

Write What Inspires You! Newsletter

February-March '11
Volume 3, Issue 9

Donna M. McDine
Children's Author



Welcome to the February-March '11 issue

Write What Inspires You!

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With the warmer spring weather right around the corner I always take the time out to give my home a good spring cleaning and along with it I feel a sense of renewal. And also, taking stock and reviewing my 3 major writing goals that I set for myself at the beginning of 2011 is essential in making sure that I am moving in the right direction to make 2011 a successful year. I continually make use of my writer's bag that I keep on hand and well stocked at all times so I can make quality efforts in my writing when waiting at various locations for my girls to finish up with school clubs, fashion design/art classes, sporting events, driver's education (Yikes!), etc. I always make sure my writer's bag includes a couple of pens in blue and red ink, post-it notes, writing pad, my current work-in-progress, and research materials. As many of us have been told many times, grabbing 15-20 minutes of writing time adds up quickly. Don't let a negative thought of "why bother with just 15 minutes it's not long enough to accomplish any writing" get in the way. This is not true! Imagine if you will. If you go for the 15 minutes Monday through Friday, you'll have an hour and fifteen minutes of writing time accomplished by the end of the week. How cool is that? So go ahead, grab time wherever and whenever you can...you'll feel so much more accomplished when you do.

Quote of the Month:

"You've undoubtedly heard that laughter is contagious. This is because vibrations such as love, peace, laughter, etc. have a ripple effect. They do reach out and affect others."

~Dyan Garris - Voice of the Angels

Without further ado I present to you the February/March feature interviews with author, Karina Fabian and publisher, Lynda S. Burch of Guardian Angel Publishing, and 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. 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 - KARINA FABIAN

I am pleased to present an insightful and intriguing interview with author, Karin Fabian. From zombie exterminators to dragon detectives to nuns in space, Karina Fabian's universes make readers laugh, cry and think. Winner of the 2007 EPPIE Award for best sci-fi and the 2010 INDIE Award for best fantasy, she lets her characters take her where they will and is never disappointed. Karina Fabian is married to Colonel Robert Fabian. They and their four kids call home wherever the Air Force sends them.

Q: Why did you write *Neeta Lyffe, Zombie Exterminator*?

A: Because I was asked. I'd written a short story for an anthology called *The Zombie Cookbook*. It was a lark, really, a short story about zombie exterminators taking on an infestation in a Korean workshop. I really was having more fun with puns and silliness with zombies, but people really enjoyed Neeta in "Wokking Dead" and asked the publisher when her book was coming.

Kim (the publisher) and I belong to a fun online chat group, The Writers Chat Room. She approached me there, and on that night, we got to talking about reality TV and favorite first lines from books. Someone mentioned, "They ate Eidelberg first," as a first line, and I suddenly had to write this story about Neeta in a reality TV show training zombie exterminators--and poor Bergie was going to get eaten.

Q: What do you like about zombies? Zombie fiction?

A: Actually, I don't care for either. I'm a dragons-and-spaceships type. In fact, I refused to watch any zombie movies or read the zombie books out

until I'd written mine so I wouldn't be influenced. References to Zombieland or Pride and Prejudice and Zombies come from what little I saw via commercials or internet chatter. I'm OK with that, because I think most of us have that much exposure to them, so you don't need to be versed in zombie literature to appreciate the fun of Neeta Lyffe, *Zombie Exterminator*.

Q: If you don't read about zombies, how could you write about zombies?

A: I have a very vivid imagination. But seriously, Neeta Lyffe isn't so much about zombies as about our possible reactions to a zombie uprising: conspiracy theories about why they suddenly appear, government policies to control the uprising, how some will make zombie-ism a political and even environmental issue, and of course, how individuals will react--from the "not in my backyard" attitude toward those working to stop the problem to Hollywood exploiting it for ratings. So when it comes to heart of it (or in zombie culture, the braaaaaaiins of it), this is a book about human nature. A very satirical, sometimes cynical, look at human nature. I really enjoyed giving my sarcastic side a workout.

Q: What was your biggest challenge in writing Neeta Lyffe?

A: Technology. My computer died four times while I was writing it. I've named it Lazarus, because it manages to come back. Ever since the first time it came back from the repairman, the z key sticks, so half the time, I was writing about ombies.

Q: What do you enjoy most about writing?

A: Exercising my imagination. Purging my brain--it gets crowded in there. Finally, reading my finished work aloud to my kids. Even though I write for adults, my kids get a kick out of the humor--and they learn a lot as I explain the in-jokes.

