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## Snow Days!

By Dahlynn McKowen

A few days ago, I received an email from Laurie Prewandowski, a technology integrator for a regional school district in New Hampshire. Her email requested a waiver to avoid copyright infringement on one of Publishing Syndicate's books—*Stand Up! 75 Young Activists Who Rock the World and How You Can, Too!* Released in 2013, this anthology has enjoyed much success, thanks

to the youth contributors and their amazing stories, and also thanks to the book's creator, John Schlimm.

In her email, Laurie explained that her region of the country has many "snow days." To avoid having to extend the school year into June for dates missed during the winter, her school district created a program called "Blizzard Bag Days." The students work from home during bad weather via computer, and if enough students participate, the school will get attendance credit from the powers-that-be for that school day. (To learn more about this program in general, click on this link and watch the video: <https://sites.google.com/a/kearsarge.org/krms/bb>).

"Our middle school does a community read program on snow days," Laurie wrote, referencing Kearsarge Regional Middle School. "How it works is that we purchase a book for every student and every staff member. Everyone reads the same book then has discussions and activities centered on that reading." Their school chose *Stand Up!* for their reading program and have purchased close to 600 books over the last two years.

*Continued...*



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**We want to hear from you!**  
Contact Publishing Syndicate at  
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Ashlee Smith, the founder of the nonprofit Ashlee's Toy Closet, assists children after they go through disasters. She would love your help in starting a chapter in your community! [www.AshleesToyCloset.org](http://www.AshleesToyCloset.org).

Laurie explained that the school's new assistant principal is a former language arts teacher and that this assistant principal wanted to read a chapter from *Stand Up!* aloud to their students using Google Hangouts (<https://hangouts.google.com>). "We want to dabble in some new technology on these Blizzard Bag Days. The students would follow along in their own copy of the book and then participate in an online discussion. Google Hangouts is a fun new thing we want to try in order to extend learning via technology." For this reason, she requested that Publishing Syndicate approve their usage of posting stories from *Stand Up!* onto the Internet. Of course we gave her and the school district permission to do so.

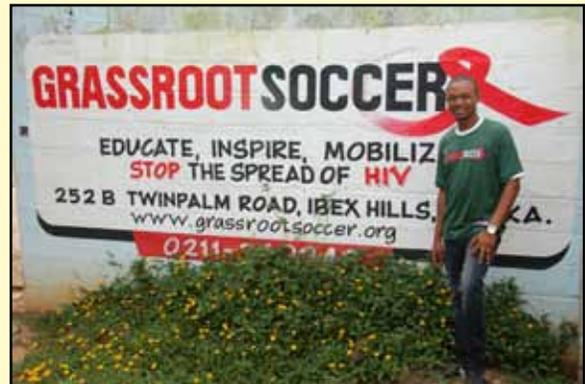
I am sharing this recent email with you as another example of ways you can promote your book. In my opinion, authors spend too much time and worry trying to get their books into bookstores when they can expend their energy and focus on public libraries and schools. At Publishing Syndicate, 25 percent of our total book sales go to libraries and schools.

*Continued...*

**Publishing Syndicate is proud of the 75 youth and young adult contributors featured in *Stand Up!* Three contributors are profiled on this page and we encourage you to visit their websites to learn more about each of them. Better yet, make a donation to their charities! And don't forget, books make wonderful holiday presents!**



Claire Wineland is the founder of Claire's Place Foundation, where she shows how the adversities and hardships in your life are simply new opportunities to change the world! [www.ClairesPlaceFoundation.org](http://www.ClairesPlaceFoundation.org)



David Kapata's story "Alive and Kicking" is part of *Stand Up!* He is the program coordinator for Grassroot Soccer Zambia, Africa. [www.GrassrootSoccer.org](http://www.GrassrootSoccer.org).

