

Write What Inspires You! Newsletter

October 2009
Volume 2, Issue 10

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Children's Author



Welcome to the October issue of my FREE newsletter:

Write What Inspires You!

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Phew! Is it really September 30th already? The cooler autumn days are upon us with the beautiful changing colors of the leaves in the Northeast. The Fall season is simply my favorite time of the year. While putting this month's issue together I'm enjoying the cool breeze from my office window and the vision of our Halloween decorations gracing our front lawn. On one side of the driveway a display of pumpkins, hay, gourds, and scarecrow welcomes visitors to our house. And much to my youngest daughter's delight, we have adorned the other side with scary skeletons, witches in flight, and a talking Frankenstein.

The Fall display works two-fold by keeping it up through Thanksgiving. Not only can a holiday display work for two holidays our writing can work for more than one market. While we focus our article or short story to one particular market, don't forget you can change the slant and submit to a whole other market. For example, you write an adventurous short story of children learning about poachers. How about taking the idea and changing it into a non-fiction article on poachers and how they affect the food chain. Ideas are endless. Always make sure you bring your handy handheld tape recorder or note pad and pen wherever you go. You never know when inspiration will strike and your next idea is born.

Get out this weekend. Enjoy a local farmers market and pick up fresh apples, pumpkins, apple cider for your Fall enjoyment. You'll be happy you did.

It is my pleasure to present to you interviews with authors Nicole Weaver and Nancy Sanders. Don't miss the goodies in the columns: Book Reviews, Reflections and Dreams by Joseph Sottile, Proclaim Your Successes, SFC Best of Anthology, Writer's Digest Best Of, First Book, Media Release, and Sponsor Ads.

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

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

Quote of the Month:

"We move about our children and hope and pray that when they get older they don't lose hope in the goodness of life—in what they and it has to offer...and we have the same hope for our students, knowing that it's a privilege to be part of it all." ~ Joseph Sottile

AUTHOR INTERVIEW – NICOLE WEAVER

I met children's author, Nicole Weaver, after reading and writing a book review of Marie and Her Friend the Sea Turtle. We have stayed in contact via email and through JacketFlap and felt she was a terrific example how one can use real life events in their writing to create a successful book. Come along and learn more about Nicole and be sure to read my book review included in this newsletter.

DMc: What or whom inspires you to write?

NW: My children and students inspire me to write.

DMc: What has been the most memorable experience in your writing career?

NW: Getting my first book published.

DMc: What style or genre of book do you write/have you written?

NW: Children's picture book.

DMc: What type of creative process do you use for the development of your ideas? Are you an outline writer?

NW: I basically jot down ideas as they come to me. In my opinion it is too rigid to work from an outline.

DMc: Please share with us the idea behind your book, Marie and Her Friend the Sea Turtle.

NW: I lived on the beach when I was a little girl, sea turtles came to shore all the time. The story is based on true events of my childhood days.

DMc: Have you used any of your experiences teaching in your writing?

NW: As a teacher you have to have a lot of compassion, so I always try to incorporate the importance of having compassion in my writing.

DMc: What did you find to be the most frustrating step/process of getting your first book published?

NW: The editing process was very frustrating. Prior to that was the many rejections I had gotten. That is why I decided to self-publish. I also decided to write the script in three languages to make it more marketable.

DMc: Please share with us your current work-in-progress.

NW: I am currently working on getting a book of poetry published and a book on short stories for middle and high school students. Last but not least, I am doing a re-write for a children's picture book that was critiqued by Guardian Angel Publishing.

DMc: What advice would you like to convey to aspiring writers?

NW: Never give up; keep writing so you can get better at 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 that the reader will find either humorous or surprising. Nicole, can you please share one with us?

NW: The first time I vacationed in Mexico I had a very interesting experience. My husband and I went to the flea market to look around, one of the merchant made a very unpleasant remark about me in Spanish, I responded in perfect Spanish and said "Watch what you say, you never know who can understand you." Since I am black she assumed that I did not speak Spanish. The people around us got a real good laugh.

