

Marketing Your Work

An Interview with Diana Tuorto

Diana Tuorto is a WWW member based in Madison, NJ. She works with Weichert Commercial Brokerage as an Executive Assistant & Marketing Specialist, when she is not writing, publishing and promoting her work. You may have seen announcements on her book signings and readings. Recently, we asked Diana about her latest novel and about how effective she believes her marketing efforts have been.

WN: How excited are you about releasing your first children's novel, *My Desert Sun*?

DT: Very! I began writing the book when I was twelve, back in 1992, so it's definitely time. I hope both children and adults read the book and it makes them want to learn more. Both wild & domesticated horses, and other animals, need our attention and help. Another goal that I had when self-publishing was to raise funds for horse rescues all over the country, and I'm so pleased when I'm able send them a donation each time I sell a book.



Diana Tuorto

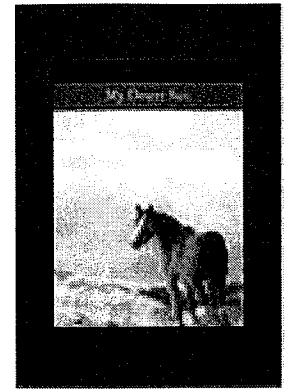
I'm also excited to host another book release party! The Tapestry Café in Netcong (6A Route 183 South, across from the theater) has offered to hold the event on Saturday, September 9th from 1-5 p.m. I'm looking forward to it—there will be live music, a great prize raffle, and free arts & crafts for children. There's no cover charge or food/drink minimum, and I hope to see a lot of Women Who Write members there!

WN: What did you learn about marketing your previously released book, *Let the Horses Die* and how will you use that knowledge to promote *My Desert Sun*?

DT: You simply have to get out there and be heard. With *Let the Horses Die*, I attended numerous open mic readings, all over New Jersey and Pennsylvania, averaging 2-3 a week at first. From there, I was able to book several featured readings. I also spent a lot of time promoting my readings through the internet and posting flyers, and gained more attendees and readers that way. I've sold 95% of my books directly through book signings and featured readings—since March, I've sold over 450 copies of *Let the Horses Die*, which still doesn't seem real.

My Desert Sun has been interesting to promote—since it's a children's book, I can't promote it as much through open mics, but I am finding a huge audience among wild horse advocates and horse rescues over the internet. I'm finding

the audience for *My Desert Sun* less through people I've met, and particularly more among those living outside of New Jersey—I was recently invited to book signings in both Nebraska and Wyoming! I also found out that a group of readers in Canada recently ordered my book, and I have no idea how they first found me! I'm also happy to see that as many adults are interested in picking up the book as children. Since last month, the book has sold over 100 copies, so it's off to a good start.



My Desert Sun Book Cover

The women in Women Who Write have been a tremendous support—not only with buying books, but also in coming out to attend events. If it hadn't attended the WWW Fall 2005 reading, I would have never self-published *Let the Horses Die* or *My Desert Sun*—after I read two poems at that event, a number of women approached me and asked, "Where's your book? I want to buy it!" I was so grateful, and surprised! It was the best encouragement I've received—it brought me out of a 3 year hiatus where I hadn't written at all.

WN: How important is it to get your name and work published in various media?

DT: It's critical to the process. In addition to promoting my books, I try to get exposure for my work in newspapers and other publications. This September, two of my poems "Let the Horses Die" and "True" will be featured in *Mobius*, a New York-based literary magazine. I also had a Letter to the Editor about the racehorse Barbaro published in *The Bucks County Herald* and *The Philadelphia Inquirer*. Shortly afterwards, a feature article on my rescue cat, Norm, appeared in the *Petsburgh Press*, a newspaper published by Animal Friends, a Pittsburgh-based shelter. By having a strong writing portfolio, readers and industry people will begin to take you more seriously. It's just as important as stepping out there in the first place.

For more information, please contact Diana at lunar_aradia@yahoo.com, or visit her website at <http://cayuse.8k.com>.