

THE POWER OF PUBLICITY

The Holiday Season Paid Off in a Big Way for *Great Houses of Summit Avenue and the Hill District*

When Karen Melvin finished work on her latest book, *Great Houses of Summit Avenue and the Hill District*, she knew she had a winner on her hands. The book beautifully catalogs 24 of the homes along St. Paul's historic Summit Avenue and in the Hill District, including the home of Prairie Home Companion host Garrison Keillor, who wrote the foreword.

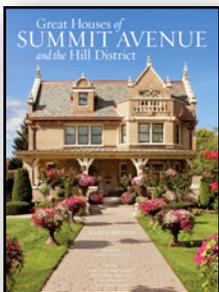
Melvin made several appearances throughout the State of Minnesota in December to promote the book. She signed books at Barnes and Noble stores in St. Cloud, Duluth, Minnetonka, St. Paul and Roseville; and at Common Good Books, Bibelot Gifts, Traditions Home and Subtext Books in St. Paul.



Above: Karen Melvin (standing) poses with the authors of *Great Houses of Summit Avenue and the Hill District*. (L-R sitting) Paul Clifford Larson, Bette Jones Hammel, Melinda Nelson & Dave Kenney.

She also participated in an annual holiday tradition along St. Paul's Summit Avenue. She led tours of the Griggs Mansion, one of the homes profiled in her book, during a preview event to the Christmas Buffet at the University Club down the street.

Copies of *Great Houses of Summit Avenue and the Hill District* are still available at stores throughout Minnesota, or can be purchased online at www.SummitAvenueBook.com.



COMING UP IN JANUARY

An article about Polly Norman's new book, *Dances Through Glass*, appears in [MN Women's Press Magazine's](http://MNWomen's Press Magazine) January issue.

Carol Whitaker, author, *Ridiculously Happy! The Secret to Manifesting the Life & Body of Your Dreams*, will be interviewed on radio stations in Atlanta and Hartford on Jan. 2nd, by a radio station in Boston on Jan. 3rd and a radio station in Omaha, Neb., on Jan. 6th.

Craig MacIntosh, author, *The Last Lightning*, will be at the Great River Regional Library in Upsala, Minn. on Jan. 10th.

Wynn Johnson, author, *An Angel is Born: A Family's Story*, will be interviewed on WRGT-TV in Dayton, Ohio on Jan. 20th.

Michelle Goldberger, Program Director for the COR Retreat, will be interviewed on radio stations in Boston, Hartford and Raleigh during Sugar Awareness Week, which is Jan. 20 – 24.

Doug Cornelius, author, *Good News: I Failed: A Story of Inventing in Minnesota*, will be at the Countryside Elementary School Science Fair in Edina, Minn., the evening of Jan. 23rd.

Christie Fournier, author, *Gypsy Nights* and *Gypsy City*, will sign books at the B&N in Apple Valley, Minn., on Jan. 25, beginning at 2 p.m.

Broadway Star Christine Fournier Signed Copies of Her Novels at The Bookcase of Wayzata on Dec. 22nd



Above: Retired Broadway dancer Christine Fournier discusses the role her background has played in the writing of her books, *Gypsy Nights* and *Gypsy City*.

Retired Broadway dancer Christine Fournier, who was in “How to Succeed in Business without Really Trying,” “Sweet Charity” and “West Side Story” back in the ‘60s, is now writing about her life on the road.

On Dec. 22nd, she appeared at The Bookcase of Wayzata in Wayzata, Minn. She shared her life story and signed copies of *Gypsy Nights* and *Gypsy City*, the novels she wrote that are based on her career.

More information about the book series can be found at www.BroadwayGypsyLives.com.

Twin Cities College Professor's Novel Wins National Recognition in December

The national spotlight has fallen on Minnesota author, Scott Dominic Carpenter, whose novel, *Theory of Reminders* was named to [Kirkus Reviews' Best Books of 2013](#) in December. Applauding the work for its “fully realized characters” and “remarkable fluency of language,” the national trade reviewer asserts that Carpenter’s “extensive comprehension of French culture and history make this literary novel a stellar achievement.” The book is one of a small number to receive the distinction.

Set in France, *Theory of Reminders* follows an American psychiatrist who seeks to unravel the story of his daughter’s disappearance more than a decade ago. Carpenter, who teaches French at Carleton College and has spent several years in France, asserts that there is also a local connection to the story. “I moved back to Minnesota at the time of Jacob Wetterling’s disappearance,” he said, referring to the 1989 disappearance of the St. Joseph, Minn., boy. “My time here has been marked by that inexhaustible saga, which has for years oscillated between hope and despair.” Although the story he tells in *Theory of Reminders* is not based on any actual case, Carpenter sought to portray the effect of unresolved trauma.



Apparently he has succeeded. Called “riveting” by Library Journal and named a Midwest Connections “Pick” by the Midwest Independent Bookseller’s Association, *Theory of Reminders* makes for a compelling read. As John Lehman of Rosebud Reviews wrote, “Nothing I have read in the last three or four years even comes close.”