To learn more about Nicole visit: <http://www.authorsden.com/nicoleweaver>

AUTHOR INTERVIEW - NANCY SANDERS

Cyberspace has certainly shown once again that you can meet people you otherwise would have not met. Recently, Nancy has been organizing her Virtual Book Tour and to my pure surprise and delight she reached out to me to host her during her cyberspace travels. And since connecting a few weeks ago, we are bumping into each other all over the Internet. I just finished attending her fabulous teleclass at the Children's Writing Coaching Club entitled, The Importance of Voice in Fiction and Non-fiction Part 1. It was a fantastic listen and participate event. She'll be back again in October to present Part 2. Email me for details at dmcidine@optonline.net. Without further ado I'm pleased to present Nancy's interview.

DMc: What or whom inspires you to write?

NS: I belong to three great critique groups. One is a group of 8 professional writers, Wordsmiths at www.wordsmiths8.wordpress.com. The other is a Christian group of writers that is open to everyone at every level called CHAIRS at www.chairs7.wordpress.com. The other is an online picture book critique group called Pens and Brushes at www.PensAndBrushes.wordpress.com. Every time I meet with each of my groups, I get so inspired to keep on as a writer. I get encouraged to move forward in spite of the rejections. I get challenged to improve my skills and try to be the best writer I can. And of course, I am most inspired each day by the greatest book of all time, the Bible.

DMc: How did you get started?

NS: I first started writing as a stay-at-home mom 24 years ago. I wanted to write picture books because I fell in love with all the wonderful picture books we'd borrow each week from our library.

DMc: What compelled you to write "Yes! You Can Learn How To Write Children's Books, Get Them Published, And Build A Successful Writing Career"?

NS: This book had an amazing beginning. I started a blog about two years ago. Mostly it focused on strategies and techniques that I wanted to share with my friends and fellow writers to help them build a successful writing career like I've been blessed to have. One day out of the blue, a publisher contacted me. She said she'd been reading my blog and wanted to offer me a book contract to write a book with the exact same material I'd been posting on my blog. I was thrilled with the opportunity!

DMc: Do you have an agent? If yes, how long did it take for you to find one?

NS: No, I currently don't have an agent, although I have had 2 at different times in the past. Each time, I found an agent fairly quickly. To find an agent, I looked at various websites and market guides and contacted ones that seemed to be a good fit for my purposes at that time. I appreciated each of their input in my career. As my career has shifted over the years, so has my need for an agent. Right now I'm looking for an agent again because I want to target the picture book market, and to do this effectively, an agent is essential.

DMc: Do you have a particular genre you prefer to write for?

NS: I enjoy writing for a variety of genres. These include magazine stories, puzzle books, craft books, beginning readers, novelty books, nonfiction books, books for the Christian market, books for the educational market, and books for the ethnic market. Right now, after years of studying this challenging genre, I'm enjoying writing for the picture book market.

DMc: What is the best writing advice you've ever received?

NS: Just write. That's it. It's easy to talk about writing and dream about writing, but unless we just sit down and write, our dreams will never come true.

DMc: Thus far, what has been your most memorable writing experience?

NS: After 24 years of writing and 75 books under my belt, I have had so many amazing and wonderful once-in-a-lifetime "moments" that my cup is bursting over with joy at being a writer. There was my first sale after 5 years of total rejections when I won a newspaper contest with a story about my dad. There was the day an editor called to say Costco had ordered the entire warehouse of my book, *A Kid's Guide to African American History*. (She asked me first if I was sitting down.) There was the time a publisher circulated to everyone

in the publishing house a quote from a reader on Amazon saying my one book D is for Drinking Gourd should win both the Caldecott and the Newbery. There was the time a friend told me she was photocopying my book, Depression: What's a Christian To Do? and mailing it in letters to men and women in prison because she wasn't allowed to mail them books. And then, most recently, there was the post on my blog a couple of weeks ago when someone I never heard of before said she got my new book, Yes! You Can, started trying the strategies, and landed her very first book contract within the week. Those are just some of the memorable highlights of my career. I have been truly blessed.

DMc: Please share with us your current Work-in-Progress.

NS: Right now I'm working on a book of readers theatre plays about math. It's for 4th through 8th graders and it's fun to refresh my math skills while writing silly plays that will hopefully help learners at all levels learn to love math and build confidence with their reading skills all at the same time. It's for Libraries Unlimited. The deadline is December 30, 2009.

