

Write What Inspires You! Newsletter

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Volume 2, Issue 1

Donna M. McDine
Children's Author



Welcome to the January 2009 issue of my FREE newsletter:

Write What Inspires You!

Happy New Year! The day I put this newsletter together the schools in my county closed due to the anticipated snow fall of 10-12"...it certainly looks like we are going to get it! I always enjoyed snow days as a child and even more so as an adult. One can almost hear the echoes of joy from children and adults streaming from their homes. A snow day always makes me a child again, giddy from not feeling the pressure of the outside world.

Go ahead grab a piping hot cup of java or in my case, French Vanilla tea, absorb the exciting interviews, book review, reflections from two authors, peer successes, and testimonials from the December newsletter.

If you are interested, please feel free to submit your name for an interview, an article and/or your successes to: dmcdine@optonline.net

Momentum continues to build on a steady basis and we are currently booked through June 2009.

Please share this newsletter with your peers in the writing industry and encourage them to opt-in as a monthly subscriber @ <http://www.donnamcdine.com>

Here's to your inspiration and continued success!

Donna M. McDine

AUTHOR INTERVIEW - BEVERLY STOWE McCLURE

Beverly and I developed our writing connection through The Muse It Up Club about two years ago. Since that time our relationship has bloomed into a full fledge friendship. Beverly's heart warming words of advice and encouragement flow into her writing. Come along with me on a personal interview to learn more about Beverly's accomplished writing career.

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Quote of the Month:

"Talent is cheaper than table salt. What separates the talented individual from the successful one is a lot of hard work."

Stephen King
On Writing - A Memoir of the Craft

AUTHOR INTERVIEW - BEVERLY STOWE McCLURE - continued

DMc: Please describe the inspiration behind *Rebel in Blue Jeans*.

BSMc: Today, and even when I was teaching years ago, many children's lives are disrupted by divorce. Often they don't understand why their parents split and are caught in the middle, loving both their mother and their father. How does a teen cope with being torn in two different directions? Rebel has to deal with her conflicting emotions. Along the way she discovers that people are not always what they seem and she is a lousy judge of character.

DMc: Your main character Rebel, was born and raised on a ranch. Have you used any of your life experiences being a Texan in creating her personality?

BSMc: The animals, mostly, helped create Rebel's personality. The mare and foal in this story are based on a couple of horses we once owned, my favorites, though Sunrise's and Stormy's stories here have a much happier ending than they did in real life. People who live in the country usually end up with a lot of stray puppies and kittens that people dump. We've taken in our share, so of course Rebel needed her furry friends to be a true Texan.

DMc: I find it true to life that the Garret boys are protective of Rebel in a brotherly way, but other feelings arise. How did you develop the characters' background to reflect their emotional changes?

BSMc: Many romances begin as friendships. My Garret cousins grew up with Rebel tagging along after them, so they treated her like their sister. Since they were the same age, they were like triplets, taking care of each other. Also, I've found that most brothers are protective of their sisters. As they reached the teen years, however, the hormones took charge, and friendship blossomed into romance. Remember those agonizing teen angst years?

DMc: You recently participated in the Paranormal Convention to promote *Listen to the Ghost*. Please share with us your experience.

BSMc: The convention was an interesting experience. The ghost hunters are quite serious about their work and use very complicated equipment to track down spirits and supernatural beings. Speakers from Arkansas, Oklahoma, and Texas shared their stories. We listened to sounds of ghosts that had

been recorded and saw strange images in photographs. I had an enjoyable day, but when it came to my book, most everyone asked if she was "my ghost." It seemed they were interested in the "real" spirits and not so much in fictional ones. I did meet some wonderful people so it was worth my time.

DMC: You are a retired school teacher. Have you conducted school visits within your old school district? If not, do you conduct school visits elsewhere?

BSMc: I wanted to do school visits at the schools where I taught, but they have been very cool to my requests. So much has changed in the years since I retired: a new principal and a new librarian who does the scheduling and has pretty much ignored my requests to talk to the students. The teachers would like for me to come, but they don't have a say in the matter. That said I did have a wonderful visit to an area elementary school, grades 1 through 4. The kids were super, asked neat questions, and I hope enjoyed themselves. I presented different programs for the age levels, using my magazine articles on animals for the younger students and my books for the older students, and thought it went well.