Carpenter is donating a portion of proceeds from book sales to the Jacob Wetterling Resource Center.

Stories about COR Retreat run in Print and on the Radio in December

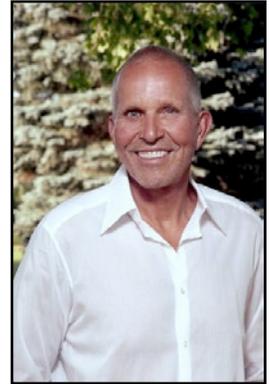


Every year around this time, people who struggle with their weight face an enormous challenge: How to avoid the Christmas cookies and other treats that are plentiful.

Michelle Goldberger, Program Director at COR Retreat, a food addiction recovery program in Wayzata, Minn., shared her story in hopes of helping her fellow food addicts avoid the temptations that are plentiful this time of year.

The story, [What Do You Mean You Don't Want A Christmas Cookie?](#) is on the front page of the Essential Wellness website's December/January issue

Also in December, COR Retreat founder Burt Nordstrand was interviewed on [WCCO Radio](#) in Minneapolis. He talked about the struggles food addicts face during the holiday season.



Author of *The Dragon in the Christmas Tree* Takes Advantage of Holiday Tie-in to Get His Book Attention



Move over Frosty and Rudolph! Sparky the dragon is now a cherished Christmas character in the Twin Cities.

Patrick Ledray, author of Sparky's story, *The Dragon in the Christmas Tree*, read his book to students at the Visitation School in Mendota Heights, Minn., on Fri., Dec. 6th and The New Life Academy in Woodbury, Minn., on Dec. 18th. On Dec. 24 he sold books in the lobby of the Lutsen Resort on Lake Superior in Northern Minnesota.

The delightful holiday tale begins as the tiny, invisible creature follows two young children into their home on a cold winter day. He tries to hide in the Christmas tree. It isn't long, however, before Sparky wakes up, trapped inside.

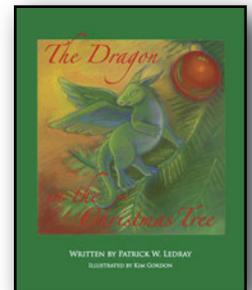
Before the dragon can figure out what to do, the children discover the tiny creature. How they react is where the most important message in the beautifully

illustrated book is captured.

The author is Minnesota's Honorary Counsel for Romania and the story came to him while he was visiting one of the many castles in that country.

This book makes a great gift for children of all ages, as it celebrates kids' curiosity and encourages them to think creatively.

To learn more, log on to www.RomanianDragons.com.



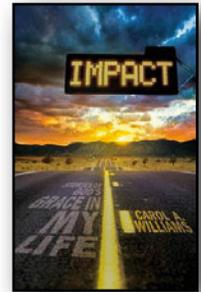
Publicity Campaign Kicks Off for *Impact: Stories of God's Grace in My Life*

Carol Williams, author of the new inspirational reader, *Impact: Stories of God's Grace in My Life*, was interviewed on [John Herrick's radio show](#) on Chisolm Trail Broadcasting in Enid, Oklahoma on Dec. 6th.

She was also interviewed on the [KGWA Morning News](#) in Enid, on Dec. 12th.

Her book is a collection of stories about the experiences she has had in which God made his voice heard. Williams is donating all proceeds from book sales to International Impact Ministries, a group she and her husband, Kyle, founded to do mission service in America and abroad.

Books are available for purchase online at [Amazon.com](#) and [BarnesandNoble.com](#).



Article About *Eye of the Storm* Appears in The Northeaster

An article about Aimee Kuzenski's new book, *Eye of the Storm*, was published in the Dec. 4th issue of the [Northeaster](#) newspaper in Minneapolis. The article appears on pages 6 & 7.

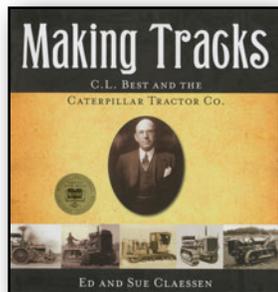
Eye of the Storm is a science fiction novel where gods and mortals meet, and the apocalypse follows. The story begins with the main character, the god War, bent on revenge after an ancient enemy tricks him into destroying his human identity. He takes drastic steps to protect his empire, seizing the body of a young West Point lieutenant named Camilla Sykes.

Learn more at [www.akuzenski.com](#).



ALSO IN DECEMBER ...

Ed and Sue Claessen, authors, *Making Tracks: C.L. Best and the Caterpillar Tractor Co.* signed books at the Barnes & Noble Booksellers store in Apple Valley, Minn., on Dec. 7th.



Gordon Fredrickson, author of the Farm Country series of books, appeared at Christmas in the Village at the Dakota City Heritage Village on Dec. 13, 14 & 15, Cedar Creek Elementary in Cedar, Minn., on Dec. 16, and Chatfield Elementary in Belle Plain, Minn., on Dec. 20.



Marilyn Jax sold copies of her award-winning mysteries, *Sapphire Trails*, *Road to Omalos* and *The Find*, at the holiday show held at St. Andrew's Lutheran Church in Mahtomedi, Minn., the weekend of Dec. 6 & 7.



