

Opportunities from Romance Writers of America's (RWA) National Conference

by Tami Brothers and Tammy Schubert

August 2006

Opportunities aren't often presented to people who sit around and wait for them. To help demonstrate what can happen when you take a chance and put yourself out there, we have prepared a summary of all the opportunities that came out of Nationals for Georgia Romance Writers members.

Name	Origin	Opportunity(s)
Anonymous	Volunteering	Met several RWA staff members through volunteering. They asked me to participate on the 2007 National Conference Committee.
Anonymous	Chance Encounter	A conversation with a fellow conference attendee, who turned out to be an agent, led to a request for a partial.
Attendees	Appointment	Partials were requested from everyone by an editor during a group appointment.
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Barbara Monajem	Appointment & Contest	A partial was requested from Lucienne Diver, an agent. Placed in Daphne contest. Received a request for a full from Anna Genoese of TOR.
Beverly Rae	Chance Encounter	Struck up a conversation with a well known author and asked her to give me a cover quote for my next book. She agreed.
Carol Burnside	Appointment	I'm convinced that remembering to wear my Maggie medallion (given to all GRW Maggie winners) and having the win listed on my business card got me a full request rather than a partial from Susan Litman.
Connie Gillam	Appointments & Networking	I had appointments with Lucienne Diver (Spectrum Agency) and Esi Sogah (Avon). Both requested partials. Vivian Beck (Vivian Beck Agency) was not an RWA appointment. She requested a full. A published author from GRW introduced me to Monique Patterson after the spotlight on St. Martin's Press. After the PRO dinner, I spoke with Deidre Knight. Both of them requested partials.
Cynthia Hamer Omev	Appointment	Received a request for a full from Wanda Ottewell at Harlequin and a request for "everything you've got" from Julie Ramsey at the Knight Agency. The most interesting thing is that the appointments didn't follow "the norm" of most editor/agent appointments I have had in the past. Ms. Ottewell and I brainstormed together, and our session ended with "well, send it to me as soon as you get it done".

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This article first appeared in the Georgia Romance Writer's award-winning newsletter, The Galley.

		<p>With Julie Ramsey, it turns out we both have connections to Athens, so we started off with something in common. This made me more comfortable. When I got to my actual pitches, her words were something to the effect of "You pitch better than anyone I've ever met. Please, send me everything you've got." Wow!!</p> <p>I think both of these situations were all about establishing a rapport. You can't pitch effectively if you're scared to death of the person sitting across from you.</p>
Darcy Crowder	Appointment	Johanna Raisanen requested a partial and synopsis of my next two books.
Debbie Giusti	Networking	<p>Brainstormed with two other debut inspirational authors about doing a program for Nationals next year.</p> <p>Talked to Steeple Hill editor Krista Stroeve, who eagerly agreed to be part of our panel.</p>
Elaine Burroughs	Appointment	<p>Rachel Vater, an agent with Lowenstein-Yost Associates, requested a partial.</p> <p>Melissa Singer from TOR requested a full.</p>
Jeanette Cogdell	Networking	I talked to Mavis Allen of Harlequin at one of the Kimani events. She told me they were putting out a paranormal anthology in 2007 to test the waters. She asked me to send her something.
Judy Keim	Networking	I got to connect with people from my agent's agency.
Kaia Alderson	Networking	I pitched on impulse to Hilary Sares after the Erotic Romance panel. I wasn't going to, but she told me to be "shameless".
Kaia Alderson & Kimberly King		We were both invited to submit our ideas for anthology to the Aphrodesia Line. Even though we mentioned the book was not complete, we were given one week to submit a synopsis and a writing sample.
Linnea Newsome	Appointment	I pitched to Paula Eykelhof, Executive Editor of Harlequin. She suggested I send in a submission to Harlequin Presents.
Marilyn Baron	Appointments & Networking	<p>Requests for partials from two editors and an agent from scheduled appointments.</p> <p>Opportunity to reconnect with two agents I had met at other RWA national conferences and Moonlight & Magnolias (M&M). I requested and received permission to submit a query with a partial.</p> <p>Opportunity to meet an agent I had been submitting to but never met in person. Met her at a workshop and again at the Moonlight Madness Bazaar.</p> <p>Heard an agent speak at a workshop. Queried her afterward by e-mail, and she requested</p>

		<p>a partial.</p> <p>Introduced myself to three editors - one after a workshop and two at spotlights. I asked for and received permission to submit partials.</p> <p>Went up to a publisher after a spotlight who gave me the name of one of his editors, who was not at the conference, to submit a partial to.</p>
Melba Moon	Appointments	<p>Pitched to Stephanie (last name not provided) and Johanna Raisanen. They both requested fulls.</p>
Melissa Beck	Appointment	<p>Editor appointment with Johanna Raisanen of Harlequin, who upon seeing me approach her table said, "We've met before." Yes, we had met at 2004 National and 2004 M&M, in appointments.</p> <p>Result: Requested everything I have on my current project.</p>
Michelle Newcome	Appointment & Networking	<p>Met with Danielle Egan-Miller of Browne & Miller. We had a lively conversation about doing Google searches on old boyfriends. At the end of the meeting, she requested a partial.</p> <p>This was my first conference. I have been trying to find a critique partner, and I put myself out there. Nicki was my roommate, and we had a wonderful time hanging out with Jeanette and Marilyn. Everyone was great about showing me the ropes, and I finally have a critique group.</p>
Missy Tippens	Appointments	<p>Got a request for a full manuscript from an agent and a partial from an editor.</p>
Nicki Harris Salcedo	Appointment & Volunteering	<p>Ellen Edwards at NAL and Nancy Yost at Lowenstein-Yost Associates requested partials.</p> <p>I met an interesting group of twelve writers (some published, some not), and they are having a writing challenge until December 1st to finish a book. This was a great opportunity for me to build relationships with other writers that I would not normally work with.</p>
Pamela Varnado	Appointments	<p>TC Royal from the Ferguson Literary Agency requested a full of my paranormal and a partial for my romantic suspense.</p> <p>Harlequin requested a partial for my romantic suspense.</p>
Pam Quattlebaum	Appointment	<p>Request for three full manuscripts from Jill Lawrence, an agent.</p>
Published Author	Networking	<p>At the Harlequin party, Mavis Allen spent hour with this author and requested a full manuscript.</p>
Susan May	Networking	<p>Received a request from Mills & Boon's Senior Editor for Medical Romance, Shelia Hodgson.</p>

Tamara DeStefano	Appointments	Received a request for a full from Vivian Beck and a full from Jenny Hutton at Mills & Boon.
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A very impressive list - and this only represents a small fraction of all the opportunities that presented themselves at this year's conference. Congratulations to everyone who took a chance and put themselves out there!

The next time you are trying to decide if you should sign up for an editor/agent appointment at a conference or strike up a conversation with someone standing next to you, think about this list and consider the possibilities. In addition to great workshops, attending GRW's Moonlight & Magnolias (M&M) or future RWQ conferences can lead to great networking opportunities.

A very special thanks to Nicki Salcedo for taking minutes at the last meeting and rushing a copy of them over to help with the research that it took to put this list together.