

The Wow Principles

e-newsletter

by Ken and Dahlynn McKowen

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IBPA: Here to Help You!

This month, we are thrilled to feature an interview with Florrie Binford Kichler, president of IBPA. For those of you not familiar with this acronym, IBPA stands for the Independent Book Publishers Association (www.ibpa-online.org).

IBPA is a non-profit trade association serving the independent publishing community, and 2012-13 marks the organization's 30th anniversary. While we recognize many of you are not publishers, Ken made it a point to ask questions that are both pertinent to authors and publishers. We guarantee you'll learn something new. Enjoy!

~ Dahlynn

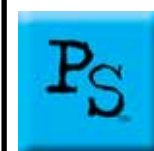
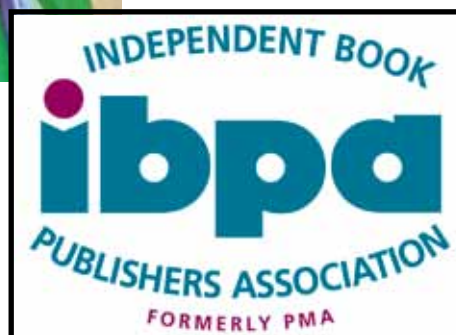
Ken: IBPA is focused primarily on assisting publishers in becoming more successful through a variety of programs. Our Wow newsletter readership is comprised mostly of writers, many of whom have written books and perhaps self-published them, and many more who would love to either write or complete a book. How can IBPA's membership best assist them?



Florrie Binder Kichler
President
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www.twitter.com/ibpa

Florrie: By helping them sell more books and avoid expensive publishing mistakes! IBPA was founded as the Publishers Marketing Association in 1983 by 15 far-sighted small publishers who realized that banding together to help each other market their titles was much more cost effective than trying to go it alone. Fast forward 30 years and 3,000 members later and IBPA's mission remains the same—to help small, independent publishers sell more books without breaking the bank. A self-publisher is an independent publisher, and IBPA is the independent publisher's partner.

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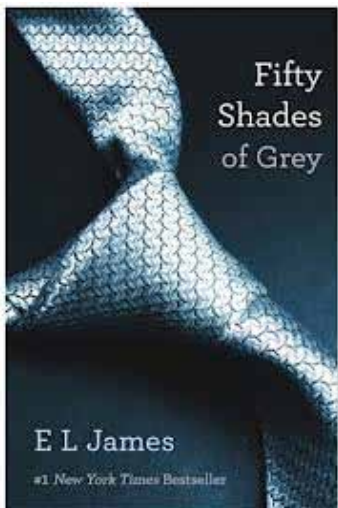
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Through a network of more than 50 cooperative marketing programs and ongoing education on how to publish professionally, IBPA opens doors that are traditionally closed to smaller publishers. And if you need advice, the IBPA staff is always available to take questions—and find answers. IBPA is the smaller publisher's advocate and champion, no matter how large or small the challenge.

K: Education is critical, especially today since the publishing world is changing as new technologies and business practices are introduced. How can IBPA's educational programs assist new and established authors?

F: Eric Hoffer said, "In a time of drastic change it is the learners who inherit the future." And nowhere is that truer than in publishing, which is why IBPA offers a wide range of educational opportunities to help publishers compete effectively in an increasingly crowded marketplace. In an environment where more and more activities traditionally performed by publishers are falling to the author—whether self- or traditionally published—education as to publishing best practices isn't optional, it's crucial to success.

All of our educational offerings are created to teach both new and experienced authors and publishers "how-to" tools, not pie-in-the-sky theories. For example, members can learn e-book publishing tips via a teleconference with Mark Coker of Smashwords; sign up for IBPA's monthly Publishing University Online webinar that gives members a low-cost opportunity to learn the in's and out's of social media, branding, e-book conversion and more; and attend IBPA's annual Publishing University conference for one and a half days of hands-on instruction from industry experts. And don't forget our monthly IBPA Independent magazine, which is full of practical publishing tools and advice.



