

# Write What Inspires You! Newsletter

April-May '11  
Volume 3, Issue 10

Donna M. McDine  
Children's Author



## Welcome to the April-May '11 issue

### Write What Inspires You!

Happy Easter and Happy Passover to all! Wishing you all a joyful holiday and spring (if it ever truly gets here).

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I always consider spring a time of renewal and the opportunity to give the house a good old thorough cleaning after the long winter. This year I also took the time out to reorganize my office and to re-evaluate my writing goals set at the end of 2010 before 2011 kicked off. By doing such I gave myself kudos for what I accomplished in the first quarter of 2011 and did not beat myself up for what I didn't get to. With the guidance of Suzanne Lieurance at the Working Writers' Club I rolled over what I still wanted to achieve and let go of scheduling too much in one day. So far this is working for the second quarter of 2011 now that April is almost behind us.

Join me on Friday, April 29<sup>th</sup> at [www.donna-mcdine.blogspot.com](http://www.donna-mcdine.blogspot.com) and chime in as to what's going on in your writing world and what adjustments (if any) have you made to make sure you achieve your 2011 goals. I am looking forward to a lively conversation.

#### Quote of the Month:

*"We each make up a part of the fabric of life. Each one of us is as unique as every single grain of sand and just as important to the whole beach. Honor yourself and others"*

*~Dyan Garris - Voice of the Angels*

Without further ado I present to you the April/May feature interviews with authors, Maggie Grinnell and Kai Strand Special Announcements. Don't miss the additional goodies: Book Reviews, Reflections or Dreams Column, Dynamic Media Release Service, Newsletters, and Sponsor Ads.

If you are interested, please feel free to submit your name for an interview, an essay and/or your successes to: [donna@donnamcdine.com](mailto:donna@donnamcdine.com). Please share this newsletter with your peers in the writing industry and encourage them to opt-in as a monthly subscriber.

Wishing you an inspirational season!

Donna

**AUTHOR INTERVIEW - MAGGIE GRINNELL**

As so many of my writing friends, I met children's author Maggie Grinnell online. Meet Maggie through her interview and learn all about her new book, *The Ketchup Bottle and the Takeover*, Living Water Publishing.

**DMc:** What has been the most rewarding/memorable experience in writing for children?

**MG:** My most rewarding/memorable experience I have had was getting to visit my inner child again after so many years. These ideas kept coming up in my head. When I went to develop these ideas, I was taken back to my childhood and to very wonderful memories.

**DMc:** How did you come up with the intriguing title, *The Ketchup Bottle and the Takeover*?

**MG:** My character has big ego and wants to command the refrigerator. So I took the form my character is in, a ketchup bottle, and what was happening, a takeover.

**DMc:** Please share with us an excerpt or synopsis of *The Ketchup Bottle and the Takeover*.

**MG:** Tommy Tomato, a ketchup bottle with an ego, moves into the refrigerator and wants to take it over. When the other condiments here about this, they devise a plan to take him out of the cold environment, the refrigerator. Tommy goes missing one day during a family picnic. The others worry and want Tommy back so they go looking for him.

**DMc:** What services do you offer to writers and what should they expect if they hire you?

**MG:** I use to be a proofreader for a magazine. I still would love to proofread. So now I provide that service that can be obtained from my website: <http://www.writer65.com/>. When someone receives this service from me, they can expect quality work with professionalism.

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

**MG:** I am working on a story about a cereal box toy that comes to life and the young girl this toy encounters. The young girl stops speaking when her dad dies. This toy and the little girl bond and have an unbelievable experience. Through that experience, many wonderful things happen.

**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. Maggie, can you please share one with us?

**MG:** I started writing to make my Dad proud of me. The surprising thing about this is that my Dad got sick and passed away without seeing any of my work. I still continue to write in his spirit.

Maggie, thank you for joining me today. It has been wonderful getting to know you better.

Visit Maggie to learn more about her: <http://writer65.com/>

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## AUTHOR INTERVIEW - KAI STRAND



Meeting and getting to know fellow author's through the Internet is one of my favorite topics to blog about. Kai Strand a "fellow angel" at Guardian Angel Publishing recently took the time out to chat with me about her new book, *The Weaver*. Sit back and enjoy getting to know Kai through her interview and you'll be happy you did.

**DMc:** When did you decide you wanted to become an author? Do you have another job besides writing?

**KS:** Like most authors, I've always written, but I decided to pursue publication seven years ago. My third child had just started Kindergarten and I'd written a middle grade novel (for my personal entertainment, actually). I was a full-time Mom at that point. Then I realized that if I was going to spend time writing, I should at least try to get paid for it.

