SECRETARY:** Linda Madl  
4804 Rockridge Court  
Manhattan KS 66503-7750  
785-770-9363  
linda@lindamadl.com

**TREASURER:** Deborah Gordon  
1240 Noonan Drive  
Sacramento, CA 95822-2507  
916-448-1964  
DBHGORDON@aol.com

**NEWSLETTER EDITOR:** Annette Carney  
PO Box 33204  
Reno NV 89533  
775-746-1680  
annettecarney@sbcglobal.net

**ADVISORY COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVE:**  
Pat Rice  
15222 Strollways Dr.  
Chesterfield MO 63017-7756  
636-778-0075  
price100@aol.com

**CENTRAL COORDINATOR:**  
Tonya Wilkerson, Varney and Assoc.  
Novelists, Inc.  
P.O. Box 2037  
Manhattan KS 66505  
Fax: 785-537-1877  
ninc@varney.com

**Website:** <http://www.ninc.com>

Address changes may be made on the website.  
For members without Internet access,  
send changes to the Central Coordinator.

Copyright ©2006 by Novelists, Inc. All rights reserved.  
No part of this newsletter may be used or reproduced in  
any manner without written permission.

## President's Voice

# Possibilities and Progress

If I had to pick a favorite month, I think it would be September. September always feels like a time for new beginnings, a fresh start, a clean slate. I'm sure much of the "zing" of anticipation I feel in September comes from years of accumulated school memories: Will I like my teachers? Will I have any friends or cute boys in my classes? Will there be any cool field trips? Will the cafeteria food be any better this year? Will I finally get picked to be on someone's kickball team? (And—oh, yeah—will I learn anything this year?) Some of my favorite things about September include the ads and displays of school supplies everywhere, with enough paper, notebooks and writing implements—on sale!—to make any writer drool. There's the weather (at least in the Northern hemisphere): still summery but not so sweltering, incredi-blue skies, the first hint of crispness in the night air. Plus the mounds of apples, corn, and other seasonal goodies at the farmers' markets and in the produce aisles.

September is kind of like starting a new book, when all the choices in the world still lie ahead, when it's all still potential, nothing written in stone. There's something heady about such a sense of possibility—the kind we can only have before reality comes along to limit it. Of course, we have to make those choices and limit those possibilities to move forward, but there's something magical about the moment just before that happens, when it's all still limitless potential. September somehow embodies that magic moment for me.

Speaking of possibilities and choices, I hope you're all as excited as I am by this year's slate of candidates for the Ninc Board and Nominating Committee. I want to take this opportunity to thank each of these folks for generously offering their wisdom and their precious time to the organization. With people like Laura Resnick, Linda Madl, and Beverly Brandt stepping up to the plate to help next year's prez, Pat McLaughlin, how can Ninc help but prosper?

We've already made real progress this year in serving our members better, and I expect that to continue under the new regime next year. Some specific examples include the ongoing work by our Used Book Committee, which is looking into conducting a reader survey to use as ammunition in the battle to eventually secure royalties for authors on used book sales. We have recently entered into an agreement with Kansas State University to house Ninc's archives, so that they'll be preserved and available to members and future boards, as well as to scholars researching our industry.

And of course there's our continually improving website, which has become a valuable resource for our members. Some of the things you'll

---

now find in the Members Only area of [www.ninc.com](http://www.ninc.com) include breaking industry news, Golden Oldies from *NINK*, including some of Evan Maxwell's classic "East of the Hudson" columns, a growing FAQ list drawn from the collective wisdom on Ninclink, links to over a dozen blogs about writing and the publishing industry, an impressive (and growing) list of research/resource links, and a more logically arranged and user-friendly Member Services area. Here, you can update your member profile, pay your dues, fill out or update your Author Coalition survey (please do that if you haven't—it's worth a good bit of money for the organization, which we can put to work for you!) and easily access more info than you could ever want about committees, the Board,

our bylaws, etc. In coming months you'll also find a more complete and updated Agent Guide, as well as an all-new Editor Guide, and a complete archive of past *NINK* issues. (Currently, we have archives available for the past five years or so.) We also plan to add a permanent article on the history of Ninc, from its inception in 1989.

Best of all, by the time you receive this newsletter, you'll be able to register online for the 2007 Conference in San Diego! Plan to join us there for fun, for networking, and, oh, yeah, for learning. It's September, after all, when all things are still possible.

— Brenda Hiatt Barber :)

---

## Greener Pastures

Continued from page 1



less than what I'd been making. It was a very scary time, but it became an opportunity to see if I could put together something new and different that would appeal to a new publisher."

Pat Gaffney (*The Goodbye Summer*) was also writing historical romance when a Dell editor, Marjorie Braman, suggested she try writing hardcover commercial fiction. Pat says this had been "an unacknowledged dream of mine for many years," so she took the leap. At the time (1997) women's fiction was not a defined genre. "I had no clear idea what I was getting into," Pat says. "I called what I was writing a 'book' and I had hopes, but no expectations for failure or success."

Serendipity also played a role in

Laura Bradley's (*Sprayed Stiff*) move from romantic suspense to the humorous cozy mysteries she now writes for Pocket and, as Jackie Chance, for Berkley. While writing dark romantic suspense novels, she periodically worked on a light, funny mystery for a change of pace. "My agent happened to ask what I was working on and I accidentally blurted out something about the mystery," she says. "She asked to see it, loved it, and eventually found a home for it. No one was more surprised than I was, since it seemed way too fun to write to get paid doing it."

Other authors found themselves switching genres when they met obstacles to selling in the area in which they'd started out. Laura Resnick (*Disappearing Nightly*),

who wrote romance as Laura Leone, encountered numerous frustrations writing category romance. The daughter of a science fiction/fantasy writer, she turned to fantasy as a more natural fit. "I seem to have a much better sensibility for the market," she says.

And then there are authors who write in more than one genre in response to their muse's desire for variety. Linda O. Johnston (*Fine-Feathered Death*) won the Robert L. Fish Memorial Award for best first mystery short story for her first published story, then went on to write time travel and paranormal romance and category romantic suspense. Now she writes the Kendra Ballantyne Pet-Sitter mysteries for Berkley Prime Crime. "I have made the switches because I could!" she says. "I loved ▶

# Greener Pastures

► the ability to switch from one kind of writing to another. Moving among fiction genres is just a natural progression for me.”