DMc: Do you dedicate your writing sessions to one manuscript at a time or do you work on several projects at a time?

BSMc: I usually work on two to three projects simultaneously. Now, for instance, I'm revising a MG paranormal story, writing the first draft of a YA contemporary, and plotting in my head another YA humorous novel. Also, a couple of PB ideas are snoozing in my brain, for when I have time to think about them, though I really am not a PB writer. I'd like to try these, however.

DMc: When developing a manuscript, have any of your characters taken a direction you never intended them to take?

BSMc: I would say most of my characters have done this. I usually don't outline, but let them follow their own path and see where they lead me. It's more fun that way. *Rebel in Blue Jeans* started out to be more about Rebel and her parents, but the boys became an important part of the story because they helped her through the difficult days. Rebel then had other problems relating to them, which became the subplots and added a lighter touch to her story, instead of it being so serious.

In *Caves, Cannons, and Crinolines*, my forthcoming Civil War story, my plans were for Lizzie to join the army (posing as a boy) and fight to defend her town as her brothers were doing. She had different ideas, and I just followed along.

DMc: In your opinion, should a writer stay “married” to their words? And should they be willing to shift from their original outline and/or plot as the story develops?

BSMc: I can only speak for myself, but if you look at my many edits of a manuscript you'll see that the final story many times bears little resemblance to the first draft. My words change so often it's like musical chairs. I'm constantly looking for a better word to show the emotions of the characters. And my plot often takes unusual twists, which makes me happy most of the time. I don't work from an outline at first. Sometimes, around the middle of a story, I write down what possibly may happen in the final chapters. That doesn't necessarily mean the story will follow my thoughts. It's more a guideline of where my characters might go to help me find both the characters' arcs and the arc of the plot.

DMc: Please share with us your latest novel coming down the publishing pipeline.

BSMc: You bet. In July 2009, *Just Breeze*, a contemporary story for MG readers, about a girl who wants to be popular like her older sister, is scheduled for release from 4RV Press.

Also, in 2009, my YA historical novel, *Caves, Cannons, and Crinolines*, will be published by Twilight Times Books.

Kate, Little Angel Sometimes, a chapter book, is forthcoming in 2010 from Blooming Tree Press, their new paperback line, and *I Live in a Doghouse*, Twilight Times, is TBA.

DMc: A signature request I like to ask every author, illustrator, editor, etc., I interview is for the individual to share with us a tidbit from their lives the reader will find either humorous or surprising. Bev, can you please share one with us?

BSMc: Well, I'm giving away a secret here, but that's okay. I went green before going green was popular. It has nothing to do with clean air or saving

trees or fossil fuels or whatever, but with my hair. Yes, I color my hair. For a while I used the shade "golden light brown," but my hair was turning too reddish, so one day I changed and used "ash light brown." Big mistake. My hair turned green. What's a girl to do when she has to go to school the next day? Shaving my head was not an option, so I convinced myself no one would notice. During the day my students were very polite, but they kept looking at me with weird expressions on their little faces. Still, none of them made a comment or asked me what happened to my hair. The teachers were more outspoken. Finally, in the teacher's lounge at noon, one teacher asked what I'd done to my hair. We had a good laugh about it and I decided to confess to my students. That afternoon, I told them I'd dyed my hair for the football game that night. The school colors were green and white and bless their little hearts they believed me. Or else they pretended they did. Now you know my secret.

To learn more about my adventures, check out my blogs:

<http://beverlystowemcclure.wordpress.com>

<http://rebelinbluejeans.wordpress.com>

<http://beverlystowemcclure.blogspot.com>

EDITOR INTERVIEW - LEA SCHIZAS

It simply amazes me how the Internet gathers people from far and wide and through this amazing technology one can forge endearing friendships without meeting face-to-face. Lea Schizas is one of those people in my life. Even though she is busy beyond compare, she always has the time for aspiring and accomplished writers. She is a multi-published author and award-winning editor of two Writer's Digest 101 Top Web Sites, and she is an editor at Red Rose Publishing. How does this one woman accomplish so much, so well? Read on and become inspired.