Q: What do you like to write about?

A: My motto is fiction, faith and fun. I love combining ideas, mixing genres, and twisting clichés and myths (modern and ancient.) My favorite universe I write in involves a Faerie dragon who lives in our world as a detective. His partner is a magic-slinging nun from Faerie. Together, they save the Faerie and Mundane universes on an all-too-regular basis against evil gods, mischievous spirits, greedy evil overlords. The first book, *Magic, Mensa and Mayhem* was one of their lighter cases--they babysat the Faerie at a convention in Florida and ended up stopping the elves from declaring war on the state over a missing papal bull. It won the 2010 INDIE award for best fantasy.

I'm currently working on a novel set about 150 years in the future, when humans find a crashed alien ship in the Kuiper Belt. In it, they'll find a device that lets you see into your soul. *Discovery* is more serious in tone, and is very Catholic in its nature and message. (I'm Catholic.)

In non-fiction, I collaborate with my father, Deacon Steve Lumbert. He and I have one book out, *Why God Matters: How to Recognize Him in Daily Life*. I've been floored by the impact it's having on people's lives. We're discussing the next book we want to write, which we think will be about a deacon's life and calling.

Learn more Ms. Fabian at www.fabianspace.com.

PUBLISHER INTERVIEW - LYNDA S. BURCH

Getting to know authors, illustrators, publishers, and editors through interviews is an instrumental way of learning about the publishing industry. Today I welcome Lynda Burch, Founder and Publisher of *Guardian Angel*

Publishing, Inc. I have quite the soft spot in my heart for Lynda and not just because she is the first publisher who offered me a book contract, but more for the heartwarming person she is.

Q: You are the principle owner of Guardian Angel Publishing. What inspired you to create your company?

A: When I incorporated there were only a few children's eBook companies and I saw a real need for them because I knew they would be the wave of the future. We started in eBooks and quickly advanced into print books, too.

Q: How many submissions do you get each month and what is your procedure for dealing with them?

A: We are only open to submissions from April 1 to Oct 1 each year but I still get close to a thousand. I try to work my way through them each day to get quick responses back but that doesn't always happen. Sometimes I'll get a backlog of 100 or so. Usually in the first page or so I'll know if the story will work for us.

Q: With the ever changing world of publishing, what are your thoughts on e-book publishing versus traditional publishing?

A: I've always been a firm believer in eBook potential and I have kind of a nice "I told you so" attitude since watching the recent explosion of their sales. :)

Q: Please share with us your words of advice to the writer who is yet to be published?

A: Get into a critique group and learn your trade. Not everyone can write for kids- and believe me when I say not everyone is a poet!

Q: For a picture book submission can a writer recommend an illustrator or does Guardian Angel Publishing assign an illustrator from their pool of resources?

A: Some people come to me with art complete by a non GAP artist and sometimes they have someone in mind to do their art. Sometimes I accept that and sometimes I don't- it really depends on the artist's style or if GAP can work with them contractually.

Q: What is the most common mistake you see with submissions?

A: People don't send in their best work. They don't check their work for missing punctuation, misspelled words and poor sentence or paragraph structure. That makes for quick rejection letters.

Q: Do you recommend a writer have their manuscript professionally edited before submitting?

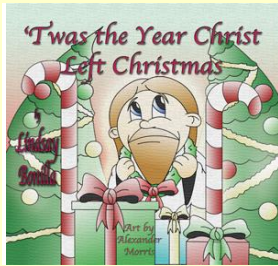
A: No offense to all editing services but I've seen some mss with professional expensive editing that had to be totally re-edited here. Some have had a thousand commas! {cringe}

Mainly because: # 1 writing for kids is a specialty, # 2(a biggie to me) punctuation has changed over the years and we no longer use the standard Chicago Book of Style, # 3 That may be fine for collegiate work but not for kids. Some editors may be technically proficient but lacking in other areas.

Q: 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. Lynda, can you please share one with us?

A: I have set a computer on fire once- literally! Ever hear of crash & burn? I've done it! Smoke and fire! Burned up a motherboard - melted that sucker. You should have seen me dive under my desk and unplug everything—well, maybe not.

