

April 2009 Volume 2, Issue 3 Donna McDine, Children's Author

Welcome to the April 2009 issue of my FREE newsletter: Write What Inspires You!

Quote of the Month:

"Optimism is the faith that leads to achievement. Nothing can be done without hope or confidence." ~ Helen Keller

The first day of Spring welcomed us this morning with snow and it melted quickly...thank goodness! Will it ever end? I know, I know...my northern friends are rolling their eyes and giggling. If she even knew what a real winter is like.

It has been brought to my attention that many of you are not receiving my monthly newsletter. To avoid future problems with my ISP, I've decided to go with iContact.com. I hope by doing so it will alleviate any further problems. Back issues can be found at:

<u>http://www.donnamcdine.com/writewhatinspiresyou.html</u>. Thank you for your patience.

If you are interested, please feel free to submit your name for an interview, an article and/or your successes to: dmcdine@optonline.net. I'd love to hear from you!

Momentum continues to build on a steady basis and we are currently at 125 opt-in subscribers and are booked through July 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

Author & ILLUSTRATOR Interview ~ Ricardo Amado

Riki and I met each other on JacketFlap through our mutual friend Kristi Smith-Armand. Kristi appeared in the March issue. Since the time of her interview she has gotten married. Congratulations Kristi! I know Riki won't mind the congratulatory note to Kristi within his introduction...they are close friends.

Riki is a US army soldier, author, editor, illustrator, publisher, and webmaster for the Everland Trilogy Project. Riki's voice is unique and pulls the reader in from the onset. Riki wrote most of the "Everland" book during his first tour in Iraq...talk about inspiration! Since interviewing Riki prior to his departure at the end of 2008 exciting events have taken place. Let me share with you Riki's news directly from him:

"Sunday, December 21, 2008...11:58 am...Guess what? Our friend Kristie (smith), unless I misread her message, wants to publish my books in Braille for blind students to read on their own. That would be so awesome and something I would not have even thought of on my own. Just thought it could be an interesting bit to add later on to my interview. I'll definitely acknowledge her in Book 2 when it comes out because not only is she giving me a lot of motivation but she's also suggested some interesting little twists here n there. It's like comparing Star Wars the original n the Special Edition. Kristie improves on the original to make it even better! Riki"

"Sunday, February 15, 2009...1:59 am...Hello everyone and Happy Valentine's Day from Iraq!

As usual, I'm a bit pressed for time with limited internet access so let me get right to the point. This morning I was pleasantly surprised to find an e-mail from a publisher (www.sweetiesbooks.com) who has invited me to join their little company and to make a long story short it looks like I might accept if we can work out a contract, which I'm sure we will. And no this wasn't one of those generic e-mails, the owner is someone I actually met through somebody I know who knows somebody who knows somebody, whose uncle's girlfriend dated where she worked that knows the 4th cousin twice removed of the owner. So there."

Congratulations Riki!

DMc: Please share with us a bit about your background and how you became a writer and illustrator.

RA: I was born In Cuernavaca, Mexico on August 1982. Came to (Huntington Park) Los Angeles, CA when I was 4 and grew up there. Joined the Army in July 2001, just prior to 9/11 and since then I've gotten to see the world (and not exactly to places I'd have liked to visit!). While in Korea I met and married my wife of 5 years now. (She's not Korean, she was a soldier too at the time. She's Black too, but I only mention that because of the obvious influence to one of the Everland characters. Guess which one?:-D

DMc: How do you find the time to write during your tour of duty in Iraq?

RA: Some people like to spend what little free time playing sports, or watching TV, or video games. For me, it was writing. Now granted I may have had a bit more freedom than most combat arms soldiers, the fact was never far from my mind. Whenever I had time to write in the back of my mind the thought was always running, "Hmmm while I'm here daydreaming about talking bears and Christmas elves, someone is probably out there getting shot at and/or getting blown up." That's why the dedication page in Volume I (which would otherwise seems a bit out of place in what's supposed to be but wasn't originally intended to be a young adult novel) reads "This book is dedicated to all our brave men and women who kick down doors for a living and face roadside IED's on a daily basis."

DMc: Was the development of the characters of Opal, Crystal, Sam, and Nadya first from your imagination or based on actual people?

