

The
Wow

e-newsletter

by Ken and Dahlynn McKowen

Principles

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Books and Schools

For those of you not aware, many K-6 public schools incorporate “Author Day” programs into their yearly schedules. A children’s author is hired—usually via the school’s PTA—to hold several assemblies to talk to students about his/her book and aspects of the publishing industry. The school’s PTA will pre-sell the book (the author provides a flyer), and the author will meet with the students, autograph the books they purchased and chat a few minutes.



We must tell you from experience that there’s nothing more powerful than when a child looks into your eyes and says, “I want to be an author *just like you.*” Wow. The future is standing before you, and they want to share their words with the world, too. In this day and age of computers and Game Boys and Xboxes, children are just not reading. Besides the benefits of reading, you also have to look at the fact that these kids are our future consumers; if they don’t read, then we, collectively as authors, will not sell books.

Back to Author Days; both Ken and I are quite active parent volunteers at our son’s elementary school. On average, we volunteer 10 to 15 hours a week, helping youngsters in their creative writing classes and beginning readers with their lessons. We also host a few of these Author Day events, mainly with our Chicken Soup books, but we were stuck as we didn’t have any more kid-themed books. Then Ken had an idea.

Oh no. It’s usually me who has the idea and Ken gets stuck with the aftermath. But this time, playing up his past as a California state park ranger, Ken created the *Ranger Ken* book series for kids. The primary audience for his books is school Author Days. He conducts ranger campfire programs (he’s

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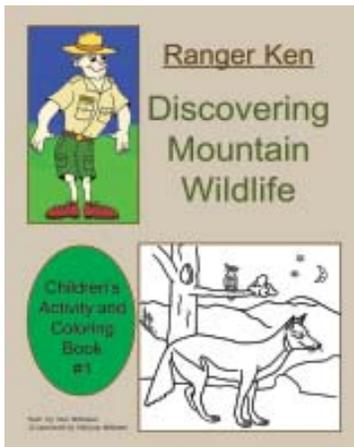
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even created a mock campfire where the cellophane flames move via a battery-operated fan) to include guitar sing-alongs, skits about animals and saving/helping the environment, audience participation, puppet shows and all those other campfire-related things he did when he was a ranger so, so, so long ago.

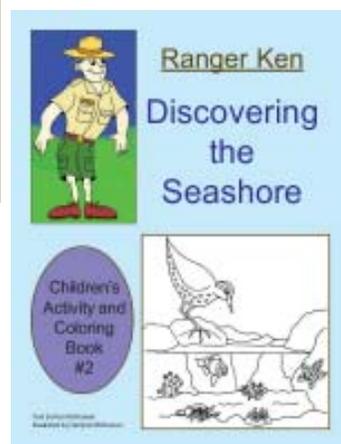
A series, the first book is *Ranger Ken: Discovering Mountain Wildlife*. A 32-page educational coloring book, I did the illustrations (growing up, I wanted to be either a weathergirl—not a weatherman—or an animator for Disney). And there will be more: *Ranger Ken: Discovering the Seashore* is being printed right now, and *Ranger Ken: Discovering Snakes, Frogs, and Lizards* is still sitting on my drawing board (yuck, I'm not enjoying drawing this one). The topics are endless, and my ranger of a husband is having a ball.

The reason we share this information is for all of you children book authors out there. Have you looked into holding an Author Day event in your school district? You have a built-in and captive audience, but more importantly, a place to talk about your love of writing. You also have a place to sell your books. But most importantly, you have the opportunity to inspire children to read and write. It can't get much better than that!

--Dahlynn



Here are the first two books!



How We Do It...

If you want to learn more about how we have set up the Ranger Ken program, including our school and group fundraising program, visit www.RangerKen.com.

Our goal is excite children about books, and if you can incorporate a similar program into your school district, (yes, you can “borrow” our fundraising ideas if you must), then go for it! Let's get kids reading!

Winners of May's Writing Prompt Contest!

Thanks to everyone who submitted an entry in our May contest. To recap, you were to create an endorsement for a book you have in progress, or even one you've been yearning to write.

We chose three great examples to share with you. The winners will receive free writing consultations with us via the phone. Since their books have yet to come out, we decided not to list the names of our winners, just their initials and states. Congratulations!

As the old adage goes, age is just a number. Such is the case in this delightful memoir about a ninety-year-old female sleuth; she always gets her man! -- W.R., Alaska

In this day and age where technology rules, *Eight Steps to Simplify Your Life* brings home the reality that faster isn't always better. This book is a must read for those who desire to simplify their day-to-day lives and reconnect with the world around them. -- D.P., Texas

What do you get when you take a little *Harry Potter*, mixed with some *Gone with the Wind*, then sprinkled with the classic *Moby Dick*? You get one whopper of a romantic, mystical tale that is sure to please fiction fans everywhere! -- M.G., Illinois



Summer Memories Writing Prompt!

What is your favorite summer time or vacation memory? The beach? Tree houses? Riding bikes?

Pen a story of 500 words or less and e-mail it to Writer@PublishingSyndicate.com. We'll pick one winner; the prize is a half-hour telephone coaching session with one of us.

Deadline: July 15, 2009

HOT STUFF! HOT STUFF! HOT STUFF! HOT STUFF! HOT STUFF!

Chicken Soup for the Soul www.ChickenSoup.com

Not Really Retired: Deadline: June 30, 2009

All in the Family: Deadline: June 30, 2009

Thanks Dad: Deadline: June 30, 2009

Thanks Mom: Deadline: June 30, 2009

**HURRY! LAST CHANCE
TO SUBMIT YOUR
GREAT STORY!**

NASCAR: Deadline: July 31, 2009

Teacher Tales: Deadline: August 31, 2009

Endurance Sports: Deadline: September 30, 2009

Dieting and Fitness: Deadline: September 30, 2009

**DEADLINES
EXTENDED!**

NEW TITLES!



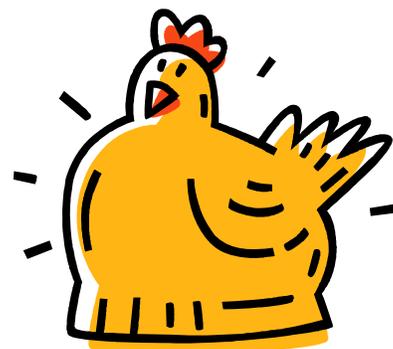
Mothers and Daughters: Deadline: December 31, 2009



Christmas and Holidays: Deadline: January 15, 2010



Grieving and Recovery: Deadline: March 31, 2010



Cup of Comfort www.CupofComfort.com



HURRY! *For a Better World*: Deadline: July 1, 2009

For Couples: Deadline: October 1, 2009

For Golfers: Deadline: December 15, 2009

Go for it! Get published! 