

**Ottawa Romance Writers' Association Policy and Procedures Handbook:  
Table of Contents (updated March 4, 2006)**

Chapter One ORWA's Background and Purpose

Chapter Two Membership

- A. Eligibility*
- B. Dues*
- C. Confidentiality of Membership Register*
- D. Visitors*
- E. Meetings Open to the Public*
- F. Suspension of Members: Due Process*

Chapter Three Governing Structure

- A. Closed Ballot Voting*

Chapter Four Executive Duties

- A. President*
- B. Vice-President*
- C. Secretary*
- D. Treasurer*
- E. Past President*
- F. Registrar*
- G. Newsletter Editor*
- H. Librarian*
- I. Tape Librarian*
- J. Workshop Coordinator*

Chapter Five Finances

- A. Fiscal Year*
- B. NSF Cheques*
- C. Installment Payments*
- D. Budget*
- E. Financial Statements*

Chapter Six Property

- A. Inventory*

Chapter Seven General

- A. Duties of Non-Executive Positions
  1. Accolades Coordinator
  2. Auditor/Financial Advisor & Audit Committee
  3. Critique Clearinghouse Coordinator
  4. Critique Partner Liaison
  5. Montreal Members Liaison
  6. Promotion Coordinator
  7. Refreshment Coordinator
  8. Webmaster
  9. ORWA Chat Loop Moderator
  10. RWA PRO Liaison

- B. Annual Valentine's Day Brunch Coordinator
- C. Annual ORWA "First Meet" Writing Contest

## **Chapter One**

### **ORWA's Background and Purpose**

The Ottawa Romance Writers' Association (ORWA) was founded by a dedicated group of romance writers in 1985. The not-for-profit group officially became a Romance Writers of America (RWA) chapter in January 1996, after its membership voted to affiliate with RWA.

ORWA averages 30 members a year, ranging from published writers to enthusiastic beginners. Members work in all areas of romantic fiction, from historical to paranormal, teen to adult, short category to long mainstream.

ORWA strives to support both published and unpublished romance writers, and to promote excellence in the field of romance writing. It does this through regular meetings dedicated to increasing knowledge about both the craft of romance writing and the romance publishing industry, and through such programs as the annual ORWA writing contest, the Critique Clearinghouse and the Valentine's Day Brunch.

The purpose of this Policy and Procedures Manual is to augment (not replace) ORWA's Constitution and Bylaws. It deals with issues that the Constitution and Bylaws are not required to cover, and describes in greater detail the procedures by which the group operates. As per ORWA's Bylaws, the Policies and Procedures Handbook may be amended by the Executive or general membership. If amended by the Executive, the changes must be published in the next ORWA newsletter.

## **Chapter Two Membership**

**A. Eligibility:** ORWA members must be members in good standing of RWA. New members will be required to show proof of RWA membership, in the form of a membership card, receipt for dues paid or member number (which can then be checked against RWA's records should any confusion arise). Renewing members must provide their membership number.

**B. Dues:** Membership with ORWA is linked to membership of RWA National. You must be a member of RWA to join ORWA, but dues are paid separately. ORWA is required to submit a membership list to RWA every year to ensure that all members are in good standing.

Annual membership dues for ORWA are \$40 Canadian. The membership year runs between January and December, therefore annual dues are payable to the ORWA Treasurer at the January meeting. As a new member, if you join ORWA between January 1st and June 30th, membership dues are \$40. If you join between July 1st and December 31st, membership dues are \$20. Guest fees paid by prospective members to attend a meeting may not be deducted from membership fees.

Members who have not paid their dues by March 1 will automatically be considered suspended. A notice posted annually in the Love Knot advising when membership dues need to be paid will suffice as a reminder to pay dues: written, personal reminders are not required, although they may certainly be sent as a way to encourage renewals by members who are uncertain about continuing.

Your RWA dues are payable in US\$ on the anniversary of your membership.

**C. Confidentiality of Membership Register:** ORWA's membership register may only be used by ORWA or RWA members, and only on ORWA or RWA business (such as conference brochures). Other uses must be pre-approved by the executive. The list is not to be used for solicitation or commercial purposes.

**D. Visitors:** ORWA welcomes visitors to its meetings, as it understands that prospective members may wish to attend meetings prior to making the decision about joining the group officially. However, to ensure that ORWA complies with RWA rules regarding membership, visitors are limited to attending three meetings per year before they are required to join the group and, therefore, RWA.

**E. Open to the Public:** ORWA may choose to hold all or certain meetings or events for members only, or it can open its meetings or special events to the public, with public notices being posted where the group feels appropriate. At open meetings, a fee of \$10 per visitor is requested to offset advertising, coffee or administration costs. Special events can be charged at a rate that reflects their value.

### **F. Suspension of Members: Due Process**

The suspension of members can be a difficult, emotional process. ORWA's bylaws and policies are designed to give the executive and members an avenue to pursue suspension where it may be

warranted, while giving the member in question an opportunity to respond to the issue prompting the suspension question.

ORWA's executive is required to give the member facing suspension at least ten days written notice of an Executive meeting called to consider the matter. The letter should therefore be sent in such a way as to guarantee both delivery and signature, such as via Canada Post Expresspost with signature required. A sample letter body, as per the requirements at paragraph 2.07.02 of the Constitution and Bylaws, follows:

*Dear Ms. xx:*

*It is our duty to notify you that an Executive meeting to consider the suspension of your ORWA membership will be held on (date) at (time), at (location).*

*We welcome your attendance at this meeting to respond to the issue that has prompted us to consider this course of action. It is alleged that on (page number) of your (novel, contest entry, etc.) you have plagiarized author yy's work from (page number) of her (novel, etc.):*

*(the two passages in question)*

*This is a serious allegation, and as ORWA's Executive, we must investigate the matter further. We look forward to the opportunity to discuss the matter with you, and encourage you to bring any evidence in your favour, such as proof of having written your work prior to the publication of author yy's work.*

*If you have any difficulty with the date or place set for the meeting, I may be reached at xxx-xxxx. While the Executive will attempt to accommodate your request for changes, we cannot guarantee we will be able to do so.*

*Sincerely,*

*xx*

*President*

*Ottawa Romance Writers' Association*

With regard to setting a time that accommodates the member facing suspension, common sense must be used as a guide. The issue must be dealt with as quickly as possible in order to avoid jeopardizing the morale within the group, but justice must be seen to be done, as well as actually done. If it's clear that the date is inconvenient for the member, try to change it. If it's clear to you that the member is stalling or purposely making things more difficult, however, you may choose to proceed with the meeting, assuming that the ten days' notice has been given.

The Executive meeting should be audiotaped to ensure the protection of all members present. If, however, the member facing suspension objects to the tape recorder being used, detailed minutes of the meeting must be taken. Care must also be taken by the President or the meeting's chairperson to keep the discussion on track, as impersonal as possible and as cordial as possible.

## **Chapter Three**

### **Governing Structure**

**A. Closed Ballot Voting:** Where a closed ballot is necessary or requested, slips of paper shall be provided to each member present at the meeting at which voting is taking place. The member will write down her or his vote, and the papers will then be collected and counted.

## **Chapter Four**

### **Executive Duties**

**Note:** all members of the Executive are responsible for familiarizing themselves with ORWA's Constitution and Bylaws and Policy and Procedures Manual, and for suggesting any amendments, deletions or additions they feel appropriate.

In addition, Executive members should maintain records such as minutes to hand over to their successors, thus ensuring a smooth transition between Executives.

**A. President:** is responsible for ORWA's overall smooth and efficient operation, and for the way in which the group furthers its dedication to romance writers and romance writing. The most effective way to approach this position is to see it as a team leader. While the most immediate members of the team are the other people on the Executive, the wider team is ORWA itself -- encouraging participation from the entire group ensures that members' needs are met, and that the group prospers.

#### **President's Tasks**

**1. General Meetings.** ORWA's general meetings must be scheduled for the year ahead. The President generally chairs the meetings, and should also prepare an agenda that can be handed out at the meetings for members to follow. Agenda items must be tracked to ensure that business is handled in a timely manner. In doing so, the President also keeps the membership informed of ongoing business and ORWA's financial status as compared to the current, approved budget. Minutes of previous meetings must also be reviewed, and presented to the membership for their approval.

**2. Executive Meetings.** The President must ensure that executive meetings are held on a regular basis, preferably every month in which general meetings are held, and will chair those meetings. You also need to ensure that all members of the Executive are aware of ongoing business and current financial commitments and status. Agendas and minutes should be handled as per general meetings.

**3. Committees.** The President is an ex-officio member of all ORWA committees. You also, in coordination with the Vice President or Volunteer Coordinator, ensure that all committees have a chairperson.

**4. Coordination.** The President coordinates the duties of the various executive positions to ensure that all of ORWA's responsibilities, financial and otherwise, are fulfilled. In addition, the President is one of four designated Executive members who can approve disbursements and sign cheques on behalf of ORWA.

**5. Communication.** By providing an open channel of communication for members, the President can recognize the early warning signs of problems within the group, respond to member concerns, and foster a sense of cohesiveness within ORWA.

In addition, the President is ORWA's primary public/media relations spokesperson.

**6. Programming.** The Executive in consultation with the Workshop Coordinator plans the slate of workshops for the current year, up to and including the January general meeting of the following year. (This is to ensure a smooth transition between outgoing and incoming Executives.) Workshops should include a broad range of writing topics, with presentations that will appeal to the full range of writing expertise within the group, from beginners to experienced writers. Guest speakers may be called upon; however, financial considerations may limit their appearance.

**7. RWA Chapter Status Renewal.** Documents for the renewal of RWA Chapter status should arrive in January. You need to return these, with the renewal fee, in a timely fashion to ensure continuation of chapter status. Depending on the atmosphere in the group, you may decide to request a vote to determine the group's approval of renewing RWA Chapter status. (Note: DO NOT use a money order to pay the renewal fee; follow the guidelines for renewing personal RWA membership.)

**8. Love Knot President's Message.** Each month, the President writes a 200-300 word message to members that appears in the Love Knot. This is usually an upbeat article that advises the membership on what the executive is doing behind the scenes. It also provides a forum for raising topics, enabling members to consider the issues prior to discussing them at a meeting.

**9. Financial Signing Authority.** The President is one of four signing authorities for disbursement approvals and cheques. At the start of your term, you'll accompany the Vice President, Treasurer and Secretary to the Bank to facilitate the change of names and signatures for ORWA's account.

Before signing any cheque, carefully examine all receipts and disbursement forms to assure yourself that this is an authorized and documented expense.

Before signing disbursement approval signs, carefully examine them and check with the Treasurer to ensure that the disbursement request is in accordance with budgeted items (example: Brunch/ Contest) and that sufficient funds are available. If disbursement request is for a non-budgeted item, ensure that the purchase has been approved by the executive or the general membership by vote as necessary.

**B: Vice President:** is responsible to take on the duties and responsibilities in the absence of the President, and to coordinate the Volunteer Sheet. As a member of the Executive, she is involved in scheduling ORWA's slate of workshops, which may include gathering or passing on ideas or assisting the Workshop Coordinator as needed.

### **Vice President's Tasks**

**1. Assumes the President's duties and responsibilities in her or his absence.** Tasks that may fall to the Vice President including acting as alternative for executive and general meetings, concluding business stated on meeting agendas, holding any necessary votes, and ensuring that ORWA's Constitution and Bylaws are being followed.

**2. General Meetings.** The Vice President assists the President in setting the meeting agenda, and reviewing the minutes of previous meetings.

**3. Executive Meetings.** The Vice President helps to set the agenda, brings forth any questions or concerns of the general membership, and reviews minutes of previous meetings, financial statements and reports from committee chairs.

**4. Volunteer Coordinator.** The Vice President's task as ORWA's volunteer coordinator is an essential one. You should begin reviewing ORWA's annual Volunteer Sheet around April, providing each member of the executive & committee chairs with a copy so that they can review their positions and inform you of any changes.

After you make the necessary changes, you should have the complete revised Volunteer Sheet ready to pass along to the Newsletter Editor in sufficient time to be published in the September issue of Love Knot . (Deadline is usually August 18th at the very latest). You should then write a follow-up article in the newsletter encouraging our members to volunteer for a position.

At the October meeting, you'll collect the Volunteer Sheets from members, coordinating those who wish to volunteer for positions, and actively soliciting members for positions that may remain vacant.

**5. Assistant Workshop Coordinator.** The Vice President assists the Executive and the Workshop Coordinator in gathering workshop ideas and materials for upcoming meetings

**6. Financial Signing Authority.** The Vice President is one of four signing authorities for disbursement approvals and cheques. At the start of your term, you'll accompany the President, Treasurer and Secretary to the Bank to facilitate the change of names and signatures for ORWA's account.

Before signing any cheque, carefully examine all receipts and disbursement forms to assure yourself that this is an authorized and documented expense.

Before signing disbursement approval signs, carefully examine them and check with the Treasurer to ensure that the disbursement request is in accordance with budgeted items (example: Brunch/ Contest) and that sufficient funds are available. If disbursement request is for a non-budgeted item, ensure that the purchase has been approved by the executive or the general membership by vote as necessary.

## **ORWA Volunteer Positions**

ORWA is only as strong as the members who give it their time and energy. Willing hands are needed to provide refreshments and organize events such as the contest and brunch. The following is a list of volunteer positions. PLEASE SIGN UP FOR AT LEAST ONE SLOT ON THIS LIST.

We'll be collecting these sign-up sheets at the first meeting in September, so bring them along. If you have questions, please contact the current executive for further information.

PLEASE PRINT

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE # (     ) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

Types of writing (ie, regency, historical, category)

\_\_\_\_\_

### **EXECUTIVE POSITIONS**

PRESIDENT \_\_\_\_\_

- \*Chair monthly meetings of the executive and general membership.
- \*Member of all committees.
- \*Appoint committee chairs.
- \*Issue press releases concerning group activities.
- \*Submit copy for President's Message to be published monthly in the newsletter.
- \*Coordinate execution of duties of the various executive.
- \*Attend monthly executive and general meetings.
- \*Prepare agenda for each of Executive and General Meetings, monthly.
- \*Track outstanding items of prior meetings to ensure business is executed in a timely manner.
- \*One of four designated to sign cheques.

VICE-PRESIDENT \_\_\_\_\_

- \*Act as alternate Chair in the absence of the President.
- \*Attend monthly executive and general meetings.
- \*Volunteer Co-ordinator.
- \*Workshop Co-ordinator.
- \*One of four designated to sign cheques.

TREASURER \_\_\_\_\_

- \*Attend monthly executive and general meetings.
- \*Maintain bookkeeping and banking of organization.
- \*Book accommodations for meetings and events.
- \*Collect membership fees and other dues as required.
- \*Issue cheques as required and maintain records and receipts of expenditures.

- \*Submit a brief monthly statement for newsletter regarding status of finances, and report at meetings.
- \*Submit annual budget in January and annual summary of expenditures in December.
- \* Be present at the annual audit conducted by the appointed Audit Committee.
- \*One of four designated to sign cheques.

#### SECRETARY \_\_\_\_\_

- \*Attend monthly executive and general meetings.
- \*Record and prepare minutes according to process.
- \*Maintain records of organization.
- \*Manage correspondence of organization.
- \*One of four designated to sign cheques.