When it comes to schools, many throughout the country host author days. If this interests you, and your book is appropriate for school-aged children, preteens or teens, contact your local school or school district and ask if they offer such a program. If they don't, volunteer to create one yourself! Check out children's book author Aaron Shepard's list of how to go about this at <http://www.aaronsherp.com/kidwriter/A70.html>.

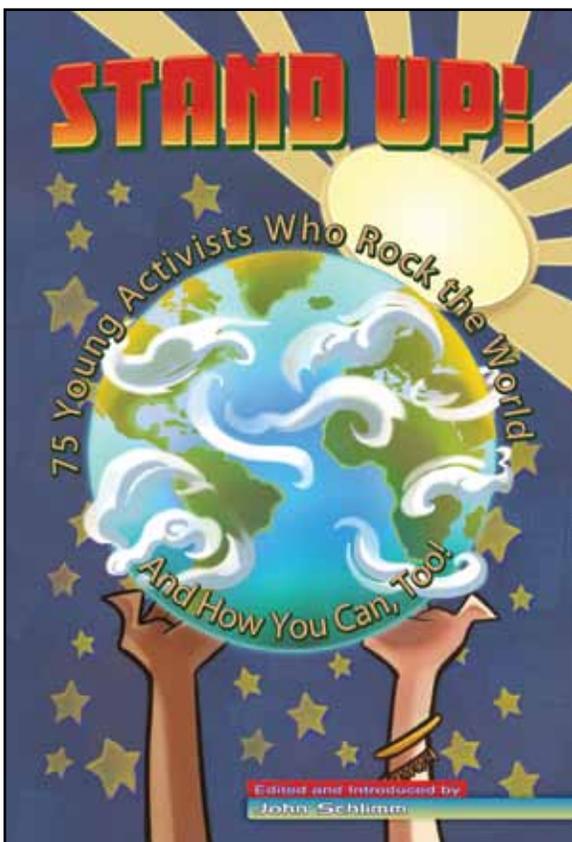
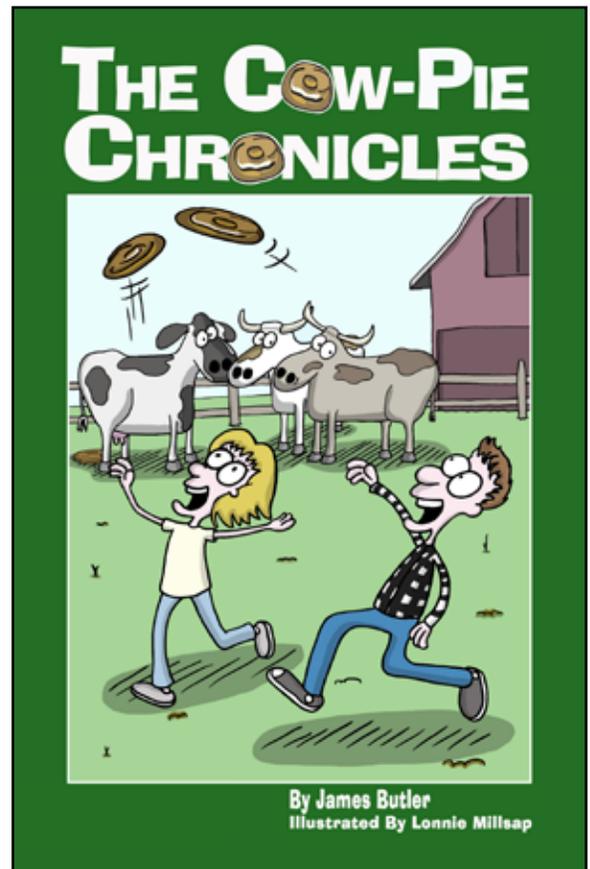
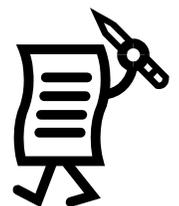
Another smart way to promote your book to schools is to create a teacher's discussion guide as a free download from your website. Check out two very well thought out and written examples of teacher's discussion guides on our Publishing Syndicate site, created by authors John Schlimm for *Stand Up!* (<http://publishingsyndicate.com/assets/master-final---stand-up!-discussion-guide-by-john-schlimm.pdf>) and James Butler's children's chapter book *The Cow-Pie Chronicles* (<http://publishingsyndicate.com/assets/cow-pie-chronicles-teacher-discussion-guide.pdf>).

