

Books In Sync Interview Spotlight With Author Alberta H. Sequeira

Multi-Author Alberta H. Sequeira Resides In Rochester, MA, USA.

Tell us what makes you proud to be a writer from Rochester, MA? Anyone who has accomplished anything in life should be proud of themselves. Being a writer gives me the opportunity to reach people all over the world with my memoirs. I feel there is a story to share with each book; from spirituality, relationships in families to alcohol abuse. There are many different ways to make contact with readers besides my books. I'm starting to enjoy writing letters to editors, articles for magazines or newspapers. My voice can be heard in any news event in town or across the seas.

What or who inspired you to become a writer? It wasn't until my father died from cancer that my writing started. I wanted to leave his military status as a One Star Brigadier General in the Army to our family from my children down to grandchildren and any future generations.

I'd have to say that Pat Perry, an author friend, inspired me when she had invited me to a writer's group at Baker Books in Dartmouth, Massachusetts. We met by choosing the same editor for our books on www.prostogo.com. The editor informed us both of being neighbors a town away and pulled us together. Jerine Watson was from the State of Washington.

The writers in the group taught me better ways of writing with showing more emotions in my writing than telling. They led me down the path of knowledge with editing, publishing, promoting and marketing.

When did you begin writing with the intention of becoming published? In 1993, I got laid off from my management position, and I thought my world ended. I cried for months until the reality of not having a job faced me. There were only three more years left to my retirement. Who was going to hire me?

Finally I wiped my tears, pulled my manuscript out, blew off the dust, and started to take my writing more seriously. My father had died in 1990, and I had started to write in 1992. In 1998, I went on a ten day pilgrimage to Medjugorje in Bosnia and added it to my book. It wasn't until 2006 that A Healing Heart was published by PublishAmerica.

Did your environment or upbringing play a major role in your writing and why? It was the loss of my father that started me on the road of writing. When he was dying he said to me, "Alberta, it's sad that I can't leave my childhood information to my family."

His mother died of Leukemia when he was two years old, and he was an only child. I don't know where his father went, but he did remarry. Dad's grandmother brought him up until she died. By then, my father was seventeen, and a year later, he went into the National Guard. The rest is history because his life revolved around the Army until he retired in 1953 as a One Star Brigadier General.

Because he had searched for years for answers, I wanted to leave his life story to my family; his laughter, his patience, military status, his climb to CEO and President of Pyrotec in Hingham, MA, his love of family, and God blessing me with him for forty-nine years. That's how A Healing Heart was published.

Do you come up with your title (s) before or after you write the manuscript (s)?

They came to me before. At first, I had other names for A Healing Heart. I was excited with the first title because it fit the whole story. I'll remember it, I said as the nightlight went off. In the morning, I had absolutely no idea what the name was, and to this day, I still don't know. I chose another one and PublishAmerica said someone else had one close to that title, so I had to change it. I'm not going to reveal the title because I'm using it in the next book. Yes, I'll remember it!

Someone Stop This Merry-Go-Round; An Alcoholic Family in Crisis came from hearing the remark at Al-Anon meetings and in my counseling with my husband. They explained an alcoholic family keeps the merry-go-round going by enabling the abuser, not making demands on them with their self-destructive behavior, not following through on threats to leave or refusing to put up with abuse. We were told someone had to get off the merry-go-round to stop the same continuous actions and defending the abuser.

I felt deeply that other families living in an alcoholic atmosphere would know what the title meant as soon as they saw it.

The sequel coming soon Please, God, Not Two; This Killer Called Alcoholism was picked from the ungodly pain from losing my daughter, Lori, to the same demon. I was trying to make one book with this title, but it got to be around six-hundred pages.

I divided the first into my teen years, my marriage, having my daughters, Richie turning to alcohol and his death. Please, God, Not Two is a continuation of our lives and the years watching Lori go down the same path as her father.

Tell us why you write the genre (s) that you write? I wrote three memoirs only because I felt strongly that I had a story to share from the pain of losing a parent, husband and daughter. Alcoholism is a worldwide, incurable disease. So many families are suffering from it. My last book and sequel are written with an honest open heart from our lives behind closed doors on what happened to all of us with our losses.

I think my next book will be fiction. I want to find something I can have fun with in making up characters and go with my wild imagination with life.

Tell us your most rewarding experience while in the writing process? My rewarding experiences were all at the time of my speaking engagements. It was extremely painful going to the Gosnold Rehabilitation Center in Falmouth, MA one year after Lori's death. She had been a patient there twice.

I broke down in the counselor's building thinking I wasn't going to be able to handle the talk. The counselor took me to the Emerson House where the women were, and my knees went weak. I could see Lori in every room, and could picture her coming down the spiral stairs with a smile saying, "Hi, Mom."