#### **EX-OFFICIO EXECUTIVE POSITIONS**

#### NEWSLETTER EDITOR \_\_\_\_\_

- \*Publish newsletter monthly from August to May.
- \*Attend monthly executive and general meetings.

#### REGISTRAR \_\_\_\_\_

- \*Attend monthly executive and general meetings.
- \*Maintain and distribute membership packages and promotional materials.
- \*Maintain and distribute membership lists.
- \*Monthly appraisal of new members to executive.
- \*Maintain lists of publishing records of membership.
- \*Respond to public inquiries regarding ORWA.
- \*Track membership valid standing in national RWA.

#### WORKSHOP COORDINATOR \_\_\_\_\_

- \* Plan the schedule of workshops for the year through consultation and approval of the executive and the membership. .
- \* Arrange transportation, accommodations, handouts, purchase of thank-you gift, special lunch or dinner with the speaker, etc. according to budget and guidelines of executive.
- \* Arrange for Guest Speakers' submission of receipts to Treasurer.
- \* Prepare announcement and/or article regarding Guest Speaker in newsletter.

#### TAPE LIBRARIAN \_\_\_\_\_

- \*Attend monthly executive and general meetings.
- \*Maintain and distribute inventory of tapes.
- \*Manage acquisition and inventory of new tapes according to budget and guidelines of executive.
- \*Manage lending of tapes to members in good standing.

#### BOOK LIBRARIAN \_\_\_\_\_

- \*Attend monthly executive and general meetings.
- \*Maintain and distribute inventory of books, papers and periodicals.
- \*Manage acquisition and inventory of new books and publications according to budget and guidelines of executive.
- \*Manage lending of materials to members in good standing.
- \*For each newsletter, provide or obtain from a member a review of one or more books.
- \*For each meeting, bring a selection of books to be borrowed, preferably slanted to topic of workshop.

**WEBMASTER** \_\_\_\_\_

- \* Looks after the administration and maintenance of ORWA's website.

**ANNUAL POSITIONS**

**ACCOLADES COORDINATOR** \_\_\_\_\_

- Inquire at general meetings if anyone has any accolades to announce.
- Provide accolades forms to the members to fill out.
- Collect forms and submit a monthly article to the newsletter.

**AUDITOR/FINANCIAL ADVISOR** \_\_\_\_\_

- Advise and assist the Executive and the membership of ORWA's financial policies and practices.
- Conduct the annual audit of ORWA's account books (in January) along with the previous year's Auditor (if different), the previous year's Treasurer and the current Treasurer or other volunteers.
- Prepare an Audit Report based on the Audit Committee's findings.
- Submit Audit Report to executive board.
- Submit Audit Report to general membership - followed by an article in the newsletter.
- Assist the new Treasurer in how to keep ORWA's accounts.

**AUDIT COMMITTEE (2 PEOPLE)** \_\_\_\_\_

- Assist the auditor in reviewing ORWA's account books in January.
- Assist in the preparation of the Audit Report to be submitted to the group.

**CRITIQUE CLEARING HOUSE COORDINATOR**

- Requires more senior member with awareness of skills of group and experience critiquing.

**REFRESHMENT COORDINATOR** \_\_\_\_\_

- Regular attendance of meetings
- Transport supplies
- Purchase supplies, submit receipts to treasurer for reimbursement
- Distribute list in SEPT for members to sign up to bring goodies to meetings, phone with reminders a few days before each meeting

## **ANNUAL SOCIAL AND AWARDS EVENT COMMITTEE**

BRUNCH COORDINATOR \_\_\_\_\_

MEMBERS (5 VOLUNTEERS) \_\_\_\_\_

- Determine and arrange location, arrange decorations.
- Determine ticket prices and submit budget to executive for approval.
- One volunteer to coordinate the applications of awards.
- Arrange guest speakers if desired.
- Arrange ceremony, including appoint emcee, speakers, etc.
- Arrange purchase and award of prizes, volunteer gifts and award certificates, etc.
- Submit summary of expenses after event.
- Collect tickets and issue receipts.
- Publicize event.

## **SINGLE EVENT POSITIONS**

CONTEST COORDINATORS (2 PEOPLE) \_\_\_\_\_

- issue newsletter article regarding the contest rules and the evaluation sheet.
- issue newsletter article regarding intention and scope of contest, inviting participation.
- Collect entry fees and screen submissions appropriately.
- Sort submissions for judges, supply with score sheets.
- Arrange purchase of judge's, previous years winner thank you gifts, etc.
- Arrange engraving and award of trophy.
- Prepare award presentation and prizes.
- Manage appointment of judges.
- Submit summary of income and expenses to executive.
- Prepare a Coordinator's Report after the event for submission to executive.

**C: Secretary:** is responsible for recording and maintaining the minutes of General and Executive meetings, and for maintaining ORWA's correspondence records.

### **Secretary's Tasks**

**1. Executive Meetings.** The Secretary attends all executive meetings, takes the minutes and circulates copies of them to all other executive members before the next meeting. Copies of minutes are kept on file.

**2. General Meetings.** The Secretary attends general meetings, takes the minutes and provides copies of them for the President, Vice President and Treasurer, plus circulates the minutes to the general membership after each meeting via the ORWA chat loop. The secretary should have at least two copies of the minutes to be circulated at the next general meeting for interested members to read prior to approval. Copies of minutes are kept on file.

**3. Correspondence.** Correspondence is prepared as necessary; both incoming and outgoing correspondence is kept on file.

**4. Financial Signing Authority.** The Secretary is one of four signing authorities for disbursement approvals and cheques. At the start of your term, you'll accompany the President, Vice President and Treasurer to the Bank to facilitate the change of names and signatures for ORWA's account.

Before signing any cheque, carefully examine all receipts and disbursement forms to assure yourself that this is an authorized and documented expense.

Before signing disbursement approval signs, carefully examine them and check with the Treasurer to ensure that the disbursement request is in accordance with budgeted items (example: Brunch/ Contest) and that sufficient funds are available. If disbursement request is for a non-budgeted item, ensure that the purchase has been approved by the executive or the general membership by vote as necessary.

**D: Treasurer:** is responsible for the collection and disbursement of ORWA's funds, and for advising the executive on ORWA's financial status. The Treasurer is also responsible for maintaining accurate financial records, ensuring all the membership-approved financial rules and regulations are upheld, and keeping track of stamps.

## **Treasurer's Tasks**

### **1.0 Upon Taking Office and/or New Executive Member(s)**

1.1 Upon assuming her duties as Treasurer, the member is given an overview of the procedures for accurate record keeping by the previous Treasurer and/or the Auditor.

The ORWA executive cannot direct the Treasurer to perform her duties in a manner which is not in keeping with the generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP).

1.2 At the time of taking office, ensure the previous Treasurer provides you with the following tools of the trade:

- Receipt book
- Bank deposit book
- Account Ledger (in binder)
- Blank disbursement forms (in separate binder)
- Blank ledger sheets
- Blank cheques
- Treasurer's Guidelines
- Previous year's financial budgets, statements and records, including audit reports

1.3 When one or more members of the executive are new, the Treasurer must contact the bank and arrange for transfer of signing authorities. The Treasurer arranges for all four members of the ORWA executive, specifically the President, Vice-President, Treasurer and Secretary, to have signing authority on behalf of ORWA. A letter with the signatures of both the outgoing executive and incoming executive indicating the changes in the executive, plus a copy of the minutes showing the election results is required. Please note that the bank can send the appropriate forms to a branch of the CIBC near the executive member for their signature. The bank statements are currently being sent to the auditor, who will ensure the treasurer receives them.

#### *Procedure:*

1. *In December, prepare letter and obtain signatures of outgoing and incoming executive and a copy of the minutes showing the election results.*
2. *Make an appointment with the bank service representative that is convenient for all new executive members. Be sure to remind the executive to bring photo identification. The former executive member's signing authority card is torn up and the member replacing her signs a new card. If an executive member can't attend, ensure that the member has made arrangements with the bank to have the papers sent to a branch near them for signature. Signing authority for all executive members should be accomplished before January 31<sup>st</sup> to ensure cheques can be written for the Valentine's Brunch. .*

2. 3. *Verify that the bank continues to require two signatures on each cheque issued from ORWA's account.*

## **2.0 Responsibility for Funds**

2.1 The Treasurer is responsible for all ORWA funds in her possession, even in the event of loss or theft. It is recommended that she deposit all monies collected in a timely fashion.

## **3.0 Financial Records**

3.1 The Treasurer is responsible for collecting and safeguarding all ORWA financial records, until such time as they are turned over to the next Treasurer.

3.2 The following records should be retained until the executive tells you otherwise. Old budgets are useful for reference the following year when new committees/executive are making up new budgets:

- ORWA annual budgets
- Any interim budgets prepared during the year
- Committee budgets (for brunch, contest, & workshops)
- Bank statements or passbooks (must be kept for seven years)
- Account ledger(s) (must be kept for seven years)
- Disbursement forms for cheques issued
- Monthly income statements submitted to membership
- Periodic balance statements submitted to membership
- Meeting minutes

3.3 Bring all current records, receipt book, deposit book, disbursement forms and the ledger to each meeting attended, in order to permit:

- a) the executive to verify expenses, receipts and budgeted amounts before signing cheques;
- b) you to immediately record in the ledger any monies received or cheques issued; and
- c) you to issue receipts.

3.4 For further details on financial statements, see section 8.0.

## **4.0 Membership Dues, Guest Fees, and Other Income**

4.1 The Treasurer is responsible for collecting annual dues and depositing the cash and cheques in the bank. Membership dues are ORWA's primary source of annual income. The annual budget cannot be prepared, nor the membership list prepared, without an accurate accounting of the annual dues received.

*Procedure:*

*1. Immediately write a receipt for the cash or cheque received from the member or guest. This is important as it is the only evidence that the person has paid.*

2. For member dues, the account ledger (binder) contains a special list of members at the front of the book. Enter the year at the top of a new column. Enter the amount received beside the member's name. Add a new member's name at the bottom of the list. Additional funds received from the member for the contest, workshops, brunch, etc. can be recorded in columns across the page. Notify the Registrar which members have paid their dues to enable her to keep the membership list current

3. Enter the amount collected in the monthly records section of the ledger (see section 6.0). The amount must be entered twice--in the credit column, and in the column under the appropriate heading. For member dues, it is not necessary to record each payment on a separate line; a total collected for the day is sufficient.

4.2 The amount deposited in the bank and recorded in the ledger must correspond with the total value of the receipts issued (the auditors will check).

4.3 The Treasurer also collects and deposits other income, such as cash collected in book draws, the book exchange, and for refreshments. The cash collected from each source is recorded twice in the ledger (under the credit heading and one other heading).

## **5.0 Bank Deposits**

*Procedure:*

1. Write the ORWA account number on the back of each cheque.

2. Fill out the page in the deposit book. Ensure you have noted in a box in the bottom left-hand corner of the deposit slip the subtotals of the monies being deposited. For example: Dues \$80, Brunch fees \$240, book exchange \$7. These amounts should match the amounts entered in the ledger columns.

3. Make the deposit at any branch of ORWA's bank during business hours, and get the deposit book stamped. For the Treasurer's own protection, the use of the bank machine or after-hours money drops are not recommended.

## **6.0 Account/Bookkeeping Ledger**

6.1 The Treasurer is responsible for keeping the account ledger up to date.

6.2 The column headings in the ledger may vary from year to year, depending on the items the executive wants to track. Refer to Appendix A for the most recent list.

6.3 Start the year on a fresh page.

6.4 Date and record each entry on a separate line under the appropriate headings. Where a column such as administration has more than one type of item, be more specific in the name column (#1) as to what the expense or credit consists of.

6.5 Debits should be entered with a negative (-) sign or within brackets () to differentiate them from credits.

6.6 At the end of each month:

- a) Draw a double line across the bottom of the columns of figures.
- b) Total the debits and credits under each column, with the running balance indicated on this line as well.
- c) On the line below, sum the year-to-date totals under each column. This allows the executive to see at a glance how much has been spent/collected in each category, and these figures can be compared to the annual budget.

6.7 Upon receipt of the bank statement, place a red tick mark in the ledger beside each cheque that has gone through (been cashed).

## **7.0 Cheques**

7.1 Mandatory measures have been put in place to verify expenses are valid before they are reimbursed. A disbursement form is the mechanism to do this, and is the only record the auditors have of the approval of the expense by the executive. A copy of the disbursement form is attached as Appendix B.

7.2 Most expenses are pre-authorized by membership vote on the budget at the beginning of the year or during the year. The newsletter, contest, brunch, workshops, bank expenses, refreshments and similar expenses have specific allocations in the budget. When an expense falls within these approved budget item limits, or when the amount is under \$50.00, the executive has the authority to issue a cheque.

7.3 Any non-budgeted expense over \$50.00 requires the approval of the general membership. For example, if any member buys tapes at a conference for the tape library without pre-approval, or makes unauthorized phone calls, the member (including any of the executive) risks not recovering her costs.

**REMIND THE MEMBERSHIP EACH YEAR THAT UNBUDGETED EXPENSES RUN UP WITHOUT PRIOR APPROVAL OF THE MEMBERSHIP WILL NOT BE REIMBURSED.**

7.4 Any claims for expenses must be submitted to the Treasurer as promptly as possible and no later than two months after the end of the calendar year in which the expenses take place.

7.5 *To issue a cheque, follow this procedure:*

*1. Ask the member to fill out the disbursement form and staple receipts to it. Each and every time a member submits a claim for expenses, a disbursement form must be filled out and signed by the member, with receipts attached. Multiple types of expenses can be listed separately on the same form.*

*2. Check the addition (use a calculator!), review the expenses to verify they fall within budgeted allocations or have been approved by the membership, sign the disbursement form, and insert it in the binder.*

*3. Prepare the cheque, and in the ledger write the date of issue, cheque number, disbursement form number, and the amount under the debit and category columns in the ledger. Sign the cheque, unless it is to yourself.*

4. *Pass on the cheque, disbursement form, and attached receipts to one (or, in the case of a cheque made out to the Treasurer) two other member(s) of the executive for review. No member of the executive can sign a cheque made out to herself.*

5. *Ensure the member of the executive (who must have her signature on file at the bank--see section 1.0 above) reviews the receipts and signs both the disbursement form and the cheque.*

6. *Hand the cheque to the member who submitted the claim. If she has not attended two consecutive meetings, mail the cheque to her home address.*

7.6 When a receipt is lost, the member must write an explanation on the disbursement form, and the Treasurer must have two (2) other members of the executive review the expense, for a total of three executive members' signatures on the form.

7.7 *For privacy reasons, a member may not want a photocopy of her phone bill or credit card statement included in the ORWA financial records. In this case,*

*1. The member must write out an itemized list of the expenses and attach it to the disbursement form. For phone calls, beside the amount, the member must indicate the name of the person who has been called, and what ORWA business was involved (contest, workshop, etc.).*

*2. The Treasurer and two (2) other members of the executive must review the original bill or statement and sign the disbursement form before returning the original bill or statement to the member.*

7.8 Where the amount claimed does not match the item on the receipt or bill, provide an explanation on the disbursement form to help the auditors understand the reason. For example, long distance savings plans often complicate the calculation of the exact cost of phone calls.

