



May 2011

Whether you are a published author or a writer-wanna-be, this e-zine is for you. Here, you will find articles, book reviews, announcements, poetry, and information about the craft and business of writing, publishing, and book marketing written by our readers. Our goal is to connect the writing and publishing community through networking.

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Editor's Corner

By Yvonne Perry

Many a writer aspires to be a published author, but what most new authors don't realize is that once a book is published, it requires a lot of time, effort, and money to market it. A book won't sell itself; it has to be presented to its target market over and over. Promoting a book can become a lot like owning a business!

A poorly-written book with a so-so cover or an ambiguous title/subtitle that lacks keywords is not as marketable as a page-turner that jumps off the shelf and causes the reader to say, "This is just what I've been looking for." Double trouble comes when you publish your book before it has been edited. You may get bad reviews posted on social sites. This will establish a reputation that causes readers may reject any future books you publish when they see your name.

On May 4, I'll be presenting "**Authors Must Learn to Sell What They Write**" during a joint teleclass with Carol Batey to help authors learn how to promote books. Carol's topic is "Writing Books and Getting Your Book out to the World." A teleseminar is a writing class conducted with a group of participants via telephone. Register at <http://weareinspirit.com/workshops.htm> . A call-in number with a pass code will be given to participants once they sign up for the class.

Please welcome Wendy, Deborah, and Kristen to the WITS team. These ladies are filling specialized roles.

- Wendy Lachmuth is available to proofread and provide voice talent for recording. She read my book, *More Than Meets the Eye ~ True Stories about Death, Dying, and Afterlife*, which is now [available as an audio book](#).
- Deborah is a non-fiction literary agent and the co-author of [Write the Perfect Book Proposal: 10 Proposals that worked and Why](#). See her article, "Building a Non-fiction Book Proposal," in this issue.
- Kristen House specializes in writing instruction and editing for the teen/tween genre. See Kristens' summer writing program in the announcements section of this newsletter.

Even though I study the [Chicago Manual of Style](#) and listen to [Grammar Girl Podcast](#) to keep my editing skills fresh, I still only do developmental editing because I don't enjoy the tedious task of trying to catch every misplaced comma. However, the editors on WITS team—Sarah, Dana, Dianna, and Kristen—have full command of the red pen and consider copy editing as a way to have a good time. Due to this vast amount of knowledge in our collective editing pool, we are able to offer authors a great education along with improving their manuscript. <http://writersinthesky.com/editing-services.html> . Meet these new people and all the members of WITS team at <http://writersinthesky.com/meet-the-team.html> .

Barnes and Noble now carries by book for empaths. It is available in print and for the Nook reader. It is also available on Amazon UK in Kindle store and in print. See all purchasing options at <http://whosestuffisthis.blogspot.com/p/purchase-book.html> . *Whose Stuff Is This? Finding Freedom from the Thoughts, Feelings, and Energy of*

Those Around You is a guidebook for empathic people who have been unknowingly carrying energetic burdens that belong to someone else. If you are an empath (highly-sensitive person), you won't want to miss this incredible interview I did with Dr. Michael Smith. <http://weareoneinspirit.blogspot.com/2011/04/navigating-2012-thriving-in-earths-new.html>

Yvonne Perry, Owner of Writers in the Sky Creative Writing Services

<http://writersinthesky.com>

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WITS Tip of the Month on Microsoft Word

Word allows you to count the number of words, lines, paragraphs, characters, and spaces within your document. Open a document that has text and look at the bottom left-hand side of your screen. Just above the start button, you should see a blue bar that displays this information for the entire document. If you do not see it, click on the Review tab, in the Proofing group, and click Word Count.

You can determine how many words a particular section has by highlighting just that section. The status bar displays the number of words in the selection. For example, 100/12240 means that the selection accounts for 100 words of the total number of words in the document, 1,2240.

Yvonne Perry will be teaching classes on the advanced features of MS Word. See <http://writersinthesky.com/writing-classes.html#Formatting> for details.

Me, Myself (publishing), and I

By Dianna Calareso

I thought biting the bullet would be harder, taste steelier, and hurt my teeth more than it actually did. In reality, biting the bullet of self-publishing was more like eating a piece of cake . . . and then being offered another.

After two years, 130 agent queries, six “show me more” replies, and no takers, I went the route that most of us have been groomed to believe is shameful, desperate, and unsuccessful—much like my attitude toward online dating before I actually gave it a try and realized it was more fun *and* more successful than sitting at home, waiting for a stranger to find me. But as a self-published author, I feel proud, accomplished, and successful. I did it!