I work part time at the local Habitat for Humanity affiliate. I celebrated my five year employment anniversary with them this month. I'm the Operations Manager which means I make sure the policies and procedures and resources are in place so that everyone else can do what they need to do in order to build affordable housing in our community. A behind the scenes job for a worthwhile cause.

**DMc: Were you an avid reader as a child? What type of books did you enjoy reading?**

**KS:** I was an avid reader. I read lots of Judy Blume, all the Little House on the Prairie books and most of the Black Stallion books. I also read lots of Henry David Thoreau. This is all very meaningful, because now I write fantasy (which I didn't read then) and I can't write poetry to save my life (which I did read then).

**DMc: Tell us a bit about your latest book, and what inspired you to write such a story.**

**KS:** *The Weaver* is a lyrical story with a little bit of magic and a lot of storytelling. It has an old fashioned feel with a timeless theme.

About the book: In a town of word weavers, Mary suffers through her third year of Novice Word Weaving. Mary thinks her troubles are over when she meets a gnome-elf who grants her a wish. But instead of weaving a better story, she's weaving strange yarn charms to accompany her still pathetic tales.

One day I was searching the cobwebs in my head for my next story idea. I was sitting in front of my computer, where I compose my stories, and I had the website up for my online critique group, Silver Web. The idea of a spider building its web slowly twisted into weaving a web of words together to build a story. That was the nugget that eventually developed into *The Weaver*.

**DMc: How would you describe your creative process while writing this book? Was it stream-of-consciousness writing, or did you first write an outline?**

**KS:** My writing is always unscripted. This book had a very stuttered composition. I wrote just over half of it and then stopped. I didn't touch it for a very long time. I don't really know why either. I guess those who outline would suggest that my lack of a direction is why I lost my way, but I worked on other projects in the meantime and did think about *The Weaver* now and then. One day I gave myself a good talking to. "You have this perfectly good manuscript doing nothing on your hard drive. It wouldn't take much to finish it and you'd have a marketable story. So open it up and get to work!" Good thing I listened, huh?

**DMc:** From the moment you conceived the idea for the story, to the published book, how long did it take?

**KS:** I honestly don't know. I don't remember when I started it and it sat around, unfinished, for so long. I'm sure I'd blush if I realized how long it took.

**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. Kai, can you please share one with us?

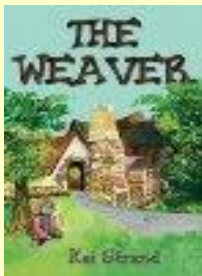
**KS:** I am frequently NOT recognized. I tend to wear my hair differently from day to day. Sometimes I have glasses, sometimes I don't. I don't know why else, but my entire life I've had to re-introduce myself to people I've met previously. I'm actually surprised when someone does recognize me the second time they see me.

Donna, I'd like to thank you for taking the time to interview me and for your interest in *The Weaver*. It has been a pleasure visiting with you and your readers.

Visit Kai at: <http://cleanwriter.livejournal.com/>

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## BOOK REVIEWS



[Click here or on the book cover to access the Amazon link](#)

Title: *The Weaver*  
Written by: Kai Strand  
Cover Art by: K.C. Snider  
Soft cover: 96 pages  
Ages: 9-12  
Publisher: Guardian Angel Publishing, Inc.  
Print ISBN 13: 978-1-61633-121-4  
eBook ISBN 13: 978-1-61633-127-6  
Published: December 2010

Print Price:           \$19.95  
eBook Price:           \$5.00

In the world of Mary Wordsmith the talents of weaving stories garner a feeling of acceptance into this special community. For Mary the overwhelming feeling of living in another person's shadow hinders her ability to master the art of weaving. Feeling like an outcast, Mary's despair mounts when a simple routine errand goes wrong. Can nothing be easy for Mary?

In her travels she meets a peculiar looking blue little man whom promises to make her most desired wish come true. Desperate, Mary relents and asks, "I wish I could weave a yarn as beautiful as my mother's." As time goes by Mary sees no improvement in her storytelling and becomes annoyed with herself for believing the little blue man. However, friends start to notice special trinkets left in Mary's wake when practicing weaving. When thanked for the beautiful miniatures, Mary is perplexed and says she has no idea what they are talking about. Believing these odd occurrences will make her a further outcast, Mary swears her friends to secrecy. Will her secret stay such for long? Will Mary discover in time that words can be taken literally and her art of weaving an ingenious story may just be beginning?

Find out what becomes of Mary's storytelling and the trinkets in this compelling story, which will have the reader turning the pages as fast as lightening. Children's author, Kai Strand expertly weaves together the art of storytelling and holding one's audience captive into a spellbinding adventure of finding one's place in the world.

Be sure to visit with Ms. Strand and learn about her masterful writing career at Strands of Thought <http://cleanwriter.livejournal.com/>.