Lawrence Watt-Evans (*The Sprig-gan Mirror*) has written fantasy, science fiction, horror, and TV/movie tie-ins. “Every time I tried something else it was because I didn’t want to get stuck in a rut,” he says. “I was a little bored, and I was hoping to break out to a higher level of recognition and more money.”

## For love or money?

Ah money. Can changing genres lead to increased income? Yes...and no. Several authors reported making “more,” “much more,” to “considerably more” in their new genre. “I earn considerably more in sf/f than I ever earned in romance,” Laura Resnick says. “This was true from the start—which certainly was one of the reasons I switched.”

Laura Bradley moved from writing romantic suspense for a smaller publisher to writing two mystery series for major houses, which resulted in better earnings for her.

A couple of authors received lower advances initially when they moved to a new genre. “I took a contract to write two mysteries for Scribner,” Janet Evanovich says. “The contract was for less money than I was making in romance, but I felt the opportunity to advance was better.”

Janet Evanovich’s first Stephanie Plum book, *One for the Money*, sold to Hollywood. “The money made a significant impact on my life, and the movie deal got press for the first book that I ordinarily would-

n’t have gotten,” she says. “Oddly enough, this had very little effect on sales. The hardcover printing was very small and shipped mostly to independents.” Time, word of mouth, and a great deal of marketing effort on Janet’s part helped build the series.

Some authors found they made about the same in the new genre as they had previously, while a couple of others reported making “less” and “much less.”

No one factor stood out as determining whether or not a move would generate more income. Timing and the market—things an author can’t necessarily predict—do play a role. When Lawrence Watt-Evans wrote a horror novel, the book was released as the horror boom of the ’80s was collapsing. “[The book] was the next-to-last horror title Onyx did before canceling the line, so it got no push at all,” he says.

Lillian Stewart Carl (*The Murder Hole*), who has written fantasy, romantic suspense and paranormal mystery novels, as well as mystery and sf/f short stories, took a lower advance when she moved from fantasy to romantic suspense, but the romantic suspense book ended up selling more books. “The market is larger,” she explained.

## Names, agents, and other considerations

Should you write under a different name in the new genre? Some authors do, some don’t. Laura Resnick uses her real name for her fantasy novels in part because the pseudonym she used for romances, Laura Leone, was owned by her publisher, Harlequin. Laura Brad-

ley didn’t change her name when she started writing her hairdresser mysteries for Pocket, but took the pseudonym Jackie Chance for her poker mystery series for Berkley to keep both publishers happy.

When Lawrence Watt-Evans moved from fantasy to science fiction and horror, he kept the Lawrence Watt-Evans name. “When the SF or horror flopped, it made it that much harder to sell the fantasy,” he says. “Publishers looks at the sales figures for my last book, regardless of genre, and saw that it hadn’t done as well as my earlier fantasy.” So when the opportunity arose for him to write Predator novelizations and Star Trek novels, he used the name Nathan Archer in order to keep those sales figures separate from his Lawrence Watt-Evans sales.

Pam Morsi wrote historical romance as Pamela Morsi and thought she would write women’s fiction as Pam Morsi, but her publisher didn’t like the idea. “They wanted to tie-in my past numbers,” she says.

Pat Gaffney also kept her name. “The hope was that I would bring romance readers with me to the new books.”

But keeping one’s name is no guarantee readers will follow to the new genre. “I thought my long-time fans would like my work, no matter what I wrote,” Pam Morsi says. “Although some did, a lot just hate it. That rancor continues to surprise me. The hate mail I receive about ‘deserting romance’ and ‘selling out’ is unbelievable.”

Lawrence Watt-Evans thought his success with fantasy would translate to the science fiction audience as well and learned otherwise.

"I'd assumed that fantasy and SF readers were pretty much the same people," he says. "I'd always read both. It turns out they mostly aren't. There's some overlap, certainly, and they go to the same conventions, but they don't read the same books and success in one genre doesn't help as much in the other as I'd expected."

Lillian Stewart Carl has discovered that "a fair number" of readers of her f/sf also are mystery and romance fans. Where the books are shelved and how they are presented to readers can make a difference in sales and authors who are established in one genre may find booksellers confused about where to shelve their new books. "Some of my early romantic suspense novels ended up in either the general fiction or horror sections of the bookstores," she says. "Why they weren't shelved in either romance or mystery—or preferably both—I have no idea. Since then romantic suspense has made a comeback, and paranormal elements are, at long last, hot, but still there's a problem deciding just where to shelve the books."

Some authors changed agents when they changed to a new genre; others stayed with the same agent. "I changed agents when I switched from f/sf to mystery/romance, because my first agent wasn't familiar with the field and even said she didn't like mystery/romance all that much," Lillian Stewart Carl says. "Now, two more agents down the line, I'll point out that it's hard to find an agent who deals in both the mystery and f/sf genres."

Laura Resnick changed agents unrelated to her decision to move from romance to fantasy, but she says. "Since my desire to write more than one type of fiction was a frequent source of friction with my previous agent, I deliberately sought an agent this time who's

comfortable with that and encourages it."

Pam Morsi and her former agent parted company about the time she made the move to women's fiction and she met with mixed responses when she began searching for a new agent. "Some agents wanted to push me back into the historicals and prove that I could continue to make progress there," she says. "Others wanted to just forget everything that I'd ever written and start over new and fresh. I finally decided to trust Andrea Cirillo. She both respected the work that I had done and believed that I could do something different."

Laura Bradley and Linda O. Johnston were each encouraged by their agent, Paige Wheeler, to venture into mystery after they'd published several romances.

Janet Evanovich has changed agents several times. "I can tell you that as you become more successful, you get more power," she says. "And the more powerful agent you acquire the more power you have as an author."

### **The view from the other side of the fence**

Romance, mystery, fantasy, science fiction, horror—is one genre much different from the other on the business side? What preconceived notions did writers bring to their new genres that proved true or untrue?

"I had believed that most mystery writers looked down on romance writers," Linda O. Johnston says. "To my delight, more mystery writers seemed genuinely interested in whether they could also attract a romance audience than sneered about my background. And the few who sneered weren't worth getting to know better anyway."

"Many of us in romance believe

that we are not accorded the respect of other genres," Laura Bradley says. "I assumed that mysteries would garner more respect in general from other authors, from bookstore owners and the general public. What I found in actuality is there are prejudices and envy amongst genres across the board, i.e. mystery writers wish cozies made as much money as romances."