K: Can you explain how a book such as *Fifty Shades of Grey* can sell millions of copies, even though so many people who have read it believe it to be poorly written on a number of levels?

F: I wish I could because then I'd go write one! I'm kidding, of course, but I think the *Fifty Shades of Grey* phenomenon is due to two factors—social media and subject matter. The adage "sex sells" absolutely applies here, and I'll add my own opinion which is that sex sells—no matter how badly written. In addition, I spoke earlier about reader reviews—here is an example of how the ease of communication in the digital age and the proliferation of social media outlets combined to create a reader-to-reader firestorm. *Fifty Shades of Grey* began as fan fiction on a website, and those initial readers stoked the online flame that resulted in 40 million sold and climbing.

K: A criticism of many self-published books is the lack of good editing. Can IBPA offer help to these authors?

F: Self-published authors can take advantage of the thousands of dollars of savings on goods and services that IBPA offers its members through its more than 50 member benefits. And among those offers are those from

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professional editors, book designers and printers. In addition, IBPA offers a unique “Ask the Experts” program for members wherein members can submit specific questions on any aspect of publishing—including editing and production—to a pool of experts who have agreed to act as a resource for IBPA publishers. The “Expert” answers the question, which is then posted online in a knowledge base for all to access.

K: On many levels, e-books and digital media will likely be a very large part of the ever-changing publishing industry. Is IBPA evolving with this new technology?

F: Yes. Certainly the move to e-books has revolutionized the publishing industry. In addition to continuing education to members on both e-book conversion and marketing, IBPA has just established a relationship with the online book reviewing service NetGalley to help our members reach 69,000+ book reviewers, librarians, booksellers and other industry professionals who subscribe to the NetGalley. The service enables distribution of new titles online (also in print) with copy protection for reviewing purposes. NetGalley is just one example of IBPA’s commitment to assist its members in competing more effectively in the e-book arena.

K: How important are book reviews? And can you offer advice to our readers about this practice, please?

F: A recent article in the *New York Times* regarding “sock puppets”—which is the industry term for creating bogus online book reviews under a false name or pretense—featured the story of a man who created phony, glowing online reviews for others for pay in order to increase book sales. IBPA deplors and rejects that practice, respects the value of book reviews for publishers, authors and readers, and urges publishers and authors to ethically pursue both traditional and online reviews.

That said, certainly the traditional outlets for book reviews are continuing to disappear, which makes reader reviews at online retailers and social reading sites such as Goodreads carry even more weight. And I do believe that the vast majority of readers who write reviews are not practicing sock puppetry! My advice is to continue to pursue online reviews, but don’t neglect the more traditional review publications—*Foreword*, *Publishers Weekly* and *PW Select*, *Shelf Awareness*, *Kirkus*, to name just a few.

Librarians in particular read and consider reviews when looking at a possible purchase. And IBPA’s partnership with NetGalley opened up a huge avenue for small publishers to go after reviews. For more information, check www.netgalley.com and www.ibpa-online.org

K: Most authors think a publisher is going to spend thousands of dollars marketing their book. We know this is rarely the case; most authors must market on their own, especially when their book is no longer the publisher’s “flavor of the month.” What advice do you have to help authors/small publishers reach buyers, especially brick-and-mortar bookstores?

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F: IBPA was founded on the pillar of cooperative marketing and nowhere is that more evident than in the suite of marketing programs members can take advantage of.

Want to reach bookstores? Reserve a space in IBPA's cooperative bookstore catalogue mailings or on the exhibit shelf in the IBPA booth at the regional bookstore conferences. Take advantage of the IBPA relationship with Ingram, one of the largest book wholesalers that can make a publisher's single book automatically available for ordering by retailers all over the world.