DMc: You are the master of multi-tasking. Award-winning writer, editing services, editor-in-chief, founder and coordinator of the Muse Online Writers Conference, and mother of five. (I'm exhausted typing all this...LOL!) How do you balance all the aspects of your life?

LS: Sometimes I wonder that myself, Donna. To be totally honest, there are times where it's extremely stressful for me because deadlines are moved up, I spend too much time reading emails, sick for a day or so that puts me behind schedule...I get things done but at a cost: Advil to get rid of migraines. Would I have it any other way? No. I love what I do.

I don't spend every waking moment on the computer although it may seem like that at times. I sit for no more than half an hour, get up and do my 'motherly' chores around the house, then back to my writing. Flipping my mother hat to my writer's hat is not hard because I'm used to flipping my editor's hat to my writer's hat all the time. Writers need a balance, one they can comfortably get back into with any disruptions that occur around them. By balance, I mean able to focus on writing, and then focus on outside commitments...accomplishing bits and pieces of commitments to make you feel victorious. Otherwise, you end up feeling as though a mule kicked you every which way but loose. And no, I've never been kicked by a mule and never want to.

DMc: Besides the numerous hats you wear, you are also the founder of numerous websites. Do you maintain them yourself or do you have assistance?

LS: Every site is maintained by me. Call me crazy but I like to have the freedom to go in, change, add, move things around without having to bother anyone to do that for me. I use Frontpage for some of my sites and the rest I use the site's easy-to-use templates. No HTML for me. Too old to learn that crappola. No patience. (Can I say 'crappola' -oops, I did again.)

DMc: When a manuscript arrives at Red Rose Publishing and you know the author personally do you pass it to another editor or are you able to stay unbiased?

LS: Totally unbiased. One thing about me is that I am able to switch off the friend part and go right into the business Lea. First off, friend or no friend, if the manuscript needs a complete overhaul, where would the justice for Red Rose or the author be if I accepted the manuscript? Writers need to understand that at times publishers/editors will require changes in a manuscript before they consider a contract. Writers have to prove they are able to handle and manage criticism and the editing process. After all, this is part of the game.

DMc: Have you had the opportunity to edit a writer's manuscript through your own editing services and encouraged them to submit to Red Rose Publishing? Or do you need to keep the two professions separate?

LS: My own editing services feels to me more than just 'an editing service'. I go that extra mile and if I discover a manuscript that any one of the publishers I know might be interested in, then I recommend the author to send it to

them. I'm like the unpaid and silent agent. And yes, I have recommended and accepted a few writers because their stories merited acceptances.

DMc: What do you look for first when you receive a submission packet?

LS: First thing I read is the blurb or synopsis of the manuscript. This usually tells me right off if it's a good mix for Red Rose knowing what our readers enjoy. If it passes that stage then I hop on over and begin reading the manuscript. In all honesty, that first chapter (actually, more like the first opening paragraph) must pull me in. If it does, I continue reading.

I'm looking for slants on similar storylines, something different and one that has a thoroughly fleshed out ending. A twist ending is always a plus.

DMc: What are your thoughts about a writer creating a platform prior to getting their first novel published?

LS: This is a must for all writers. I've had writers contact me asking when their release dates are so they can begin promoting. I tell them don't wait until your release date...START NOW! Writers must begin building a following, readers who enjoy their blogs, newsletters, or info found in their websites. Starting cold turkey on a release date is not the smartest thing to do.

DMc: If you feel a platform is essential, what are some important steps a writer should take towards forming a platform?

LS: Build a website. I know many right now are going to say to themselves "But I don't have anything to put on my site." There are tons of things you can put on your site to begin building a platform, to begin branding yourself as an expert in your field. Here are just some ideas to work on:

- ✓ Look at the genre you love to write in. Find other like-authors and exchange links with them (Now you have a LINKS page all set up in your website.)
- ✓ Write short articles on the craft of writing in that genre (now you have an ARTICLE page on your website or begin a blog using that theme)
- ✓ Reders love to find out about writers on a personal level (now you have an ABOUT ME webpage on your site)

- ✓ To go with the short article theme above, write articles and submit them to Article Banks. Ezines and newsletter editors pick these up and post them in their sites. How does this help to promote you? You include a bio with a link back to your site. Readers from these various sites now have the opportunity to 'traffic' your site and find out more about you.
- ✓ As you get publishing credits, add these to MY WRITING CAREER page on your site.
- ✓ An area many don't think is part of the promo is joining writing groups and participating in as many as possible. At the end of each email, make sure to have a signature so members can link back to your site.