In contrast, Pat Gaffney says the way her books were received "out in the world" was "night and day," when she switched from writing romance. "Now my books were reviewed in major newspapers, I went on full-fledged book tours," she says. "I did radio and TV, books clubs made my novels their selections, I hit bestseller lists, RWA chapters asked me to keynote, I got fan mail, subrights actually meant something because my books went to audio and made major foreign sales."

"I do think the world at large is less judgmental about my work," Pam Morsi says. "But I didn't suddenly acquire this wellspring of respect from the literati. And I am now vulnerable to such backhanded compliments as 'she's come a long way from her bodice ripping past.' I try to take all that with a few grains of salt."

As for the business side of publishing, the writers interviewed for the most part found little or no difference between genres, though Laura Resnick says she thinks romance is "the more businesslike genre. There's more emphasis on professionalism and a more businesslike approach to the market."

Linda O. Johnston found mystery publishers more likely to offer multi-book contracts from the start, in order to try to build a series.

"The businesses are more alike than they are different," says Lillian Stewart Carl. "Series ▶

## Greener Pastures

► novels are popular in both genres [mystery and fantasy]. Input on cover art depends on the house, not the genre. Ditto with how the contracts are set up and how I'm treated as an author."

Lawrence Watt-Evans points out that science fiction and fantasy are published usually by the same people and his treatment in writing those genres contrasted sharply with the treatment he received in his brief foray into horror. "In SF and fantasy I got a fair bit of respect," he says. "This was my book, I was a creative partner. Cover input was minimal; they just didn't much care what I thought, for the most part, but would listen politely before ignoring 90% of it. In horror, I was obviously a mercenary hack trying to make a quick buck. My cover input was actively rejected; I was told flat-out that if I suggested anything, that would ensure it would *not* be on the cover, as it would be intruding on marketing's turf."

Janet Evanovich found that differences only showed up as she became more successful. "I have full control over my covers but this doesn't always insure a great cover," she says. "I have full control over my tour but this doesn't always make a great tour. I have publicists working night and day but this doesn't guarantee me morning television and nationwide exposure. My publishers buy me maximum front of store space but this doesn't insure compliance at store level. So here's my posture. Do the best you can, try not to get too nuts, and move on. These people are trying to help you as best they can but they are after all just people. God didn't fit

into the budget."

### What's a writer to do?

Lillian Stewart Carl thinks now is the ideal time for authors to look at other genres, especially if the direction they want to go is complementary to the work they're already doing. "More and more editors are buying books in more than one genre, or so it seems to me," she says. "Genre-blending is finally becoming respectable, even lucrative."

"I'm a great believer in versatility," Linda O. Johnston says. "Moods change in publishing. Everything seems cyclical. If all you can write is one kind of book, then when the cycle for your genre is down, it's a whole lot harder to sell anything. If, on the other hand, you can write something that's on the upper part of the curve, too, then you've got a lot more vistas open to you."

Lawrence Watt-Evans reminds authors that those other pastures aren't always as green as they look. A new genre presents the same marketing challenges as the old one and moving into a new field involves a certain amount of risk. "Be aware you're starting over," he says. "Do it for fun, not as a career move—unless your old genre is dead or dying."

"I would tell an author thinking of switching genres to study the genre they intend to tackle and make sure it is worth the effort," Laura Bradley says. "Establishing oneself in a genre takes infinite time and backbreaking work and that will have to be repeated nearly to the same degree in the new genre."

Laura Resnick agrees. "Breaking into a second genre is pretty much like breaking into your first one," she says. "Except that, since you've already proven you can write and sell books, people sometimes take your initial efforts a bit

more seriously on your second genre."

The final decision for many comes down to the kind of book they really want to write. As Pat Gaffney says, "Do it for love, not money. If it's a purely business decision, don't burn any bridges; if your writing pace is fast, keep your old publisher happy by continuing to contract for books in your former genre. If you do it for love, make sure you can afford time for a learning curve."

Pam Morsi agrees. "I think that ultimately you have to look at what is going to satisfy you in the largest sense," she says. "If it's most important to you to write what you want to write, then go with that. If making a living over the long term is your critical goal, then that has to be your top consideration. Risking it all for fame and glory is what matters for some. Consider everything, but be sure to prioritize your true feelings for yourself. Other people's opinions don't count here at all."

*Cindi Myers writes romance and women's fiction. Her next release is Fear of Falling, September 2006.*

## Bits'n'Pieces

### Bookstores Literally on the News

The NBC affiliate in San Francisco will be doing short segments on independent booksellers in the Bay Area. The 5 minute segments will air during the 10-11a.m. morning news program. Why? The producer wants more books on the program.

*"Bits" Compiled by Sally Hawkes*



# **San Diego ~ 2007**

**March 15, 16, & 17**  
**The US GRANT**  
**San Diego, CA**

Here's what we have lined up so far:

- ◆ Great rates at a luxury hotel—\$180/night for 1-4 guests. Suites \$295+
- ◆ Complimentary airport transportation
- ◆ Our own “pod” of rooms for meeting, networking and story collaging
- ◆ Adventures for Traveling Companions lined up for Thurs, Fri, and Sat.
- ◆ Eric Maisel, renowned creativity coach will lead optional pre-conference workshop on living authentic lives with creative activity at the center.
- ◆ Anita Fore, Esq. (Director of Legal Services at the Authors Guild) will lead a morning workshop on negotiation strategies and contract clauses to keep an eye on.
- ◆ Daisy Marylis (Executive Editor of *Publishers Weekly*) and Bette-Lee Fox (Managing Editor of *Library Journal*) on what's up in publishing.
- ◆ Mike Unzueta will talk about his 25 years as a federal agent investigating bombings, working undercover, buying stolen cars, guns, and heroin...
- ◆ Laura Resnick and Lynn Miller lead an afternoon workshop on Method Acting for Writers

Here's what we are working on:

- ◆ A futurist with a background in popular entertainment to lead a session with editors and agents on the potential and possibilities of commercial fiction.
- ◆ A storytelling mixer that is as fun as the one Mary Jo Putney and Annette Carney came up with last year for our Dessert Buffet.
- ◆ Trolley tours, a harbor cruise, perhaps a ferry ride to Coronado or a trip to Danny's Bar and Grill where the Navy SEALS hang out.