## **8.0 Financial Statements**

8.1 A Budget describes the anticipated income and expenditures for the year, and is prepared by the Treasurer. An amount is set aside for each budget item (newsletter, contest, brunch, rent, RWA dues, etc.). This budget, and any future variations of the budget, must be approved by the membership. Once it is approved, the Treasurer must ensure all expenditures do not exceed the budgeted amounts. It is the Treasurer's responsibility to warn the executive if expenditures are close to the limit of the budgeted allocation for that item. See Appendix C for an example of a Budget.

8.2 An Income Statement describes the opening balance, income, expenses incurred, and balance forward for the previous month, and is prepared by the Treasurer. This statement allows the membership to see where their money was spent, and how much remains in the bank. The Treasurer is responsible for preparing an Income Statement for the previous month. June, July and August may be condensed into one report. The executive will review it and distribute it to the general membership in oral or written form, or in the newsletter. See Appendix D for an example of the Income Statement

8.3 A Balance Sheet describes the cash (assets) in the bank and projected expenses (liabilities) for the remainder of the year. It basically gives the membership an update on how much has been spent and where, how much is set aside for future expenses, and if there is any money left over (equity = assets-liabilities). A Balance Statement should be prepared in spring

and fall to help the executive review the budget and see if ORWA is on track. In lieu of a Balance Sheet, the Treasurer may prefer to prepare an Interim Budget. See Appendix E for an example of the Balance Sheet.

## **9.0 Committee Budgets & Expenditures**

9.1 The Treasurer is a member of all brunch, contest, speaker and workshop committees, and is responsible for reviewing all submitted budgets from committee chairs to ensure sufficient funds are available to cover the planned expenditures. The Treasurer may then recommend to the membership that the budgets be approved. Note: it is the membership, not the Treasurer, that approves all budgets.

9.2 The committee chairs must not spend any money until their budgets have been approved. Any increases to these budgets, due to unforeseen expenses or expenses higher than anticipated, for example, must be approved by the membership at large **PRIOR TO SPENDING ADDITIONAL FUNDS.**

9.3 After the ORWA event (contest, workshop, brunch, etc.), the committee chair prepares a final report/statement and provides copies to the executive and the newsletter editor so that it can be reviewed by all members.

## **10.0 Stamps**

10.1 The Treasurer is responsible for keeping an inventory of American and Canadian stamps. These are generally purchased by ORWA or received via contest entries.

## **11.0 Year End Report**

11.1 The year end report must include the following:

- a final budget showing exact amounts spent compared to initial allocations
- a proposed budget for the year to come, problems encountered, concerns, and recommendations for improvements.

## Appendix A: Ledger Column Headings

Column	Item	Description
0	Date	
1	Name	Name of person issued cheque or type of income received (membership dues, interest, etc.)
2	ORWA Cheque #	Number in top right corner of cheque
3	Disbursement or deposit #	Number on top right corner of disbursement form
4	Debit	Expense
5	Credit	Income
6	Running Balance	Enter at the beginning and end of each month
7	Membership Fees	
8	Guest Fees	
9	Refreshments	
10	Newsletter	
11	Rent and Administration	Includes stamps, new receipt books, RWA fee, etc. Describe what the expense is in the Name column.
12	Brunch	All expenses and income related to Brunch, including phone calls, costs of awards, speaker, rental of space, advertising, etc., as per brunch budget
13	Contests	All expenses and income related to ORWA contest, including mailing costs, guest speaker, phone calls to editors, published authors, etc., as per contest budget
14	Workshops	All related expenses & income including speaker travel costs, phone calls, taxi/parking, meals, honorariums, rental of room, etc.
15	Telephone	Miscellaneous calls (describe)
16	Books/Tapes	All purchases of books and tapes for libraries, and all income from book exchange and book raffles (describe)
17	Bank Interest and Fees	(describe)

**Appendix B: Sample Disbursement Form**

## Appendix C: Sample Budget

### 19xx ORWA Budget

Opening Balance as of  
January 1, 20xx \$x,xxx.00

<u>Income</u>	\$\$
Member Dues	xx
Guest Fees	xx
Bank Interest	xx
Book Raffle & Exchange	xx
Brunch	xx
ORWA Contest	xx
<u>RWA Contest</u>	<u>xx</u>
Subtotal Income	XX

#### Expenses

Emergency Reserve	xx
Rent	xx
Newsletter	xx
Bank Charges	xx
Tape & Book Purchase	xx
Telephone	xx
Workshops	xx
Brunch	xx
Brunch Reserve	yy
ORWA Contest	xx
RWA Contest	xx
Refreshments	xx
RWA Dues	xx
<u>Admin. Costs</u>	<u>xx</u>
Subtotal Expenses	ZZ

Net (Income-Expenses) \$0.00



## Appendix E: Sample Balance Sheet

Balance Sheet as of June 1, 20xx

<u>ASSETS</u>	\$\$
Cash in CIBC as of May 15 bank statement	X,xxx.xx
<u>Accounts receivable</u>	<u>0.00</u>
Net Assets	X,xxx.xx
 <u>Liabilities</u>	
Uncleared cheques	xx.xx
<i>Accounts Payable:</i> (expenses incurred but not yet reimbursed)	
Outstanding Brunch expenses	xx.xx
Outstanding Contest postage	x.xx
<i>Upcoming Expenses:</i> (as per budget)	
Rent	0.00
Newsletter	xx.xx
Honorariums for Contest Critiquers	xx.xx
Bank charges	x.xx
Telephone	xx.xx
Refreshments	xx.xx
Fall Workshops	Xxx.xx
<i>Reserves:</i>	
Brunch Reserve for next year	xx.xx
Contest Reserve for next year	xx.xx
<u>Emergency Reserve</u>	<u>Xxx.xx</u>
Net Liabilities	Y,yyy.yy
 ORWA EQUITY (Assets-Liabilities)	 x.xx

**E. Past President:** an ex-officio member of the Executive, the Past President assists in an advisory capacity, providing continuity between successive Executives.

**F. Registrar:** is responsible for effectively maintaining and distributing ORWA's membership list at least twice a year (in Feb/March and November); maintaining the guest log at each meeting and directing guests to the treasurer to pay their guest fees; coordinating with the Chat Group Coordinator and the Newsletter Editor to have new members added to those lists or current non-members removed; coordinating with the Treasurer to encourage annual renewals of membership;. An essential task is the need to keep track of members' valid standing as members of national RWA. To do this, the Registrar can request RWA membership numbers from new or renewing members. New members who do not yet have a membership number may provide cancelled cheques or receipts as proof of RWA dues payment. The Registrar also attends executive and general meetings, submitting a monthly list of new members to the Executive. The Registrar also maintains and distributes new member packages and promotional materials, and responds to public inquiries regarding ORWA.

*Text for Welcome to ORWA Letter:*

*The Ottawa Romance Writers' Association was founded in 1985 and became a Romance Writers of America (RWA) chapter in January 1996. To join ORWA, you must also be a member of RWA National. ORWA annual dues are \$40 (CAN) for full membership and \$20 for associate membership. RWA annual dues for Canadians are \$85 (US).*

*ORWA averages 30 members a year, ranging from published writers to enthusiastic beginners. Our published members include Romance Hall of Famer and Rita award-winner Jo Beverley, contemporary authors Elizabeth Syme (Elizabeth Syme Adamitz) and Elizabeth Batten-Carew, Harlequin Intrigue author Joyce Sullivan, Regency authors Kathryn Smith, Nonnie St. George and Laura Paquet, science fiction author Ann O'Bannon, erotica author Sharon Page, as well as other members published in non-fiction and short fiction.*

*ORWA members work in all areas of romantic fiction, from historical to paranormal, teen to adult, sweet to steamy. Whatever your interest, you will find others to share it. Many of our members also work in other writing fields: editors, journalists, science fiction, children's books and mainstream. The skills learned in writing romance can be applied to other kinds of writing.*

*Wherever you are in your writing career, there's a place for you in ORWA. We offer support and encouragement for our fellow writers.*

*Meetings:*

*ORWA meets on the first Sunday of the month from September to June, with the exception of some meetings that occur a week later due to statutory holidays. Our meetings are usually held in the Conference Room at the Ottawa Citizen building at 1101 Baxter Road, Ottawa. It's easy to reach off the Queensway's Pinecrest exit and there's plenty of free parking.*

*Meetings run from 1:00 to 4:00, starting with a brief discussion of ORWA business and the distribution of accolades and chocolates to share and acknowledge the accomplishments of members. After a half-hour break to chat and catch up, the meeting resumes with a workshop or guest speaker. Visitors are welcome to attend our meetings, although we do request a \$10 donation.*

### *The Love Knot:*

*ORWA publishes a monthly newsletter from September to June called the Love Knot. The editor relies on members for articles and information items, so please contribute often. You don't have to be a published author to share your experience and knowledge with other members.*

### *Critiquing:*

*Many members belong to critique groups that meet on a monthly basis, usually at a member's home. You can place a notice in the newsletter to find out if there is a group working in your sub-genre, or start one of your own with other members who share your interests. ORWA also runs a Critique Clearinghouse, which offers members the opportunity to have their partial or full manuscript critiqued by another member, anonymously if you wish. Application forms to request a critique or to volunteer to critique are included in your membership kit, or you can contact the Critique Clearing House coordinator, whose name appears in the monthly newsletter.*

### *Tape and Book Libraries:*

*ORWA maintains two excellent libraries of cassette tapes and books relating to romance writing. Many of the tapes are recordings of RWA national conference workshops and speakers. A list for each library is included in your membership kit. The librarians' names are listed in the monthly newsletter. If you wish to borrow a tape or book, please contact the librarian ahead of time so she can bring it to the next meeting.*

### *Monthly book exchange:*

*Bring your used books to the meeting and pick up ones you haven't read. Your 25-cent donation goes towards purchasing books and tapes for the libraries.*

### *Contest:*

*Every spring, ORWA sponsors the First Meet writing contest, open to all full members unpublished in book-length romantic fiction. Entry fee: \$15. Submissions must include the first ten pages of a manuscript covering the first meeting of the hero and the heroine, as well as a five-page synopsis of the entire book.*

*Entries are judged by published ORWA members. Second and third place contestants win the opportunity to have the first three chapters of their manuscript critiqued by a published author of the same genre. The first-place prize is a critique of the first three chapters by an editor at an established publishing house.*

### *The Valentine's Brunch:*

*Every February, ORWA hosts a Valentine's Brunch to celebrate members' achievements from the previous year and to honour the hard work of our volunteers. It's a special occasion you won't want to miss.*

*You have joined a supportive, interactive group. Please feel free to discuss any concerns or ideas with members of the executive. We welcome all volunteers, not just to serve on the executive, but to help with other jobs, large and small, from arranging snacks to helping on the Brunch*

*committee. Don't feel shy about volunteering--it's a great way to meet other members and contribute to ORWA.*

**G. Newsletter Editor:** produces ORWA's LoveKnot newsletter and distributes it to the membership by email on the last Monday of every month (except June and July) so details of the next meeting are available for the membership; solicits articles of interest to the membership; collects chapter news and information, edits articles and contacts authors for clarification where necessary; participates in EditorLink – listserv for RWA's newsletter editor (recommended); maintains a list of members and their email addresses; maintains the newsletter exchange with the Toronto RWA chapter and the Alberta Romance Writers' Association, collects past issue of the LoveKnot.

The Love Knot is now an entirely electronic publication. Layout is extremely easy, with no need for graphics or fancy columns, tables etc. Any word processor can be used and it's best to save the file as plain text as formatting gets lost in email. The time commitment is 5 -10 hours per month.

As editor, the majority of the work comes in the gathering of information and soliciting of articles and the laying out of the newsletter. As a general rule the articles submitted do not need a great deal of editing and are only returned to the author for review if major changes have been made. Participation on RWA's Newsletter Editor listserv, EditorLink, is highly recommended as a source of articles and as a source of distribution for those written by ORWA members as long as they have agreed to sharing their work with fellow chapters.

Membership on EditorLink is straightforward. ORWA's president must advise RWA's National Office of the newsletter editor's name and RWA number so an invitation can be issued to join the group. All correspondence can take place via email, though the online archive at Yahoogroups is a rich source of articles as it goes back several years. As a general rule, it is best to post at least one or two articles each month from ORWA members, in exchange for those taken from other chapters.

At this time the Executive does not require that the newsletter be approved by the President or Vice-President, though it is wise to consult them if questions about submissions arise.

**H. Book Librarian:** maintains, and administrates the borrowing of, ORWA's inventory of books, papers and periodicals. The Book Librarian therefore attends executive and general meetings, bringing along a selection of books to be borrowed, preferably slanted to the topic of the workshop. Members in good standing may borrow materials by writing their name on the card inside the book, and giving the card to the Book Librarian. Unless other arrangements are made, materials are due at the next general meeting. Should the materials not be returned on time, the Book Librarian must contact the member in order to arrange a return time. The Book Librarian also manages the acquisition of new books and publications according to ORWA's budget and any guidelines decided upon by the Executive. The Book Librarian may solicit ideas for new acquisitions from the general membership, and will maintain a list of books requested by members to be considered for purchased as our budget allows. The Book Librarian may contribute one or more book reviews (or solicit reviews from others) for the LoveKnot newsletter.

**I. Tape Librarian:** maintains, and administrates the borrowing of, ORWA's inventory of audiotapes. The Tape Librarian therefore attends executive and general meetings, bringing along

ORWA's tape library. Members in good standing may borrow tapes by notifying the Tape Librarian of the title(s) involved. Unless other arrangements are made, tapes are due at the next general meeting. Should the tapes not be returned on time, the Tape Librarian must contact the member in order to arrange a return time.

The Tape Librarian also manages the acquisition of new audiotapes according to ORWA's budget and any guidelines decided upon by the Executive. The Librarian may solicit ideas for new acquisitions from the general membership, and will maintain a list of tapes requested by members to be considered for purchased as our budget allows. Many of our existing tapes come from workshops given by editors, agents, authors and experts at various conferences, including the annual RWA National Conference.

**J. Workshop Coordinator:** is responsible for coordinating and planning the workshop schedule for the year with the executive, discussing possible workshops with the membership, working out budgets for workshops which have cost, scheduling and booking workshops/speakers, making travel, hotel, meal, arrangements for special speakers, purchasing a thank you gift for speakers who are not given an honorarium, contacting the speaker for handouts that need to be copied for the meeting (ORWA usually pays for photocopying although some authors prefer to bring them with them); and delegating these or other tasks.

### **Workshop leaders and speakers**

We schedule a mix of outside speakers and ORWA speakers to lead workshops. We try to fill 1-3 from outside (depending on budget) and 3-5 from within ORWA. We try to get a mix (historical and contemporary, category and single title, etc.) Ask the membership for workshop proposals. Encourage anyone to come forward who wishes to. Don't turn members away; everyone has something valuable to contribute. Also it's good practice for them and emphasizes the support aspect of ORWA membership. At the meeting at the end of the year, ask for suggestions for types of workshops wanted and for specific outside speakers. Suggestions (in order of desirability) for finding speakers are:

1. Recommendations by writers who have seen the speaker
2. ORWA members' contacts who are a) editors, b) agents, or c) authors
3. Other writing groups (e.g. Capital Crime Writers)
4. The RWA speakers' list (accessible on RWA's website by the chapter president).

