

Write What Inspires You! Newsletter

October-November '11
Volume 3, Issue 13

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Children's Author



Welcome to the October-November '11 issue

Write What Inspires You!

The word "memories" keeps popping into my thoughts in recent weeks and I wanted to share with you my Guardian Angel Kids Editor-in-Chief November letter:

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"This time of the year always brings back fond childhood memories of riding bicycles through my neighborhood with the leaves swirling around the wheel spokes and my collie, Champ, running alongside as I pedaled faster and faster. I breathed in the smell of the crisp autumn air and felt my heart beating in my chest when I hopped my bicycle over the pile of leaves at curbside. Champ barked with excitement. I see my house at the end of the street and I pedaled even faster because I knew that a fresh baked apple pie with whip cream was waiting for my return. My mom didn't disappoint, as soon as I opened the back door to the kitchen my stomach grumbled with the delectable aroma of cinnamon apple pie. I washed my hands half-heartedly and slipped a morsel of pie in my mouth. Champ obediently sat at my feet and I sneaked a piece into his mouth. He gobbled it down and barked for more. We sat together on the floor savoring every bit.

Quote of the Month:

"Oh, God give me grace for this day. Not for a lifetime, nor for next week, nor for tomorrow, just for this day. So that for this one day, I have the gift of grace that comes from your presence."

Looking back on this memory I always enjoyed the simplicity of the day and still do to this day. I urge you as adults with your children to enjoy the simple pleasures in life and enjoy every moment. Time is fleeting and before you know it your children are grown and starting families of their own. And that opens a whole other wonderful door for memories to be created."

Without further ado I present to you the October/November feature interview with children's author, Karen Pokras Toz, Book Reviews, Reflections or Dreams Column by Joseph Sottile, Special Announcements, Guardian Angel Kids Ezine, 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 all inspiration!

Donna

AUTHOR INTERVIEW - KAREN POKRAS TOZ

Q: Hello Karen, please tell us about you, as a writer.

KT: Well - I wasn't always a writer. I enjoyed reading as a child and had many stories floating around in my head that I wanted to write. Unfortunately, I was not very good at writing, or at least I didn't think I was very good. Math was my subject. I always believed you were either a math person or an English person, and so I never pursued writing. In school I studied finance, accounting and law. My writing was always with numbers. Thirteen years ago, I heard a news story on television and began creating a novel based around this single event - all in my head, of course. I'm not sure what made me decide it was time to put pen to paper, but at some point last year I began writing. I am now hooked!



Q: Your middle grade book *NATE ROCKS THE WORLD*; perhaps you'd you give us some insight into it in a few sentences.

KT: This is the first book in the *NATE ROCKS* series, about a quirky young boy who draws cartoons that come to life. *NATE ROCKS THE WORLD* uses humor and adventure to show that even kids can accomplish great things. The book is geared toward 8-12 year olds.

Q: How did you come to write this particular book?

KT: I knew I wanted to write a fun book that would encourage kids to read. The inspiration really came from my children. My oldest son is an artist, my daughter is very creative, and my youngest loves to role-play. I sort of combined all three of these traits to come up with my main character, Nathan Rockledge.

Q: Do you have a favorite character from the book?

KT: That is such a hard question because I really love all of my characters. Of course I love Nate, but I think Nate's mom is my favorite. She tries so hard to cook and sew be the perfect mom and housewife, stumbling every step of the way. I'd be lying if I said there wasn't a little bit of me in her.

Q: Where can people buy your books?

KT: *NATE ROCKS THE WORLD* is available online in both print and digital copies from Amazon, Barnes & Noble, the Apple Store and many more outlets. For a complete list, please visit my website: www.karentoz.com

Q: What are you writing now?

KT: I'm working on two projects actually. I am revisiting my first manuscript, which I never published, called *invisible*. It is the story of a woman who finds herself suddenly famous and thrown unwittingly in front of the paparazzi. I am also several chapters into the next book in the NATE ROCKS series. I am hoping to release both books within the next year.

Q: What qualities does a writer need to be successful?

KT: For me, determination, focus and commitment are key. Everyone has a story to tell - I truly believe that. There are so many resources out there to help you along the way. Grammar, style, and technique - those are all things that can be developed over time with the right guidance. It took me 13 years to realize that.

Q: Do you manage to write every day?

KT: I do try to write everyday whether it be working on one of my books or posting on my blog. I find that morning is the best time for me to write ... maybe it's the coffee. I usually try to get up early, while my house is still quiet to write. Once the kids start waking up, I usually lose my momentum. Multi-tasking is definitely not my thing.