**We'd love to have you join us.**  
**Pat Roy & Pat McLaughlin**  
**& the Conference Committee**

# Conference ~ 2007

## Schedule of Events

*This is a tentative schedule, subject to change right up to the moment it happens.  
Updated schedule is available online at [www.ninc.com](http://www.ninc.com)*

### **Wednesday, March 14 ~ Tour, shop 'til you drop, meet up with friends**

The US GRANT is in the Gaslamp District not far from the Horton Plaza Complex. There are tons of restaurants, shops, etc. within walking distance. Balboa Park is a trolley ride away.

Early next year, we'll put together a schedule of museums, tours, harbor cruises, restaurants, etc. so that you can join up with other Ninc members as your schedule allows. In any case, at:

**5:30 - 7:00 p.m.** Informal gathering at the US GRANT Lobby & Libation Lounge

### **Thursday, March 15 ~ Maisel Workshop, General Meeting, and Ninc@Night**

**8:00 - 8:30 a.m.** ~ Conference & Workshop Registration

**8:30 - 3:30 p.m.** ~ **Price of Admission to the Creative Life ~ Eric Maisel**  
*(Optional pre-conference workshop)*

Renowned creativity coach leads workshop on feeling deeply, dreaming big, and leading a vital, authentic life whose center activity is creating.

**4:00 - 5:00 p.m.** ~ Conference Registration

**5:00 - 6:00 p.m.** ~ **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

**6:00 - 7:00 p.m.** ~ **San Diego Soup & Salad Supper**

**7:00 - 8:00 p.m.** - **Ninc@Night sessions**

A) **Details to follow.**

B) " " "

C) " " "

**8:00 - 9:00 p.m.** **Dessert Buffet & Storytelling—Members only**

**9:00 - 10:00 p.m.** **Ninc@Night sessions**

A) **Details to follow.**

B) " " "

C) " " "

**10:00 - ? p.m.** – Informal discussions in the Libation Lounge.

**Adventures for Traveling Companions** ~ 3-Day Tripper trolley pass and Passport to Balboa Park that includes admission to 13 attractions such as the Museum of Man, the Air & Space Museum, Hall of Champions, Science Center, Automotive Museum, Museum of Art. We'll round up a couple locals willing to guide initial trolley tours. Other times, we'll send them out in groups with maps, schedules, and instructions to be back Thursday night at:

**9:30 - 10:00 p.m.** Dessert Buffet for Traveling Companions.



# ☞ ELECTION NOTICE ☞

The best thing you can do for Novelists, Inc. is also the best thing you can do for yourself as a member—**vote!** You're responsible for the leadership of Ninc, so don't fail to cast your ballot.

## PROPOSED SLATE OF OFFICERS FOR 2007 NOVELISTS, INC. BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**President-elect: Laura Resnick** is the award-winning author of numerous fantasy novels, science fiction/fantasy short stories, and romance novels (written as Laura Leone). She has served on several Ninc committees and was the chairperson of the 1997 Ninc conference in New York City. For more than three years, Laura wrote the “Comely Curmudgeon” column for *NINK*, as well as the “Filthy Pro” column in the *SFWA Bulletin*, the national magazine of the Science Fiction/Fantasy Writers of America. A collected volume of her columns will be published by Jefferson Press in 2007 under the title *Will Write for Food*. In her copious spare time, she went to graduate school to earn a master's degree in journalism, and she spent part of 2006 as a journalism intern at the Associated Press in Israel.

**Secretary: Linda Madl** is the author of ten historical romances, eight novellas, and numerous short stories. Her work also includes articles for trade journals in the food industry, agribusiness, and engineering as well as book reviews and feature articles for local newspapers. She is the current Ninc secretary and has helped to oversee the transition of Ninc's central office to a CPA firm in Manhattan, Kansas. She has served on boards of local writing organizations and continuing education groups.

**Treasurer:** Before becoming a published author, **Beverly Brandt** earned a Bachelor's degree in Finance and worked as a financial analyst in the insurance and high tech industries. Determined to escape the corporate world, Beverly wrote her first book in under three months and sold it to St. Martin's Press – unagented and out of the slush pile – just six months later. She has gone on to sell nine more novels and three novellas to two different publishers since that first sale, and has two books under option for the big screen. Beverly writes romantic comedies under her own name and action/adventure under the pseudonym Jacey Ford. She has served on the boards of two of her local RWA chapters, both as treasurer and published author liaison.

## NOMINEES FOR THE 2007 NOMINATING COMMITTEE

**Ken Casper's** (a.k.a. K.N. Casper) writing career started back in the sixth grade when he was ordered by a teacher to write a "theme" explaining his behavior over the previous semester. To his teacher's chagrin, he enjoyed stringing just the right words together to justify his less than stellar performance. Since then he's published short stories, sixteen Superromances and has three more Harlequins in the works. None of which qualifies him to nominate anyone for anything, of course, but he did this once before and the organization managed to survive, so he thought he'd give it another try.

**Dee Davis** has a B.A. in Political Science and History, and a M.A. in Public Administration. Highlights of her 10-year career in public relations include teaching college classes, lobbying both the Texas State Legislature and the US Congress, and serving as the director of two associations. Her first book was published in 2000. Since then, Dee has written two additional time travels and six romantic suspense novels. Dee currently writes full time, is a member of RWA and various community organizations.

**Marcia Evanick** has published 37 romances and has plans for many, many more. She's won numerous awards and has made all the lists, including the *New York Times*. She is currently under contract with Zebra and is working on a continuing series set in a small Maine town.

**Roz Fox**, a.k.a. Roz Denny and Roz Denny Fox, began her writing career in 1989 while working full time as an administrative assistant at Bellevue Community College. She has since written 40-plus books. In addition to Ninc, Roz maintains active memberships in several RWA chapters. She supports genre fiction and believes strong organizational leaders are vital to maintaining good dialogue between writer-members and an ever-evolving industry.

Selling her first romance novel in 1998, **Toni Herzog** has written for Kensington, Harlequin, Warner, NAL, and Avon, with her eleventh book coming out in September, 2006. Toni writes full time, lives with her husband in northern Kentucky, and enjoys traveling, genealogy, scrapbooking, quilting, and other crafts. Toni has been a Ninc member since 2000 and RWA since 1996. She welcomes the opportunity to give back to Ninc by serving on the nominating committee.

RITA award-winning author **Patricia Knoll** sold her first book in 1984 and has so far written 25 books for Harlequin/Silhouette and Kensington. She plans to write many more, continuing to write until her cold, dead fingers are pruned from the keyboard. She has a degree in Elementary Education, is a reading specialist, and is also working to become certified by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards. She is the mother of four grown children and lives in Tucson, AZ.