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### **Scheduling**

1. The meeting schedule is structured as follows:  
February - brunch  
June - social  
July and August - no meetings  
November - elections (and recently added, collage)  
Other - contest results and judges' workshops (April, May, or June, depending)  
This leaves January, March, April (or May), September, October and December meetings requiring a speaker.
2. Try to schedule out of town speakers during the nice travel months, so December, January, and April are definite workshops for local or ORWA authors.

3. Normal workshops run the last part of the meeting (approx. 2:30 - 4:00). Special workshops might start earlier (e.g. 1:00) with the business part of the meeting occurring earlier or later, depending on the speaker's schedule.

### **Alternatives**

- Occasionally it's easier to do something informal, such as have everyone at the meeting discuss a topic, or go into two or three groups and ask a published author to lead or facilitate a discussion on a specific writing topic. (We've done both of these in January some years.)
- Sometimes very special workshops, such as retreats, are arranged. They need more coordination and a committee can be helpful.

### **Special speakers get special treatment**

- With special out-of-town speakers there will be travel and accommodations arrangements to be made, as well as social outings such as dinners. With editors and agents we also arrange appointments (providing the editor or agent is willing). With outside authors there may be book signings. Sometimes we charge a little extra and rent a nice room.
- With special speakers there are more wants and a lot more work, so delegating tasks helps considerably. (e.g. one person books the room, one person hosts a potluck, one person chooses a restaurant and makes dinner reservations, etc.)
- There is considerable benefit to being one of the members who gets the chance to spend time with the special speaker (learning a great amount in a short time, making a useful future contact, perhaps even making a friend).

### **Finances**

- Only outside speakers are paid, although there may be minor expenses reimbursed for ORWA member speakers.
- There are ways to make speaker costs cheaper. Members may have a friend/acquaintance whom they've seen speak and know is good. Often these members have housed the speaker, which saves us money. This is not always an option, of course.
- Sometimes we get an extra special speaker which results in higher expenses. For those special events we charge non-members more money, and occasionally charge members a small fee as well.
- The workshop budget comes from membership dues and is usually around \$1200. Some years, if ORWA has a significant surplus, some of that money can be redirected towards workshops. All workshops with expenses of \$50 or more must be voted on by the membership at a meeting. (Under \$50 must be approved by the executive.)
- Expenses must be accompanied by receipts and a short report (including financial details). Sometimes money must be fronted (method should be worked out with treasurer in advance) for expenses such as plane tickets and hotel rooms. Sometimes the speaker will pay for these and will be reimbursed. Other times someone else (often the workshop coordinator) will. For instance, when asking an editor or agent to come, we don't even suggest that they pay up front. We just do it.
- A speaker who is not a member of ORWA and is not being paid an honorarium for speaking, should be presented with a gift in the \$10 - \$25 range.

### **Workshop Write-Up**

Prior to the meeting or workshop, the Workshop Coordinator should obtain the speaker's bio and prepare an announcement or article highlighting the guest speaker for the Love Knot. If the

speaker is a friend of another ORWA member, the Workshop Coordinator may wish to ask the ORWA member to contribute information to or write the article/announcement.

**Day of the workshop** The workshop coordinator should ensure that the guest is made to feel welcome by introducing her to the executive and other members. She may appoint a helper to facilitate this task. In advance of the meeting, the workshop coordinator should ensure whether a gift or honorarium will be presented and who will be purchasing the gift and a card. An honorarium is traditionally presented in a card to the speaker by the president at the close of the workshop.

**Further Information**

Feel free to ask the advice of past workshop coordinators and past presidents. Everyone is more than willing to help

## **Chapter Five: Finances**

**Note:** For detailed financial procedures, see the Treasurer's duties in Chapter Four.

**A. Fiscal Year:** ORWA's fiscal year runs from 1 January to 31 December.

**B. NSF Cheques:** A fee of \$15 shall be charged for NSF cheques.

**C. Installment Payments:** At the discretion of the Executive, membership, workshop or other fees may be paid by installment rather than in one lump sum. In this case, post-dated cheques or a series of money orders will be required.

**D. Budget:** The budget for the year shall be presented to the general membership at each March meeting for approval. In order to maintain ORWA's sound fiscal status, the budget must be balanced: that is, income and expenses must at least break even.

**E. Financial Statements:** An income and expense statement should be provided at each executive and general meeting to ensure that all members of ORWA are aware of the group's financial well-being, and to ensure that income and expenses agree with the approved budget. Statements required to be presented at year-end include the Income Statement and Balance Sheet.

## **Chapter Six: Property**

**A. Inventory:** any assets valued at more than \$5.00 shall be inventoried annually. For the Book and Tape Libraries, the inventory should be part of the handover between Librarians.

## Chapter Seven: General

### A. Duties of Non-Executive Positions

**1. Accolades Coordinator:** is responsible for ensuring that ORWA celebrates the accomplishments of its members, through Accolades announcements at each meeting, and through maintaining ORWA members' publishing records. The Accolades Coordinator inquires at general meetings if anyone has any accolades to announce, and provides accolades forms (see below) for members to fill out (or takes her own notes) and submits the accolades to the editor for publication in an upcoming issue of the LoveKnot. **Accolades** include:

- made a sale
- submitted a manuscript
- sent a query or synopsis
- won a contest
- entered a contest
- completed a manuscript
- finished any chapters
- received a rejection
- judged a contest
- any other achievements members wish to announce

As a rule, the Coordinator gives out one chocolate to a member for each of their achievements, and two chocolates for a rejection.

If the Accolades Coordinator chooses to use an Accolades Form (rather than taking notes), she provides one to each member to fill out with their accomplishments so that the information regarding their achievements can be published in an upcoming issue of the Love Knot.

Accolades Forms are handed back to the Accolades Coordinator by the end of each meeting; however, it's a good idea to put the Accolades Coordinator's name, address, telephone # & email address on the back of the form in case the member does not hand the form in at the meeting.

After all the Accolades Forms have been collected, the Accolades Coordinator compiles and writes an article for ORWA's Love Knot newsletter. **Please Note:** Although rejections are acknowledged at the meeting, they are usually not added to the Accolades article (unless there is a special reason).

The submission of the Accolades article is due each month by the 18th in order to give the Newsletter Editor sufficient time to fit the article into the next Love Knot issue.

The Accolades Coordinator also maintains **publishing records for ORWA members**. Each month, through the collection of Accolades Forms, the Coordinator compiles lists of ORWA members who have had a work published or rejected or who have entered any contests. At the end of the year, these lists are supplied to the Brunch Coordinator.



**2. Auditor/Financial Advisor:** is responsible for the audit of ORWA's account books for the previous year, in the case where an outside financial professional is not available. The Constitution and Bylaws requires the committee to be comprised of three ORWA members who are not immediate past members of the Executive, to avoid conflict of interest issues. The Audit Committee may be joined in its work by both the current and immediate past Treasurers. The Executive may elect for the Auditor to receive the bank statements to prevent statements from getting lost due to the yearly change in the slate of officers.

The role of the Auditor/Financial Advisor is to advise the Treasurer, Executive Board and general membership on issues that require clarification involving the disbursement of ORWA funds and to assist and advise as needed in the recording of credits and debits. If the Auditor is asked to advise on an issue requiring a vote of the membership at a general meeting, the Auditor should abstain from voting on the motion. The Auditor should remain impartial.

**Note:** While ORWA's bylaws require an audit be done within 90 days of the fiscal year end, it is recommended that the audit be completed by the end of January to give the new Executive Board an accurate picture of the state of ORWA's finances as they plan the budget for their current year.

The Auditor's report should be presented to the Executive and the general membership no later than the March meeting.

#### **a) Selection of the Audit Committee**

A two-member Audit Committee should be appointed to assist the Auditor in conducting the annual audit of ORWA's account books within 90 days of the fiscal year end. During the audit period these members should **not** be on the current or immediate past executive.

The Audit Committee will conduct the audit along with the Auditor/Financial Advisor, who was previously appointed as Advisor for the year under audit. Along with the Auditors and Auditor/Financial Advisor, the immediate past Treasurer as well as the current Treasurer may also be requested to be present at the audit.

The Audit Committee ensures that funds received and disbursed are accurately recorded, and correct any errors found. (All errors that have been made during the year under audit are also reported in a discrepancy report.) The Auditor and the Audit Committee prepare and sign an Auditor's Report which is submitted to the Executive and the membership at the March general meeting. The report is also submitted to the Love Knot to ensure that all members are aware that the audit has been conducted. In their report, the Audit Committee may also make recommendations for changes to the Treasurer Guidelines if necessary.

#### **b) Selection of Auditor/Financial Advisor**

The Auditor/Financial Advisor is an appointed member of ORWA who has been a member of the previous year's audit committee and is familiar with the policies and procedures of ORWA's accounting system and audit procedures. Their role is to advise the Treasurer, Executive Board or general membership on issues that require clarification involving the disbursement of ORWA funds, and to keep a record of such issues for future reference during the annual audit of ORWA's account books

To assist in this role, the Auditor/Financial Advisor provides the new Treasurer with an overview of the procedures for accurate record keeping if the immediate past Treasurer is not able to. In addition, the Auditor/Advisor assists the Treasurer to clarify the proper way of dealing with ORWA's financial records, and answers any questions the Treasurer, Executive or general membership have during the year. During the audit, the Auditor/Advisor teaches, assists and advises the Audit Committee on the policies and procedures of ORWA's accounting and audit system, and ensures that the next Auditor/Financial Advisor understands their role for the coming year.

For the period in which they are Auditor/Financial Advisor it is best that they are not a member of the current Executive Board, or a Committee Chair or are involved with any ORWA activities which involve the disbursement of funds, to ensure that there is no opportunity for a conflict of interest between themselves, the Executive Board or the Treasurer.

The Auditor/Financial Advisor should be on hand at all times during the audit to advise and assist the Audit Committee if a question arises.

The Auditor/Financial Advisor has the power to periodically examine ORWA's account ledgers and disbursements to ensure that they are being kept in accordance with the Treasurer Guidelines and Audit Committee's Recommendations that have been approved by the Executive Board.

During the examination of ORWA's account books and disbursements, the Auditor/Financial Advisor has the power to check for any inconsistencies and correct any mistakes.

### **c) Items to be provided to the Audit Committee**

During the audit the Treasurer should provide the Audit Committee with the following:

- all ORWA's account records for the year to be audited
- the bank book and all bank statements provided to ORWA for the year to be audited
- all disbursement forms for the year to be audited
- all financial statements that were provided by the Treasurer to the general membership, including the budget for the year being audited
- all Committee Chair's budgets and financial statements
- a copy of the Treasurer Guidelines
- all previous Auditor's Reports

The Treasurer or the Executive Board should also provide the Audit Committee with the following:

- a copy of ORWA's Constitution and Bylaws
- all minutes to executive and general meetings to allow the audit committee to verify what funds were allotted by the executive and/or membership

### **d) Conducting the Annual Audit of ORWA's account books**

Once the Audit Committee have been provided with items needed, they should proceed with the audit.

While ORWA's Bylaws require an audit be done within 90 days of the fiscal year end, it is recommended that the audit be completed by the end of January to give the new Executive Board an accurate picture of the state of ORWA's finances as they plan the budget for their current year.

In conducting the audit, the auditors, acting on behalf of the membership, must satisfy themselves that all is in order and properly recorded. It is the Audit Committee's responsibility to ensure that all discrepancies/errors found are noted and the course of action taken indicated.

ORWA has an open book policy. No disbursement is beyond discussion or question if the rules were not adhered to -- no matter who made it.

If an expense over \$50 was made without proper authority, you note that in your Auditor's Report and make a recommendation to prevent it from recurring.

If a disbursement was made and a receipt not provided, you may wish to investigate the expense by discussing it with the member(s) involved and perhaps checking/verifying the cost of the item to ensure the amount is reasonable. This must be done with tact and discretion.

It is inappropriate for any member of the executive board to advise you how to deal with a disbursement you're investigating as an auditor.

In circumstances where it is found that ORWA owes a member money, the Audit Committee ensures a cheque is written.

In circumstances where it is found a member has been overpaid and owes ORWA money, the Audit Committee is to report this information (and offer their recommendation) to the current executive board when they present the Auditor's Report to the executive board. The Executive Board, by vote, will decide the appropriate course of action to be taken. Note again that the Audit Committee should exercise discretion when investigating any discrepancy found in our financial records. A discreet chat with the member(s) involved with the discrepancy will usually provide enough information to resolve the matter.

In the Auditor's Report, it is sufficient to note that discrepancies where receipts had not been provided were investigated and found to be in order. There is no need to list names of the members who did not provide receipts for whatever reason.

However, if an error is corrected and a cheque issued to a member, the name of the member, the date, the amount and the reason must be noted in the Auditor's Report.

*Procedure:*

*In conducting the audit, check each individual entry (beginning in January of the year under audit), to ensure that:*

***i. Deposits or Credits***

- *the amount entered is the same amount that was deposited to ORWA's bank account (NOTE: Depending on the Treasurer's methods, two or more entries in the account books may be combined and therefore appear as only one entry on the bank statement)*

*ii. Debits (all debits **must** have a corresponding disbursement form)*

- *an Executive Board member submitting the disbursement form has not approved their own expenses*
- *the amount entered is the same amount that appears on the disbursement form:*
- *the disbursement form has been completed accurately:*
  - *date*
  - *disbursement #*
  - *name and position of member submitting disbursement*
  - *quantity, description and amount*
  - *member's signature*
  - *Treasurer's signature*
  - *ORWA cheque # and date of issue*
  - *membership approval date/executive approval signature (NOTE: **All** disbursements need the executive approval signature. And **all** disbursements where one item is \$50 or over **must** have the membership approval date (meaning the date when the vote by the general membership took place -- if the amount was approved in the budget, the membership approval date is the date the budget was approved) as well as the executive approval signature.)*
- *the disbursement # assigned is recorded accurately in the account book.*
- *the ORWA cheque # is recorded accurately in the account book*
- *all budgeted items fall within the budgeted amounts of all executive budgets and committee chair budgets (except where otherwise stipulated in either executive or general meeting minutes)*
- *that the amount of the disbursement is correctly recorded in the appropriate column as either a debit or credit*
- *a receipt has been attached. If there is **no** receipt then the box '**reason for not submitting receipt(s)**' must be completed and the reason for not submitting a receipt included. **It is the Auditor's responsibility to verify that any disbursements for which a receipt was not provided are legitimate by asking the member to provide a backup receipt in the form of a bank statement for an Interac/debit card purchase or a credit card statement for a credit card purchase. If the purchase was made in cash, the Auditors can verify with the place of purchase by phone or by checking the price of similar items, that the price is reasonable.***

**e) Auditor's Report**

The Auditor's Report, until presented to the Executive Board, is a confidential document and remains so to ensure the integrity of its contents. The goal of the Audit Committee's Recommendations is to ensure that ORWA's financial records are kept in order and to simplify the bookkeeping as much as possible for the Treasurer.