DMc: What would you be if you were not a writer?

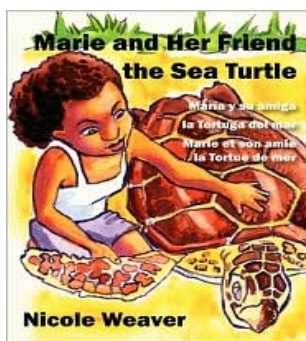
NS: I am a homemaker, but this summer we became empty nesters so there are no more kids at home! I've worn many different hats over the years including Bible study leader, Women's Ministry leader, quilter, and craftsperson. If I could not be a writer, at this point of my life I would want to be a speaker at writer's conferences, an agent to help shape other writers' careers, or an acquisitions editor at a children's publishing house.

DMc: Where can our readers visit you?

NS: My website is www.nancyisanders.com. From October 5 (today!) until October 16,

I'm hosting a Virtual Book Tour on my blog: <http://www.nancyisanders.wordpress.com/> to celebrate the release of my newest book, Yes! You Can. Please stop by and visit!

BOOK REVIEWS



Title: Marie and Her Friend the Sea Turtle
Written by: Nicole Weaver
Illustrated by: Ruben Chavez
Ages: 6-9
Publisher: Outskirts Press, Inc.
ISBN: 978-1-4327-2377-4
Published: March 2009
Softcover: 36 pages
Price: \$14.95

The wonder and beauty of the ocean draws Marie to the beach each day in the hunt for the perfect seashell. Her adventures bring her to the best location on the island. Delighted to catch a glimmer in the distance, Marie rushes to retrieve what she believes will be the most beautiful seashell ever. To her surprise she finds a stranded sea turtle, who oddly enough communicates his frustration of being stuck on the beach. With love and determination Marie seeks a way to release the sea turtle back to his home in the ocean.

Written in English, French, and Spanish children's author, Nicole Weaver reaches many cultures and pulls at children's hearts in their love and wonderment of the world around them. Illustrator, Ruben Chavez further brings the story alive with his colorful illustrations which certainly will make the reader yearn for their own beach adventures.

Nicole Weaver is a children's author and veteran teacher of French and Spanish at the middle school and high school levels. Visit Nicole at:

<http://www.authorsden.com/nicoleweaver>

Ruben Chavez is an illustrator and fine artist. He enjoys rendering people in various mediums, with the intent of capturing their spirit and soul. Visit Ruben at:

<http://rubenchavez.com/index.html>

Reviewed by Donna M. McDine for the National Writing for Children Center.

REFLECTIONS OR DREAMS

SCHOOL PARTIES

By Joseph Sottile

Why do teachers hate parties?

They act as if parties aren't cool.

They'd rather not have the birthday cakes,

happy handshakes, the extra calories,

the melted ice cream, and root beer floats.

Parties are fun. Parties are cool.

Parties give kids a chance to chill out.

Why don't teachers like kids running here,

there, and everywhere?

Weren't teachers kids once?

Parties are fun. Parties are cool.

Parties give kids a chance to pig out.

Parties are sloppy, messy, and fun.

Why do teachers hate parties?

Didn't they like to have fun once?

Visit Joe at: <http://www.consideration.org/sottile>



BLOG SCHEDULE

<http://www.donna-mcdine.blogspot.com>

The cool Fall weather has brought on a slew of events at Write What Inspires You. I'd be delighted if you'd stop by any day and read about fellow children's writers. A few are past, but with wonderful technology you can view the feature and of course the current.

Fri, September 25th – Just Breeze by Beverly Stowe McClure has blown into town. Come meet this new character in person.