**Kayla Perrin** is a *USA Today* bestseller and multi-published author. Since her first book was released in 1998, she has had 25 more titles released, and is under contract for ten more novels with various publishers. She currently writes romance, erotica, chick lit, chick lit mystery, and mainstream women's fiction with a good dose of suspense. She also had a children's mystery published in 2000. She considers Ninc an invaluable resource for the published writer.

**Gina Wilkins** sold her first book to Harlequin Temptation in 1986. She has since produced 85 books for Harlequin/Silhouette. Having appeared on several bestseller lists, she is a four-time winner of the Georgia Romance Writers' Maggie Award and was nominated for a *Romantic Times* Lifetime Achievement Award in 2004. She firmly believes there should be an award for World Class Procrastinator, for which she would be admitted into the Hall of Fame. She and John, her husband of 29 ½ years, have three extraordinary children.

**Lenora Worth** is the award-winning author of more than 25 books with Avalon, Leisure, and Steeple Hill. A bestseller at Steeple Hill, Lenora is excited about her first book for Harlequin's Next in October, 2006. Lenora is married with two grown children and lives in Shreveport, Louisiana with her husband of 32 years. She wrote a weekly column for the *Shreveport Times* for five years, and currently writes feature articles and a monthly column for a local regional magazine. Her qualifications for the Ninc nominating committee include a talent for begging.

# BALLOT

Member please sign here: \_\_\_\_\_

Please print name here: \_\_\_\_\_

---

**Please mail this Ballot to:  
Election Committee, c/o Novelists Inc., PO Box 2037, Manhattan KS 66505.  
*Ballot must be received by September 22, 2006***

---

## ITEM 1: Election of 2007 Officers

YES NO

\_\_\_ \_\_\_ Laura Resnick, President-Elect

\_\_\_ \_\_\_ Linda Madl, Secretary

\_\_\_ \_\_\_ Beverly Brandt, Treasurer

## ITEM 2: Election of 2007 Nominating Committee Members (Vote for no more than 5)

\_\_\_ Ken Casper      \_\_\_ Roz Fox      \_\_\_ Kayla Perrin

\_\_\_ Dee Davis      \_\_\_ Toni Herzog      \_\_\_ Gina Wilkins

\_\_\_ Marcia Evanick      \_\_\_ Patricia Knoll      \_\_\_ Lenora Worth

----fold here----

----fold here----

Place  
Stamp  
Here

**Election Committee  
c/o Novelists Inc.  
PO Box 2037  
Manhattan KS 66505**

**Friday, March 16 ~ Sessions, brainstorming, networking & Welcome Reception**

- 8:00 - 3:30 p.m.** ~ Tea & Coffee in the Crystal Foyer  
~ Informal Gatherings in the Chairman's Court  
~ Plotting, brainstorming, collaging in Chaffee Court
- 8:30 - 10:00 a.m.** ~ **Life in the Fast Lane** ~ Federal Agent Mike Unzueta will talk with us about his 25 years of investigating crimes, working undercover, buying guns, drugs, and stolen cars.
- 10:30 - 12:30 p.m.** ~ **Negotiating Strategies** ~ Anita Fore, Esq., Director of the Authors Guild legal department presents and answers questions on successful negotiation skills and strategies.
- 12:45 - 1:45 p.m.** ~ Lunch with kindred spirits
- 2:00 - 4:30 p.m.** ~ **Method Acting for Writers (Workshop)** ~ Lynn Miller (actress, teacher, writer, director, and film producer) and Laura Resnick (novelist, journalist, and world traveler) on creating compelling, fully realized characters using techniques and exercises in sensory and memory experience.
- 5:00 - 6:00 p.m.** ~ Nap, shop, tour or ?
- 6:00 - 9:00 p.m.** ~ **Welcome Reception & Dinner**
- 9:00 - ???? p.m.** ~ Informal networking

**Saturday, March 17 ~ Publishing Industry Sessions**

- 8:00 - 12:30 p.m.** ~ Tea & Coffee in the Crystal Foyer  
~ Informal Gatherings in the Chairman's Court  
~ Plotting, brainstorming, collaging in Chaffee Court
- 8:30 - 9:30 a.m.** ~ **What's Up in the Publishing World**  
Daisy Marylis, *Publishers Weekly* Executive Editor, and Bette-Lee Fox, *Library Journal* Managing Editor, give their take on what's going on.
- 10:00 - 12:00 p.m.** ~ **Opportunities & Possibilities**  
Kate McCallum and Ja-Lene Clark, story consultants and media developers, lead discussion focused on what's ahead.
- 12:30 - 1:30 p.m.** ~ **Lunch**
- 2:00 - 3:00 p.m.** ~ **Wrap up Conference 2007 & Brainstorm Conference 2008**
- 3:30 - ???** ~ **St. Patrick's Day Part in the Gaslamp District**  
Research Celtic celebrations. Music and frolicking involved.

**Sunday, March 18 ~ Relax, Reflect, Refill-the-Well Day**

**Morning** ~ Exploring Sunday Brunch options. Details to follow.

# Conference Registration ~ 2007

Name on membership roster: \_\_\_\_\_

Name on badge: \_\_\_\_\_

Pseudonyms on name badge (limit two): \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email address: \_\_\_\_\_

Special dietary/physical requirements: \_\_\_\_\_

*Please contact Pat (patroy1@charter.net) directly regarding any dietary requirements.*

Arrival date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Registration fee *(Registration ends March 7, 2007)*

Early Bird *(August 15, 2006 - October 15, 2006)*      \$295      \_\_\_\_\_

Regular *(October 16, 2006 - February 28, 2007)*      \$325      \_\_\_\_\_

Late *(March 1, 2007 - March 7, 2007)*      \$350      \_\_\_\_\_

**Maisel ~ Price of Admission to the Creative Life**      \$ 45      \_\_\_\_\_

*Thursday, March 14 - 8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.*

**Guest ticket**/Friday night gala      \$ 65      \_\_\_\_\_

**Traveling Companion Adventure**      \$ 55      \_\_\_\_\_

### Checks payable to Novelists, Inc.

Susan Gable

P.O. Box 9313

Erie PA 16505-8313

**Total Enclosed: \$** \_\_\_\_\_

***Or make life easy and register online at [www.ninc.com](http://www.ninc.com)***

For registration questions, email: [Susan@susangable.com](mailto:Susan@susangable.com)

# Janet Evanovich

*Just our luck... in researching her article on changing genres, Cindi Myers ended up doing a fascinating interview with Janet Evanovich that we had to include in its entirety. Ed.*

**Cindi:** Why did you make the switch from romance to mystery?

**JE:** I realized I had absolutely no talent for writing the long detailed sex scenes that were required at the time. I was having difficulty getting an entire book out of sheer relationship. I saw that the little series romance I was writing was a dead end. Lines were collapsing and print runs were diminishing (remember I wrote for *Second Chance* and *Loveswept*). I tried to move to romantic adventure and bigger books, but none of the romance editors would give me a contract. Actually I was sort of kicked out of romance.