The Auditor's Report should consist of the following:

- Audit Committee Summary: a summary of the Audit Committee's general findings, including a brief description of any discrepancies and a brief outline of any recommendations. This should be signed by both Auditors and the Audit/Financial Advisor.
- Balance Sheet: bank account balance vs ORWA's account books balance
- Discrepancy Report (if any discrepancies are reported): a detailed account of all discrepancies found during the audit, and a detailed account of what action the Audit Committee has taken or will take in the future to clear up said discrepancy.
- Audit Committee Recommendations (if necessary): a detailed list of all recommendations, including any made for the addition, deletion or modification to the Treasurer Guidelines.

The Auditor's Report should be completed and presented to the Executive Board in an expeditious manner, to enable the new Executive Board the opportunity to examine its contents and to take immediate action if necessary on any point within the document.

Both Audit Committee and Audit/Financial Advisor should be present at the presentation to answer or clarify any questions the Executive Board may have concerning the Auditor's Report document.

Once the Auditor's Report has been presented to the Executive Board, the Audit Committee should make arrangements with the Executive Board to have the presentation of the Auditor's Report added to the general memberships' meeting agenda.

At the general meeting one member of the Audit Committee or the Audit/Financial Advisor should give a brief summary of the Audit Committee's findings. Once the Auditor's Report has been presented to the General Membership, a follow-up Auditor's Statement should be submitted to the Newsletter to ensure that members who were not present at the presentation can be informed of the Auditor's Report.

**3. Critique Clearinghouse Coordinator:** maintains a current list of ORWA members willing to critique other members' work. When a request for a critique is received, the Coordinator matches the request as closely as possible with the skills and interests of a critiquer.

The request should be detailed on a Request Form to give sufficient detail to match the work involved with the appropriate critiquer, or Resource Person. The list of Critiquers, and their forms, should be updated annually.

The Coordinator contacts the critiquer, and gives as much detail as possible, including the critiquee's name (unless the request is for an anonymous critique), to enable the critiquer to make a decision about going ahead with the critique. If the answer is yes, the Coordinator contacts the critiquee, giving her or him the critiquer's contact information, and the two individuals then sort out how they'll trade the manuscript back and forth. (If the answer is no, of course, the Coordinator contacts another potential critiquer.)

In the case of an anonymous critique, the Coordinator usually obtains the work to be critiqued, and submits it to the critiquer without naming the author. The critiquer will then submit it back to the Coordinator, for onward transmission to the author.

It's a good idea to give the critiquer a call after a week or so to ensure the process is going well. Similarly, contacting the critiquee after the critique is finished provides valuable feedback about the process.

*Sample article for Love Knot, by Yvonne Jeffery Hope:*

*ORWA set up the Critique Clearinghouse (CCH) in 1995 to assist you in finding a suitable critiquer for your manuscript, someone familiar with the category you're writing. While all members of ORWA are certainly encouraged to make use of the CCH, we hope it might be of particular benefit to those who are a little shy about approaching someone to critique their work, those who don't have a regular critique group, or those who need a fresh look at their work.*

*Think of the CCH as your first reader cracking the spine of your book. Will she love the story from the opening hook? Will she become so involved in the characters (and the conflict that separates them) that she forgets all about making supper?*

*What if she doesn't love the story? what if she finds the characters difficult to like? Or the conflict poorly motivated? Wouldn't you want to know?*

*My job as the CCH coordinator is to find the best person to critique your work, and to ensure she or he is available. Once it's all set up, I notify you of the critiquer, and the two of you take it from there. Should you prefer an anonymous critique, I'll take care of getting the critique to and from the critiquer without revealing your identity. I only ask that when you request the critique, whether anonymous or otherwise, you have the work ready to go. Please don't ask for a critique of something that "should be finished next month."*

*To help me do a good job, I need to know (in writing) the category of your manuscript, whether it's a partial or complete manuscript and/or a synopsis, how soon you'd like a reply (two to three weeks is reasonable), and the type of critique you're looking for. Do you want a line edit (spelling, grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, etc.) plus several pages of general comment on plot, character, conflict, etc., or do you want a heavier emphasis on general comments plus a*

*few examples of line editing? Do you have any specific concerns, such as sensuality in the love scenes, or suspense in your mystery plot?*

*I also need to know who's willing and available to critique for the CCH, and what your areas of expertise are. Remember, filling out the form doesn't mean you're obliged to critique...if you're too busy when the request comes, just say so.*

**CRITIQUE CLEARINGHOUSE RESOURCE PERSON**

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE (H) \_\_\_\_\_ (W) \_\_\_\_\_ (FAX) \_\_\_\_\_

E-MAIL \_\_\_\_\_

BEST HOURS TO REACH ME \_\_\_\_\_

**EXPERIENCE:**

You don't have to be published to be a great critiquer. Experience in critique groups or with writing courses or workshops helps, but isn't necessary. Having read extensively in the field is the only real criterion we have. Anyone who reads a lot, knows a lot.

No. Years Writing \_\_\_\_\_ No. Years ORWA \_\_\_\_\_

Workshops/conferences attended:

Are you a member of a critique group? (List ORWA members in your group.)

What lines do you read regularly?

What lines are you currently writing?

Are you published in:

Details:

\_\_\_ Romance \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ Fiction \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ Non-Fiction \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

AVAILABILITY TO CRITIQUE:

I am willing to critique in the following categories:

Contemporary: Short\_\_\_\_ Long\_\_\_\_ Traditional\_\_\_\_ Suspense\_\_\_\_ Paranormal\_\_\_\_

Time Travel\_\_\_\_ Young Adult\_\_\_\_ Other\_\_\_\_

Historical: Regency\_\_\_\_ Western\_\_\_\_ Medieval\_\_\_\_ Other\_\_\_\_

Other: Mainstream Romance\_\_\_\_ Short Romantic Fiction\_\_\_\_

Popular/Women's Fiction\_\_\_\_ Other (please specify)\_\_\_\_\_

For each manuscript I am willing to: (check all that apply)

\_\_\_\_ Provide a detailed line edit to a maximum of \_\_\_\_ chapters/pages (circle one).  
Line edits correct spelling, punctuation, grammar and sentence structure, and are detail oriented.

\_\_\_\_ Provide only brief line editing examples rather than a detailed line edit.

\_\_\_\_ Provide a general analysis of the work -- comments on the "big picture" such as plot, character, conflict, etc.

\_\_\_\_ Discuss the manuscript with the writer on the telephone\_\_\_\_, in person\_\_\_\_, or via e-mail\_\_\_\_.

For CCH Coordinator's Use:

Date Assigned:

Type of Critique:

Length:

Critiquee:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**CRITIQUE CLEARINGHOUSE REQUEST**

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE (H) \_\_\_\_\_ (W) \_\_\_\_\_ (FAX) \_\_\_\_\_

E-MAIL \_\_\_\_\_

BEST HOURS TO REACH ME \_\_\_\_\_

IS THIS A REQUEST FOR AN ANONYMOUS CRITIQUE? \_\_\_\_\_

**EXPERIENCE:**

This information will assist in matching you with the most suitable critiquer.

No. Years Writing \_\_\_\_\_ No. Years ORWA \_\_\_\_\_

Workshops/conferences attended:

Are you a member of a critique group? (List ORWA members in your group.)

What lines do you read regularly?

What lines are you currently writing?

Are you published in:

Details:

\_\_\_ Romance

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ Fiction

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ Non-Fiction

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ Other

\_\_\_\_\_

WORK TO BE CRITIQUED:

Contemporary: Short\_\_\_\_ Long\_\_\_\_ Traditional\_\_\_\_ Suspense\_\_\_\_ Paranormal\_\_\_\_

Time Travel\_\_\_\_ Young Adult\_\_\_\_ Other\_\_\_\_

Historical: Regency\_\_\_\_ Western\_\_\_\_ Medieval\_\_\_\_ Other\_\_\_\_

Other: Mainstream Romance\_\_\_\_ Short Romantic Fiction\_\_\_\_

Popular/Women's Fiction\_\_\_\_ Other (please specify)\_\_\_\_\_

Length: Partial\_\_\_\_ Complete\_\_\_\_ Number of pages\_\_\_\_\_

Synopsis: Yes\_\_\_\_ No\_\_\_\_ Number of pages\_\_\_\_\_

Response Time Requested\_\_\_\_\_

WHAT TYPE OF CRITIQUE IS NEEDED?

\_\_\_\_ A detailed line edit throughout the manuscript.  
Line edits correct spelling, punctuation, grammar and sentence structure, and are detail oriented.

\_\_\_\_ Just a few line editing examples.

\_\_\_\_ Several pages of general comments on plot, character, conflict, etc.

\_\_\_\_ If they agree, I'd like the opportunity to discuss the critique with the critiquer.

DO YOU HAVE ANY SPECIFIC CONCERNS (E.G. PLOT, SENSUALITY, ETC.)?

For CCH Coordinator's Use:

Date In:

Date Set Up:

Critiquer:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**4. Critique Partner Liaison:** announces in the newsletter that she or he is available to anyone looking for a critique partner or group. If someone asks for help locating a critique group, the Liaison contacts other members and makes arrangements for them to speak with the interested party or parties.

**5. Montreal Members Liaison:** acts as a contact person for the Montreal-area members.

**6. Promotions Coordinators** (one in Ottawa; one in Montreal): issue press releases concerning group activities, including publicity notices for local papers to promote ORWA events and workshops. The Coordinators maintain and update ORWA's publicity materials, such as brochures, and distribute such material and publicity notices to other writers' groups and local libraries. They also greet guests attending meetings to answer questions and provide information regarding the group. If money is allotted for advertising, the Coordinators submit a summary of expenses to the executive.

**7. Refreshment Coordinator:** ensures that refreshments are available at ORWA meetings when necessary. The Coordinator distributes a list in September for members to sign up to bring goodies to meetings, and phones a few days before each meeting to provide a reminder. Any extra supplies are purchased, with receipts submitted to the Treasurer for reimbursement, and those supplies are brought to the meeting and set up.

**8. Webmaster** assumes the following responsibilities for maintaining Orwa's website:

- \* Website updates. The webmaster is responsible for soliciting and posting regular updates of ORWA information, including author information, to the website. Updates are done monthly or at a minimum, quarterly.

- \* Redesigns. The webmaster is responsible for ensuring information is easily accessible and for redesigns as necessary. Major redesigns of the website are to be discussed with the general membership before being implemented.

- \* Agreements. Every October, the Webmaster is responsible for re-registering the Ottawa Romance Writers Association domain name. As this is an expenditure, the webmaster is to review the cost with the membership no later than the September general meeting. Every December, the Webmaster is responsible for renewing the site web hosting agreement. As this is a budgetary item, this is to be raised no later than the October general meeting, to ensure that if alternative must be found, the webmaster has sufficient time to make arrangements.

- \* Records. The webmaster is responsible for keeping records of all software, fonts and imagery used on the ORWA site, to facilitate transition from one webmaster to the next.

**9. ORWA Chat Loop Moderator** assumes the following duties for moderating ORWA's chatloop:

- \* Subscribe new members to the list at Yahoo (by sending them invitations to join - you can no longer directly add people to groups) as directed by ORWA's Registrar

- \* Unsubscribe those who are no longer members who forget to do so when they leave

\* Keep an eye on the list and remind people about basic netiquette i.e. snipping original posts when replying, not including entire digests, changing subject lines when appropriate and just generally making sure all comments remain professional

**10. RWA PRO Liaison** duties include:

\*Remind the general membership at each meeting about the PRO program, it's requirements and procedures for applying, etc.

\*Speak regularly on the benefits of PRO membership, like the website, the market news, the PRO email links, column in the RWR, PRO track at National Conference, etc.

\*Have PRO applications available at every chapter meeting

\*Collect the proof of fulfilled requirements--hard copy or disk copy of completed MS plus proof of submission: copy of a rejection letter from an editor or agent stating the name of the completed MS, submission postcard stating the name of the completed MS, or a contract from a small or unrecognized press or e-pub for the MS.

\*Have the applying member fill out the PRO application

\*Get two chapter board members to authenticate and sign off on the proof, preferably before the next meeting.

\*Mail off the application to RWA National ASAP--with PRO pin sent to the chapter president's address, in my case. This can change to the PRO rep's address when official

\*At next meeting after PRO pin arrives, award to the member with much fanfare!

\*If possible, the PRO representative should be a member of RWAPRO. This allows access to the PRO website and makes gathering information easier.

## **B. Annual Valentine's Day Brunch Coordinator**

Each year, ORWA uses the romance around Valentine's Day as an opportunity to celebrate its members' achievements over the previous year and thank our volunteers. The Brunch Coordinator selects a committee of several other members, plus the Treasurer. The first ORWA brunch was held in 1995.

### **Tasks/Schedule**

#### **November**

- Research possible brunch locations and menu prices. Tentatively reserve dates. The Brunch is traditionally held on the first or second Sunday of February from 12:00 to 4:00 p.m. The meal price per person should include taxes and gratuities. Five dollars is usually added on to the meal price for the brunch to cover costs of awards, gifts, flowers, etc. Please note that the final ticket price per member is usually anywhere from \$22.00 to \$28.00, including the \$5 supplement. Guest ticket prices are \$10.00 above the ORWA member prices.

When checking out a location, please consider that we require a quiet room where speeches can be given without microphones or having to compete over background noise in the restaurant. Adequate parking is a must.

- Budget:
  - a) The brunch committee should consider their budget to be about \$100 based on the usual attendance factor of 20 members x \$5, with the knowledge that a \$50 reserve of funds is set aside in ORWA's annual budget to cover any cost overruns.
  - b) The cost of the executive gifts (budget \$5-6 per gift) comes from ORWA's gift budget, not the brunch budget. These gifts would be presented to our out-going executive whether there is a brunch or not.
  - c) Volunteer gifts are presented to ORWA members who have helped out in the previous year. Budget \$1 - \$3 per gift, including tax. Only volunteers who attend the brunch receive a gift. The executive, the workshop coordinator and the newsletter editor should be asked to provide the committee with a list of members who have donated their services to the group.
  - d) Editor gift. Budget \$5 – 6 for an editor's gift as this job is one of the most time-consuming of volunteer positions.
  - d) First Book Awards. Since the Brunch's inception, Joyce Sullivan looks after this award and the purchase of a frame and matting of the recipient's first bookcover and the award certificate. The price varies from year to year depending on the size of the bookcover and the cost of the frame. Budget \$45 per award. If more than one award is to be presented, make a motion at the December meeting to cover the additional costs if you are worried you'll surpass the \$50 Brunch reserve.
  - e) Audrey Jessup Award for Volunteer Service, named after ORWA's founder, who passed away in 2003. This award is a business card case presented to the recipient. Budget \$23

for this award. *Things Engraved* is the store we usually purchase them from. Elizabeth Syme-Adamitz usually presents the award in Audrey's name.