These are just some simple beginning steps to take. Study other author websites and see what catches your eye and interest and try to implement something similar. The way we read books to expand our writing the same diligent effort is needed to improve our websites. You can have a glimpse of my own for ideas: <http://www.leaschizas.com>

DMc: What advice would you give to writers in their attempts to get published?

LS: First off, read the publisher's guidelines. Make sure the publisher you are targeting accepts your genre. You would be surprised how many times I get submissions for genres we don't even publish.

Second, read, read as many books in the genre you like to write in and study other authors.

Hone your writing by eliminating the passive voice, delete unnecessary back story, remove 'that' if the sentence's meaning is untouched. Flesh out your characters so readers can believe they are real. Never end a story without finalizing any foreshadow you created at some point. And never, ever have a new character suddenly appear near the end to save the day. That just won't wash. That's called cheating a reader and you risk losing that reader's respect forever.

DMc: Is there a particular genre you prefer to read? Or are you open to almost anything?

LS: My favorite genres are: children's books, Young Adult, romance in any subgenre, dark fiction/horror, mysteries, and fantasies. These genres I prefer to read and review.

DMc: A signature request I like to ask every author, illustrator, editor, etc., I interview is for the individual to share with us a tidbit from their lives that the reader will find either humorous or surprising. Lea, can you please share one with us?

LS: I am a high school graduate. I am a cosmetology graduate. Never went further than high school. Is this humorous? Not at all, but it's one that puts me in a stress level whenever I have to workshop. And to be honest, I avoid hosting face-to-face workshops because my fear (this is the surprising part) is that I will be asked a simple grammatical question and will look like a dork if I don't know the answer.

I have a gift and that gift is picking off storylines of interest; able to pull together an author's manuscript and tighten it; spot plot holes, weak characters, mundane dialogue...but put me in a room full of eager writers who want to find out what the heck a homonym is and I begin to feel my food inching its way up my throat, ready to hurl any moment. I suck when it comes to grammar terms; easily spot them in a manuscript but please, don't ask me those questions. And that's my story and I'm sticking to it.

Meet Lea Schizas: <http://www.leaschizas.com>

The Muse Marquee: <http://themusemarquee.tripod.com/>

The Writing Jungle: <http://thewritingjungle.blogspot.com/>

The Muse Book Reviews: <http://themusebookreviews.blogspot.com/>

ILLUSTRATOR INTERVIEW - BRIAN BASCLE

Since becoming a member on JacketFlap in June 2007, I have had the privilege of meeting numerous authors, editors, and illustrators. The artistic talents and accomplishments of Brian Bascle immediately impressed me. His hats are many: graphic designer, illustrator, actor, voiceover talent, husband, and dad. Brian has illustrated several titles in the Capstone Press' Graphic Library series. Immerse yourself in the colorful world of Brian and be ready to be dazzled.

DMc: Your career is quite diversified. Illustrator, actor and voice over talent, graphic designer, husband and dad. How do you find the time to balance everything?

BB: I am blessed that I'm my own boss and I work from home. There's always a variety of stuff going on and there are some stressful moments, but somehow it all works out. The fact that I'm home-based and answer only to myself gives me the freedom to craft my work schedule to fit my family obligations.

DMc: Was there a person from your childhood who encouraged you to stay a child at heart?

BB: My dad was a goofball when I was younger and I think that influenced me a bit. My mom was always an appreciative audience and always laughed at my antics - still does, in fact. And a cartoonist named Jim McLean was very influential to me as a kid; I took his cartooning and animation classes when I was ten/eleven years old, so he was the one who first introduced me to the joys of india ink and artgum erasers.

DMc: What or whom inspired you to become an illustrator?