From the very beginning in December of 2006, my characters were intended to be RA: absolutely 100% original products of my imagination. Previous failed experiences in my attempts at writing showed all too clearly why it wasn't a good idea to base my characters on actual people. No, I wanted to create characters that I could be proud to call completely my own and yet that would stand out from the competition which there is plenty of when you got teenage female protagonists. Bratz, Winx, most recently Disney's Tinkerbell new faeries. But I think my girls stand out in a very simple yet obvious way: they're not variations of the same mold. I understand how it's cost-effective in making their toys from a business point of view but there too I've taken a different path. My girls are different, and considering everything else is pure fantasy the characters themselves are probably the single most realistic things my books got going for them. Crystal is short and plump, not your typical skinny teen model blonde. Opal too (the illustrated one) I think is a couple of shades darker than what's normally perceived as ideal. And Sam, well I think she represents a naturally pretty but conservative girl that doesn't need to show skin and wear tons of make-up to feel beautiful.

DMc: If the characters were created from your imagination, how did you go about finding the living person to match the already profiled character?

RA: The idea to use living persons to match my characters has been a very recent decision as of October 2006. Finding a character to match Opal wasn't too difficult. I had originally based her designs on a picture I'd seen of my wife when she was young which was fine since until recently I had never planned to use live models. Of course, my wife is no longer 15 so I turned to the next best choice. Her daughter (my step-daughter who is about the right age). For Nadya, I actually went to several modeling agency websites to find a girl who could match the look I was looking for and the challenge was actually 4-fold. First I had to find a girl that looked like Nadya. Two, once I found her, I would have to get her interested. Next I would need to get her parents permission. And finally, the touchy subject of financial compensation (pay) would come up. I'm happy to say I was more than fortunate all around.

On newfaces.com I found Safyra, who responded to my invitation only 30 days after I was ready to give up on the whole live models idea. Her mom Jenny was more than happy to participate and better yet, she is a photographer herself and she liked what she saw I was doing that she offered her daughter's modeling and her own photography services for free. (almost, they're expecting a cut of the sales when our books take off!) But EVEN better, Jenny led me directly to the girl who is now Crystal. She wasn't kidding when she said, "my daughter's best friend at school would be perfect for the part!" As for Sam, at the moment I'm still looking for a girl to fill the part but I'll update you on this)

DMc: Did the illustrations of the characters come before, during or after the writing of Everland?

RA: I guess you could say the illustrations have come DURING the writing of Everland, mostly out of necessity for the book covers, for the website, and of course so my potential live models could have a clear idea of what I was looking for. The character descriptions though go back to the very beginning.

DMc: Being a father of four daughters's, are any of their personalities in your characters?

RA: Subconsciously, I suppose there are. While I was in Iraq my wife would write letters to me all the time telling me about everyday life back home. She would tell me about how my 3-year old (now 5) Natalia was so smart in pre-school yet quiet (she was diagnosed with autism so she only started taking recently) so she helped shape Sam. There was the 14-year old Reona always wanting to stand up for others. Opal. The most surprising thing though was when I came home and met the twins who were pre-mature newborns when I first left. I came home to find that Penny was a short, bossy little person like Crystal and Rheena had traits of Nadya: sensitive and with a constant need to be taken care of.

DMc: Talk about multi-tasking. You wear many hats: father, husband, writer, illustrator, military career, webmaster, bookseller, and owner/founder/Editor-inchief of Romeo & Juliet Press. How do you find the time to balance it all?

RA: By staying up late, a lot! During the day I do my Army job, in the evenings I spend time with the wife and kids who won't let me be anywhere near a computer unless it's to watch Elmo videos on youtube! So after they go to sleep, I try to get as much done as I can. Some nights I'll work on my actual manuscripts. Other nights I'll update the website, or more recently play around with MS paint (I'm poor, I can't afford Adobe Photoshop so I work with what I got). The progress feels frustratingly slow but even though I got so much more planned in the future; I think I've come a long way from just a year ago when I came home with nothing but a WordPad (not Word! WordPad!) file on a thumbdrive. I used WordPad by the way because I found it was the only program that is compatible no matter whose laptop you borrow!

DMc: What is your biggest challenge in writing, illustrating, and promotion all at once?

RA: Time, because obviously I don't get to this full-time as I'd love to and I now feel I could actually do for a living and money, although I'll admit I've been blessed to have been able to save money by doing many things myself instead of hiring someone else to do it for me.

Just being the little guy literally starting from scratch alone has been a huge challenge but I knew it would be. Initially I tried to find major publishers but one of 3 things always happened: either they had extremely long response times for submissions, or my work simply wasn't what they were looking for, or worst those that WERE interested had plans of their own that didn't match my vision which as you can see, so far I have been able to pursue. But overall my two biggest challenges will always be time and money.