It was very emotional and many tears were shed including mine. The genuine hugs from the patients showing their gratitude from my visits are my rewards. My talk at the Providence Marriott Hotel in Providence, Rhode Island to one-hundred and fifty women and a priest was another reward.

They also came up to me with hugs relating mostly to *A Healing Heart*. *Someone Stop This Merry-Go-Round* was not released yet.

Bringing peace, hope and love to any individual in any circumstances where they feel lost, is beyond words.

Tell us your most negative experience while in the writing process? Not knowing where to turn with questions during the writing. When my book was completed, it was as if I stood in a middle of a room not knowing what steps to take next. That's where the writer's group came to my aid. I can't say enough about them. They may not be the answer to everything with your publishing, but they help you avoid their mistakes.

Tell us your most rewarding experience in your publishing journey? Nothing was more rewarding than seeing my books in print with my name on them. Years of writing and editing were worth the hard work. I must have carried them around in my hands for hours. I studied every page in amazement, *I did it!*

Tell us your most negative experience in your publishing journey? My negative experience was after writing *A Healing Heart*. I had more roadblocks with my own publisher. The Medjugorje Magazine, not only wanted to feature me in their March issue with my life story, but wanted to buy my book for their bookstore and advertise it in their magazine. What a chance of a life time!

The magazine was given unbelievable shipping charges; the book went from \$19.95 during their review to \$24.95 for a soft cover, and the publisher let the book sale disappear without finding a way to work with the magazine.

Two International military distributors wanted to review *A Healing Heart*, and again, the publisher would not work with them. In two years, they have not closed a sale I have sent their way.

What one positive piece of advice would you give to other authors? My advice is not to get hooked into a contract; mine is seven years. Read every line carefully and pay a lawyer to read it. I would never go with a publisher again who has contracts unless it was a very well known traditional publisher.

POD (Print on Demand) Publishers might offer free publishing, but the expenses are very costly in purchasing your own books and shipping.

If you have a platform with speaking engagements, self-publishing might be the way to go. You can always look for an agent if the book takes off. I went this route with Infinity Publishing with my second memoir. It cost me money, but the multiple benefits are worth it.

Don't give up your dream of getting published. Don't get depressed with the rejection letters. Keep going forward. Bond with other authors; go to chat rooms.

I heard Steven Harrison on one of his telephone seminars explain the difference between a rich and poor author.

A poor author depends mainly on getting their books on the shelves of bookstores and doing book signings. A rich author finds out what other talents they have; can you do speaking engagements, give a workshop, or join another author with a seminar. Explore your inner talents. You have to be seen to get known.

Who Is Your Favorite Author? That's hard for me to answer because it isn't often that I can relax with a good book. When the sequel is completed, I hope to accomplish this. I don't have a favorite. When I buy a book, it's mostly from a topic I need to study, more than the author.

When I do read, I like an author who can get my attention in the first few pages. I'm bored with a book that drags out with no excitement or emotions; pull me into the characters.

It's a shame because there are thousands of unknown author who have to be wonderful writers. We all wait for that big break to get known, never mind famous.

What Format (s) are your books in: Print Only.....E-Book Only....or Both? My books are print only. I thought of E-Books but have not taken the time to see how to have them done. I looked into audio because I had four request for them, and the prices were shocking.

Current Book (s)?

A Healing Heart; A Spiritual Renewal (2006; PublishAmerica)
Someone Stop This Merry-Go-Round; An Alcoholic Family in Crisis (June 2009 Infinity Publishing).

What special projects are you working on now and what books do we have to look forward to in the future?

COMING SOON:

Please, God, Not Two; This Killer Called Alcoholism (the sequel to Someone Stop This Merry-Go-Round)

I'm trying to connect to news alerts on Google with alcoholic abuse to see if I can work with other organizations or introduce my book.

Christian locations to do more talks.

I'm waiting for scheduled interviews a second time while my books are being reviewed by:

- * Tony Lopes from the WVBF Taunton Radio Taunton, MA
- * Pete Braley from the WBFM Radio Show in Fairhaven, MA
- * Paul Lazarovich from the Cranberry Country Journal Cable TV show in Middleboro, MA.
- * Multiple book signings
- * Speaking Engagement December 12, 2009 at the Boston Chapter of the Magnificat, a Woman's Catholic Ministry

I've joined forces with five other published authors on Authors Without Borders www.awb6.com. We offer many different services to bookstores, libraries, and schools.

Is there anything else that you would like to share with us?

I'm excited getting on Books In Sync website. Hopefully, I can grow and bring readers and other authors to the site. I would be thrilled if readers posted reviews on Barnes and Noble and the Amazon site, after reading any of my books.

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