

## BOISE NON-FICTION WRITERS' GROUP

Meeting on May 7<sup>th</sup>, 2008, at the Rediscovered Bookshop.

Hosted by Randy Hill, Notes by Linda Hill, Quality Control by Kate Riley

Kate Riley was this month's guest; she spoke about the trials, tribulations and triumphs of publishing her own book, *The Green Velvet Journals*.

Her book came about as a result of letters she and her mother wrote to each other after her mother was diagnosed with cancer. Once they made the decision to get the collection of letters published, Kate and Vee (Kate's mom) devoted three hours a day, three to four days a week, to working closely with their editor. After sending out sample chapters to 27 publishers, and being rejected, Kate decided to self-publish. Thus the tedious work of designing the entire book began and she worked on a daily basis until it was pdf ready to be sent to their designated printer, Lightning Source. Inc in Tennessee.

Rather than using specific layout software, Kate decided on the physical size and layout and transcribed the manuscript into a format using those parameters, although she was quick to point out that publishing companies today will lay out the book for self-publishers.

Some of Kate's points to remember on the self-publishing journey:

- One must have a publishing name and get a business name--hers is "In the Beam Publishing House."
- Potential Printers are usually happy to send you sample copies of books they have produced for others.
- As publisher, you have total control of how the book looks, cover art, font, layout and the title!
- Kate used Lightning Source ([www.lightningsource.com](http://www.lightningsource.com)). At that time—in 2003—her cost per 182-page book was \$5.34.
- There will also be a shipping and handling charge – you must calculate this in. S&H can amount to quite a bit even if using ground shipping. Don't suggest printing in China.
- It is wise to include a book order form at the back of the book. This lets people contact you.

- ISBN number: [www.isbn.org](http://www.isbn.org). This website will give you everything you need. In 2003 the cost was \$275 for a minimum of 10 ISBN numbers. Kate doesn't believe it has changed much since then. When you send in your application, send in registered, return receipt. This will give you a set of 10 ISBN's. You must send a pdf of your book to the Library of Congress for copyrighting - which is a whole other thing which includes an application and separate fee. Mail registered return receipt. Whatever the date is on that receipt is actually the date your book is copyrighted (this is because of the extensive backlog of submissions).
- You will only need to think about UPC codes - self-adhesive stickers to place over the ISBN) should you decide to sell in other market venues (other than book stores) i.e. your local market, Target, etc.
- A note about a possible resource, Beyond Words. Kate talked to Cindy Nichols at that company, and Cindy said that although they have a "no unsolicited manuscript" policy, everything they get is actually read, no matter if it has already been self-published. They have picked up self-published works and republished them under their name. (You never know!) Cynthia Black is the current acquisitions editor. ([www.beyondwords.com](http://www.beyondwords.com).) Always make sure the acquisitions editor is still employed at the publishing company BEFORE sending him/her your work!
- Bowker Publishing Services, Books in Print. [www.booksinprint.com](http://www.booksinprint.com). You definitely want to be listed here but be AWARE of the timing—Kate missed out on getting into this because she was too late. By going to this website, you can also get links to a printers' list. Very useful.
- Bookmasters—possible company to look into. They can do layout design, artwork, etc.
- Print Media Books, Anaheim. Kate interviewed this company and they seemed like a possible good fit. Be sure to have them send you a copy to make sure they produce high-quality books. In fact, do this with every company you interview.
- Caxton Printers, here in Caldwell.
- Gary Richardson is a book designer living in Boise. 208-336-2128. [garyerichardson@gmail.com](mailto:garyerichardson@gmail.com)
- Lori(sp?) Roberts. Booklore Publications. 208-342-7929.
- Lulu.com. \$6.53 for 6x9, 100-page B&W paperback.

- \*\*The Complete Guide to Self-Publishing, by Tom and Marilyn Ross. This is a great resource, and something you should pick up as soon as you begin to seriously think about self-publishing.
- \*\*Publicize Your Book, by Jacqueline Deval.
- A Guide to Book Printing and Self-Publishing. Gorham Printing, Centralia, WA. 360-273-0970.
- Distribution—Lightning Source (Kate’s printer) will put it on Amazon.com. Kate recommends that you go to Amazon.com to find out all you need to know. [www.writersweekly.com/amazon.php](http://www.writersweekly.com/amazon.php) is one of several sites.
- Barnes & Noble will handle POD (Print on Demand) books if a customer comes in and orders a book. They will order the book and then when it comes in, call the customer for pick up. However, they will not carry or shelve the books for you – even when they invite you to be a member on the Idaho author panel they do once a year. You carry your books in, they take 40% of sales, and you leave with whatever you didn’t sell. In about four months you will receive a check from them. In other words they handle the sales for you.
- Ways to market your book: Use the two books (\*\*) she mentioned above; carry books in your car at all times; endorsements sell your books; put a review on your website (see [www.thegreenvelvetjournals.com](http://www.thegreenvelvetjournals.com)).

Kate graciously gave us her phone and e-mail address, in case we have further questions:

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