DMc: What inspires you to write and illustrate?

RA: Everything around me. My family, the Army, my experiences overseas. Seems like a pretty big gap to leap from insurgents to faeries but if you start reading into my stories, the influences are there. Growing up, I always loved to draw and write. My head was always in the clouds. I had more imaginary friends than real friends. At one point a few years back when I first joined the Army, when I first got married, when my first daughter was born I felt that I had to "grow up" and leave all that fantasy nonsense behind. So ironically, it was that deployment to Iraq that brought it all back and I finally embraced my creativity instead of trying to bury it. And finally, the people who read my books and actually like them.

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 form their lives that the reader will find either humorous or surprising. Riki, can you please share one with us?

RA: Wow! Where do I even begin??? Let me put it this way. The army has a cadence that goes, "This Army life is not my style, hey! They got me looking like Gomer Pyle!" I never knew who that was until I went out and got the DVDs and now, looking back at all the drill sergeants that used to call me "Pyle!!!" I now see why!

Visit Riki at: http://www.everlandonline.com

Author Interview – DYAN GARRIS

Dyan and I first connected in 2007 when I stumbled upon her website at http://www.dyangarris.com. So impressed by her openness and light I interviewed Dyan in November 2007, which you can find in my FREE e-book, *Write What Inspires You!*

Author Interviews, which is available through my website http://www.donnamcdine.com. When I began brainstorming my newsletter in late 2008, I immediately placed Dyan on must interview list. And it is with my pleasure I present to you Dyan Garris.

DMc: Dyan, you are a clairvoyant, clairsentient, and clairaudient. Please explain to our readers what this means.

DG: Clairvoyance is the ability to see and predict future events. It's not so strange or unusual if you understand how time functions. Clairsentience is a "knowing" and clairaudient is the ability to "hear" guidance. I am also a voice recognition psychic and trance channel. I have access to the akashic (soul) records and I channel directly from "Source."

DMc: You recently debuted *Voice of the Angels Magazine for Multi-Dimensional Living*. Please share your inspiration behind the creation of this magazine and what you hope to achieve from this endeavor.

DG: Everything I've done over the last fifteen years has been co-created with Spirit. As I was finishing up the last CD in the series and the creation of the Spiritual ToolboxTM, I wondered what came next. The guidance I received was to first clearly define exactly what I enjoy doing. And then do something that would tie everything together that I've already done. That's how the magazine was born. It's a co-creation with Spirit from my elemental root – from who "I am," not what "I want."

In the magazine we're presenting information for helping people move beyond current perceptions, perspectives, belief in limitations, and for moving forward on the path to mind, body, and spirit oneness and enlightenment. The goal is to provide people with tools for self-empowerment. And also to be as a continuation of the Spiritual ToolboxTM where everything works together as a whole, and also works on many different levels at the same time.

DMc: Do you have a partner at the Voice of the Angels Magazine? If so, how do you divide up the responsibilities of running such an intriguing magazine?

DG: I don't have a partner, no. I do have a very supportive "angel team" and many fabulous authors and contributors.

DMc: You are a multi-published author of Money and Manifesting, Voice of the Angels – A Healing Journey Spiritual Cards, The Book of Daily Channeled Messages, Talk To Your Food! Intuitive Cooking, and Fish Tale of Woe – Lost at Sea. How do you balance your time between so many different commitments?

DG: I'm a disciplined, goal oriented person. Everything I'm putting out into the world is about balance. If I'm not balanced, the work I'm doing wouldn't make much sense, vibrationally or otherwise. So every day there is first and foremost a commitment to balance. Everything follows from there. Sometimes life throws you the unexpected and

you do your best to flow with whatever it is, albeit sometimes more gracefully than other times.

DMc: Beyond the scope of your writing please explain the purpose of your creation of your series of music and meditation CDs for healing.

DG: The music and meditation CDs were created for several different reasons. The first thing to understand is that Voice of the Angels – A Healing Journey Spiritual Cards are all scenes from "A Healing Journey Guided Fantasy," which is the guided journey on the last track of the first CD. So everything began as an integrated journey. Each of the eight CDs in the series vibrates to a particular chakra, while working simultaneously on all of the chakras. The CDs consist of music that is designed to vibrationally attune the listener and at the same time balance and clear the chakra system. They work multidimensionally. The first six CDs have several tracks of soothing music followed by a guided meditation as the last track, each for a particular purpose. The series gets progressively vibrationally higher as it goes along. For example, the music on the first CD is quite different and less musically complex than the music on the seventh or eighth CD. The CDs are designed for relaxation, meditation, Automatic Chakra Balance™ and vibrational attunement of mind, body, and spirit. The most important thing to understand is that they may seem like separate products with separate purposes, but they are all interconnected just as we are all connected, while seemingly separate. We are all part of the one. The CDs are one component of the Spiritual ToolboxTM, but they are also all part of the whole.