But, I had to get over a few things before taking the route that has been one of the best decisions of my life:

- **Myself.** I *had* to get over myself! Who cares if a 25-year-old agent in New York thinks I'm "not what she's looking for?" Was I really going to place all my confidence and worth as a writer in the hands of a stranger who I already know doesn't have the time or money to publish a non-celebrity memoir? I was about to, until a friend knocked some sense into me and literally said, "GET OVER YOURSELF." It was the best smack in the face I've ever received.
- **Pride.** *Self-published* ... ugh, right? Wrong. I wrote my book to tell a story, to share my experience, and to hopefully better the world. You don't need me to tell you how well that was working while my book was saved as a Word doc on my computer. Self-publishing has gotten my book *out there*, which is where it has to be if I want anyone to read it. And, if I don't want them to read it, I'm probably not ready to be a writer.
- **Them.** How could I possibly leave my books with the books of other self-published writers (who are obviously terrible writers, not good writers like me who had bad luck with agents)? Easily—by accepting that other self-published writers *are* good writers. They're *great* writers. Many of them are better writers than I'll ever be. They just took a different road, got their books out there, and got on with their lives.

The most encouraging part of the process was realizing I could use my self-publishing for good. On Smashwords, I was able to set my own price. Then, I could decide what to do with it! And I decided to donate 25% of every sale to the Alzheimer's Association (since my memoir is about my grandfather's battle with the disease).

So if you've exhausted your options for traditional publishing, at least consider self-publishing. At the very least, it's a good exercise in getting over yourself. And that's the first step in becoming a true and honest writer.

Dianna Calareso is a writer, editor, and teacher with WITS. Her work has been published online and in print; her most recent publications include Concisely magazine and the anthology Saying Goodbye. Her creative nonfiction essays can be found at www.dcalareso.blogspot.com. Dianna specializes in developmental editing and proofreading at the final stage of the manuscript. She has a keen eye for small details that can overturn a manuscript, including shifts in POV and spelling/grammar inconsistencies; she also works to guide clients with questions about plot, characters, and tone. As a writer, she can empathize with whatever your struggle is; as an editor she is eager to help you make your writing better.

Got Writer's Block? Try a Change of Scenery

By Dana Micheli

This week, I've been juggling a heavy workload with my preparations for a trip to Arizona to see my family. It will definitely be a working vacation, and no small source of stress, as I contemplated how this change in my routine would impact my efficiency in meeting deadlines. There were so many things to consider, not the least of which is my

odd hours. I tend to work best in the middle of the night, a habit that's certainly not conducive to spending quality time with my firmly diurnal family.

But then I remembered how a change in scenery is often the best way to get my creative juices flowing. I've often found that a different climate—along with different people and conversations-- tend to bring about a shift in energy that allows me to view even the most challenging projects through new eyes. Most importantly, perhaps, is the fact that I will have to reign in my inner workaholic (to which I usually give control over my daily life). The restorative effects of this, I suspect, will remain with me long after I've returned home. And that is never a bad thing.

Now, I know you can't just hop a plane every time you feel blocked. But, you can certainly take a walk in a nearby park, write in a new coffee shop, or talk to a friend you haven't seen in a while. You may be surprised by what appears on your next page.

Dana Micheli is a freelance writer, editor, proofreader, and journalist. She has written and edited works of fiction and nonfiction, including novels (ghostwritten), news articles, resumes, business plans, and restaurant reviews. She also researched and wrote the legal and housing sections of New York: The Complete Resident's Guide (Explorer Publishing). She is also the business writer for WITS.

Book Reviews

[The Sid Series ~ A Collection of Holistic Stories for Children](#)

ISBN: 978-0982572207

Price: \$15.95

Publisher: Write On!

Pub date: October 2009

Pages: 54

Genre: Children, mind-body-spirit

The Sid Series is an endearing collection of twelve short stories for young children. Each story shows how Sid and his grandparents experience universal truths about living and loving on Planet Earth. For example, Sid encounters angels and fairies, explores the magic and power of his imagination, and learns to look within for love and guidance. I love that the stories speak clearly to three year old children, and also excite the mind and heart of my nine year old daughter. If we can read books like *The Sid Series* to our *youngest* children, we can begin life-long conversations about self-discovery and the loving spirit that lives in all things universal. Thank you, Yvonne Perry, for condensing universal truths into beautiful tales that hold the attention of our toddlers. I feel this book is an act of creation not only for the hearts of our children, but for the wellbeing of our planet.