BB: I have drawn since the age of two and I just always felt wired to do it. In my childhood and teenhood, I was inspired by the artists of superhero comics and humor magazines like Mad and Cracked - Jim Steranko, Richard Corben, Curt Swan, John Severin, Frank Frazetta were names whose work I admired and inspired me, along with 'cartoonier' guys like Don Orehek, Don Martin, Charles Schulz, Chuck Jones, etc.

DMc: Please describe the collaboration involved between you, the publisher, and the author?

BB: A project with Capstone Press usually starts with them sending me a written manuscript containing all the words in a book and where they need to go on a page, along with brief written descriptions of what the pictures should be. From there I'll send them a first rough pencil storyboard of the entire book, followed by a more finished penciling, then on to ink and color. The penciling and inking are all done the old-fashioned way, and colors/shading/effects are all done in Photoshop. Most books I've done for them involve all these stages, though some titles have been inkless and a bit looser in style. The How-to-Draw books I've done for them are pencil only, but have involved

several from-scratch designs for monsters, spaceships, funky cars, and other characters.

DMc: Please share with us your latest project.

BB: My latest title for Capstone was completed at the end of summer 2008. It's a book in their Cartoon Nation series due to be published in 2009 and is all about the history of women in voting and politics. So the story is all about suffrage, Susan B. Anthony, etc., ending with the nomination of Geraldine Ferraro in 1984 and Hillary Clinton's presidential campaign in '08. Less than a week after I delivered the final color board, John McCain nominated Sarah Palin as his running mate. So with some shifts and tweaks to the last couple of pages, I drew a new McCain/Palin image for the end of the book before it went to press. It was an interesting reminder that -- even though I do a lot of 'way back' historical research to get facts, dress styles, and likenesses visually accurate for these books -- history is happening right NOW, too!

DMc: When illustrating a book do you incorporate any physical aspects from anyone in your life?

BB: I have indeed, and I always look for an opportunity to do it, time and narrative freedom allowing! My two kids have appeared in a crowd of French refugees receiving relief supplies from Clara Barton, and my wife is visible behind Martin Luther King during his 'I Have a Dream' speech on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial. I always enjoyed it whenever there was a cameo appearance in a crowd scene in Mad, so I always relish the chance to do the same kind of thing.

DMc: How long does it take to illustrate a picture book?

One to two months.

DMc: Is there one particular book you've illustrated that you like the most? If yes, why?

BB: I like the Clara Barton book from Capstone's Graphic Library series. I like the level of detail and expression, and it was fulfilling and fun to draw Clara through her entire life and research each period in aspects of costume, furniture, etc. Passages of the story were also told in the form of old 'photos' depicting historical events in her life, so there was an opportunity for some stylistic variety within the narrative that involved enclosing action

within sepia-toned photo frames, creating antiqued newspaper clippings with period typefaces, etc. I'm also happy with the cover of that book, too.

DMc: What advice would you give to an aspiring illustrator?

BB: Draw, draw, draw. And don't ever think you can't do it.

DMc: A signature request I like to ask every author, illustrator, editor, etc., I interview is for the individual to share with us a tidbit from their lives the reader will find either humorous or surprising. Brian, can you please share one with us?

BB: I don't have a favorite color.

Follow Brian's career at:

Art/Design: www.basclecreative.com

VO/Acting: www.brianbascle.com

A link to my available titles on Amazon:

http://www.amazon.com/s/qid=1228749834/ref=sr_pg_1?ie=UTF8&rs=&keywords=Brian%20Bascle&rh=i%3Aaps%2Ck%3ABrian%20Bascle&page=1

BOOK REVIEW



Title: *Rebel in Blue Jeans*
Written by: Beverly Stowe McClure
Ages: Young Adult Contemporary
Publisher: Twilight Times Books
ISBN: 1-933353-49-X
Published: October 2008
Softback: 157 pages
Price: \$14.95

BOOK REVIEW continued

Sixteen-year-old Rebel Ferguson lives what she believes to be the ideal life, until the day her mother departs the peaceful life of their ranch. Rebel's life begins to spiral out of control, while she attempts to understand her mother's desertion. Her father becomes distant and turns to alcohol to deal with his failed marriage. All is not what it appears to be, especially the changing friendship with her longtime friend, Will Garret and the special attention from a gorgeous college guy, Rick.