- Brunch theme/programme
  - a) ORWA members who will be receiving the Jo Beverley First Book Award are generally our featured speakers at the Brunch. They make a speech when they receive the award. Depending on the number of recipients and the theme of the programme or other guest speakers planned, the First Book Award recipients may be asked to give a talk anywhere from 10 minutes to 1 hour. If by November, no member has made a first book sale, the brunch coordinator should be thinking about inviting an outside guest speaker/author/editor/agent or soliciting a workshop/panel from other ORWA members.
  - b) Our Brunch is a celebration and the underlying theme/programme should inspire our members to continue pursuing their writing careers.
  - c) As part of our celebratory theme, the First Meet Trophy is always prominently displayed at the Brunch and the previous year's top three finalists are asked to make a short speech to explain what happened with their author/editor critiques.

## **December**

- At December meeting
  - a) Present restaurant/meal options for group vote.
  - b) Vote on guest speaker if travel expenses or honorarium will be incurred. Minimal expenses like gas may be covered in the Brunch budget. Larger travel expenses or an honorarium can be voted from the ORWA Workshop Budget or by charging a higher ticket price for the Brunch attendees.
  - c) Vote on ticket price for the brunch.
  - d) Have on hand some award applications for the Genesis, Phoenix, First Book & Subsequent Sales. (Applications follow below.)
- After the meeting, confirm the date with the restaurant, ask by what date final count of members attending must be supplied. Ask how many last-minute guests may be allowed to attend because our Montreal members attend weather/permitting on the day of the event.. Inquire what type of tablecloths (what color), candles, flowers etc. the restaurant may supply. Some may supply fresh flowers. Just because they have them, doesn't mean you want to use them. Our Brunch is considered a formal occasion, so keep the table dressings appropriate to the event.
- Confirm travel arrangements with guest speaker(s) if any.
- By December 18<sup>th</sup>, write up and submit to the LoveKnot a blurb about the brunch, including theme, restaurant, location, guest speakers, workshop, ticket price, deadline to buy tickets etc. Ask the editor to run it in January and February.
- Meet with committee members to divide various jobs between committee members, including:
  - a) Confirming theme of the brunch, selection of speaker topics

- b) Select emcee. The emcee opens the brunch with a 5-10 minute inspirational talk about the theme, keeps the programme running smoothly and introduces all speakers.
  - c) Coordinating applications for awards and arranging for certificates for Phoenix, Genesis, and First Novella awards and Executive Service awards. Award applications should be posted in both the January and February issues of the ORWA Love Knot. Please note that First Book recipients must provide their covers to Joyce Sullivan no later than mid-January. Joyce Sullivan traditionally does all the certificates and awards and has all the materials.
  - d) Obtain list of volunteers from executive, workshop coordinator, newsletter editor. Purchase volunteer gifts, executive gifts, editor(s) gifts, Audrey Jessup Volunteer Service Award. If you're not sure of the number of volunteers attending, on average we present about 22 volunteer gifts. Leftover gifts can be recycled to present to guest speakers.
  - e) Roses for subsequent sales. Published authors who've made subsequent sales are awarded with a rose for each sale made.
  - f) Arranging decorations and/or flowers for the tables – Determine if needed. You may opt to do a large arrangement in a vase on the gift table instead, or even sprinkle rose petals about. The lovely thing about the brunch is that each coordinator/committee can add their own special touches.
  - g) Audrey Jessup Volunteer Service Award is presented to a member voted by the group for exemplary volunteer service. The recipient may not be on the executive or previously received the award. Prepare ballots to distribute in the January LoveKnot, as well as to distribute at the January meeting. Be sure to post a list of the previous recipients. Confirm with Elizabeth Syme-Adamitz that she will be able to present the award at the brunch.
  - h) Doorprizes. In the past, ORWA members often donated doorprizes to the Brunch.
- Some Brunch committees have actively solicited books from publishers, authors, merchants, etc. There is no set rule.
- i) Publicity. Coordinate publicity, if any. At the very least, a notice should be posted to the Citizen's Upcoming Events section. Check the paper for submission deadlines.

## January

- At January meeting, conduct the vote for the Audrey Jessup Award. Encourage members to complete and submit award applications.
- Publicize event by submitting information in the Ottawa Citizen's upcoming events calendar.
- Post reminders on the chat loop to encourage members to apply for the award and stimulate ticket sales.
- Stay in touch with Treasurer to stay on track of ticket sales.
- By January 18<sup>th</sup> submit to Loveknot, article about the Brunch along with map/directions to the event.
- Prepare programme for the brunch to give to emcee at least 3 weeks prior to event, and ask people to present awards. The brunch has a traditional format as follows:

Ottawa Romance Writers' Association  
Valentine's Brunch 200X  
Location

Sunday, February X, 200X

12:00 p.m. Welcome by emcee. 5 - 10 minute inspirational message.  
Introduction of Orwa's Executive

Welcome by president.

Presentation of the Sandra Robertson Award for Executive Service  
and gifts to out-going executive by new president.

Presentation of volunteer gifts by current President

Presentation of the Audrey Jessup Volunteer Service Award by  
Elizabeth Syme Adamitz

12:30 - 1:30 Doorprizes. Lunch

2:00 Presentation of Awards

Orwa First Meet Contest Winners by Contest Coordinator

Genesis & Phoenix Awards by the president or a published author

First Novella Award by the president.

Jo Beverley First Book Award presented by the last author to receive it.

"First sale talk" by recipient(s)

Roses presented for Subsequent Author Romance Sales by president.

Non-romance writing achievements mentioned by president.

2:30 Doorprizes. Bathroom Break

2:45 Main workshop: Joyce Sullivan & Kathryn Smith  
"Sizzling First Meets"

3:55 Doorprizes. Final Thanks. (Remind the emcee of the protocol of  
publicly acknowledges each member of the brunch committee.)

### February/leading up to brunch

- Ensure article about the Brunch appeared in the LoveKnot with a map/directions to the location.
- Post reminder on the chat loop along with directions, etc.
- Follow up that all award presenters have been contacted and have the necessary information they need about the award. (Award info below)
- Ensure awards/certificates have been made.
- Follow up on travel arrangements/photocopies of handouts for guest speaker.
- Purchase gift for guest speaker or remind Treasurer to purchase a gift card and prepare cheque for the honorarium.
- Remind Treasurer to bring chequebook to the brunch so cheque can be written to the restaurant at the close of the event.
- Ensure all gifts have been purchased/wrapped.
- Provide restaurant with final number of attendees by deadline. Please note that Montreal members often can't confirm their attendance until the day before or day of because of weather.
- Prepare meal tickets if members have preordered their meal selections.
- Check with committee members to report their expenses to you so you're aware whether or not you're on budget. Each committee member should present you with a written outline of their expenses. Committee members submit their receipts to Treasurer for reimbursement.

### Day of Brunch

- Purchase Subsequent Sale Roses and flowers for the tables (if required)
- Arrive early at restaurant to set up
- assist Treasurer with ticket sales and issuing receipts
- act as a troubleshooter during brunch working with restaurant staff

### After the Brunch

- Update Brunch Committee section of Policy & Procedures Handbook
- Meal refunds are only issued to members who failed to attend if the restaurant did not charge ORWA for the booked meal. A refund should not include the \$5 fee to cover brunch expenses.
- Present summary of expenses after event to Executive and membership at the March meeting as shown:

#### Statement of Account 200X Valentine's Brunch

Income:	21 tickets sold @ \$26.00 =	\$ 546.00
	2 tickets sold @ \$36.00 =	<u>\$ 72.00</u>
		\$ 618.00
Refunds on two tickets @ 23.00 each		- <u>46.00</u>
Total income:		\$572.00

#### Disbursements:

restaurant charge for 21 meals including tax/tip	\$482.99
volunteer gifts—candles	55.92

frame first book award	5.60
matting first book award	14.78
card for first book award	1.15
gift for newsletter editor	6.31
flowers for tables & roses for book sale	13.88
Audrey Jessup Award card case	17.24
gift bags, tissue paper	5.55
gift sacks for volunteer gifts	3.21
gift bag Audrey Jessup Award	.58
candy hearts	2.26
photocopies workshop	14.64

Total Disbursements:		\$624.11
Total Income	\$ 572.00	
less total Disbursements	<u>- 624.11</u>	
Loss of :	\$ -52.11	

Notes:

1. The Orwa membership voted to subsidize the brunch to keep ticket costs down to \$26 per person e.g. \$23 per person meal cost, plus \$3 towards the programme.
2. The cost of the executive gifts was \$25.26, but they not listed above because these are not expenses paid for out of the brunch budget.

Respectfully submitted,  
Jane Smith, Brunch Coordinator

**Addendum to Brunch Coordinator's information**

- I. Audrey Jessup Volunteer Service Award ballots**
- II. Writing Award Applications**
- III. History of the Genesis & Phoenix Awards for Presenters/Recipients**
- IV. Remembering Audrey Jessup**
- V. History of the Sandra Robertson Award for Executive Service**

**See following pages.**

I nominate \_\_\_\_\_ for the Audrey Jessup Award

because \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Thank you for voting!**

I nominate \_\_\_\_\_ for the Audrey Jessup Award

because \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Thank you for voting!**

I nominate \_\_\_\_\_ for the Audrey Jessup Award

because \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Thank you for voting!**

I nominate \_\_\_\_\_ for the Audrey Jessup Award

because \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Thank you for voting!**

I nominate \_\_\_\_\_ for the Audrey Jessup Award

because \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Thank you for voting!**

## APPLICATION FOR ORWA WRITING AWARDS

In the spirit of Orwa's mandate to support and encourage each other in the pursuit of a career in romance writing, Orwa presents awards to members at our annual Valentine's Brunch in recognition of their writing achievements in the course of the previous year (2001). These awards are meant to commemorate an author's all-important first tries at submitting a partial and a completed manuscript to a publisher and her first successes in getting published in short story, novella and book length form. Each award may be received only once. If you've recently joined the group but have been writing for a long time, you may opt to apply for the award for work sold before 2001, or you may apply for the award with work submitted and sold within 2001.

We are also interested in hearing of your subsequent sales in short fiction, novellas, books (any genre). And of your placing in contests.

### FIRST TRY AWARDS

**Genesis Award** - Presented to authors who've submitted their first proposal consisting of three chapters and a synopsis of a romance novel to a publishing house and had it rejected.

**Phoenix Award** - Presented to authors who've submitted their first full-length romance manuscript to a publisher and had it rejected.

Author's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Manuscript: \_\_\_\_\_

Was submission Partial \_\_\_ (Genesis Award) or Full \_\_\_ (Phoenix Award)

Publisher submitted to: \_\_\_\_\_

Date on rejection letter: \_\_\_\_\_

Provide a brief description of what you've done with the manuscript since  
i.e. revised and resubmitted elsewhere, buried it in a drawer . . .

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### FIRST SALE AWARDS

**Short Story** - Sale of a romantic short story.

**Novella/Novelette** - Sale of a romantic novella or novelette under 45,000 words.

**Jo Beverley First Book Award** - Sale of a full-length romance novel.

Author's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Manuscript: \_\_\_\_\_

Was sale Short Story \_\_\_ Novella/novelette \_\_\_ Book length \_\_\_

Publisher : \_\_\_\_\_

Line (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

Date of acceptance: \_\_\_\_\_

Provide a brief biography of yourself and a few details of the sale:

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**Subsequent Sales**

Title	Type (book, short story, novella)	Publisher
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**Contest Placings**

Contest	Name of Your Entry	Place
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## **History of the Genesis and Phoenix Awards for Presenters/Recipients**

**Genesis Award:** The Genesis Award is presented to authors who have submitted their first proposal (three chapters and a synopsis) of a romance novel, to a publishing house and had it rejected. Genesis means beginning, origin, start, commencement, creation, the way in which something is formed. And there is no way a published author will ever be formed unless she submits her work to a publisher. You can slave away for years, writing incredibly scintillating prose, but if you never send it out, you'll never start on that long road to becoming published. A Chinese man in 550 B.C. said, "A journey of a thousand miles began with a single step." (Lao-Tsze). Even though your proposal may have been rejected, you still know that you dared to believe you can write and that you have a story to tell.

Recipient:

**Phoenix Award:** The Phoenix Award honours authors who have submitted their first full-length romance manuscript to a publisher and had it rejected. As many know, the Phoenix was a beautiful, lone bird in Egyptian mythology, which lived in the Arabian desert for 500 to 600 years. It was the only one of its kind. It consumed itself in fire, on a funeral pyre, and rose renewed, in the freshness of youth, from the ashes to start another long life. The Phoenix it refers to a person of singular distinction, a prodigy. This award acknowledges the courage it took to finish your book and send it out—to let someone out in the big wide world of publishing actually read it. Yes, it was rejected. But like the Phoenix, you will rise from the ashes of your sadness and discouragement and begin again. If you did it once, you can do it again, only even better!

Recipient:

## Remembering ORWA's First Lady -- Audrey Jessup

*Written by Joyce Sullivan*

January 11th, 2003 marked a sad day in the history of our chapter with the passing of ORWA's founder, Audrey Jessup. A former high school teacher who treated life as a grand adventure, Audrey didn't laze around wishing for things to happen . . . she was a go-getter and made things happen. Recognizing a need for a romance writer's group in Ottawa, Audrey formed ORWA in 1985 and volunteered to be its first president.

Jo Beverley, who served as ORWA's first newsletter editor, recalls that over twenty members were present for ORWA's first official meeting, "We had the valuable support of two writers published by Harlequin – Claire Harrison and Dinah Shields, and they each gave a talk a year, but the rest of the time we shared our own discoveries."

Audrey possessed a quick wit and a smile that instantly made anyone who met her feel accepted and valued. She bolstered and encouraged authors to keep pursuing their dreams despite the roadblocks that might fall in their path. "Try again," she'd encourage in her lovely throaty voice and remind the author that there were more publishers to try, other story ideas that could be written. Under Audrey's vision, ORWA became a workshop-oriented group that nurtured writers to improve their craft. Many members joined ORWA for the valuable writing workshops even if their interests were not romance oriented. In fact, Capital Crime Writers was formed by ORWA members who were interested in writing mysteries, too. Audrey, who was a keen mystery writer and had a wonderful talent for devising ways to kill people, was a charter member of that group. She also became a charter member of the Ladies Killing Circle, a group of talented ladies who published mystery anthologies set in the Ottawa area.

ORWA became an official chapter of RWA in 1995. In February of that year, ORWA held its first Valentine's Brunch and we presented Audrey with an award named in her honour for her service and commitment to our chapter. The award is an elegant business card case, which Audrey selected because she felt it was a reminder to authors that writing is a profession, not a hobby. Each year since, the Audrey Jessup Volunteer Service Award has been presented to an ORWA member for their exemplary service to our chapter.

Audrey led by example and ORWA was blessed to have this jewel.

*"Whatever you can do or dream you can, begin it;  
Boldness has genius, power and magic in it."  
Johann Wolfgang Von Goethe*

## **Sandra Robertson Award for Executive Service**

*Written by Joyce Sullivan*

Sadly, in September of 1999, we lost a member of Orwa, our Vice-President, Sandy Robertson as a result of a traffic accident. Two years ago Sandy joined our group. Her very first meeting was our Valentine's Brunch. When I first met Sandy and looked into her eyes, I immediately recognized that here was a woman with the soul of a writer. That first instinctual impression was confirmed when I had the pleasure of critiquing her entry in the Orwa First Meet Contest, *A Time to Heal* and got to hear her voice. As a writer, I don't think you really know another writer until you have read what they've written—their hearts are laid bare in their words. And it was evident to me that Sandy had talent – so much so that I admit to being disappointed that she hadn't entered our 1999 contest because I was curious to see how much she'd grown in her writing. She was a working writer, who dreamed and wrote. I don't think I'm the only one who felt a terrible sadness that she'd never receive a first sale call from an editor or hold her published book in her hand.