Alexandra Folz, author of [Indigo's Bracelet](#)

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[What Would You Do? A Kid's Guide to Staying Safe in a World of Strangers](#)

Author: Melissa Ridenour  
Publisher: Headline Books, May 2011  
ISBN-13: 978-0938467113

Obviously, there is a need for this information. A copy of this book arrived the same day that my step-granddaughter told me she was learning about “safe touch” at school. She had a difficult time explaining what she had learned, and since she is an A student, there must have been some flaw in how the material was presented. Written so children can understand without feeling panic, *What Would You Do: A Kid's Guide to Staying Safe in a World of Strangers* is the way I prefer my grandchildren learn about being safe.

From understanding how to use caller ID, setting a family code word, establishing an ICE (In Case of Emergency) list of safe people, to knowing what to do if a stranger comes calling, this book has everything a child needs to know about staying safe whether on the Internet, phone, or at home. With puzzles, quizzes, and a checklist to empower parents, this is a great handbook to help children discover their own answers to personal safety issues. This should be required reading for elementary school children.

Reviewed by Yvonne Perry is the author of [Whose Stuff Is This? Finding Freedom from the Thoughts, Feelings, and Energy of Those Around You](#) and [The Sid Series—A Collection of Holistic Stories for Children](#). She is also a member of the National Writing for Children's Center.

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[The Reconnection: Heal Others, Heal Yourself](#)

Author: Dr. Eric Pearl
Publisher: Hay House (October 1, 2002)
ISBN-13: 978-1561708192

I read [The Reconnection, Heal Others, Heal Yourself](#) in preparation for an hour-long interview with Dr. Pearl on my show, We Are One in Spirit Podcast. From the time I began chapter 1, I kept hearing in my mind: "impartation of gifts." This is something I hadn't thought of since my intercessory prayer days. For many years while serving as a worship leader, I had witnessed people being healed. I suppose I was hoping that the source of this Reconnective Healing would miraculously infuse Eric's writing and that by reading the book, I might sense an increase the gift of healing in me.

When I reached the close of chapter 8, I found Dr. Pearl's assurance that an impartation can occur with the reading of this book. I could feel the energy when I “played” with it as is taught in the book, but I can't say that any increase in my ability to heal myself or others manifested as a result.

In my interview with Dr. Pearl, he explained how the activation process of this all-inclusive spectrum of healing frequencies can be taught and caught in his weekend seminars. At first, this might sound like the author is trying to get money from people by urging them to attend his seminars. But, in reality he has witnessed doctors, energy workers, and healers as they begin to access a level of healing (light and information) beyond anything any of them has been able to access prior to the seminar.

I may be somewhat skeptic, but I always want to know if something is real. When I posted an announcement on Facebook that Dr. Pearl was going to be a guest on my show, my friend, Wayne, emailed me. Three years ago Wayne attended a lecture given by Dr. Pearl. My friend had been in agonizing shoulder pain for almost nine months, so he raised his hand when Eric asked if anyone had shoulder pain. Eric invited him to come up front. Eric waved his hand in front of Wayne's shoulder. Wayne felt something cool, then warm, then cool again like a breeze blowing inside his shoulder. After a few minutes he was able to raise his arm over his head with barely any pain at all. The next day he was pain free and noted an increase in mobility. Two years later, Wayne had ex-rays that showed an inoperable and severely-torn rotator cuff. The doctor couldn't understand why Wayne was not in agonizing pain and how he had so much mobility. Wayne said, "Eric and Reconnective Healing are for real!"

I believe him. The new frequencies of Reconnective Healing have been scientifically measured by researchers, who are now calling it forefront of "Information Medicine." It reminds me of the primordial stem cells that seem to have divine intelligence in knowing exactly where to go to work on a patient to restore heal by regenerating a perfect and natural healing. I find this a very exciting day to be living on the planet, and I look for Reconnective Healing to continue transforming lives.

We Are One in Spirit Podcast

May 1

Dr. Eric Pearl is the author of the international bestseller [*The Reconnection: Heal Others, Heal Yourself*](#), now published in more than 36 languages. He travels the globe teaching Reconnective Healing, an extraordinary new way to heal others, yourself and your loved ones by engaging with scientifically measurable new frequencies that researchers are calling the forefront of "Information Medicine." Eric ran a highly successful chiropractic practice for 12 years. One day his patients began reporting that they felt his hands on them—even though he hadn't physically touched them. Patients soon reported receiving miraculous healings from cancers, AIDS-related diseases, epilepsy, cerebral palsy, chronic fatigue syndrome, rheumatoid and osteoarthritis, birth disfigurements, and other serious afflictions. This led to his discovery of Reconnective Healing and its extraordinary power to heal people and change lives.

