

**Valley Forge Romance Writers  
2008 The Sheila Contest  
Complete Rules and Regulations**

**CATEGORIES AND FINAL JUDGES:**

Single Title Romance – **Karen Gerlach, Harlequin**

Historical (short or long and Regencies) – **Deb Werksman, Sourcebooks**

Fantasy/Futuristic/Paranormal – **Kate Duffy, Kensington**

Women's Fiction with Romantic Elements/Chick Lit -- **Rose Hilliard, St. Martin's Press**

Romantic Suspense -- **Megan McKeever, Pocket Books**

***NOTE: If less than 10 entries are received for a category, that category will be eliminated and the author given the choice of switching the entry to another category or having the entry and fees returned.***

**TOP SCORE AWARD:** VFRW will present a separate award certificate to the entry scoring highest in all categories, and a free one-year VFRW membership from date of acceptance.

**LOTTERY PRIZES: WINNERS** of the **RANDOM DRAWINGS** receive a **DETAILED CRITIQUE** by:

- **TERRI BRISBIN**, two-time RITA finalist and award-winning author; or
- **LOIS WINSTON**, three-time Golden Heart finalist, American Title finalist, and National Readers' Choice Award nominee, published author; or
- **ALICE WOOTSON**, Emma Award nominated, multi published author.

Authors will critique the first three chapters, synopsis, and query letter for the winner. All entrants are eligible for the random drawings.

**DEADLINE: All hard copy entries must be postmarked by January 26, 2008, and received no later than January 31, 2008. Electronic entries must be received by 11:59pm on January 31, 2008. Entries received after the deadline will be returned.**

**ENTRY FEE:** \$25 for all VFRW members / \$30 for all **non-VFRW** members. Hard copy entries must be made via check or money order, and should be made payable to **VFRW** in U.S. dollars. Electronic entry fees must be paid via PayPal. All entry fees are non-refundable.

**ELIGIBILITY:** Participation is open to all RWA members, published and unpublished, who have not published or contracted with a non-vanity, non-subsidy press in the category entered at the time of the contest deadline and within the past five years. Previous first place winners may not re-enter the winning entry, even in edited format. They may, however, enter another work. Enter as many different manuscripts as you wish, but each entry must either be mailed in a separate envelope and accompanied by the full entry fee and a signed entry form, or sent electronically via .rtf or .doc format and paid using Paypal. The same manuscript may not be entered in more than one category. Choose the best category for any single work. Any entries received after the deadline will be returned.

**JUDGING:** Entrants will receive a detailed score sheet from *four* qualified judges. The lowest score will be dropped before determining the final score. Judges will be encouraged to comment on the score sheet, but VFRW cannot guarantee that all judges will comply with this suggestion. The top five entries in each category will advance to the finals. **A minimum combined score of 240 points (out of possible 300) is required to become a finalist. If there are not five entries which meet this minimum, only the entries that do will advance.**

### **ENTRY FORMAT:**

- Five letter-quality copies of the synopsis (up to 5 pages) and beginning of manuscript not to exceed 35 pages total for synopsis and manuscript pages.
- Entries must be presented in proper standard manuscript format: double-spaced with one inch margins using **12-pt. Courier or Courier New font, 25 lines per page. NOTE: Entries using Times New Roman or any typeface other than Courier or Courier New will not be accepted.** Both synopsis and manuscript pages must be in Courier New font and double-spaced.
- Manuscript headers should include the title of the entry, category, and word count in the upper left corner and the page number in the upper right corner only. **The author's name may not appear anywhere on the entry other than the title page.**

### **PAPER ENTRIES:**

- Completed Contest Entry form/signed Waiver.
- Completed Lottery Drawing form/signed Waiver.
- One title page listing author's name, address, phone number, email address, title of book, category, and projected word count of completed manuscript.
- Each mailed entry must also be accompanied by the appropriate entry fee and a stamped (not metered) **Priority Mail Tyvek envelope from the post office with sufficient postage** for the return of the entry and score sheets. Include a postcard with return postage if you wish verification of entry arrival. **DO NOT send by any form of delivery that requires a signature!**
- Entries **must be bound by a binder clip.** Please do not staple, use paper clips, or bend or fold pages. Entries that are not bound will be disqualified. **No loose pages!**
- Photocopies and print-outs must be legible and of good quality.

### **ELECTRONIC ENTRIES:**

- Electronic entries must be sent in .doc or .rtf format **only.**
- Each electronic entry must be paid using PayPal.