Though she'd only been a member a relatively short time, she endeared herself quickly, hosting our summer social, and volunteering to be our vice president when we were desperately seeking volunteers. It seems only fitting that we remember her here at our brunch. After months of discussion we finally decided upon establishing a Executive Service Award in her memory that will be presented to each year's executive.

Sandy was laid to rest on a beautiful September day in a glorious landscape of fall colors beneath a sky of the deepest, purest blue. No writer could have envisioned a more beautiful day. Or written words more clearly spoken from the heart from her family and coworkers. The beauty of the day and the sadness of Sandy's loss seemed to speak to me, pulsating some kind of message I couldn't put into words—until just recently when I came across a quote by Louisa May Alcott and immediately felt myself catapulted back to that day and thoughts of Sandy. Louisa May Alcott wrote,

“Far away there in the sunshine are my highest aspirations. I may not reach them, but I can look up and see their beauty, believe in them, and try to follow where they lead.”

That was the message.

## C. Annual ORWA “First Meet” Writing Contest

**1. Contest Coordinator:** facilitates the smooth operation of the contest and act as a neutral buffer between the contestants and the judges. ORWA’s First Meet Contest should be a positive learning experience for all. Contest winners from previous years should be encouraged to volunteer to be Contest Coordinator. The Contest Coordinator assumes her responsibilities at the November meeting when the elections are held and volunteer positions for the coming year are determined.

### 2. Schedule of Events

#### November

- Obtain the Contest Coordinator’s Policy & Procedure Handbook.
- Check to make sure that the previous year’s winner(s) is prepared to make a speech at the brunch and/or write an article for the newsletter about the experience
- Note: Make sure that the contest deadline date and the date for the awards ceremony has been updated in the contest rules, before distributing them to the membership.

#### February

- Ensure that the trophy has at least one blank heart plaque for the name of this year’s winner. If not, find out the procedure for ordering new ones. (Please update this manual when that occurs).

NOTE: In the past, we have asked last year’s winner to bring the trophy to the Valentine’s Brunch. (This gives the Contest Coordinator time to arrange any necessary repairs or cleaning. And it also ensures that the Contest Coordinator has the trophy in plenty of time to have it engraved).

- Contact the engraving store and find out how long the engraving will take.
- Inquire with Elizabeth Syme-Adamitz if she wishes to supply the contestant’s with her donation of roses again this year.
- Arrange for certificates to be printed when winners known.
- Write an ORWA’s First Meet Contest article for the March newsletter inviting members to enter the contest. State the contest deadline, date for the awards ceremony, amount of the contest fee, and the prizes. Include a copy of the contest rules and the score sheet. **(A version of the score sheet specially formatted for publication in the newsletter—and distribution to interested contestants-- is on this disk labeled: Sample score sheet for publication in the newsletter.)** Remember to include your own name, address, telephone and email address so that members can contact you for more info. (Deadline to newsletter editor - February 18th).
- Bring copies of the contest rules, evaluation sheet and contest checklist to meetings.

#### March

- Write an article for the April newsletter reminding people that the contest entries must be handed in at the May meeting- include the contest checklist. Write name and address for those who want to mail entry to contest coordinator (Deadline to newsletter editor – March 18th).
- Contact the senior judge/judges’ panel to inquire who will be judging the contest. Often the judges will not be made final until a week or two before the contest (depending on the authors’ individual deadlines). The senior judge can answer any questions you may have about the operation of the contest.
- ◆ Make sure previous year’s winner(s) has written an article for the ORWA newsletter extolling the benefits of entering the contest. (Deadline to newsletter editor - March 18th).
- Bring copies of the contest rules, evaluation sheet and contest checklist to meetings.

### **April**

- Write an ORWA’s First Meet Contest Update - reminding people to hand in their entries at the May meeting, include contest checklist and contact information (Deadline to newsletter editor - April 18th)
- Prepare the judges’ kits

### **May**

- Ask the Registrar or the Treasurer to take the cheques at the May meeting.
- Bring the Judges’ Kits to the meeting.
- Make sure you have an updated Membership List from the registrar and that each entrant is a paid member of ORWA.
- Accept entries from members.
- Review entries against entry checklist to ensure entries are complete.
- Add each contestant’s name etc., to the List of Contestants.
- Add the contestant’s entry # to the contestant’s manuscript and synopsis (in red ink). This entry number will help to easily match the contestant with their entry.
- Add a check mark in the “entry fee - paid” box on the List of Contestants to indicate that the entry fee has been paid.
- Put the cheque or money into an envelope marked “Entry Fees” and hand over to the Treasurer before the end of the May meeting.
- Double-check that all judges have the correct number of entries and that there are sufficient copies of scoresheets provided. Each judge should also be supplied with a copy of the contest rules, judges’ guidelines and a judges’ comments form.

- Make sure that the judges have sufficient envelopes in which to return the contestants' entries before they leave the May meeting.
- Keep in touch with judges to help with any problems or concerns.
- Ask judges to report the winner at least 5 days before the meeting to allow enough time to have the name engraved on the trophy.
- Plan presentation ceremony of awards with judges and executive.
- Be available for the judges' meeting so that they can telephone you with the winners.
- Contact Elizabeth Syme-Adamitz to determine if she wishes to continue her tradition of donating the roses to the contest entrants. Inform her of the number of entrants so she can purchase the silk roses.
- Write an ORWA's First Meet Contest Update - trophy to be awarded at the June Social. Be sure to include directions to the social as well as the hostess's address and contact number (so lost travelers can call for directions.) Also, mention how people can get their Contest Entry mailed to them if they are unable to make the June Social (Deadline to newsletter editor – May 18th)
- Notify the person printing the certificates of who the winners are and how they placed in the contest. Proofread the certificates to ensure:
  - a) proper spelling of Ottawa Romance Writers' Association (the apostrophe is after the s)
  - b) proper spelling of the entrant's name
  - c) title of the manuscript is correct
  - d) date and year are correct

Remind her to bring them with her to the June Awards Ceremony. Be sure to bring a black ink pen for the President's signature. The contestant may wish to frame her certificate and they look classier when signed in black ink.

## **June**

- Ensure everything is ready for the Awards Presentation of certificates, trophy, roses, gifts, etc. The contest should be given all the hoopla it deserves.
- Be sure to thank everyone who has participated.
- Prepare a proposed budget for review by the executive
- Ask the judges for their comments.
- Compile judges' comments and other notes for Contest Coordinator's Report.
- Keep in touch with the contest winners, to ensure that they are progressing with their sample chapters, synopsis, etc., for their critiques by editors or authors. The revised proposals are due no later than the September meeting or they will receive \$25 in lieu of their prize.

- Keep in touch with the senior judge or person who is coordinating the critiques for the winners. Find out the cost of postage (including return postage) required for the mailing of manuscripts, etc. Include in final financial statement.

### September

- Submit disbursement forms along with receipts to Treasurer for Contest expenses. Example: judges' gifts, engraving of the trophy, postage etc. NOTE: Disbursement forms for expenses can be submitted at any time to the Treasurer for reimbursement.
- Prepare a final financial statement, for review by the executive.
- Write Contest Coordinator's Report for review by the executive.

### 3. Judges

The established panel of judges are responsible for selecting and asking someone new to judge. Many factors are taken into consideration when choosing new judges. It is important that everyone works well together. Traveling distances must also be considered as the four judges will need to meet to discuss the entries and tally the scores.

Criteria the panel considers when seeking judges:

- Published in book-length romantic fiction.
- Published in short fiction.
- Have been recommended by other ORWA judges.
- Have experience editing/critique professionally.
- Have experience judging contests.
- Have won or been a finalist in several contests.
- Have other valid qualifications.
- Ability to provide thoughtful, tactful comment.

**Please Note:** The judges devote an enormous amount of time to judging and critiquing entries, preparing a talk about the entries, and arranging for critiques of the winning entries. Respect the commitment they have given to the contest and shield them from unnecessary demands on their time. **Do not** ask the judges to present other talks, prepare workshops, or anything beyond what has already been outlined in this Policy & Procedural Manual. The act of judging is mentally exhausting for the judges and when the contest is finally over, they welcome the opportunity to return to their own writing. Value our judges' time and make every effort on your part to make the difficult and time-consuming job of judging as easy for the judges as possible. Do encourage the contestants to thank the judges for their input.

### 4. Receiving Entries

- Check the "entry checklist" to ensure that the entry is complete and properly set up for the judges.
- Inform the executive of the number of contestants in the contest.
- Hand over the envelope containing the "Entry Fees" to the Treasurer before the end of the meeting.

## **5. Judges' Meeting**

The Judges' Meeting is where the judges establish the winning entries.

The Contest Coordinator is not present at this meeting, but is required to be available so that when the winners have been determined, the Judges can then contact the Contest Coordinator to find out the names of the contestants who have been chosen as the winners.

The Contest Coordinator should provide the Judges at the May meeting (or whenever the contest deadline date is) with sufficient envelopes in which to return the contestants' entries.

## **6. Handling of the trophy**

The trophy is awarded to the winner and remains in her/his possession until the Valentine's Brunch where the Contest Coordinator presents them with a small gift in exchange for the trophy. The Contest Coordinator then keeps the trophy until it is presented at the Awards Ceremony at the June meeting. The Contest Coordinator should examine the trophy in February to determine whether any maintenance is required, such as ordering and applying new heart plaques. (See "Ordering new heart plaques" in this section.)

## **7. Engraving of winner's name**

The winner's name is engraved on the next blank heart plaque on the trophy. Allow [5] days for engraving. Check with last year's Contest Coordinator's Report for name of engraver and cost of engraving.

## **8. Ordering new heart plaques**

Heart-shaped plaques are a specialty cut. It is cheaper to buy [5?] at a time. In 1996, new plaques were purchased and attached to trophy.

## **9. Certificates for Winning Entries**

A certificate is awarded to the three (3) winners. 1st Place, 2nd Place and 3rd Place. These certificates are presented at the Awards Ceremony.

## **10. Awards Ceremony**

The presentation of the trophy and certificates are done towards the end of the June meeting.

- Normally, during the first part of the June meeting, the judges present their talks, based on what they observed during the contest. (Some judges prefer to submit something to the newsletter editor).
- Following the talks, the contestants are thanked for their entries and are each given a rose.
- The judges are thanked for their valued time and presented with a small gift in appreciation.
- Then, the third place winner is announced and is presented with a certificate, with the same procedure followed for the second place winner.
- Finally, the first place winner is announced, and the trophy and certificate awarded.

- After presentation of the trophy and certificate, the winning entries are read: usually, a portion of the second and third place entries and the entirety of the first place entry are read.
- (Note: The names of the winners should be announced by the Contest Coordinator, but the presentation of the trophy and certificates is done by the President or her stand-in).
- Contestants are given their envelopes containing their entries and scoresheets at the close of the meeting. A contestant may request that their scores be mailed to them.

## **9. Gifts**

- A silk rose donated by Elizabeth Syme-Adamitz is usually given to each contestant. Polite protocol would be to check with Elizabeth to see if she would like to continue her tradition each year.
- A small gift for each judge.
- A gift for the previous year's winner to be presented to at the Valentine's Brunch when she must relinquish her trophy. Traditionally this gift has been a crystal heart.

## **10. Arranging for critiques for finalists**

This is usually accomplished via the contacts/networking of the senior judges and other ORWA members. Critiques by an author or editor appropriate to the category/line of the winning entries are arranged. Authors are paid an honorarium of \$25 Canadian for critiquing the second and third place entry. (Editors are not paid). ORWA members who have judged the contest should not consider themselves eligible to prize critique the second and third place entries. Their feedback has already been provided in the contest. Ideally, the entrant would wish to revise their entry based on the judges' comments and the proposal would be reviewed by a published author who writes for the same line or same house the contest entrant is targeting. The second and third place finalists may suggest the names of published authors whom they'd like their entry critiqued by, but whatever arrangement made is at the discretion of the judges and is final.

On or before the September meeting, the winning contestants must supply the ORWA member who has arranged the critique with:

- three chapters and a synopsis (plus a cover letter if it will be sent to an editor).
- two envelopes suitable for mailing the manuscript. One must be self-addressed for the manuscript's return.

A cheque should be sent in the same package as the manuscript, with a cover letter from the person arranging the critique. Copies of the letters should be passed on to the contest coordinator for her files.

ORWA pays all costs associated with postage (including return postage).

## **11. Judge/Contestant Appointments**

In previous years, contestants wishing to speak with one or more judges' following the contest were asked to request an appointment. With the move of the announcement of the contest results to June, this makes the former practice impractical. Contestants should feel free to contact any of the judges by phone or email to clarify a point, but should be considerate of the judges' time. It

may be useful for a contestant to “remind” the judge of what she wrote on a scoresheet so that the judge has a reference when discussing their entry.

## 12. Judges’ Kits

- Expandable folder
- Two folders labeled: Unjudged Entries & Judged Entries (coloured ones are nice for easy reference)
- One folder labeled: Rules/Scoresheets/Guidelines etc.
- Clips
- Pencil
- Note pad
- Copies of scoresheet  
(one copy for each entry to be judged plus about five spare copies for each judge)
- Copy of the contest rules
- Copy of the judges’ guidelines
- Copy of the judges’ comments sheet
- Copy of the contestants’ scores

Also Included: (only in one of the judges’ kits - usually the senior judge)

- Envelopes (9” x 13”) - To return contestant’s entries (15)

## 13. Supplies Needed

For the numbers specified below, the assumption is made that there are 4 judges and up to 15 contestants. In future contests, the number of contestants may vary, or fewer judges may be used. Change the numbers as necessary.

Envelopes (9”x13”)	15	To return entries to contestants.
Envelope (4” x 9”)	1	For the contest coordinator to put the entry fees into.
Roses (or similar small gift) **	15	To be presented to each contestant.
Certificates	3	To be awarded to the finalists. Personalized for each finalist.
Accordion folders	4	1 per judge
File folders	12	3 per judge
Clips	60	(number of contestants x number of judges)
Pencils	4	1 per judge

Note pad	4	1 per judge
Gift for previous year's winner	1	As a reminder of the trophy s/he must return.
Gift for judges	4	As a thank you.
Gold heart-shaped plaques		Only needed when trophy has no empty plaques left.
Copies of rules	40	Have on hand lots of extras.
Copies of evaluation sheet	40	Have on hand lots of extras.
Copies of scoresheets	100	Have extra copies in case more people enter than anticipated and to give judges spares.
Copies of judges' guidelines	4	1 per judge
Copies of judges' comments sheet	4	1 per judge
Copies of contestant's scores	4	1 per judge For the judges to keep track of the contestants and their scores
Copies of rejection notice	5	To be attached to any rejected entries to indicate the reason for the rejection.
Copy of entry checklist	1	For contest coordinate to check all entries against.
Copy of rejection procedure	1	For contest coordinator to check invalid entries against.
Copy of list of contestants	1	For contest coordinator to keep track of contestants.