"Aw, come on, Reb, Rick tilted the glass so a trickle ran down her chin. Drink up. Before she realized it, the glass was empty and her throat was burning. Eew! That's awful! She pushed him away. What is it? And don't tell me orange juice."

Rebel must make positive decisions in her life before it is too late. To do this she will need to first accept her mother's decision and listen to and take to heart her friend's sound advice. By doing so, hopefully it will guide Rebel down the right road towards contentment and appreciation of one's self.

Beverly Stowe McClure, expertly gets into the mind and actions of the main character. The reader will find themselves cheering for Rebel and all the while wanting to yell at her to make the right decision. To learn more about Beverly's writing career visit her at: <http://beverlystowemcclure.wordpress.com>

Reviewed by: Donna M. McDine

REFLECTIONS OR DREAMS

REFLECTIONS

by Kristie Smith, M.Ed, TVI

It is almost time for a brand new year, and for the first time in forty-seven years I am going to be a married woman. After years of being single, going out with nice and not-so-nice men, I have finally met my soul mate and will be married in Hawaii on December 30, 2008.

Meeting your soul mate is not what I thought it would be. After all, I am a hopeless romantic who loves the idea of a smooth flawless romance, an enormous wedding and everyone is happy. My fiancé and I have not had smooth sailing. However, with God in charge, our relationship ranks in the top ten according to me.

Don't get me wrong when I say that finding my soul mate is not what I thought it would be, I am extremely happy. It is just as with everything in life and anything worth having, there are problems, conflicts, and very trying times. This is life and reality that does not make a great chic flick.

I am marrying someone who is in my opinion one of the best men, besides my dad and late brother-in-law. that I ever met. He thinks that I am the best-looking, smartest and most humorous person. He does not see or care that I am forty pounds overweight, cannot figure out a checkbook and am crabby because of constant migraine headaches that I inherited from my maternal grandmother whom I loved dearly.

People that know Richard and I are shocked that we have lasted three years and are getting married because we appear to be polar opposites. He is more reserved, a class act and I am loud with a, well let's just say, overbearing laugh. Richard is an academic while I am the woman waiting on the next sale at Macy's. I am friendly- Richard is quieter. I was scared to go out with him when my sister set me up because I was afraid that he would not talk back to me on the date, so I invited a friend and my sister to go along on our date, so, in case there was silence, they could help me to keep the conversation going. A silent room has always made me nervous.

I adoringly tell him that I viewed him as arrogant and a little on the moody side when I knew him from the past. My sister and my future husband worked together years before, so she reassured me that he was a good guy and would not murder me on the first date.

Little did I know that dating and then marrying him would be one of the best things to ever happen to me.

When Richard and I first started dating, he had just gone through a divorce and his father whom he loved dearly recently had passed away months before our first date. My family had just lost my brother-in-law, Bob of cancer at the age of only forty-four. We had both been through some really tough times before the date.

My sister, Karyn, Bob and I as a team had been going from a cancer center in Dallas to one in San Antonio for several months. Bob was over six foot two, weighed close to two hundred and seventy pounds; an ex TCU football player that would not give up easily. He only wanted my sister, my mother and me around while he fought the toughest game of his life. He always put on his brave face for his two children.

Bob fought extremely hard and even received radiation at the weight of one hundred and forty pounds on the week that he passed away. He battled esophageal cancer for over two years.

My sister stayed by his side, slept on the floor so that she could be right by his side and took him to radiation until he could no longer walk. After Bob passed away, my sister and I literally spent the next nine months going to work, coming home to DVD's and eating No Bake cookies. Karyn luckily stayed slim and I bulged from all sides and have yet to lose the weight.

Needless to say, at this time, I was not excited about dating. I had gone out with so many men and most of the time it had been a little short of a disaster and more stress than I could ever had imagine. I was not in the mood for a romance, a man or anything else. My only joy was sitting with my sister, talking to my mother, eating cookies and watching the Friends DVD's over and over.

Richard began taking me places much to my chagrin, planning really fun events and calling daily. Since he had not been corrupted in the dating game, he did not know anything about playing games with women. He did not and does not pretend. What you see is what you get.