Mon, September 28th – Movement and Rhythm Newsletter by Kathy Stemke

Wed, September 30th – The Peril of the Sinister Scientist by Janet Ann Collins

Fri, October 2nd – No Bones About It by Bill Kirk

Mon, October 5th – Guest Author Virtual Tour – Nancy Sanders

Tues, October 6th – A Horse of Course by Shari Lyle-Soffe

Wed, October 7th – My Grandma's Kitchen Rules by Bill Kirk

Fri, October 9th – Preston, The Not-So-Perfect-Pig by Janie Robinson

Mon, October 12th – Randy Kazandy, Where Are Your Glasses by Rhonda Fischer

Tues, October 13th – Guest Author Interview Carol Zelaya

Wed, October 14th – Emily the Chickadee by Carol Zelaya – Book Review

Fri, October 16th – One Noble Journey by Dixie Philips

Mon, October 19th – The Legend of Vinny Whiskers by Gregory Kemp – Book Review

Mark your calendar today and be sure to visit <http://www.donna-mcdine.blogspot.com>.

Thank you in advance for your interest.



Stories for Children Magazine First Annual "Best of" Anthology!

Stories for Children Magazine is proud to announce the release of its first annual anthology, Best of Stories for Children Magazine Volume 1. Come take an adventure in the World of Ink and let the SFC Contributors and Stanley Bookman show you how your imagination can be your guide.

There has always been an enchantment about reading a good children's story. Children take pleasure in having a story read to them anytime or anywhere - whether it be around a campfire, under a starry night, in their beds wrapped up tight in snuggly blankets, beneath a shady tree on a hot summer's day, or in front of a roaring fireplace on a cold winter's day. Children love to listen to a story being read and this can go as far as adolescence. Best of Stories for Children Magazine Volume 1, is a collection of over 20 poems, stories, and articles published by leading children's authors.

At Stories for Children Magazine the World of Ink is a place where imagination is everything and everything is only your imagination. Stories for Children Magazine has been inspiring children, parents, librarians, and teachers for well over two years with their monthly online magazine. Now with the release of the Best of Stories for Children Magazine Volume 1, children, parents, librarians, and teachers can enjoy the top stories, poems, and articles from Stories for Children Magazine's first year of publication over and over again.

The Best of Stories for Children Magazine Volume 1 can be purchased nationwide from any bookstore, or online through several internet websites including Amazon.com, LuLu.com at <http://www.lulu.com/content/4892856>, and the SFC Bookstore at <http://www.storiesforchildrenmagazine.org>

Come visit the SFC Team and SFC Contributors in the World of Ink at Stories for Children Magazine! There are many wonderful articles, stories, and interviews with leading Children's Authors or Illustrators in each monthly issue.

To learn more about Stories for Children Magazine visit:
<http://www.storiesforchildrenmagazine.org>

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Writer's Digest

WRITE BETTER GET PUBLISHED

If you appreciate Write What Inspires You Newsletter, please consider nominating us for the "Writer's Digest Best Newsletters for Writers," Send an email to writersdig@fwpubs.com with your comments and nomination and be sure to note "Writer's Digest Best Newsletters" in the subject line. Thank you in advance if you are so inclined.



DO YOU
REMEMBER
THE MAGIC
OF YOUR
FIRST BOOK?

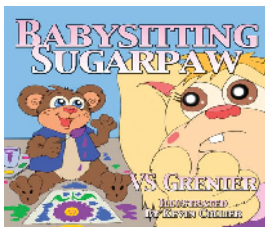
VS Grenier has joined forces with First Book to help children find the love of reading and writing. Here is what Bonnie Johnson from First Book had to say about me joining their cause.

"First Book provides new books to children in need addressing one of the most important factors affecting literacy – access to books. Since 1992, First Book has distributed over 65 million new books to children from low-income families in thousands of communities nationwide.

"Programs that serve predominantly children from low-income families can receive books from First Book and that is why VS Grenier has joined First Book in our fight to bring children their first book.

"First Book works with many different authors and/or publishers big and small! We are thrilled to be working with VS Grenier at First Book in our donation program. We have done similar donations and generally because First Book works with thousands of recipient groups across the country we try to find a group near an author and/or publisher that could benefit from a donation such as this."

However, getting a book into a child's hands is much harder than it sounds and so I need your help. You can help me bring a child their first book a few different ways.



1. Place an order for an autographed copy of Babysitting SugarPaw and 25% of the sale will go to books for First Book. Place your order at <http://vsqrenier.com/BabysittingSugarPaw.aspx>
2. Buy and donate Babysitting SugarPaw to First Book. Once we reach the 100 book level, First Book will proceed in donating the books to a group in my local area where I get to personally hand each child their First Book. You can place your donation at <http://vsqrenier.com/BabysittingSugarPaw.aspx>
3. Tell your friends about Babysitting SugarPaw and how I have joined forces with First Book in bring children their first book. You can use this announcement or parts of it on our blog, website, or social networks.