**Cindi:** Did you switch agents when you made the move? Why or why not?

**JE:** I switched agents. If my original agent had been more supportive, and I felt he was really on top of things I would have stayed with him. That wasn't the case.

**Cindi:** What obstacles did you come up against in making the switch and how did you overcome them?

**JE:** I had to learn how to plot! And I had to learn how to survive a book tour. Beyond that I'm not sure there were obstacles.

**Cindi:** Tell us about your experience with *One For the Money*, your first Stephanie Plum mystery.

**JE:** The contract was for less money than I was making in romance, but I felt the opportunity to advance was better.

When I handed my *One* manuscript in to my new agent he sent it off to Hollywood, and I got a huge movie deal. The money made a significant impact on my life, and the movie deal got press for the first book that I ordinarily wouldn't have gotten. Oddly enough, this had very little effect on sales. The hardcover printing was very small and shipped mostly to independents.

**Cindi:** You've been very prolific throughout your career. Have you struggled with writer's block? How did you handle this?

**JE:** Because I'd gotten the movie contract and because the first book received fantastic reviews there was a lot of pressure to play "can you top this" with myself on the second book. I woke up every morning paralyzed with fear of failure. The fear and depression and paralysis forced me to develop a work method. Put one foot in front of the other and keep moving forward. And for God's sake get over yourself. This business of book writing isn't about you (the author). Books need to be read. Books are about the reader. Write for the reader. Respect the reader. Love

the reader. This was how I got the second book written and this is how I still write...because the paralysis and fear is still lurking there. It turns out success has little to do with dispelling insecurity.

**Cindi:** Speaking of success, certainly your Stephanie Plum series has been wildly successful. Other than obviously writing great stories with memorable characters, what role did you play in making that success happen?

**JE:** By the third book it was becoming clear that I needed to take charge of my business if I wanted to make real progress. I wasn't a Harry Potter blockbuster success story. I was the author who was going to have to scratch and claw her way up. People were reluctant to part with their money for a "funny" book. My publishers were having a hard time getting a grip on exactly what we were selling. My agent was clueless. So I was forced to develop my business model. Take responsibility for your own success. Keep your eyes open. Analyze the market. Spend money to make money but spend it wisely. Surround yourself with the best possible people. Always keep your eye on the prize—the reader!

And again, I changed agents.

**Cindi:** Did you find any differences in the way business is conducted in the romance and mainstream publishers? ▶

**EVANOVICH: Do the best you can, try not to get too nuts, and move on...**

► **JE:** Because my crossover happened years ago I'm not sure it's relevant. I can tell you that as you become more successful you get more power. And the more powerful agent you acquire the more power you have as an author. And that as an author you always play good cop and let your agent play bad cop. And that a man can be rich and exert his power and be sexy, but a rich and powerful woman is a bitch. So ladies you want to avoid talking to *Forbes*.

My major contracts are reviewed by my agent, one or two New York

lawyers, my husband and my son, and we still screw up. I have full control over my covers but this doesn't always insure a great cover. I have full control over my tour but this doesn't always make a great tour. I have publicists working night and day but this doesn't guarantee me morning television and nationwide exposure. My publishers buy me maximum front of store space but this doesn't insure compliance at store level. So here's my posture. Do the best you can, try not to get too nuts, and move on. These people are trying to help you as best

they can but they are after all just people. God didn't fit into the budget.

**Cindi:** Any advice for authors who are interested in changing genres?

**JE:** Crossing genres is not a big deal. Do what you feel is right for your career. Losing or misunderstanding your voice as an author is a very big deal. As an author you make a promise to the reader that you're going to guarantee her a certain level of entertainment. Always try to keep the promise. ▲

**INTRODUCING.....**

*The following authors have applied for membership in Ninc and are now presented by the Membership Committee to the members. If no legitimate objections are lodged with the Membership Committee within 15 days of this NINK issue, these authors shall be accepted as members of Ninc:*

**New Applicants:**

Mary Balogh, Kipling, SK, Canada

Linnea Bernadino (*Linnea Sinclair*),  
Naples, FL  
Laura Drewry, Yellowknife, NT,  
Canada  
Diane Golling (*Diane Farr*),  
Citrus Heights CA  
Susan Lyons, Vancouver, BC,  
Canada  
Sandra K. Moore, League City TX  
Jesse Petersen (*Jenna Petersen*,

*Jess Michaels*), Bloomington IL  
Jessica Trapp, League City TX

**New Members:**

Wayne Jordan, St. Michael, Barbados  
Robert Mayer (*Robert Doherty, Greg Donegan*), Hilton Head Island, SC  
Michelle Rouillard (*Michelle Rowen*),  
Mississauga, Ont., Canada

Ninc has room to grow...recommend membership to *your* colleagues. Prospective members may apply online at [www.ninc.com](http://www.ninc.com).

**Stay in Touch  
with Ninc online.**

Visit the website at [www.ninc.com](http://www.ninc.com). Join the neverending e-conversation – for members only – by joining Ninclink. If you have questions, email moderator Brenda Hiatt Barber at [BrendaHB@aol.com](mailto:BrendaHB@aol.com)

**Controlling Your Listserve Preferences through Email:**

Subscribe	NINCLINK-subscribe@yahoogroups.com
Unsubscribe	NINCLINK-unsubscribe@yahoogroups.com
Switch to Digest	NINCLINK-digest@yahoogroups.com
Switch to Individual Mail	NINCLINK-normal@yahoogroups.com
No-Mail	NINCLINK-nomail@yahoogroups.com





# BOOKS...ABOUT BUSINESS

## THE TIPPING POINT: How little Things Can Make a Big Difference

BY MALCOLM GLADWELL, PUBLISHED BY LITTLE BROWN & Co. 2000

REVIEWED BY PAT McLAUGHLIN

THE TIPPING POINT speaks directly to authors about our biz. Because what is a best-seller book if not—as Malcolm Gladwell terms the phenomenon he’s exploring in this book—a social epidemic.