DMc: To add even further talents you are #1 charting New Age recording artist. For those unfamiliar please share with us where we can tune in and what you record.

DG: My music is played on numerous New Age music stations both nationally and internationally.

DMc: You often make reference to the Spiritual Toolbox. What is this exactly?

DG: The Spiritual ToolboxTM is a series of integrated products that I co-created with Spirit. They all go together, they are all part of the whole, and they all teach people how to transform the lower into the higher. That's how we balance ourselves and it's how we create, by bringing energy up and connecting it through all of our chakras so it can then go up and out and return to us as form made manifest. The products help people achieve balance and forward moving energy in their lives. They help people get unblocked. The Spiritual ToolboxTM is also a microcosm model for co-creating and multi-dimensional living. Anyone can do what I did, can create their life the way they desire, if they learn to create from their root, create from who they really are, let go of the belief in limitation, and just trust that they are being guided on their journey.

DMc: Towards the end of 2008 you embarked on a DVD tour. Please share with us what the subject matter of your DVD's are and the purpose of them.

DG: I have one DVD *Doors To The Soul*. It's for Automatic Chakra BalanceTM which is a technique I developed to balance the energy field in a short amount of time. It's a relaxation DVD and all you do to reap the benefits is watch and listen.

DMc: To date, what has been the most stand-out moment in your career?

DG: The thing that stands out the most is finally seeing everything come to fruition and come alive. I designed and drew *Voice of the Angels – A Healing Journey Spiritual Cards* in 1993 and 1994. There weren't any such cards with channeled messages from angels in the marketplace at the time and I couldn't get them traditionally published. They were considered very strange. In 2005 technology caught up and I was able to offer free angel card readings online and also publish the cards, journal, and CD that began the whole "project." From there, everything followed very quickly. The last three years have been a very focused effort of creation. I'm still in awe of the way the journey has unfolded. In 1994 when I was finishing the guidebook that goes with the cards, I heard these words: "Nascent Quintessence." That loosely translates to "something quintessential (archetypical/representative model) about to be born (emerging, growing, or blossoming)."

DMc: What current project are you working on?

DG: I just finished writing my chakra balance certification course, designed a line of jewelry for Automatic Chakra BalanceTM, and also recently finished the *Money and Manifesting Audio Book*. Now that the Spiritual ToolboxTM is totally complete, I hope to focus the majority of my energy on the magazine. It's my passion.

Visit Dyan at: http://www.voiceoftheangels.com or http://www.voiceoftheangels.com

REFLECTIONS OR DREAMS

I Can't Write Today Because By Joe Sottile

I can't write today because my paper is wrinkled.

I can't write today because I left my homework home.

I can't write today because I don't have any lunch money.

I can't write today because my pinky needs a band-aid.

I can't write today because I don't have my lucky pencil.

I can't write today because I don't know the date.

I can't write today because it's raining cats and dogs outside.

I can't write today because I forgot to brush my teeth.

I can't write today because my dog barfed on the kitchen floor.

I can't write today because my brand new T-shirt has a hole in it.

I can't write today because my underpants are too tight.

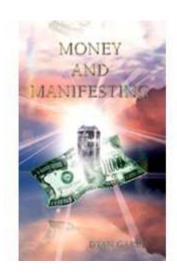
I can't write today because my mind is broke.

I can't write today because broke is my mind. Can't write today!

As printed in "Waiting to See the Principal and Other Poems," by Joe Sottile and Illustrated by Lori Aman

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

BOOK REVIEW



Title: *Money and Manifesting*

Written by: Dyan Garris Hardback: 175 pages

Publisher: Journeymakers, Inc. **ISBN:** 978-0-9776140-6-6 **Publication:** February 2008

To learn how to open the energy pathways and balance the mind, body, and spirit is instrumental in manifestation. Positive thoughts are important, but along with the teachings of Dyan Garris, she provides guidance in adding chakras into your thought process so that you can achieve your dreams.

Written in direct terms with excerpts of fictional characters to better visualize how the energies work the reader will learn the meanings and locations of each chakra and how to balance them to achieve wealth, prosperity, and transformation.