Richard reminds me of Edward in the movie Twilight. Edward falls head over heels in love with Bella. He craves her. Of course since Edward is a vampire, he craves her blood. Now as far as I know Richard craves my company for some reason but not my blood.

People in general could learn much from Richard and Edward because the real man and the fictional one love deeply and are not afraid to show how they feel, will go to any lengths to prove this love and always put their companion first.

After two painful years of watching people and their doctors of all ages fight to save their life, I began thinking differently. Who cares if you gain weight unless your health is affected? Who cares about the lines on your face or the lack of money in your account? The people that I met in the cancer labs only seem to care about four things: their faith, family, friends, and living.

I decided after going through this experience, with the risk of sounding corny, that the only way to enjoy life is to simply love and service each other. Nothing else really matters.

I have come to the conclusion after being single, engaged and married that you can be happy in any situation. Life is short, so it is up to every one of us to enjoy a

wonderful life, help others by being a service to them and to be content in any situation.

God has blessed me with the most wonderful mother, family and fiancé among my many blessings. Anytime I was unhappy about being single, fat or poor, my devoted mother would remind me of this wonderful Bible verse.

"Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ which strengthen me."

Philippians 4:11-13, KJV

Have a wonderful year and look for the good in every day.

To learn more about Kristie's writing career visit her at:

http://www.kristielsmith.com/Site/Wee_Play_Wee_Learn.html

MY GOAL

by Sandy Senay-Ellefson

I like to write, it makes me smile,
I can get lost for at least a while,
I can be me, no wants or needs
My imagination the experience feeds.

I do not know just why I started
It doesn't work for the faint hearted
There are times of wait and worry
for editors don't like to hurry

But just when all hope is lost
You find it's worth all the cost
You sold a piece and reached a goal
and somehow now you feel so whole.

Sandy Senay-Ellefson is currently a student at ICL. She has placed in several writing contests, but is still new to writing. A mother of three with her first grandchild due this month, she writes with the goal of helping all children learn a love of written words. Sandy can be reached via email: estricth@hotmail.com



PROCLAIM YOUR SUCCESSES!

Mayra Calvani:

- ❖ I'm happy to announce that "The Slippery Art of Book Reviewing," is an EPPIE 2009 Awards Finalist under the non-fiction category! Visit www.slipperybookreview.wordpress.com for reviews, excerpts, blurbs, and interviews with the authors.

Kim Chatel:

- ❖ Rainbow Sheep, is a finalist in Category 08 - Children/Young Adult in EPIC's 2009 EPPIE Competition.

Between the Cracks Fiction at www.kimmcdougall.com

Children's and YA Fiction at www.kimchatel.com

Blazing Trailers Book Previews www.blazingtrailers.com

Nancy Famolari:

SUMMER'S STORY

Mainstream Romance:	Contemporary
Publisher:	Red Rose Publishing
ISBN:	978-1-60435-244-3
Cover Artist:	Shirley Burnett
Editor:	Lea Schizas
Word Count:	69,400
Release Date:	December 18, 2008

Blurb:

Summer's father, a famous racehorse trainer, is dead; his only asset, a fabulous trotter. Two men offer help to get the horse to the races. Summer refuses Ned, owner of Golden Oaks, blaming him for her father's death. Davis, a famous racehorse driver, wins her heart, but deserts her after she suffers a serious accident on the track. Behind the scenes, Max, a wealthy owner, will do anything to get the horse for his stable. Can Summer get her trotter to the winner's circle and most important will she find love?

Nancy's Website: <http://sites.google.com/site/nancyfamolari>

Summer's Story coming soon from Red Rose Publishing: <http://redrosepublishing.com>

Katie Hines:

- ❖ I recently signed a book contract with 4RV Publishing for my middle grade urban fantasy, "Guardian." It is due to come out in May, 2009. Thanks for the opportunities to put up this success! I'm thrilled.

website: <http://www.katiehines.com>

blog: <http://katiehines.blogspot.com>

Coming May 2009 - "Guardian" - middle grade urban fantasy

Summary: Imagine you have made a secret promise that can lead you to the discovery of an incredible treasure and an ancient power. But in order to fulfill that promise, you must defeat an age-old sect that is determined to claim the treasure and power themselves.