May 12

Author, Metaphysical Minister and Lifestyle Coach **Carol Batey** will be joining Yvonne Perry on We Are One in Spirit Podcast May 12. She will be discussing her new book, *What's Cooking in Your Soul?*. Carol is the mother of six children and the author of numerous magazine and newspaper articles and four published books. Carol will share information about how you can improve and renew the purpose of your soul and

step into your destiny. *What's Cooking in Your Soul?* will help you to analyze your life and all of the relationships and situations within it.

May 19

May 19 Michael David Lawrence will be joining us to discuss his new book *Emotional Health: The Secret for Freedom from Drama, Trauma, and Pain*. The book is an owner's manual describing practical methods to release your chronic pain, suffering, and stress. In this book you learn how to embrace your feelings rather than continually avoiding them. This skill once mastered brings us relief from suffering, for instance feeling empowered rather than victimized.

WITS Podcast

May 13

Life and business development coach, spiritual counselor **Kimberly Coots** will be joining Yvonne Perry on Writers in the Sky Podcast May 13. She will be discussing her new book, *Divine Worth: Break the Bonds of Unworthiness and Create the Life You Desire*. Her passion is helping people live the lives they desire by connecting with true worth, potential, and purpose, creating greater joy and fulfillment, and shifting the consciousness on the planet from fear to love. The more than twenty-five practical exercises, tools and insights in this book will guide you in transforming self-limiting thoughts and beliefs, and empower you to create greater joy and fulfillment in your life.

Building a Non-fiction Book Proposal

By Deborah Herman

If you want to write a non-fiction book it is unavoidable that you will have to master the non-fiction book proposal. There are many advantages to doing so even though it conjures images of tedium, frustration and writer's block. The book proposal is actually our friend. When I began in the business of writing I learned about the book proposal by writing them very badly. My agent, now my husband, Jeff Herman, took pity on me and had me screen book proposals to see what makes one good and what makes one completely ineffective. Eventually we co-authored the book, ***Write the Perfect Book Proposal: Ten Proposals that Worked and Why***, which became a classic in the industry. The advantage to mastering the book proposal is two-fold. First: you can sell a book to a publisher with a proposal without having to complete an entire manuscript. Second: it gives you a roadmap that makes writing the book much easier and ensures the publisher that they will be getting what they paid for.

There are specific parts to a book proposal. It is like a business plan and the format we use in our book incorporated what I learned in Law School. Before I became a writer and literary agent I studied law at Ohio State University in a dual degree with the Graduate School of Journalism. I practiced law for a few years but my passion had been writing all along. My training in law was a big help in creating a format for a book proposal because I equated it with a brief. A brief is a legal document that has to persuade a judge to see the case law your way. A book proposal is an opportunity for you to persuade an editor or agent to see your book as viable and potentially profitable for them.

When I coach a writer through the process of writing a non-fiction book proposal I first help them create the core of what it is that will separate their book from all others. This is called the hook. The hook is the most important part of the proposal because it gives you clarity that will carry through to the manuscript. Above everything else, a non-fiction book must be organized and provide value to its reader. Readers of non-fiction are looking to be entertained, but the more important element is to gain information that they believe will help them in some way.

I provide assignments to make the process of writing the proposal relatively painless. Perhaps what is most unique about the way I work is that I incorporate my 20 years as a literary agent, my experience of writing 10 non-fiction trade books and my intuition to help a writer find his or her true voice and passion. This is what will make them successful.

Literary agent Deborah Herman has authored or collaborated on nine books and is a new affiliate of Writers in the Sky Creative Writing Services. She is an intuitive and often uses her gifts to help writers discover their authentic selves.

WITS Announcements

Kristen House has developed a summer writing program called "A Novel Idea." It is aimed at teaching middle-grade students (rising 7th, 8th, and 9th graders) and high-school students (rising sophomores, juniors, and seniors) to write a novel in a month during their summer break.