Ricky Lee, author, "Pappy & Me," signed books at a Starbucks in Plymouth, Minn. on Dec. 23rd and 30th.

This Month's Publicity Tips Article - How to Go About Securing Reviews that Can Help Sell Books

Whether your book is still several months away from being published, or has been available for sometime now, one of the best ways to get the word out is to secure reviews, and they are available in more places than you may think.



In addition to the big three—Publisher's Weekly, Kirkus Reviews and Library Journal—you can also seek reviews from your hometown newspaper, bloggers, friends and Amazon.com.

Here are some tips for how to go about securing those all important reviews:

1) The major review magazines.

If you still have several months to go before publication, it would be worth your time to go after some pre-publication reviews. Publisher's Weekly, Kirkus Reviews and Library Journal all accept titles from both traditional and small presses. However, they ask to receive books a minimum of three months before the publication date.

If you think your book has merit and is competitive with those being put out by the major publishers, it's worth a shot to send it in and see what happens. You can get galley copies inexpensively printed up through Amazon's Create Space if your publisher is unable to supply them for you.

Be sure to follow the directions on each publication's website to make sure you provide all the information they need.

2) Hometown newspapers.

Another place to seek out a review is from the book editor at your local hometown newspaper. Papers in the larger cities typically have someone assigned to this beat full-time. The smaller papers may assign the task to feature reporters or freelancers. Just like with the major reviewers, it's a good idea to get a copy of your book to the newspaper editor several months before your publication date so they will have time to get a

read scheduled and a story done on or around your release date.

3) Industry experts and known reviewers.

Who do you think would be most interested in reading your book? Identify some possible reviewers and ask them if they would be willing to read your book, then let you know what they think. For example, if you have written a novel set during World War II, perhaps a local college professor would be willing to read it and offer an opinion. If that person likes your book, his or her praise could be worth its weight in gold.

Ideally, the reviewer would get a copy of the manuscript well before your launch date and the online review that gets posted will help create buzz around the launch.

4) Amazon.com reviewers.

Another place to seek reviews is on Amazon.com. Do a search for books that are similar to yours and read the reviews. When you find someone you think might be interested in your book, look at their profile to see if the person's contact information is available.

If it is, contact the person and praise him or her on the review written, and ask if he or she would like to receive a complimentary copy of your book.

5) Ask friends and family for reviews.

When you're getting ready to release a new book is not the time to be shy. You need all the support you can get to spread the word. Ask everyone you know to review your book and post their reviews online. Friends and family members are the easiest people to ask. Co-workers and other acquaintances come in a close second.

6) Paid reviews.

If you're not having any luck getting reviews done for free, there are several companies that offer reviews you can pay to receive. They can be costly though. Blue Ink Review charges a minimum of \$395 for a review. Clarion Reviews start at \$335 and paid Kirkus Reviews are available for \$425.

Now that you know how to go about securing reviews, the next step is to make them work for you. Start by gathering the reviews together in one place—your website is a good home for them. Then, every time you send out communication related to your book, include the text from a

review or two in your letter. Some authors will actually send out an entire page of reviews to show the person receiving the letter how well received the book has been.

Next month's publicity tips article:

How to Get the Media Interested in Interviewing You

About Rachel M. Anderson

Rachel M. Anderson has more than 20 years of communications experience across a wide range of disciplines. She has worked as a publicist, marketing and public relations consultant, marketing and direct response copywriter and as a journalist (television newscast producer, television newscast reporter and newspaper reporter).

The benefit of hiring a PR person with media experience

PR people with journalism experience are highly creative, calm in crisis situations and knowledgeable on many topics. Plus, they fully understand the needs of the media and are able to pitch stories in a natural way since they once had to offer story ideas to editors and/or producers every day in the newsroom.



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MEDIA OPPORTUNITIES

If your book is relatable to any of the following events observed in January or February, let us know! RMA Publicity may be able to help you secure publicity in the print, broadcast and/or online media for your book.

January is...

Celebration of Life Month
Get a Life Balanced Month
Get Organized Month
International Creativity Month
National Mentoring Month
Self-Love Month
Teen Driving Awareness Month

Specific dates observed in January...

Diet Resolution Week – Jan. 1 – 7.
National Cut Your Energy Costs Day – Jan. 10
Get to Know Your Customer Day – Jan. 16
Kid Inventors Day – Jan. 17
Healthy Weight Week – Jan. 19 – 25
Sugar Awareness Week – Jan. 20 – 24

February is...

American Heart Month
International Expect Success Month
Library Lovers' Month
National Time Management Month
Youth Leadership Month
I Love to Read Month

Specific dates observed in February...

Children's Authors and Illustrators Week – Feb 2 – 8
Random Acts of Kindness Week – Feb. 10 – 16
National Donor Day – Feb. 14
National Have-a-Heart Day – Feb. 14
National Eating Disorders Awareness Week – Feb. 23 – Mar. 1

* Source: 2013 Chase's Calendar of Events