Q: What advice would you give aspiring writers?

KT: The same advice I gave myself... dream big. I know it's a cliché, but it is something I tell my kids all the time, so I figure I should follow my own advice, right? Just to be clear, I am not talking about money and fame. For me, success is not measured that way. You have to set goals - keep them reachable and then push yourself even further. Make as many contacts as you can, use the Internet, join critique groups, get a writing coach if possible, educate yourself, keep up with the industry, and just keep writing!

Q: What do you do when you're not writing?

KT: Well my kids keep me pretty busy. I also blog, crochet and garden. In addition, I am an advocate for the Arthritis Foundation. I am the 2011 Spokesperson/Honoree for the Eastern Pennsylvania Chapter of the Arthritis Foundation for their annual Jingle Bell 5k walk/run to be held in December. If anyone is interested in joining Team Toz to benefit arthritis, we'd love to have you! Please visit my blog for more information.

Q: Tell us more about your website and blog.

KT: I love to blog. I write about my daily life as a mom, writer, wife... basically it is just me rambling about whatever happens to be on my mind at any particular moment. Every week, I post a 'Friday Five' where I sum up what's been going on in my little world. You can check it out at <http://kptoz.blogspot.com>. If you read something you like, let me know! Comments really make my day.

I also have an author website www.karentoz.com. Here you can find information about my book, including reviews, a free chapter download, and purchase information.

Thank you so much for the interview!

Purchase information for Nate Rocks the World:

[Print copy - direct from publisher](#)

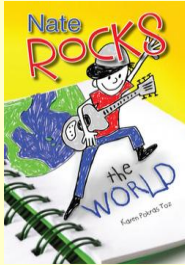
[Print & Kindle - Amazon.com](#)

[Nook, Sony Reader, Apple, Kobo & others](#)

Connect with Karen online: <http://www.karentoz.com>

Twitter: [@karentoz](#)

Facebook: www.facebook.com/karentoz

BOOK REVIEWS

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

Title: *Nate Rocks the World*
Written by: Karen Pokras Toz
Soft cover: 136 pages
Ages: 8-12
Publisher: CreateSpace
Print ISBN 13: 978-1463510824
Published: June 2011

Nate Rocks the World takes you into the internal creative world of Nate, who is plagued by his older sister, Abby, who torments him at every turn and an overprotective mother that never seems to see the bigger picture. Nate sees no escape from his mundane life, until he puts pencil to paper and his wildest dreams come alive. Are his drawings morphing in his imagination and coming to life in reality or is it all just his wishful thinking?

"Hey Nathan! Earth to Nathan! Why are you just sitting there smiling? Tommy asks. And what's with the cartoon you drew of someone playing guitar? I thought we were trying to come up with a prank for Abby?"

Will Nate's reality and dreams collide and make his life bearable? How does Nate distinguish between the two without coming across crazy? Find out in Karen Pokras Toz's middle grade adventure *Nate Rocks the World* and discover where your imagination can take you.

Karen Pokras Toz has the unique knack of bringing to life the questions, fears, and dreams that many a young boy has swirling in their minds on any given day. Making for a hilarious and relatable quest by Nate.

Learn more about Toz's fascinating writing life at www.karentoz.com.



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

Title:	<i>Frankie's Perfect Home</i>
Written by:	Beverly Stowe McClure
Illustrated by:	Alexander Morris
Soft cover:	15 pages
Ages:	4-8
Publisher:	Guardian Angel Publishing, Inc.
Print ISBN 13:	978-1-61633-162-7
eBook ISBN 13:	978-1-61633-163-4
Published:	June 2011
Print Price:	\$9.95
eBook Price:	\$5.00

Frankie Armadillo has had enough of his cramped living quarters and sneaks off into the night. Determined to find the perfect home he treks from place to place. Starting out in a hole beneath a house, to tunnels beneath trees, to deserted barns, and more; no place meets his expectations. Scared, hungry, and cold Frankie Armadillo continues his quest for what he believes will be the perfect home.

Will Frankie realize that "there is no place like home?" or will he find a place to call his own?

"Frankie rested for a minute. "I can't give up now, I need a place to sleep." So he lifted his chin, slipped out of the log, and stepped into the softest soil that squeezed right through his toes."

Journey along with Frankie Armadillo on an adventure like non-other and discover what Frankie comes across and learns what he knew all along.

Beverly Stowe McClure brings to life the world of Frankie Armadillo in a delightful imaginary way that the reader almost forgets Frankie is not human. *Frankie's Perfect Home* is sure to be a wonderful addition to your home or school library for the youngest of children.