To learn more about Guardian Angel Publishing, Inc. visit -
<http://www.guardianangelpublishing.com>

BOOK REVIEWS[Twas the Year Christ Left Christmas](#)

Title: *Twas the Year Christ Left Christmas*
Author: Lindsay Bonilla
Illustrator: Alexander Morris
Soft cover: 22 pages
Publisher: Guardian Angel Publishing, Inc. / December 2010
ISBN-13: 978-1-61633-128-3
E-book ISBN: 978-1-61633-129-0

The true meaning of Christmas and the wonder of the Messiah, Jesus can be lost in the hustle and bustle of the season. Do not succumb any longer. Take time from the preparations and reflect with the children in your life the importance of the day is in rejoicing the birth of Jesus Christ. For without God's love nothing would be possible.

Come along on this heartfelt journey of finding one's spiritual guidance through the awe inspiring rhyme of Lindsay Bonilla and thought provoking illustrations of Alexander Morris. *Twas the Year Christ Left Christmas* is sure to become religious school reading in years to come.

Visit children's author, Lindsay Bonilla:

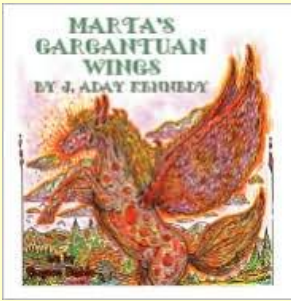
<http://www.lindsaybonilla.com>

<http://www.lindsaybonilla.blogspot.com>

Founder and Director -- World of Difference Ltd. <http://www.worldofdiff.org>

Lily and the City of Light <http://www.guardianangelpublishing.com/city-of-light.htm>

'Twas the Year Christ Left Christmas <http://www.guardianangelpublishing.com/christ-left.htm>



[Marta's Gargantuan Wings](#)

Title: *Marta's Gargantuan Wings*
Written by: J. Aday Kennedy
Illustrated by: Eugene Ruble
Soft cover: pages
Ages: 9-12
Publisher: Guardian Angel Publishing, Inc. / September 2010
Print ISBN 13: 978-1-61633-093-4
eBook ISBN 13: 978-1-61633-094-1

Not to judge someone by their appearance is an important life lesson and a difficult one at that. For if you do you may miss out on a special individual.

Marta the Pegasus is confronted by the narrow thinking Aljor the bird who believes that Marta's enormous wings make her a freak. Contrary to Aljor's belief system, Stajon the monkey comes to Marta's defense. "If you don't have anything nice to say, don't say anything at all. Keep your beak shut. Stajon stuck his tongue out at Aljor." What ensues between Marta and Stajon is a genuine friendship of accepting others for who they are and not by their looks.

Their friendship is put to the test as a disaster occurs in the woods and the time for self discovery and courage is thrust upon Marta. Will she overcome the negativity towards her and save the day? Find out in *Marta's Gargantuan Wings*.

J. Aday Kennedy's delightful story of finding one's place in society is a heartwarming story of acceptance. A must have children's book for classrooms, libraries, and homes to invoke non-judgment and anti-bullying conversations with our young muses.

Eugene Ruble's illustrations makes Marta's the Pegasus' story come to life with enchantment.

Visit J. Aday Kennedy at:

Marketing tips, book reviews and author interviews

<http://jadaykennedy.blogspot.com>

<http://facebook.com/jadaykennedy.com>

http://twitter.com/jaday_kennedy

<http://teacherlibrarian.ning.com/profile/JAdayKennedy>

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

REFLECTIONS OR DREAMS

"Ask the One Who Really Know About What Goes in Our Elementary Schools"

By Joe "Silly" Sottile

I had to do this report
on the most important
person in our school.

But first I had to find
out who the most
important person was.

So I asked everyone
I could find:

"Who is the most important person school?"

Here is what they said:

The principal said, "I am, because I keep the school running smoothly."

The custodian said, "I am, because I keep the school neat and clean."

The lunch lady said, "I am, because I feed the future."

The nurse said, "I am, because I take care of the healthy and the sick."

The gym teacher said, "I am, because I teach lifetime skills."

The art teacher said, "I am, because I teach kids to create works of art."
The music teacher said, "I am, because I teach children to love music."
The librarian said, "I am, because I teach children to cherish literature."
The classroom teacher said, "I am, because I make everyone smarter."
And then I asked the secretary, Mrs. Young, who knows everything
and everybody, and she said, "YOU ARE!"