Visit illustrator, K.C. Snider and immerse yourself into creative and colorful world <http://www.kcsniderart.com> and <http://blog.kcsniderart.com>.

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## REFLECTIONS OR DREAMS

"Three Wishes"

By Joe "Silly" Sottile

As the teacher sees it,

I wish that all the children  
in the world wouldn't hunger



for food, praise or affection.

I wish that all the children  
in the world would have peace  
in their communities and their homes.

I wish that each child would become  
all he or she is capable of being,  
while treating others just the way  
they would like to be treated.

Visit Joseph "Silly" Sottile today at: <http://consideration.org/sottile>

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## SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS



The nominations are in for the Global eBook Awards and I'm thrilled to share with you that *The Golden Pathway* has made the Children's Picture Books Fiction nomination list!!

My heartfelt best wishes to fellow nominees:

*One Pelican at a Time* by Nancy Stewart

*Sully's Topsy Tale* by Donna Shepherd

*The Weaver* by Kai Strand for Children's Literature category

If I've missed anyone, please let me know and I'll be happy to announce next time.

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Are you a children's book author who's ready to get the word out about your book? Visit the National Writing for Children Center today and learn how your book can be showcased for an entire month: <http://writingforchildrencenter.com/showcase-application>

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Guardian Angel Kids Ezine for children expands the publisher's mission to provide safe, healthy entertainment for ages 2 to 12. It features games and activities from Guardian Angel books and characters. *GAK* is currently taking submissions for May through December 2011.

Visit today for submission guidelines <http://www.guardian-angel-kids.com/submissions.htm>

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Overwhelmed? Don't have time to write and post your media releases. Let the panic settle and don't fret any longer. Let Donna take the pressure off. Writing a media release requires a certain technique and online media distribution can be quite time consuming. Coupled with her marketing manager experience at *Stories for Children Magazine*, Donna is uniquely positioned to help provide you with a top notch media release.

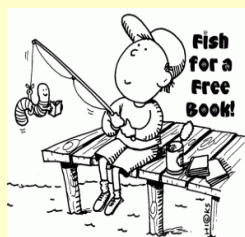
You'll discuss your good news and happenings to get a clear indication of your direction. Your valuable information will then be written into a dynamic media release. Even if you don't have publishing credits under your belt, announcing guest interviews or your topic of choice will help draw traffic and recognition to you and your writing blog.

Don't wait. Let Donna take the pressure off you today. References furnished upon request.

**Contact information:** Donna McDine / [donna@donnamcdine.com](mailto:donna@donnamcdine.com) / 845-359-6646

<http://www.donnamcdine.com/dynamicmediareleases.html>

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Ever wish you had a go-to place to find all the latest children's literature give-aways on the web? Look no further! Lori Calabrese has started a new monthly meme (if there's enough interest, it might possibly become a weekly meme) in which she links to book giveaways around the Kidlitosphere and web.



If you are hosting a children's - young adult book-related giveaway, sponsoring a giveaway, or just found a really awesome giveaway that you'd like to share, please leave it at Fish For a Free Book! <http://loricalabrese.com/category/giveaways/fish-for-a-free-book-meme/>

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## NEWSLETTERS



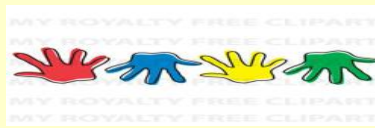
Looking for the latest children's literature news? Don't have time to scour all of the blogs out there (and we know there are a ton!), but would like to be pointed in the direction of some of the best articles and gossip?

Be sure to sign up for *The Book Bugz Newsletter* from [Lori Calabrese Writes!](#) *The Book Bugz Newsletter* flutters your way once a month and covers all of the latest children's book buzz-everything from the latest children's literature news, things happening throughout the Kidlitosphere, book reviews & recommendations, book giveaways, and tips for writers on writing and marketing.

Lori is so interested in what other writers and bloggers have to say. After becoming inspired from the wealth of information out there regarding children's books and children's literacy, she wanted to create a newsletter that not only highlights what's happening at [Lori Calabrese Writes!](#), but also highlights the recent news being talked about throughout the kidlitosphere.

The subscription is FREE and subscribing is easy. Just visit the *NEW!* [Lori Calabrese Writes! blog](#) and subscribe at the top right sidebar. Then we'll be buzzing about children's books in the November issue of *The Book Bugz!*

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## 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! All this at your fingertips and in your email in-box...you surely can't go wrong.



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>

## SUPPORTER ADS



Award-winning author of the HowToDoItFrugally Series of Books for writers, including USA Book News' award winners

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*The Frugal Book Promoter* <http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/193299310X/>



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>



### 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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