Learn more about Beverly Stowe McClure's versatile career at <http://beverlystowemcclure.wordpress.com> and <http://beverlystowemcclure.blogspot.com>

REFLECTIONS OR DREAMS



Once Upon a Teacher, Now a Kid Poet

By Joe Sottile

While carrying copies of our latest poetry book to my former colleague, and illustrator, I race down the halls to the back of the school, hoping that she's eating lunch in her room.

My heart is pounding with delight,
my visitor's tag is flapping in the breeze.
Sweat is beading on my forehead,
and rolling into my left eye. It burns.

I cannot wait to show this gifted artist
how well her illustrations turned out
in our third poetry book for kids.
I know that she will be ecstatic.

But I slow down, as I approach her room
and peek into another teacher's room—
one whom I admired for her teaching ideas,
zest in teaching, and sensitivity to others.

Some would call her a "mover and shaker."
I call her passionate, professional, and perky.
Some kids near the door are chanting repeatedly,
"Someone is at the door! Someone is at the door!"

As I open the door and stroll through
I say, "Someone silly is here"—hoping the kids
will laugh and enjoy the moment.
And I take a close look at Ms. Perky.

I see this former cheerleader, valedictorian,
and 3rd grade team member hunched over her desk,
looking shorter than I used to remember her.
Retirement is not too far off for her.

Suddenly I am blindsided by the reasons I left
teaching public school—teaching for the test,
test mandates, district goals, building goals, and
personal goals that were not that personal.

I stumble toward Ms. Perky who is rooted
at her desk with one student seated nearby,
while the rest of the class pretends to do math,
as they eyeball me clutching ten poetry books.

She tells me that her son's college roommate
had me in elementary school as a teacher
(in this same room that we are in now),
and he discovered the love of writing here.

I am surprised by this wonderful compliment
that seems to have come out of leftfield.
So I simply say, "Invite me in to do poetry."
Winking I add, "Give yourself a poetry break."

I don't hear cheers for a poetry visit
from a tired and gray Ms. Perky,
but the boy at the table says,
"How much is your book?"

Ms. Perky launches instant dart eyes at him,
yet they bounce off of his rubber face
and he says, "I have money in my lunch bag."
Ms. Perky ignores the outspoken student.

She says, "Yes, I should." But she won't.
Poetry is a marginal activity.
And there are tests to be taken,
and benchmarks to be met.

Visit Children's poet, Joe Sottile www.joe-sottile.com

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS**Join Book Bootcamp & Write YOUR Book in 2012**

Are you ready to write a novel but you don't know how to get started?

Or maybe you've started a novel dozens of times only to stop midway through so you NEVER finish writing it!

OR - perhaps you want to write a nonfiction book that will become your "signature" product, which will take your business to new levels?

If you answered "yes" to any of the above, then **Working Writer's Book Bootcamp** is just what you need!

This **Book Bootcamp** is offered just twice a year - in January and June.

Registration for the January 2012 **Book Bootcamp** ends December 1, 2011, to give participants enough time to complete the prerequisite assignment before bootcamp begins on January 9, 2012.

Email suzanne@workingwriterscoach.com now for a complete syllabus, including payment information. Just put "Book Bootcamp Fiction" or "Book Bootcamp Nonfiction" in the subject line.

A rectangular advertisement with a red border. On the left is a cartoon illustration of a woman in a purple dress looking surprised while a woman in a blue dress adjusts her girdle. On the right, the text reads: "Margot Finke's (Hook Kids on Reading) Manuscript Critique Services. Personal guidance is her specialty. Let Margot help YOU make your manuscript as tight as . . . 'Granny's New Girdle!'"

Margot Finke's
(Hook Kids on Reading)
Manuscript Critique Services

*Personal guidance is her specialty.
Let Margot help YOU make your
manuscript as tight as . . .*

"Granny's New Girdle!"

This VIDEO, by *Margot Finke*,
<http://youtu.be/GOV79sMJiMM>
explains how YOU can write as "*Tight as Your Granny's New Girdle*."

Let Margot's help and personal guidance show
YOU ways to HOOK an editor at first glance.

Title: Writers Online Workshops: How to Enter Your Children's Book into Award Contests - Two Parts

Presented by: Multi-award-winning children's author, Donna McDine.