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

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

MEDIA RELEASE

CONTACT: Carolyn Howard-Johnson e-mail: HoJoNews@aol.com

CONTACT: Magdalena Ball e-mail: maggieball@compulsivereader.com

For Immediate Release

Award-Winning Poets Seek Artwork for New Chapbook

World Wide Web-- Poetry Partners Seek Artwork for Fifth Chapbook

It's been said (quite a few times!) that a picture is worth a thousand words. Even though Magdalena Ball and I are poets, we think the original author may have underestimated, and we'd like you--if you're a painter or a photographer--to prove us wrong.

We are the coauthors of the Celebration Series of chapbooks of poetry. They include *Cherished Pulse* (for anyone you love) , *She Wore Emerald Then* (for mothers on your gift list), *Imagining the Future* (for Fathers), and *Blooming Red*, a Christmas chapbook. Chapbooks have been a tradition in the poetry world since Elizabethan times. The Celebration Series goes beyond the clichéd sentiments in most greeting cards - and does it for about the same price.

All four of our chapbooks are illustrated by artists making each a triple effort. *Cherished Pulse* and *Blooming Red* feature artwork from California artist Vicki Thomas. *She Wore Emerald Then* features photographs by May Lattanzio and *Imagining the Future* a photo by celebrated composer Ricky Ian Gordon.

We are planning a fifth chapbook lauding women's issues and feminist themes. We are looking for submissions to be used on its cover. Yes, it's a contest. The winner's work will be featured on *Deeper Into the Pond: A Celebration of Femininity* to be published later in 2011. There is no pay but since Ball runs respected review Web site *The Compulsive Reader* (www.thecompulsivereader.com), and Howard-Johnson is the author of a multi award-winning series of books for writers including *The Frugal Book Promoter*, they can promise a wide distribution of the cover image, credit and a biography of the cover artist in the book, and tons of marketing exposure.

See the other chapbooks' covers at www.howtodoitfrugally.com/poetry_books.htm.

Here is a poem from that chapbook:

Ariel

Memory's two voices,
the you-girl
suffering the moment
and the you-now
who interprets.
You promise yourself
you won't fear the secrets,
won't tell what happened
without the feelings.
You deny yourself that
and you become Ursula
stealing your own song,
leaving yourself gurgling
under the sea. You need
the music to tell your story,
to find it, to understand it
to know the truth,
to reach above the
ocean's surface
where
others
live.

If you have something you'd like us to see, please e-mail your creative work to Ball at maggie_ball@bigpond.com with SUBMISSION: DEEPER INTO THE POND in the subject line. We hope to have a decision by June 1, 2011 and we reserve the right to select no winner. If a winner is selected, we may also choose runners-up so those acknowledgments may be used by the winners for purposes of marketing. There is no fee for entering, and only the honor and publications for being selected. Oh, yes. And two copies of the finished chapbook. We hope to hear from you.

#

Support Material available on request.

Carolyn Howard-Johnson

Instructor for the renowned UCLA Extension Writers' Program

Web site: <http://www.HowToDoltFrugally.com>

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

The Frugal Editor <http://budurl.com/TheFrugalEditor>

The Frugal Book Promoter <http://budurl.com/FruglBkPromo>

The Great First Impression Book Proposal <http://budurl.com/BookProposals>

Great Little Last Minute Edits: <http://budurl.com/WordTrippersPB>



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>



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 submissions guidelines <http://www.guardian-angel-kids.com/submissions.htm>

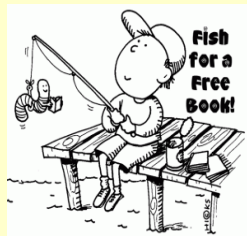


Overwhelmed? Don't have time to write and post your media releases. Let the panic settle and don't fret any longer. Let Donna take the pressure off. Writing a media release requires a certain technique and online media distribution can be quite time consuming. Coupled with her marketing manager experience 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 / 845-359-6646
<http://www.donnamcdine.com/dynamicmediareleases.html>



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/>

NEWSLETTERS

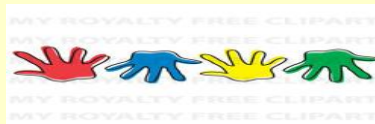


Looking for the latest children's literature news? Don't have time to scour all of the blogs out there (and we know there are a ton!), but would like to be pointed in the direction of some of the best articles and gossip?

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!*



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

The Frugal Editor <http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/0978515870/>

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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We DETEST spam and we do not share or sell our mailing list
To unsubscribe from this newsletter, simply send an email to: donna@donnamcdine.com with the word "unsubscribe" in the subject line and you will be removed.

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