Want to reach libraries? A publisher's own book flyer travels with those of fellow publishers' to thousands of libraries at a cost literally thousands of dollars cheaper than an individual mailing. Or send a title for display in the IBPA booth at the American Library Association and/or Public Library Association trade shows and inclusion in the IBPA catalogue distributed to all librarian booth visitors.

These are just two examples—there are many more listed on the IBPA website at www.ibpa-online.org.



K: Booth space is very expensive and not cost effective for an author or even a publisher with only a few titles to exhibit. How can IBPA help the small guys compete with the big boys in these venues?

F: IBPA attends, staffs and represents our members' titles at all the major book industry trade shows on behalf of our members—BookExpo America, ALA (American Library Association as mentioned above), PLA (Public Library Association) and the Frankfurt Book Fair, the largest book show in the world. Instead of a publisher spending five figures on travel, hotel and booth space on their own, sending a title (or more) with IBPA for \$100+ buys exposure in the IBPA booth in a high-traffic location, inclusion in the IBPA color show catalogue distributed to all IBPA booth visitors, representation of publishers' books by the knowledgeable IBPA staff, and a detailed report of the show sent to all participants after the fact. Frankly, I can't imagine a publisher not taking advantage of a deal like that!

K: One last question: Several years ago, one of the books that Dahlynn and I wrote—*The Best of California's Missions, Mansions and Museums*—won the prestigious Benjamin Franklin Award in the travel book category. That certainly helped us sell more books. Do you have any thoughts on the importance of book awards, and do you have examples of how winning that award has helped some of IBPA's members' book sales?

F: As I wrote in a recent column for the IBPA Independent, as a publisher myself, I'm a believer in book awards. Not only does that gold or silver seal on a book attract the consumer's attention, an award provides a

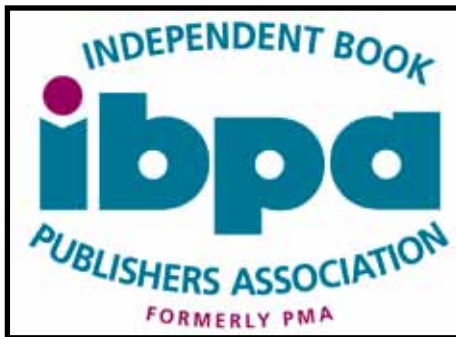
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publisher/author with a tangible mark of distinction for the title and provides marketing and promotion ammunition for catalogues, bookmarks, blogs, websites, etc. If the award is one of the few (of which the IBPA Benjamin Franklin Awards is one) that gives individual feedback as to why the book was or wasn't chosen for an award, the education and insight the publisher/author receives that can be applied to future books is invaluable.

Granted, unless the award is national in scope, a publisher may not see a huge bump in sales, but with proper promotion and marketing, certainly award-winners can sell more books. For buyers faced with a universe of books growing exponentially and looking for a way to eliminate titles from purchase, an award provides one more reason to take a second look at the winning title. I would caution publishers to investigate the awards program they are considering entering to insure that the judges are credible and the award provides real value for the entry fee.



Thank you to Florrie for her time and advice. But wait, we're not done—Florrie had one more surprise for us. She extended a discounted membership offer to all *Wow Principles*' readers! IBPA will deduct \$30 from their membership fee of \$129! For only \$99, you can take advantage of the terrific member benefits, many of which were talked about in this article. Go to <https://www.ibpa-online.org/membappl.aspx> and enter discount code **PUBSYN99** in the field where it asks for a "Referral or Discount code."

www.ibpa-online.org
www.twitter.com/ibpa

IBPA is truly a wonderful organization and we wholeheartedly urge you to join. And so you know, we receive no kick-back from IBPA, just a thank you from Florrie and the IBPA staff. And you'll be thanking us, too, once you join and take advantage of IBPA's many great programs!