Ken and I always tell people that the writing itself is the easiest part of creating a book—it's the marketing of a book that takes more ongoing work, creativity and fortitude. Laurie's email is another great idea for your marketing and promotional bag of tricks, one that I would never have thought of considering we don't have public school snow days in the Sacramento area!

In closing, John sums it up best:

“As an educator and writer, the greatest gift is knowing that people, especially young people, are being inspired and called to action in some way by *Stand Up!* What's happening at Kearsarge Regional School District with the Blizzard Bag Days community read program is a blueprint for other schools across the country.”

**Let it snow!**



**Thank you for sending in your stage fright stories! Here are two that will make you appreciate public speaking (or singing)!**

*Each time I speak publicly, I feel a bit of stage fright. I find a small case of nerves to be helpful, and I typically speak better when I am a bit anxious. My biggest fears include being at a loss for words and accidentally saying something inappropriate. The latter is a fear based in reality. On one occasion, I mixed up my words and “started fighting” came out as “farted stighting.” It was not my finest moment. Recently, I spoke to the Franklin Rotarians in Virginia (PHOTO, below). My presentation went well and was void of unsuitable language. I try to remember that I am a writer, and the worst life experiences often make for the best stories.*



Sam72/Shutterstock.com

~~ Melissa Face, Virginia



*Dahlynn, I’ve been singing and speaking in public for so many decades, I haven’t had actual stage “fright” for a long, long time. Does stage “hysteria” count?*



*During a church Christmas cantata a few years ago, I had a solo in a 70-voice choir. Packed auditorium, standing room only! At one point, three grown shepherds, including our youth pastor, came be-bopping down two aisles toward the platform, jiving to the lively music. I got tickled, completely lost my focus and laughed through most of one stanza of my solo . . . over the microphone! The shepherds took their place, and I was able to finish my solo. My grin remained, but I managed not to laugh through the “Hallelujah Chorus” finale . . . barely.*

*My grin remained, but I managed not to laugh through the “Hallelujah Chorus” finale . . . barely.*

~~ Barbara Carpenter, Illinois



*Smile, Barbara!*



Have you peed from laughing today?

[www.LaughUntilYouPee.com](http://www.LaughUntilYouPee.com)

# Short Short Story Competition

## **HURRY!**

**Deadline: December 14, 2015**

The following is from *Writer's Digest*:

“We’re looking for short stories! Think you can write a winning story in 1,500 words or less? Enter the 16th Annual Writer’s Digest Short Short Story Competition for your chance to win \$3,000 in cash, get published in Writer’s Digest magazine, and a paid trip to our ever-popular Writer’s Digest Conference! The winning entries will be on display in the 16th Annual Writer’s Digest Competition Collection.”



### **Prizes**

First place winner will receive:

1. \$3,000 in cash
2. Paid trip to the ever-popular Writer’s Digest Conference!
3. Story title published in Writer’s Digest magazine’s July/August 2016 issue
4. Copy of the 16th Annual Writer’s Digest Short Short Story Competition Collection
5. Copy of the 2016 Novel & Short Story Writer’s Market
6. Copy of the 2016 Guide to Literary Agents

Second place winner will receive:

1. \$1,500 in cash
2. First place winner prizes, items 3 through 6

Third place winner will receive:

1. \$500 in cash
2. First place winner prizes, items 3 through 6

Fourth through 10th place winners will receive:

1. \$100 in cash each
2. First place winner prizes, items 3 through 6

Prizes for 11th through 25th place winners, too!



**Learn more about this competition at**

**<http://www.writersdigest.com>**