If you would like to know more about First Book please visit their website at <http://www.firstbook.org>

To learn more about VS Grenier and her picture book Babysitting SugarPaw visit <http://vsqrenier.com/BabysittingSugarPaw.aspx>



MOVEMENT AND RHYTHM NEWSLETTER

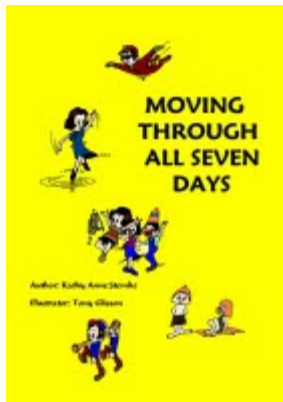
Attention all educators, home schooling parents, and librarians!

Kathy Stemke, Freelance Writer, Author, and Educator has a fantastic newsletter jammed packed with tips and activities your students and children will surely be thrilled to join in on. To become an opt-in subscriber today and to learn more about Kathy visit: <http://educationtipster.blogspot.com/>

At <http://educationtipster.blogspot.com/> you will also find important information on movement activities, book reviews, and parenting tips which will help parents and teachers teach children phonics, math, writing and science!

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Don't forget to check out Kathy's book Moving Through all Seven Days



Available on lulu:

<http://www.lulu.com/content/e-book/moving-through-all-seven-days/7386965#>

Additional locations where Kathy shares her expertise:

<http://www.helium.com/users/406242>

http://www.associatedcontent.com/user/237923/kathy_stemke_dancekam.html

<http://kathystemke.weebly.com/>

SUPPORTER ADS



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If you'd like to become a published children's book author yourself, join the Children's Writers' Coaching Club like I did, at the National Writing for Children Center and get the help you need to succeed ~ <http://www.cwcoachingclub.com>



[Lea Schizas](http://leaschizeditor.com), is a multi-published and award-winning author and editor. Her commitment is to help you tighten your manuscript before it's submitted to agents or publishers. She will stick with your manuscript until we are both satisfied of the conclusion ~

<http://leaschizeditor.com>



At SFC Newsletter for Writers, we believe writers naturally want to help along those starting out. I know you will enjoy this monthly newsletter loaded with helpful information, fun stories about the writing life, and the successes of fellow writers.

Voted one of the 101 Best Websites for Writers by Writer's Digest 2009

<http://storiesforchildrenpublishing.com/SFCNewsletterforWriters.aspx>



Need A Manuscript Critique?

Do you have a wonderful story, but need a second pair of eyes to look it over?

VS Grenier will look for grammar, spelling, setting, plot, character development, and so much more. Critiques are designed to help us become better writers. We all need our stories looked at by others who have experience in the writing world. VS Grenier was voted one of the Top Ten Editors ~ Preditors & Editors Readers Poll 2007. To find out more about VS Grenier's critique services visit: <http://vsgrenier.com/critiques.aspx>



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Karina L. Fabian

Fiction, Faith and Fun!

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Parents, grandparents and caregivers often hear these familiar words: "I'm bored, there's nothing to do." And the most famous of all while traveling - "Are We There Yet?" Now -- There's an App for that.

iKids Play™ by Shering Solutions LLC, is the perfect creative play activity developed by educators and now available for iPhone/iPod Touch through this new App. Sue Thurman's, Maybe We Are Flamingos, is now available in this innovative format, at the Apple Store in the iTunes section.

Your child can use the Rub 'n Color activity, which is perfect for small fingers providing the ability to magically reveal pictures. The Touch 'n Color allows children to select one of many colors, then use their finger as a crayon to color the illustrations. This is the perfect way to color without breaking or misplacing crayons on a long trip. The iRead Aloud function will let your child read the story and record it in their voice, or listen to Storytime read by Safari Sue Thurman. Adults also love these fun activities, when they can get their children to share.

Read more at: <http://www.examiner.com/x-2174-Arizona-Family-Examiner>

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