In fact, he focuses one chapter on the process of how Rebecca Wells’s *The Divine Secrets of the Ya-Ya Sisterhood* became a best-seller.

It’s Chapter Five if you want to start there. But don’t limit yourself to Chapter Five. Read the whole book. Maybe twice. This is the book that might help explain what marketing is trying (or should be trying) to do with your books.

As always with Gladwell, the writing is accessible, the examples interesting. Just a spattering include Hush Puppies, drug use in Baltimore, and the American Revolution.

He distills the factors determining when a trend reaches that tipping point that turns it into an epidemic into three rules: The Law of the Few, The Stickiness Factor, and The Power of Context. As a journalist, I equated these to Who, What, and How.

► The Law of the Few looks at what Gladwell calls Mavens, Connectors, and Salesmen.

Mavens both gather and disseminate information. They are the people in your lives who know immediately where you can get the best price on tires, or who’s the best real estate agent in town. They are listened to because the facts and experience back them up. Connectors, first of all, know a lot of people and a diversity of people. They also enjoy connecting those people, especially bringing together people who would otherwise not meet, yet the connector knows they will be a good “fit” or be mutually beneficial. Salesmen are persuaders. Where Mavens deal with facts and practicalities, Salesmen deal with ideas and possibilities. They all are the engine of word of mouth.

► The Stickiness Factor might require a chapter for most readers to understand, but for authors, I can boil it down to The Hook or the High Concept. The fascinating part of this chapter is that in using the example of Sesame Street, Gladwell traces how Stickiness can be developed, even after several missteps.

The trick, of course, is finding the right “who”—those Mavens, Connectors and Salespeople who can start an epidemic—and the right “what”—the particular package for your information that will be so irresistible to people that

they stampede toward it.

► Gladwell divides *The Power of Context*, talking about both environmental and social contexts that can provide tipping points that can send a trend into full-blown epidemic. The environmental contexts are fascinating, but the social are more directly tied to the publishing business. The chapter on the *Ya-Ya Sisterhood* concentrates on that second aspect of context—social tipping points.

After a discussion of the development of Methodism, Gladwell writes, “The lesson of *Ya-Ya* and John Wesley is that small, close-knit groups have the power to magnify the epidemic potential of a message or idea.”

That might sound as if the solution for authors seeking best-sellerdom is to tap into the psyche of a small, close-knit group. But at the end of the chapter, Gladwell returns to Wells’ experience with *Ya-Ya*, and her recognition that “these women had built their own *Ya-Ya* relationships, not so much to the book but to each other.” So in some ways, the book was an entry point for the epidemic, which then left it behind.

It’s a lesson in the great difficulty of trying to harness a social epidemic. Yet understanding the Tipping Point rules can open your eyes to both your own role in potential social epidemics and to their potential impact on our business.

If you’re only going to read one of the books I’m reviewing, make it this one. ▲

### Espresso Book Machine

Want an out of print book without waiting? The Espresso Book Machine will do it for On Demand Books. EBM can print original books, but the prime target is stores and libraries, who might want to print titles that aren’t at the top of a bestseller’s

### Bits'n'Pieces

list, or are temporarily out of print. On Demand Books is looking at the 30,000 titles in their internet archive as a possible start. The InfoShop at World Bank in Washington DC will have the first machine in April 2007. Additional machines will go in the NY Public Library and Bibliotecheca Alexandria in Egypt, in September. There are also talks with an unnamed bookstore chain outside the U.S.



# *The Care and Feeding of the Girls in the Basement . . .*

BY BARBARA SAMUEL

---

## Celebrating The Work

Sometimes, writing is hard.

This morning, I am still tired from the RWA conference in Atlanta. I'd love to lie around and let my brain come slowly back to my body, to lie around in the cool of my basement, and read the very good novels I brought home with me. I'd like a minute to absorb the pleasure of bringing home a RITA for a book that I adored and marked a very big turning point in my life. I'd like to talk to my friends about the things they learned, if they plan to make changes or try new things or....whatever.

Sometimes, writing is hard. For those days, I've pasted a quote above my keyboard that reads:

*"Perhaps it would be better not to be a writer, but if you must, then write. If it all feels hopeless, if that famous 'inspiration' will not come, write. If you are a genius, you'll make your own rules, but if not—and the odds are against it—go to your desk, no matter what your mood, face the icy challenge of the paper—write."* J.B. Priestly.

So here I am, writing. Even thought I want to talk on the phone instead. Or read books. Or amble around the garden.

But there is no time for that. There has been no time for that all summer—I've gone from one thing to the next in an unbroken blur of airplanes, suitcases, urgent deadlines, teaching. There are humans who want my attention sometimes—the man who likes to eat dinner with

me, and the son who needs hugs and attention, and the little collection of young women I seem to have adopted who need encouragement for their writing, and the animals who *miss* me when I'm gone, and the garden that needs at least a little bit of deadheading. My large family has been needing things, and I've provided a meeting place for mother and uncle to meet between two cities, and seen another uncle who had a bad accident on a motorcycle a year ago and is looking much better, thank heaven.

That afternoon, we chatted about children and cousins and what they were doing. My eldest is on his path and I don't worry about him much, but I stated, for the 1000th time, that I fretted a lot about my younger son's direction (or lack thereof). He's a good kid, works two jobs, has a fancy car he found on the Internet for a song, a girlfriend he adores, and lots of steady, supportive relationships. He's a happy person, which is what we've always said was his gift—he was born knowing how to be happy.

And yet, I worry that he has not yet found a vocation. I worry he'll be 30 and not know what he's meant to do and be trapped in some spot he hates and—

My wise uncle, calm and clear-sighted, chuckled a bit. "Not everyone knows what they want to do with themselves by the age of eleven." Which is the year I realized people wrote books and if that was a job, by golly, it was going to be *my* job.