Karin Larson:

- ❖ "Maybe This Time," *Stories for Children* ~ December 2008
- ❖ "Freeze Point," *Nature Friend Magazine* ~ December 2008
- ❖ "Is This Work?" *Once Upon a Time* ~ will be published in a future issue.

Donna M. McDine:

- ❖ My special announcement that I have been hinting at for the last month is: I have been hired as the Marketing Manager at *Stories for Children Magazine*, effective January 1, 2009. My writing career has come full circle...SFC was my first publishing credit in April 2007.
- ❖ "Gum Massage Tips," *Parenting Universe* ~ December 2008
- ❖ "Four Tips for Squeezing in Your Exercise During Your Busy Day," *Diet Trends Review.com* ~ December 2008
- ❖ "Ten Ways to Survive the First Year of Middle School (Junior High)," *Psychology Again.com* ~ December 2008

CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL!
CHEERS TO YOUR CONTINUED SUCCESS!



The 4th Annual Muse Online Writers Conference - October 12-18, 2009

To register -

<http://www.freewebs.com/themuseonlinewritersconference/registration.htm>

The Muse Online Writers Conference is aimed at offering you, the writer, whatever resources you need to enhance and better your craft, as well as to make some contacts to get you to that next level all writers getting published.

The conference organizers understand many writers out there do not have the monetary resources to attend outside conferences, or perhaps are situated in far off locales, or may be incapacitated in some way makes it difficult to travel. Within the world of the Internet, everything is possible and with this in mind they offer you this chance to come out, have a chat with their Presenters, ask them questions and even attend a few of their FREE workshops held throughout the week.

Things to note when visiting the conference website:

Place your membership in INDIVIDUAL EMAIL only. No email exchange between members. You are responsible to update and reregister if you change your email address. Updates and Info emails will go out ONLY once so you need to go into the Messages and find them to update yourselves on news about the 2009 Conference. Tell your friends to register early because this year the **cut off date for registrations is August 1st. NO EXCEPTIONS.**

And remember...this is a smoke-free environment.

Lea Schizas, founder and coordinator of the Muse Online Writer's Conference

museitupeditor@yahoo.ca

TESTIMONIALS FROM THE DEBUT NEWSLETTER

"Just wanted you to know I just finished my first time reading of your newsletter, and I say first because I'll be going back to really get into the details. Wow, it looks really good too. It's more like a mini-magazine. Well done!"

Riki Adamo - <http://www.everlandonline.com>

"Hi Donna! I am happy to receive your newsletter. It's fabulous! What an undertaking, but well worth it. I enjoyed reading it! I wish you all success. Donna McDine's newsletter is first class all the way. Thank you for all that you do. I appreciate our connection."

Angel Blessings,

Dyan Garris ~ <http://www.voiceoftheangelsmagazine.com>

"Congratulations, Donna! Nice newsletter!"

Suzanne Lieurance

The Working Writer's Coach

"When Your Pen Won't Budge, Read The Morning Nudge"

<http://www.morningnudge.com>

"Wow, your debut issue was great! I'm impressed."

All the best,

Beth Bence Reinke, MS, RD

<http://www.jacketflap.com/profile.asp?member=BethAnn>

"The debut issue of your newsletter is awesome. Loved your article and am so happy for you. You also know how to leave us with a cliffhanger. (Your post about news Jan. 1.) Have a good week, while the rest of us bite our nails waiting for the next chapter. :)"

Beverly Stowe McClure

<http://beverlystowemcclure.wordpress.com>

<http://rebelinbluejeans.wordpress.com>

My heartfelt Thank you to Stephanie Hoina (stefhoina@hotmail.com), my critique partner and friend for taking on the responsibility of proofreading the Write What Inspires You! Newsletter. As writers we all know how difficult it is to proofread on our own!

****Please share this newsletter with your peers in the writing industry and encourage them to opt-in as a monthly subscriber @**

<http://www.donnamcdine.com>

****We DETEST spam and we do not share or sell our mailing list****

To unsubscribe from this newsletter, simply send an email to: dmcdine@optonline.net with the word "unsubscribe" in the subject line and you will be removed.