**Entrants who do not comply with the above rules will be contacted and given until the contest deadline to correct the infraction. Failure to comply by the deadline will disqualify the entrant. The entry will be returned if an SASE has been supplied and destroyed if not. The fee will be forfeited.**

**SUBMISSION:** Send entries to the individual category coordinators as follows. **Do not send your entry via by any means that requires receiving a signature.**

**Single Title Contemporary**

2008 THE SHEILA  
c/o Stephanie Mowery  
5 Reading Avenue  
Shillington, PA 19607

**Electronic submissions to:**

Sheila\_stc@vfrw.com

**Historical**

2008 THE SHEILA  
c/o Ruth Zavitsanos  
7 Blakely Road  
Downingtown, PA 19335

Sheila\_hist@vfrw.com

**Paranormal**

2008 THE SHEILA  
c/o Daria Yanez  
12 Wilson Circle  
Chester Heights, PA 19017

Sheila\_para@vfrw.com

**Romantic Suspense**

2008 THE SHEILA  
c/o Carolyn Matkowsky  
5 Blue Rock Rd  
Wilmington, DE 19809

Sheila\_rs@vfrw.com

**Women's Fiction w/Rom. Elements & Chick Lit**

2008 THE SHEILA  
c/o Laura Graham Booth  
81 Windwhisper Lane  
Annapolis, MD 21403

Sheila\_wfre@vfrw.com

**NOTIFICATION:** Barring unforeseen circumstances, finalists will be notified by phone or email on **March 24, 2008**. Winners will be notified by phone or email on May 3, 2008.

**AWARDS:** First place winners in each of the five categories plus The Top Score Award will receive a certificate. All other finalists in the five categories will receive certificates. First through fourth place winners will have their names printed in RWR Magazine. **All decisions of the judges are final.**

**QUESTIONS:** Contact Robin Kawczynski or Carla Faker, Contest Chairs, at contest@vfrw.com.

**2008 THE SHEILA CONTEST -- Official Entry Form**

(Please print, sign, and return with entry and payment-- see rules for requirements.)

Author's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ RWA# \_\_\_\_\_

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

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Title of Entry \_\_\_\_\_

Category (please check one):

- historical
- romantic suspense
- single title
- fantasy/futuristic/paranormal
- women's fiction w/romantic elements & chick lit

**CONTEST WAIVER (must be signed for entry acceptance)**

I have read, understand, and agree to abide by the Official Rules of THE SHEILA Contest. I further understand and agree that any questions regarding the interpretation of the Official Rules will be submitted to and decided by the Contest Coordinators, and I will accept as final the decision of the Contest Coordinators in any such matters.

I realize and accept that manuscript judging is subjective by nature. Critiques and score sheets are provided to the participants as a courtesy. They represent the opinions of the individual judges, not those of VFRW, and are intended for the entrant's use only. Neither VFRW, its officers and members, nor RWA, its officers and members, endorse critiques resulting from this contest. No critique is to be construed as the opinion of VFRW and/or RWA, their respective officers and/or members.

Accordingly, I accept and abide by the decisions of any judges and/or contest officials regarding winners for the contest. I specifically agree to indemnify, hold harmless, and reimburse Valley Forge Romance Writers and its contest personnel and/or judges, on demand, for all loss, cost, or expenses incurred in connection with either: a) Any dispute arising from my participation in THE SHEILA Contest, or b) Any other dispute arising from THE SHEILA Contest beyond the control of the contest officials.

I hereby acknowledge acceptance of the terms and conditions of this contest. I hereby verify the truthfulness of the above information that I have provided.

I am signing this waiver in consideration that Valley Forge Romance Writers, the contest officials, and the contest judges are relying on the truth and sincerity of my statements.

**I further realize that my contest entry will not be accepted if I do not show my acceptance of this agreement by signing my name below.**

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**2008 THE SHEILA CONTEST – Random Lottery Drawing**

(Please print, sign, and return with entry and payment-- see rules for requirements.)

**TO ENTER THE RANDOM LOTTERY DRAWING** you MUST sign and submit this waiver your signed entry form. Our PAN authors are volunteers and offer their professional critiques as a courtesy to you. Critiques are the opinion of one person only and are offered as guidelines. Entrants must hold harmless RWA, Valley Forge Romance Writers and the author if the entrant disagrees with the critique. These critiques are gifts and should be taken in the spirit in which they are intended. If you do NOT wish to have your work reviewed and critiqued by an author, please feel free not to participate in our lottery drawing. If you DO wish to enter our drawing for a critique gift, please sign below.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_