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WITS team member Dianna Calareso has published her memoir online via Smashwords (self-publishing is the way of the future, no?). We are absolutely thrilled for her success. The book only costs \$2.49, and she's donating 25 percent of every sale to the Alzheimer's Association (the memoir is about her grandfather, a retired Marine who suffered from Alzheimer's until his death in 2005). Here's the link, which includes a short and long synopsis, as well as instructions for downloading and sharing via social media. <http://www.smashwords.com/books/view/53669>

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Join Yvonne Perry and Carol Batey for a teleseminar May 4 at 7 p.m. Central Time. This workshop is packed with writing, marketing, and publishing information that will allow you to be informed and ready to unleash your creativity. Register now at <http://weareinspirit.com/workshops.htm>

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### Writing, Book Formatting, & Marketing Classes

Have you ever thought of taking classes to improve your writing? Are you a self-publishing author who wants to personally work with an editor on your book manuscript? The writing instructors on Writers in the Sky Creative Writing Services (WITS) team are available to work one-on-one with you by phone or email (or in person if you are in the Nashville area). Group classes are also offered. See <http://writersinthesky.com/writing-classes.html> for more info.

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BookBuzzr had a webinar about Using Twitter to Market Your Book. The panel consisted of Carolyn-Howard Johnson (author of the HowToDoItFrugally series), Joel Friedlander (proprietor of Marin Bookworks), Laurel Marshfield (professional writer, ghostwriter and developmental editor), Phyllis Zimmler Miller (co-founder of Miller Mosaic Power Marketing) and Penny C. Sansevieri (CEO of Author Marketing Experts, Inc.). See what the experts had to say: <http://www.bookbuzzr.com/blog/book-marketing/qa-using-twitter-to-market-your-book/>.

What I've Learned About Novels from Kids

By Kristen House

I fancy myself a pretty great teacher. I don't mean to sound smug, but I've been at the chalkboard (or whiteboard as it may be) for nearly a decade now, and in that time, I've found the inner writer in college students that most teachers would have ignored. It is my passion, this pulling of words from a clammed-up college freshman who is more interested in pretending to sleep or texting his girlfriend than he is in my class.

But I would have never guessed that I would learn so much in my classroom from a group of 18-year-old students. Those kids, the ones who show up surly and under caffeinated each morning, were up for a challenge last semester. What if, I wondered, I asked more of them? Way more. What if I asked them to write every day, over 1,000 words at a time? Would they choke under the pressure? Or would they rise to the occasion? And what if I could rewind their lives to the point in time when they started doubting that they could write a competent sentence, and I gave them the tools to set a big goal, and then meet it?

That's when I developed A Novel Idea, a summer writing course for middle-school and high-school students that will teach them to write a novel in a month. And over the last two months, I've been honored to teach miniature versions of A Novel Idea to 47 classrooms of students. I have been humbled, awed, and shocked by what I've learned from them. Here are the highlights:

- Kids are thirsty for a challenge. They aren't only capable of writing novels in their spare time, they *want* to!
- They are far more competent than adults ever dreamed. Students as young as 11 years old intuitively know what makes for a good story, how to craft a flawed protagonist, and that a good kiss at the end of a story will bring readers back for more.
- When they're writing a story that matters to them, kids want to learn grammar (gasp!) because they want their characters to sound smart.
- Once the ball is rolling, students would rather jot down an idea for their novel than text a friend. Since the average teenager sends over 3,000 text messages per month, the potential for idea-jotting is staggering!

Lest you think I've forgotten what this means to my sleepy college students, I later met with that group of pioneers at Bongo Java near Belmont where I teach. To my astonishment, several months later they were all still writing. They found a freedom in the daily word count goal, a fluency with their writing that they hadn't felt before, and a level of competency that they'd never experienced. One student told me that the daily writing habit was revolutionary. Another told me it had changed his life. A third had decided change his major and use writing every day as a pastor.

I was humbled.

And what I would say to you is this: write every day. Write when you're tired, when the bills are due, when you're overwhelmed and angry and stressed and completely over your day. Write when you're so full of joy you feel you might burst. Write when it's

rainy, when it's sunny, when you're shopping for your supper. Write when you're too sick to think straight. Write when you're bored. Whatever you're doing, just write. The habit is intoxicating, and the product, whether you become a best-selling novelist or a dedicated journal-writer, is something far more precious than you can imagine.

Kristen House is an Adjunct Instructor of Writing at Belmont University, and the Chief Executive Muse of A Novel Idea. She writes fiction every day for hours, even when there isn't anything to write about. Kristen lives in Nashville with her husband, Andrew, sons, Holden and Shephard, and a yippy little dog named Osie.