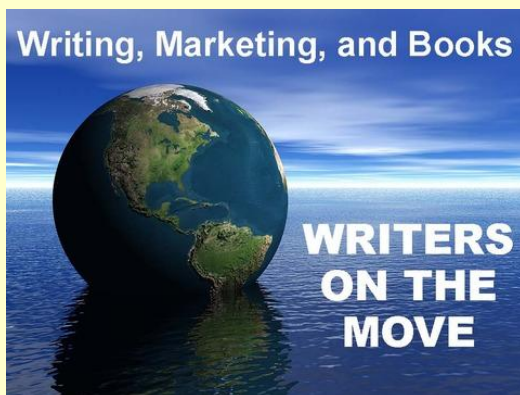
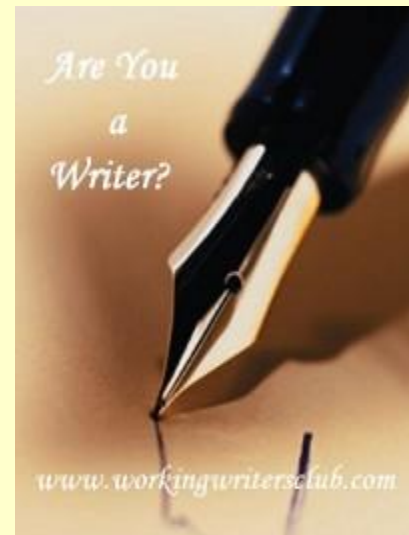
Description: The world of book award contests is immense and the wealth of information cannot be covered in one workshop, so please mark your calendar for both dates below:

Dates: November 17, 2011 at 11 am CST and December 15, 2011 at 11 am CST

About Donna: Her first children's book *The Golden Pathway* has received numerous awards: Preditors & Editors Readers Poll 2010 Top Ten Children's Books, Global eBook Awards Finalist Children's Picture Book Fiction, and Literary Classics Silver Award & Seal of Approval Recipient.

Don't miss this opportunity to learn from someone in the trenches of children's book award contests as she reveals what she has learned along the way.

Visit the Working Writer's Club and obtain further details on topics covered and registration details: <http://www.workingwritersclub.com/events-2>



Workshop Format: Live Online Chat

Title: Create and Sell an Informational Product

Presented by: Karen Cioffi

Date: November 18, 2011

Time: 7PM, EST (U.S. Time)

Handout: Yes

Fee: Free

Workshop Description:

Surely, you've all hear by now about informational products. If not, it's all about creating a product that provides needed or wanted information to others . . . information others will be willing to pay for.

And, it's not difficult at all.

So, what might be an example of an informational product?

Simple, anything that, again, will provide people with information / knowledge they need or want. Information that will solve a person's problem or will help them get where they want to be. It might be a report, an e-book, a workshop, you get the idea.

To help you get in the informational product game, Writers on the Move is hosting a workshop presented by Karen Cioffi that will give you the steps you need to get where you want to be: creating and selling informational products.

To register for "Create and Sell an Informational Product" email Karen Cioffi at: [karencioffi \[at\] ymail](mailto:karencioffi[at]ymail).

The workshop is free, but all registrants will be added to the Writers on the Move and the presenter's mailing list.

Details to the LIVE CHAT will be provided upon registration.

We'll be offering (at the discretion of the presenter) an After Workshop Package of this workshop for those who didn't register and would like to purchase it. It'll include the live chat transcript, the workshop handout, and possibly a podcast. Be sure to *Get Yours* when it's available!

<http://www.writersonthemove.com/p/writers-on-move-workshop.html>Title: Create and Sell an Informational Product

EZINES AND NEWSLETTERS



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. The 2012 themes and submissions guidelines are now available: <http://www.guardian-angel-kids.com/submissions.htm>

Visit today and enjoy an ad free and child safe environment: <http://www.guardian-angel-kids.com>

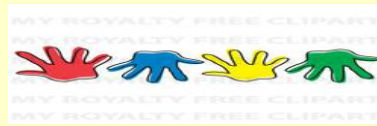


Looking for the latest children's literature news? Don't have time to scour all of the blogs out there (and we know there are a ton!), but would like to be pointed in the direction of some of the best articles and gossip?

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 Lori at <http://loricalabrese.blogspot.com/p/fish-for-free-book.html> and subscribe at the top right sidebar. Then we'll be buzzing about children's books in the latest 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>

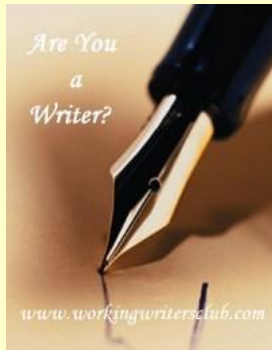
SUPPORTER ADS



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/>



The Working Writer's Club is a professional club for freelance writers, authors, coaches, and speakers providing training, resources, and networking opportunities for its members.

Visit www.workingwritersclub.com and learn what all the excitement is about.



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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