**R**unning behind all this summer activity and the contracted work, is a story. Not a book yet, not a novel. A character who whispers to me every now and again about her life. Well, she *was* whispering. Lately, she's been following me around like a fourteen year old, talking and talking and talking, whether I listen or not. She's there when I settle in to watch a movie, when I lie down to sleep, when I doze off on a plane or read a magazine or do a load of laundry. She's entirely self-centered. It's all about her, her, her. *Her* taste in music and men, *her* foibles and quirks, *her* favorite clothes and the things that shame her and the reason she chose the work she did, or rather, how it chose her. She talks about boyfriends and staff and people she doesn't have anything to do with under any circumstances. She talks about her sister. She tries to seduce me into coming to the keyboard with tidbits of legend, with the glitter of the things I most like—metaphor and family and weather.

I want to *write*. Hole up in a room with my work and let it carry me away.

This has been going on quite a lot lately, this sense of being mobbed by characters. It's not always the same characters—there's a crew of them, the population of books-yet-to-be—but this particular one has been most in evidence lately. She's ready, turning and turning in the womb of my imagination. She's tugged me out of bed in the middle of the night and insisted I listen to her tale, so there are bits and pieces amassing on the hard drive. I have found myself sketching the outline, seeking the shape, trying on titles, experimenting with structure.

When she isn't speaking, there are two or three other projects that are clamoring for my attention, too. I had to finally buy a white board so I could jot down the bits that come for each one. I started writing in 20 minute timed writings on one nonfiction undertaking, which seems to be just right. Twenty minutes, once a day, and walk away. I feel no attachment to how it all turns out, whether it will emerge into a Project Worth Selling or not, so it's easy to play with it.

With the insistent character who will not leave me alone, I have appeased her by building her collage late on weekend evenings, when I can listen to music and wander without pressure through my imagination. It appeases her. For now.

And lest anyone sigh and say, "Oh, I wish I felt that way about writing," trust me, I don't always. There are long slogs, when the best I can do is just show up, times when it's all just hard, hard work.

But it isn't right now. Through this year, through this time, I am remembering now why I wanted to be a writer. Not for money or fame, but because stories crowded in and wanted telling, and I found out I was pretty good at it. Not great, not ever that, but good. I could please others with my tales, and it always felt like

the right thing to do. And I like it. It's....well, it's a ball. A delight. A treat.

Admit it—you like it, too. Not on bad days, of course. Who likes any job on a bad day? But when the flow is going and you're finding just the right words and you know how the scene is going to flow, and the whole thing goes exactly as it should, even *better* than it should, and you've got shivers from the things everybody is doing and how it's all coming together, is there anything better? When you raise your head and realize you've been at it for *hours* and you've not been yourself, but living in book world, and wow, it's cool.

I love that. It's easy. Not in the sense of pure flow, tapping into some miraculously always-flowing clear river, but easy in the sense of *I know how to do this*.

Maybe it is like a river, actually. I see it in my imagination as a mountain stream, close to the source in a thick green pine forest, where the water is still fresh and icy cold from snow melt. Sometimes, it seems that I'm sitting on the bank, scooping sentences out of the fast-moving depths at my will, getting wantonly soaked in unused words, drenchings of paragraphs, floods of ideas. Other times, I feel I'm waiting, dry and sweating and weary, for a trickle. One. At. A. Time.

(Interesting that my slow trickle of words coincided with a drought here in Colorado, and this year, I'm so sloshy with ideas that I can't keep up with them, and we've had more rain than we have in years. Colorado looks like England. This suggests yet another possible story to me....but firmly I say, not right now.)

It's not *always* easy. We all know that. I wake up some mornings and think—you must be kidding. I'm tired. I'm overcommitted. Who even cares about this?

But more often, at least for me, it's a joy, not a job. I suspect that's true for most of us. If we let ourselves play, it's more fun than almost anything. It's a calling, a vocation. I am so grateful to be a writer! How about you? This month, let's celebrate the work itself. Go to it with a sense of play and anticipation. If you must, slog through a day or two or three, but write anyway. And make sure you try to have some fun with it, in whatever ways you can.

## Exercises:

- ▶ What would your life be like if you had not picked up a pen or opened a computer file and started writing a story? Where would you be?
- ▶ Write down ten things you love about the writing process itself. If it hasn't been working, why not? When *did* it work?

*Barbara Samuel is admittedly giddy about writing after winning her fifth RITA award in Atlanta, for Lady Luck's Map of Vegas. Visit her website at [barbarasamuel.com](http://barbarasamuel.com)*

## Starbucks Commits

Mitch Albom's *For One More Day* will be Starbucks' first venture into the book world. They'll promo the book beginning in October, after Hyperion's late September release. The six week promo will include a spinner rack and knock-down table, as well as an author video on Starbucks' WiFi opening page, and the new website, [www.starbucksbookbreak.com](http://www.starbucksbookbreak.com), that premiered in August. October 16 will be "Book Break" day for book discussions in major market stores.

# Bits'n'Pieces

## Embargoed–Big Seller, No Title

*Title to be Revealed*, by an unnamed author, is expected to be a hot seller from Morrow this September. The untitled book is a biography with a 300,000 print run that will receive major media coverage. A HarperCollins publicist denied rumors that the author is a former Bush administration staffer, but won't say anything else. Booksellers claim it's a good news/bad news situation, since there is no way to anticipate if the book will skyrocket or tank.

## Personnel

Karen Thomas, founder of Kensington's Dafina line, has left for another job. At our presstime, the speculation is that she has gone to Hachette. No replacement has been announced.

## Bookstores Get "Kickback" for Speaker

HarperCollins will now reward booksellers for arranging speaking engagements for HC authors outside the bookstore. Any bookseller that helps with setting up an HC author to speak will get a 5% fee that is paid as a credit to the store. Eligible store owners must have an active part in the booking, e-mailing the name of the author and organization involved to HC. If arrangements are made directly between organizations and HC, no credit is given.

## Workshop Proposals Wanted For Texas 2008

The Dallas Area Romance Authors are now accepting workshop proposals for Dreamin' 2008, to be held April 4 and 5. The form and further information are available at: <http://www.dallasromanceauthors.com/conferences/> The deadline for workshop proposal submission is January 15, 2007.

— "Bits" Compiled by Sally Hawkes

**NiNK** a publication of Novelists, Inc.  
An Organization for Writers of Popular Fiction  
P.O. Box 2037  
Manhattan KS 66505

Publishing Services by Huseby Agency, Ltd.

FIRST CLASS MAIL  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
FARGO ND  
PERMIT #281

**Don't Miss Out!**  
**Ballot 2007 &**  
**San Diego Conference**  
**News in the Center of**  
**This Issue**