

Three Talented Professionals on Writing, Illustrating, and Marketing Children's Books

MON TRICE – montrice.net

I never dreamed I'd write children's books, and being a publisher was nowhere on my radar. I was a mommy of a little brown boy who had tons of books on his shelf, but it was difficult to find books with



Mon Trice

characters who looked like him. As I reflect on my fiery baptism into children's book publishing, there are a couple of lessons that stand out more than others.

When you hire an artist, make sure this person is an "illustrator" who grasps the specifications of file setup and the differences between RGB and CMYK for web and for print. The next step is to have an agreement in place that outlines compensation, revisions, rights, and remedies if there should be failure to deliver, etc. The more specific, the easier it is to move through to completion.

Balancing the creative role of author and the business aspects of marketing and publishing requires excellent planning and time management. I begin with the end in mind, work backwards, and place buffers for things going long or wrong. I plan out the production year on a calendar, draft a marketing plan, and fill in the calendar with the rest of my life.

DAN KILLEEN – HappyFunBooks.com

I visit three to four schools each week to read my books and present how I develop ideas. I don't charge a fee but am able to sell directly to parents. These events are wonderful experiences, as I have the privilege of reading to kids and getting their reactions. Teachers appreciate having their students interact with an author, and they often note how the visit sparks a burst of unsolicited

creativity from their kids.

For four months following a new release, I try to schedule an in-store signing every week. I call Barnes & Noble stores within driving distance, request the contact information for the community business development manager, email them with info about my books, and follow up with a phone call. On the day of a signing, I bring a banner to hang from the table, postcards to give away, and original illustrations for folks to see. More important than all these "props" is a willingness to be friendly and engaging with customers.

On the social media side, I mainly post on Facebook, occasionally tweet, and have recently begun posting on LinkedIn as well. In terms of followers, I have a long way to go.

SHELLEY DIETERICHS –

goodbuddynotes.com

Thirty-five years ago I launched a letter-writing campaign with samples of my work to artists' reps around the country. After many

months, a Connecticut based rep agreed to represent me and landed me my first illustrated book assignment: *Uh Oh! Gotta Go!* by Bob McGrath of Sesame Street! The contract spelled out fees and dates that sketches and finished artwork were due. I had done sketches for the entire book and begun finishes when I was asked to redo almost half of the artwork because the editor decided to make changes.

My rep did not go to bat for me or secure extra money for my time in redoing artwork. That's when I learned about all the things you need in a contract in order to protect yourself from these very things. A few years later, I attended a Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators (SCBWI) workshop in NYC. I took my portfolio along for critiques by other reps and acquired a new rep.

At the beginning of my freelance career, I did many work-for-hire assignments, which I would not do again. In work-for-hire, the artist loses all rights to the artwork and has no control over its reuse by the client.



Dan Killeen



Shelley Dieterichs

Special Event



SHAWN MANAHER WORKSHOP ON JUNE 25

(9am – 12pm) at the Westborough Country Club! **SHAWN MANAHER**, founder of Reading Deals and Book Marketing Tools, presents: "Grow Your Audience, Sell More Books: What a Marketing System Can Do for You."

\$25 for SLPA members, \$35 for SLWG members (with special code), \$45 for non-members

<https://www.facebook.com/events/1595172770799485/>

April Recap & Upcoming Events

In April, SLPA members enjoyed two fantastic events. On April 13, the monthly member meeting, "Author Resources Right at Your Fingertips," featured several brief, informative presentations by SLPA Board members Kevin Ericson, Peggy Nehman, Andrew Doty, and Bob Baker.

Three days later, on April 16, was a sold-out workshop at St. Louis Community College - Meramec, "How to Publish Your Own Book: What You Need to Know," in which Kim Wolterman, Warren Martin, Andrew Doty, Peggy Nehman, and Bob Baker each spent time introducing specific self-publishing topics and answering LOTS of questions from a very curious audience.

The SLPA was busy in April and will be staying that way! Check out our upcoming events:

- May 11, 6:30pm: "What It Really Takes to Be a Children's Book Author" with Shelley Dietrichs, Dan Killeen, & Mon Trice
- June 8, 6:30pm: "Working with a Local Small Publisher" with Kristy Makansi, Donna Essner, & Lisa Miller
- June 25, 9am: "How to Build an Audience, Grow Your List, and Sell More Books!" with Shawn Manaher
- July 13, 6:30pm: "Working with a Printer" with Jaffe Book Solutions



COMING IN JUNE

JUNE 8, 2016

Working with a Small Publisher
with Kristy Makansi, Donna Essner and Lisa Miller

Learn Marketing—SLPA is looking for an intern

The SLPA is looking for a marketing and publicity intern to work with the Editorial Director on social media, press material, and general SLPA visibility. For more information, contact Andrew Doty at communications@stlouispublishers.org.

THE BOOK CORNER

The Doctor's Tale by Claire Applewhite

Struggling to comprehend his new and sometimes cruel reality involving poverty, disease, drug addiction, and racial tension, the young intern, Thomas Spezia, is not prepared for the rigors of training and the gritty reality of St. Louis



City Hospital. When his mentor, Dr. Skelton, assigns the case of Lori Raines, a terminally ill patient, Thomas becomes overwhelmed by her needs and the demands of her philandering husband and so he embarks on a treacherous road to self-discovery that indelibly transforms his life. Everyone has a dream, but every dream has a price. Thomas must answer the question that gnaws at him, day and night: Has the price become too high?

Available at: claireapplewhite.com/books/romance/a-doctors-tale

MEMBERSHIP DUES
\$60 in 2016

SLPA Meets on the Second Wednesday of the Month

RICHMOND HEIGHTS
COMMUNITY CENTER (THE HEIGHTS)
The Angus Room
8001 Dale Ave.
Richmond Heights, MO 63117
(Child care available at The Heights)

Doors open for networking at 6:30pm,
Program begins at 7pm

The meeting concludes about 8:30pm,-
Networking until 9pm

Regular meetings are free to members.
Guests: \$10 at the door.



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