To be able to clear the pathways of each chakra you need to learn and institute in your daily life the Breathing and Relaxation Techniques, Prana Breathing, Grounding Centering, and Create a Sanctuary.

"In order to effect any change we first have to be WILLING to DO something differently. The mind must be in alignment with the will. We can then use change as a catalyst to freeing up the energy of money."

All of this takes the "Integration of Mind, Body, and Spirit."

Read, "Money and Manifesting," and learn how to implement all that Dyan teaches and practices herself. These teachings will help guide you to the life you so richly deserve.

Dyan Garris is a clairvoyant, clairsentient, and clairaudient. To learn more about Dyan and her powerful teachings please visit her at http://www.dyangarris.com.

Book review written by Donna M. McDine for Pump Up Your Book Promotion

PROCLAIM YOUR SUCCESSES!

Amy Allgeyer Cook:

Amy's middle grade fantasy novel, The Iron Bodkin, won the grand prize in PM Moon Publisher's First Annual Writing Contest. It will be published sometime next year. Link to the press release:

http://www.pmmoonpublishers.com/2008-2009 Contest Winner.html

Blog: http://amy7a.livejournal.com/

Mayra Calvani:

I just got some amazing news... my book, The Slippery Art of Book Reviewing, has been nominated for a Foreword Best Book of the Year Award under the Writing category. Winners to be announced in May. I'm pretty excited! First prize is \$1,500.

Website: http://www.mayracalvani.com

Kim Chatel (McDougall):

Rainbow Sheep won the EPPIE for best children's e-book of 2008! Here's the logo if anyone wants it. I'm soooo thrilled.

Between the Cracks Fiction at www.kimmcdougall.com
Children's and YA Fiction at www.kimchatel.com
Blazing Trailers Book Previews www.blazingtrailers.com
Romance Fiction at www.elizacrowe.com

CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL!
CHEERS TO YOUR CONTINUED SUCCESS!

CONTEST ANNOUNCEMENT

Refer an opt-in subscriber to the "Write What Inspires You!" Newsletter and automatically be entered in the drawing for:

"Writing Kit: Everything You Need to Get Creative, Start Writing, and Get Published," From the Editors of Writer's Digest Books.

- Make sure the person you refer includes their name & email address and your name & email address in the opt-in box at the top of my website:
 http://www.donnamcdine.com or within their email to: dmcdine@optonline.net
- Contest ends: May 31, 2009 I've extended the contest due to transmission problems.
- Winner Announced: June 2009 issue of the "Write What Inspires You!" Newsletter

VIRTUAL BOOK TOURS

Guest Authors and Illustrator Schedule for Write What Inspires You! Blog: http://www.donna-mcdine.blogspot.com

- Wednesday, April 1st ~ Christian children's author, Patti Ogden.
- Friday, April 3rd, ~ children's author, Scott Heydt.
- Wednesday, April 8th ~ children's author, Lori Scott
- Monday, April 6th, ~ children's author, Margot Finke

Be sure to stop by and leave a comment or question. Each guest will be on hand periodically throughout the day to field your questions.



Stories for Children Magazine Announces Its *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

Editor, Stories for Children Magazine

Email: <u>vsgrenier@storiesforchildrenmagazine.org</u>

Phone: 800-670-4416

ONLINE WORKSHOPS FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG ADULTS

Hi there from SIMON ROSE:

I am now running online workshops for children and young adults, ages eight to sixteen, conducted via e mail. Details of the workshops offered are available at http://www.simon-rose.com/online_wkshp_yngadults.htm Basically, it's like having an online writer in residence, right in your own home, as aspiring young authors have the unique opportunity to work with a published author.

Even if you don't have children in this age range, please help me to spread the word about these workshops by passing this information on to those in your social circles who may be interested.

Thank you in advance for your help.

Simon Rose

http://www.simon-rose.com/http://simon-rose.blogspot.com/http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TipYYEIgOtE

Phone: (403) 285 9383 Cell: (403) 813 4918

The Doomsday Mask 2009 - The Heretic's Tomb 2007 The Emerald Curse 2006 - The Clone Conspiracy 2005 The Sorcerer's Letterbox 2004 - The Alchemist's Portrait 2003

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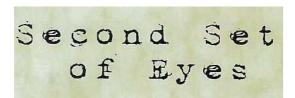
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If you'd like to become a published children's book author yourself, join the Children's Writers' Coaching Club like I did, at the National Writing for Children Center and get the help you need to succeed ~ Click below: http://www.cwcoachingclub.com



<u>Lea Schizas</u>, 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.



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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

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