

# Spring in Chicago

May 2026

In case you haven't had occasion to meet any, romance writers are a great bunch. Friendly, supportive, fun.

I attended the Chicago-North Romance Writers' Spring Fling Conference in April. What a blast.



My local writer friend Erika and I took the Amtrak from St. Louis to Chicago, which is an adventure in itself, but definitely preferable to driving in Chicago. Took a wild taxi ride (I decided early on to just avert my eyes) to the Royal Sonesta hotel, right on the Chicago River. I rarely stay in such a nice hotel, but by sharing a room with Erika and getting the conference discount, I made it work.

The view from our eighteenth floor room was spectacular!



The first evening we went to dinner with our online writing group friends. I had never met them in person. When we arrived in the lobby, my first words were “You have legs!” and “You’re so tall!” It’s always interesting to see people in person who you have only known on zoom. We had a lovely dinner and stroll along the very busy Riverwalk on that warm spring evening.



The next two days were full of workshops, keynote speakers, a gala dinner, and opportunities to meet lots of new friends. It was an honor to be at a conference with best-selling authors such as Adriana Herrera, who is from the Dominican Republic and likes to write characters who look and sound like her people, and Brenda Jackson, who has written 156 novels and was the first Black woman to achieve both the New York Times and USA Today bestseller status in romance.



I participated in a huge book signing event, sharing a table with Megan Bannen, across from Jillian Davis. Folks were excited to hear about my little debut novel with characters who are truly later in life!



**Spring Fling**  
Writers Conference 2026  
*The Power of Love Is Community*

**Open to the Public FREE Book Signing**  
Saturday, April 18 3:30-5:30 pm Royal Sonesta Chicago

<b>Brenda Jackson</b>	<b>Adriana Herrera</b>	<b>Sherry Thomas</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tanya Agler</li> <li>• Megan Bannen</li> <li>• Kimberly Beckett</li> <li>• Julie Berman</li> <li>• Sara Biren</li> <li>• Chandra Blumberg</li> <li>• Elizabeth Boyle</li> <li>• Asa Maria Bradley</li> <li>• Katelyn Brehm</li> <li>• Terri Brisbin</li> <li>• Lyn Liao Butler</li> <li>• Janet Burnett</li> <li>• Rachelle Paige Campbell</li> <li>• Katy Cooper</li> <li>• Miranda Darrow</li> <li>• Jillian David</li> <li>• Dawn Davison</li> <li>• Maggie Eliot</li> <li>• Jeanine Englert</li> <li>• Elizabeth Everett</li> <li>• Maureen Ewing</li> <li>• Kelly Farmer</li> <li>• Jacie Floyd</li> <li>• Sara Fujimura</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kelly Garcia</li> <li>• Anna Grace</li> <li>• Melanie Greene</li> <li>• Victoria Hamel</li> <li>• Michelle Hazen</li> <li>• DA Henneman</li> <li>• Mia Hopkins</li> <li>• Juliette Hyland</li> <li>• Genevieve Jack</li> <li>• Evie Jacobs</li> <li>• Danielle Jackson</li> <li>• Katrina Jackson</li> <li>• Beccan James</li> <li>• Stephanie Jayne/ Stephanie J. Scott</li> <li>• Melonie Johnson</li> <li>• Reem Kashat</li> <li>• C. Morgan Kennedy</li> <li>• Kasey Kennedy</li> <li>• Corrina Lawson</li> <li>• Kerry Lockhart</li> <li>• Beverly Long</li> <li>• Mia P. Manansala</li> <li>• Aliza Mann/ Mae Moore</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opal Mason</li> <li>• Michelle McCraw</li> <li>• Keeko Butterfly McKween</li> <li>• Linda Mercury</li> <li>• Christine Merrill</li> <li>• Lillie Moore</li> <li>• Julie Navickas</li> <li>• Dana Nussio/Dana Corbit</li> <li>• Isabelle Popp</li> <li>• Laura Ridgefield</li> <li>• Khushi T. Saha</li> <li>• AG Sanders</li> <li>• Alexa Santi</li> <li>• Shannyn Schroeder</li> <li>• Brandy Shaw</li> <li>• Holly Smurthwaite</li> <li>• Darci St. John</li> <li>• Cara Tanamachi / Cara Lockwood</li> <li>• Kristen Vale</li> <li>• CJ Warrant / CJ Barlowe</li> <li>• Maggie Wells</li> <li>• Sara Whitney</li> <li>• Sarah Zachrich Jeng</li> </ul>

On the last evening a few of us strolled up Michigan Avenue, admiring block after block of beautiful tulip blooms, to Gino's East for some yummy pizza.

I spent the next two days flitting around the city with my son Brian, who has lived in Chicago for over two years, celebrating his twenty-eighth birthday!



We enjoyed brunch at the famous Ann Sathers, with its ridiculously huge cinnamon rolls (you can get TWO as just ONE of your sides!).



It has been a long time since I laughed continuously for over an hour, as we did at the Second City improv show.

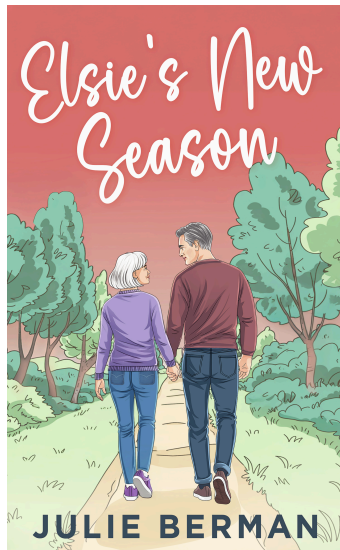


Last but not least, we enjoyed a lovely day at the Lincoln Park Zoo before returning to Brian's apartment where he made me some delicious onigiri (Japanese delicacy – look it up!).

My time in Chicago reinvigorated my energy to finish my second novel. Sneak peeks coming soon!

**I appreciate your support:**

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THANK YOU!!

*Julie*

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**Julie Berman Author**

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