\*\* Elizabeth Syme-Adamitz usually donates the roses. Polite protocol would be to check with Elizabeth to see if she would like to continue her tradition each year.

#### **14. Proposed Budget**

A proposed budget should be presented to the executive in order to give them an idea of what expenses are expected to be incurred during the contest as well as a projected dollar figure of how much income the contest may yield.

The figures used in the proposed budget should be primarily based on last year's expenses and the number of contestants who entered the contest.

For example: (items that could be included:)

- Number of contestants who entered the contest.
- Gift for outside critique of the second place winner's manuscript\*
- Gift for outside critique of the third place winner's manuscript\*
- Cost of postage (return included) for all winner's manuscripts\*\*
- Engraving of the trophy\*\*
- Gift for previous year's winner\*\*\*
- Gifts for judges\*\*\*
- Cost of Judges' Kits (envelopes/file folders/ clips etc.)\*\*\*\*

\* These costs are constant year after year and should be viewed as the number #1 priority when assessing what is paid first out of the entry fees.

\*\* These costs vary from year to year and should be viewed as important when assessing what is paid next out of the entry fees.

\*\*\* These costs vary from year to year, but are important. Please keep in mind that the cost for such gifts should be within the amounts available after \* and \*\* have been allotted.

\*\*\*\* The cost of the Judges' Kits varies each year, depending on the amount of available money left over from the entry fees, and how much supplies are required. The Judges appreciate these kits and should be provided with them each year.

## **15. Final Budget**

A final budget should be presented to the executive for review after all the expenses of the contest have been paid out. A loss or profit should be clearly indicated in order to provide the executive with an accurate view of exactly how much it costs to run the contest and of how much support (\$) wise) there is with the membership. Included in the budget should be all current year's expenses and all current money earned.

## **16. Contest Coordinator's Report**

The Contest Coordinator's Report should consist of an overview of the general running of the contest and be presented to the executive. The report should encompass all aspects of the contest:

- Number of contestants
- Contest winners
- Financial Statement
- Articles & Contest Updates that appeared in newsletter
- Judges' comments (include comments sheets)
- Suggested changes

- Any concerns the contest coordinator, judges or contestants have
- Name of the engraver and cost
- Where the crystal heart was purchased



## THE ORWA FIRST MEET WRITING CONTEST RULES

1. The contest is open to all paid-up members of ORWA, as of the contest closing date, who are not published in book-length romantic fiction. It is considered appropriate for members at all levels of experience to enter. Only one entry per member is allowed. For submission by two writing partners, one must be a member of ORWA. Neither can be published in book-length romantic fiction.
2. Four (4) copies of the contest entry are required.
3. The contest entry must be a scene from a romance novel in progress and will consist of up to ten manuscript pages (to a maximum of 2,500 words) and a brief synopsis, not to exceed five pages (to a maximum of 1,250 words) of the entire novel. This may be category romance, intrigue, historical, regency, fantasy or any other kind of fiction as long as the love story is the major story line.
4. The scene should contain the first meaningful meet of the hero and heroine. If the first meet scene is shorter than ten pages in length, an entrant may at her discretion include a portion of the scene immediately prior to the first meet scene, a portion of the scene immediately following the first meet scene, or portions of both. The entire entry—the first meet scene plus any additional scene portions—must be a maximum of ten pages in total. Since you must stay within the maximum word count no marks will be lost for an incomplete scene. (By first meaningful meet, it is intended that the writer feel free to pass over a brief encounter, such as a passing word in the hotel lobby, or a phone call to set up a meeting. The judges retain the right to question and possibly disqualify an entry in which significant encounters have clearly been passed over).
5. If the contest entry does not comprise the actual beginning of the novel, then a brief introduction should be provided, no longer than one page (250 words).
6. The contest entry must be submitted as follows:
  - a. It must adhere to proper manuscript format: typed on one side of the page, double spaced, with a minimum of 1.25 inch margins on all sides on 8.5" x 11" bond paper. (If you are not clear on correct manuscript presentation, check *Writer's Market* or most good writing books in your library, or ask the Contest Coordinator or an executive member for advice). We will be paying particular attention to the word count, so ensure you are as close to 250 words per page as possible. Different computer and word processors use a variety of fonts which range dramatically in words per page, so the judges urge you to use Courier font or any font that will result in approximately 250 words per page based on 25 lines per page and 10 words per line. If you cannot conform to this standard and, as a result, you have more than 250 words per page, make your entry shorter to ensure you stay within the maximum word counts. The judges are only obligated to read the first 2500 words of an entry.
  - b. The title must appear on the upper left corner and page number on the upper right corner of each page. **Your name should not appear in the header.**

- c. The category and/or appropriate line(s) must also appear on the first page of your entry below the title: typed or hand printed (preferably in ink). The category may be historical, single title or mainstream contemporary, category, single title or mainstream romantic suspense, paranormal, futuristic, regency, fantasy, short contemporary, long contemporary. For short and long contemporaries, please list the appropriate line(s) such as Silhouette Romance, Harlequin Presents, Bombshell, Harlequin Intrigue, Silhouette Desire, Silhouette Intimate Moments, Silhouette Special Edition, Harlequin Blaze, etc. More than one line may be listed - E.g. an entry may be suitable for both Harlequin Intrigue/Silhouette Intimate Moments.
  - d. The entry should be numbered from the beginning of the novel (e.g., it could start on page 23). This will enable the judges to see how far into the book the scene occurs.
  - e. Include one cover sheet that contains the title, author's name, address, telephone number, word count, category and/or the line. **Author identification MUST NOT appear on any other part of the entry.**
  - f. Include a cheque for \$15 (Canadian dollars), payable to: ORWA.
7. The closing date for entries is the May meeting and entries are to be handed to, or otherwise delivered to, the person designated to receive them. The entry receiver will ensure, as far as possible, that contest rules have been followed and will pass the entries to the judges without identification. Note: if you cannot be present at the May meeting, please contact the Contest Coordinator to make alternate arrangements.
  8. The Contest Coordinator may not enter the contest or be a judge.
  9. There will be a minimum of three judges, preferably four. The judges are selected by the committee of published authors who have previously judged the contest.
  10. Even though there will be no identification on the manuscripts, some judges may recognize some work. This is accepted, and we trust the integrity of our judges.
  11. Entries will be rated using a standard score sheet, and these sheets will be returned to the entrants. If you wish to have a copy of this sheet, please ask the Contest Coordinator or a member of the executive.
  12. The results will be announced, and the trophy awarded, at the June meeting.
  13. In addition to the trophy, the winning manuscript will be sent for critique and consideration to an appropriate editor or agent. The second and third place manuscripts will be sent to a published romance writer for a critique. (All contestants must be prepared to produce three chapters no later than the September meeting. This should present little problem as the contest is intended for members' work in progress, not material created specifically for the contest). Failure to present a manuscript in a timely manner as determined by the discretion of the judges may result in the forfeiture of the critique for the 1<sup>st</sup> place finalist or the substitution of a \$25 CDN award in lieu of the critique for the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> place finalists.

14. The decision of the judges is final.

## ORWA Writing Contest Evaluation Sheet

### The Characters

1. The Heroine: (based on the scene only)  
Does the heroine come alive? Is she strong, admirable, sympathetic and believable; potentially or actually caring and tender?
2. The Hero: (based on the scene only)  
Does the hero come alive? Is he strong, admirable, sympathetic and believable; potentially or actually tender and sensitive?
3. Characters in general: (based on the scene & synopsis)  
Are the characters believable, non-cliché, intriguing? Are their motivations clear and plausible?

### The Story

4. Plot/Synopsis: (based on the scene & synopsis)  
Is the plot interesting, complete and logically developed? Does the synopsis clearly explain the story?
5. Attraction/Sexual Tension: (based on the scene & synopsis)  
Is attraction and/or sexual tension present in the scene and likely to develop through the story?
6. Conflict: (based on the scene & synopsis)  
In the scene and the synopsis, is there evidence of sufficiently deep and complex problems within and between the characters to carry the book?
7. Setting: (based on the scene only)  
Is there a sense of time and place? Can the reader feel the period and the locale: do they set the mood?

### The Writing

8. General: (based on the scene & synopsis)  
Is the writing fresh, coherent and free of clichés? Is it well-paced? Is the point of view handled well? Is the writing free of errors in grammar, punctuation and spelling?
9. Dialogue: (based on the scene only)  
Is the dialogue lively, interesting and convincing?
10. Presentation: (based on the scene & synopsis)  
Are manuscript and synopsis presented in a professional manner?

## Entry Checklist

After the entries have been collected, the contest coordinator will review the following checklist before handing them on to the judges.

\_\_\_ Ensure that the entry is a complete package.

- Four copies of the synopsis
- Four copies of the scene
- A cover page, conforming to the contest rules
- A cheque, properly made out, for the entry fee

\_\_\_ Ensure that the contestant is a paid member of ORWA.

\_\_\_ The contestant's name, or any other identifying information, does not appear on the entry itself.

\_\_\_ Ensure that the category and/or appropriate line(s) of the entry is indicated on the first page below the title. If not, write it on the entry so that the judges have access to the information.

\_\_\_ The entry conforms to the page count/word count.

\_\_\_ If there are more than 10 pages in the scene, or five pages in the synopsis, remove the extra pages to be returned to the contestant.

### **If everything is in order and the entry is valid then the contest coordinator should:**

- Add the contestant's name and title of manuscript to the list of contestants.
- Add the contestant's entry # to the contestant's manuscript and synopsis (in red ink). This entry number will help to easily match the contestant with their entry.
- Add a check mark in the "entry fee - paid" box of the list of contestants to indicate that the entry fee has been paid.
- Put the cheque or money into an envelope marked "Entry Fees" and hand over the envelope to the Treasurer before the end of the meeting.
- Remove the cover sheet.
- Separate the four copies, one for each judge.
- Clip together (if clip not provided by contestant).
- Place in a stack for each judge.

### **Give each Judge:**

- Their stack of entries to be judged.
- Whatever package of materials the contest coordinator has provided: Judges' Kits - (make sure the following are included:)
  - score sheets
  - contest rules
  - judges' guidelines
  - judges' comments sheet
  - contestants' scores
- Add to **ONLY** one judges' kit: (usually the senior judge)
  - envelopes (9"x13") (15) - to return contestant's entries

**LIST OF CONTESTANTS  
FOR ORWA'S FIRST MEET CONTEST**

XXXX

Entry Fee	Entry #	Name of Contestant	Title of Manuscript
_____	1.	_____	_____
_____	2.	_____	_____
_____	3.	_____	_____
_____	4.	_____	_____
_____	5.	_____	_____
_____	6.	_____	_____
_____	7.	_____	_____
_____	8.	_____	_____
_____	9.	_____	_____
_____	10.	_____	_____
_____	11.	_____	_____
_____	12.	_____	_____
_____	13.	_____	_____
_____	14.	_____	_____
_____	15.	_____	_____
_____	16.	_____	_____
_____	17.	_____	_____
_____	18.	_____	_____
_____	19.	_____	_____

**ORWA FIRST MEET CONTEST SCORE SHEET**

Each criterion is scored 1-10. 1-4 requires major work; 5-7 requires work; 8-9 done quite well; 10 publishable quality.

Title of manuscript:

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Name of judge:

---

Score Total: \_\_\_\_\_

**\*\*\*\*\* The Characters\*\*\*\*\***

1. The Heroine: (based on the scene only)

Does the heroine come alive?  
Is she strong, admirable, sympathetic and believable?  
Potentially or actually caring and tender?

2. The Hero: (based on the scene only)

Does the hero come alive?  
Is he strong, admirable, sympathetic and believable?  
Is he potentially or actually caring and tender?

3. Characters in general: (based on the scene & synopsis)

Are the characters believable, non-cliché, intriguing?  
Are their motivations clear and plausible?

\*\*\*\*\* The Story\*\*\*\*\*

4. Plot/Synopsis: (based on the scene & synopsis)

Is the plot interesting, complete and logically developed?  
Does the synopsis clearly explain the story?

5. Attraction/Sexual Tension: (based on the scene & synopsis)

Is attraction and/or sexual tension present in the scene and likely to develop through the story?

6. Conflict: (based on the scene & synopsis)

In the scene and the synopsis, is there evidence of sufficiently deep and complex problems within and between the characters to carry the book?

7. Setting: (based on the scene only)

Is there a sense of time and place?  
Can the reader feel the period and the locale?  
Do they set the mood?

\*\*\*\*\* The Writing \*\*\*\*\*

8. General: (based on the scene & synopsis)

Is the writing fresh, coherent and free of clichés?

Is it well-paced?

Is the point of view handled well?

Is it free of errors in grammar, punctuation and spelling?

9. Dialogue: (based on the scene only)

Is the dialogue lively, interesting and convincing?

10. Presentation: (based on the scene & synopsis)

Are the manuscript and synopsis presented in a professional manner?

**ORWA WRITING CONTEST JUDGES' GUIDELINES**

1. In order to pick up the entries, judges should attend the ORWA meeting (usually the May meeting) at which the entries are turned in to the contest coordinator. If this is not possible, contact the contest coordinator to make alternative arrangements.
2. When you receive the package containing the entries, immediately check to ensure that you have all the entries and sufficient scoresheets (Appendix "G"), (one per entry).
3. Judging takes time. You have a month before the contest results are announced. Budget approximately three weeks for the main judging. (Entries can take from one to four hours each to judge.) The judges' meeting will be scheduled for the fourth week -- usually the week prior to the ORWA meeting at which results will be announced (so that there is time for the trophy to be engraved). Expect to hand in all of your entries and comments at the judges' meeting. Ensure all of your scores are tallied, and also rank the entries by title, from highest score to lowest.
4. Traditionally, each judge picks a writing topic (usually based on a common problem that the contest entries reveal) and presents it as a short lecture and/or newsletter article. You are not obligated to do this, but it serves as a valuable benefit for the wider ORWA membership. You may wish to keep potential topics in mind as you judge the entries.
5. Of course, judges must not discuss individual entries with other ORWA members, either during or after the contest, without the express permission of the writer.
6. Judges may feel free, however, to contact the other judges if they are unsure how to handle a particular entry.
7. Judges are not expected to handle phone calls or requests for private meetings from contest contestants. Time is set aside for this purpose, during or after one ORWA meeting (usually the May meeting), for the contestants to discuss their entries with the judges. If you cannot attend this meeting, please contact the contest coordinator to make alternative arrangements. Judging 7. Judges must read the entries and fill out the scoresheets accordingly, writing comments on the manuscript where appropriate. You may add additional comments on a separate sheet of paper if necessary. In particular, you are asked to explain low scores, so that the author knows both what warranted the low score, and possible solutions.
8. Use pencil for both comments and scores. Please do not tally the scores for each entry until you have finished judging all the entries.
9. If you discover an entry whose author you recognize, simply do your best to judge it as neutrally as possible. Do not, however, let the other judges know whose entry it is until after the contest results have been finalized at the judges' meeting.

## **JUDGES' COMMENTS**

Comments/suggestions or problems regarding the ORWA First Meet Contest of xxxx:

Name of Judge: \_\_\_\_\_