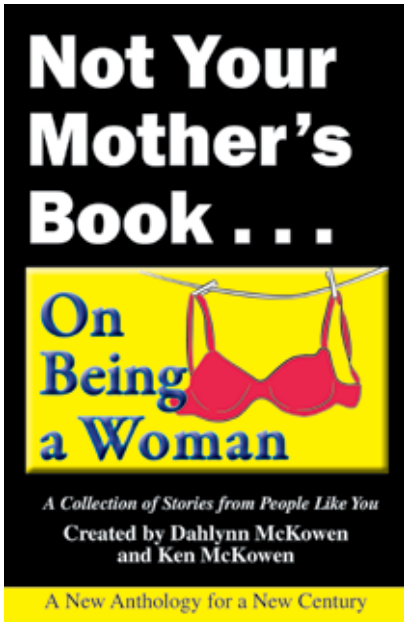
~~ Dahlynn



In Next Month's Issue...

Kathleene "Kathy" Baker, co-creator of *Not Your Mother's Book...On Dogs*, discusses rejection, as in receiving rejection letters from publishers and promising venues of publication. Entitled "Not Down for the Count," Kathy offers tips on how to deal with this all-too-prevalent and very frustrating aspect of the publishing industry. So don't throw in the towel just yet, at least not until you read Kathy's advice!

Funny! Daring! Different!



If you haven't heard, *Not Your Mother's Book . . . On Being a Woman* was released on October 9th. The book is available at all online book retailers as both a paperback and e-book. It will also be available to brick-and-mortar stores beginning the weekend of October 27th.

This book is the first in the *Not Your Mother's Book* (NYMB) series, and initial reviews have been wonderful. We encourage you to pick up a copy and see what our NYMB books are all about. And we kindly ask that you leave a review on Amazon or other review sites such as Goodreads.com. Thanks!

With the new release, our PR campaign is in full swing, and we've been busy sending out copies to the media. If you are a member of the media, or know of media outlets that would be interested in a press package, drop Dahlynn a note: Dahlynn@PublishingSyndicate.com.

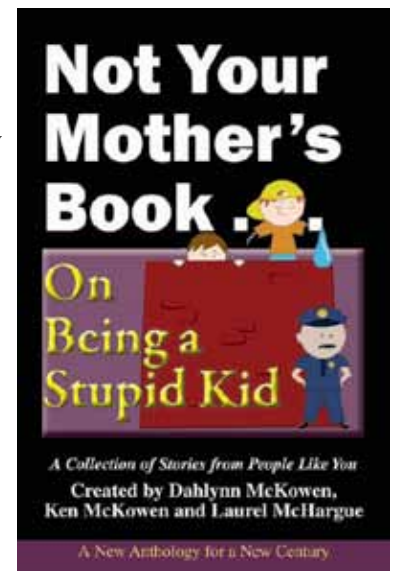
Coming Soon!



Not Your Mother's Book . . . On Being a Stupid Kid is in final galley review. Hooray! The book is slated for release on November 6th. Yup, Election Day. There has to be a joke in there someplace!

Who Let the Dogs Out?

Not Your Mother's Book . . . On Dogs is going through manuscript review. Our goal is to release the book in late November or very early December. The release date will be announced in November's *Wow* newsletter!



Psst! Two new NYMB book titles announced on Page 8! Be the first to submit your stories!

Yes, I'm Certifiable—Care to Join Me?

Got your attention?

The word “certifiable” is a much nicer word than “crazy.” Or I could have used “peculiar,” “cracked,” “daft” or even “eccentric” in the title. But my choice sums it up fairly well. I’m going to pen a 50,000 word novel in 30 days, beginning on November 1st.

For those of you who know me and my insane schedule, what I’m about do should have me committed. I’ve decided to sign up for NaNoWriMo. And I want you to join me. Seriously. Stop laughing.

NaNoWriMo (www.nanowrimo.org) stands for the National Novel Writing Month. How they came up with the acronym, I’ll never know. But as of this writing, the countdown clock on their website reads, “7 days, 7 hours, 43 minutes and 29 seconds” until the event begins. Oh, crap. Another deadline.

Because I’m saving words for my novel, I’ve pasted NaNoWriMo’s “About Us” info from their website:

National Novel Writing Month is a fun, seat-of-your-pants approach to novel writing. Participants begin writing on November 1. The goal is to write a 50,000-word (approximately 175-page) novel by 11:59:59 PM on November 30.

Valuing enthusiasm and perseverance over painstaking craft, NaNoWriMo is a novel-writing program for everyone who has thought fleetingly about writing a novel but has been scared away by the time and effort involved.

As you spend November writing, you can draw comfort from the fact that, all around the world, other National Novel Writing Month participants are going through the same joys and sorrows of producing the Great Frantic Novel. Wrimos meet throughout the month to offer encouragement, commiseration, and—when the thing is done—the kind of raucous celebrations that tend to frighten animals and small children.

In 2011, we had 256,618 participants and 36,843 of them crossed the 50K finish line by the midnight deadline, entering into the annals of NaNoWriMo superstardom forever. They started the month as auto mechanics, out-of-work actors, and middle school English teachers. They walked away novelists.

I know you want to ask me why I’m doing this. Answer: I already have 11 books published through three different publishers and several more ghost-created, all of which are non-fiction. But I’ve never written a full-length novel and have had one simmering in the far reaches of my brain for several years. So between my full-time work as a publisher, app creator, mom, wife, volunteer and all-around extremely busy person, I’m going to do it.

Let’s do this together! If you’re as crazy as me, send me an e-mail at Dahlynn@PublishingSyndicate.com if you’re game and we’ll chronicle our journeys on Publishing Syndicate’s Facebook page and Twitter account. And who knows, if your novel turns out great, and if Publishing Syndicate feels it has potential, we might even talk about a book deal. If anything, come December 1st, we can do lunch then go shopping for matching straitjackets!

~~ Dahlynn

Sign up at www.NaNoWriMo.org



HURRY! STORIES NEEDED!

Updated 10/25/12

Not Your Mother's Book . . .

A new anthology for a new century!

Nearly 40 titles in the NYMB series need stories! Stories must be written by people age 18 and up. Details on the PS website.

New NYMB Titles!

On Food

Working for a Living

DEADLINES, DEADLINES!

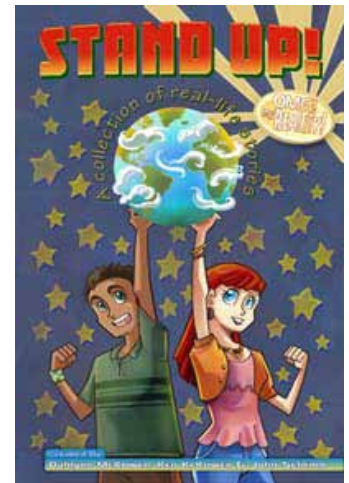
On Parenting: December 1, 2012

More deadline announcements will be made next month, but don't wait! Send your stories in NOW to avoid getting stuck in the piles of last-minute submissions.

OMG! My Reality Youth Series

Time to get published!

We are accepting stories for four *OMG! My Reality!* titles: *Kids*; *Preteens*; *Teens* and *Stand Up!* Stories must be written by those age 25 and younger. Please share this information. Thanks!



HURRY!

DEADLINE for OMG! books

Stand Up!: November 1, 2012

www.PublishingSyndicate.com



My Story is Out: High School Years

Created by Lyndsey D'Arcangelo

The nation's newest anthology for LGBT teens!

Attention LGBT teens and college-aged kids! Lyndsey needs stories for her book, so please pass along this information. Contributors who make the book will be paid royalties! www.MyStoryIsOut.com

**Dream
of
ThingsSM**

Dream of Things has a great line-up of anthology books. On their website, be sure to click on the "Workshop" tab for a listing of titles. Good luck!

www.DreamofThings.com

Go for it! Get published! 