



# LAUGHING BEAR 139 NEWSLETTER

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## The Surviving Small Press: Preteen Publishers

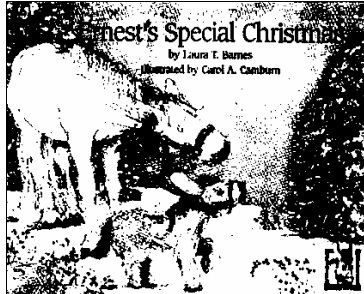
A newsletter publisher contacted me concerned that the circulation for her 3 1/2 year old publication has not been growing at the pace she would like. This is in spite of plenty of recent publicity including a story in the local newspaper and being featured on a popular web site concerning her subject. She was looking for advice on reaching her niche market. She has a well-designed web site that is getting impressive traffic and which is generating lots of interest, but few new subscription sales.

That would seem a routine request for advice except that it comes from a 13 year old girl who has been publishing her newsletter since she was 9 1/2.

Similarly, an 11 year old boy contacted me for advice on producing and marketing a magazine he is starting up. He even has his own photographer. And the examples of publishers in the preteen age range keep coming in.

It is surprising that there are publishers this young at all. It is telling that they are more focused on the practicalities of their newsletter or magazine than a lot of their older colleagues. Requests I get from teens and adults seem to focus on finding funding, preferably from a venture capitalist or bank loan, neither of which are realistic,

*(Continued on page 2.)*



## Ernest's Special Christmas

by Laura T. Barnes, Illustrated by Carol A. Camburn  
Barnesyard Books, Inc., PO Box 254, Sergeantsville, NJ 08557; 36 pp, 10" x 8", hardbound, \$17.95; [www.barnesyardbooks.com](http://www.barnesyardbooks.com)

Ernest, the heartwarming hero of the series of children's books of which this is the fifth installment, is a miniature donkey who lives on a farm with his barnyard friends.

In this story, it is Christmas Eve and the animals are settling in their stalls in anticipation of the celebration to come. Ernest notices that Chester, the retired draft horse, is missing.

Ernest braves the snow to find his friend, then gathers the other animals to help him save Chester, demonstrating the value and comfort of friendship.

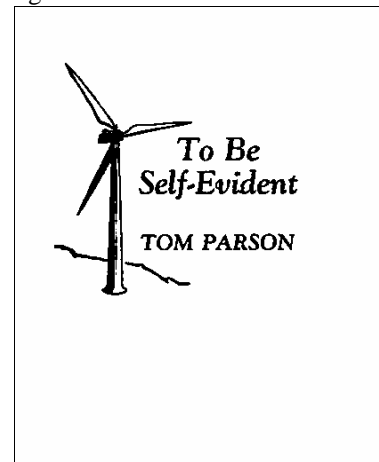
Laura T. Barnes and her husband live on their farm, Barnesyard, with the real Ernest and assortment of adopted animals including homeless horses and miniature donkeys.

Ernest's Special Christmas is beautifully illustrated, charmingly written, and a book that would be treasured by any child.

## To Be Self-Evident

by Tom Parson  
Wood Works, 4131 Greenwood N., Seattle, WA 98103; 78 pp, 6" x 7", printed on letterpress and hand bound in signatures, \$16.00; [www.woodworkspress.com](http://www.woodworkspress.com)

Tom Parson is probably best known as a Denver letterpress printer and editor of Now It's Up to You Productions ([www.froglok.com/typetom](http://www.froglok.com/typetom)). He is also an accomplished poet and literary organizer and advocate.



This collection of sonnets captures the warmth and sensitivity of the poet as he rides a bus, contemplates nature and a pot of soup. He also strikes wryly at political targets, reminding us that there is much more to this poet than some sort of New Age serenity.

This is a man who has been involved in the struggle to make the world better, or at least fair. And he has seen the evolution from the 1960's into this new century when we need to be reminded that values are not always measured in coin.

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## Pre-Teen Publishers

(continued)

and how they can get someone to sell advertising for them than on what they want to publish or how they intend to do it. The impression is that they like to fantasize and talk about their publishing project, whereas the children just jump in and do it, asking for advice as they need it.

A headstrong child will write out copies of their book or magazine longhand if that's the only way they can make them. As they gain resources, their publications may become more sophisticated, but they don't put off publishing just because they lack something they imagine they need to get started. It is more important to them put whatever it is they are inspired to do into print than it is to do it in a particular way.

Obviously adults have responsibilities that get in the way of impetuously jumping into projects, especially those that could affect their livelihood. Publishing a book or magazine is an expensive and time consuming undertaking. It is necessary to do some serious planning before getting started.

Still, from the mail I get, most adults who get the itch to publish do so because of the money they imagine they can make or because they think they'll have access to famous people. They are not particularly interested in the process or business of publishing.

By and large, they want to start a magazine, usually a generic entertainment one. If they get specific at all, it is to say they want to do something like *People*. Usually, however, they won't give any specifics at all for fear someone will steal their concept.

That's all fine and dandy. But being adult, and not wanting to jump right in like a child, they should be doing market research. How many magazines are already

in this market? How many of those are profitable? Is there a niche in the market that is not being exploited? Is there something they have to offer that no one else does?

But, alas, they have been daydreaming about this enterprise for awhile and immediately want to know how much it is going to cost and how to get started.

I write back and say it is going to cost more than you can possibly imagine and I strongly suggest you start out by taking a job or internship on a working magazine similar to the one you want to publish so you don't have to spend your own money to learn the business.

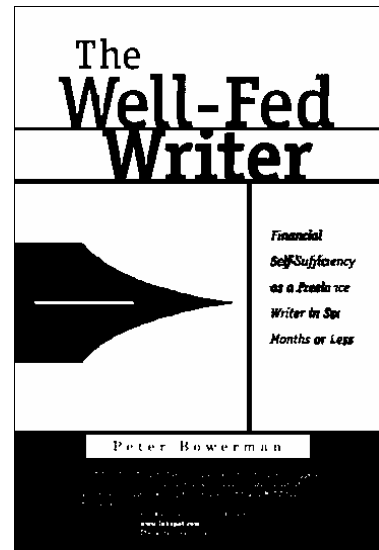
Sometimes they write back later and say they did get on with a magazine. Sometimes they agree they haven't researched the project well enough and will look into it more. Never have I seen a non-literary magazine that was published by one of those people.

The moral to this story is that there are two kinds of people who **successfully** publish a magazine, or book for that matter.

One is the person represented by the childlike model here. They publish because they are driven; either they have something to say or they are fascinated by the process. They want to do this because it fulfills a need for them. Making money off it is a secondary concern.

The second type of person approaches publishing as a business. That doesn't mean they don't care about what they are publishing or the process of doing so, but they want to make a living at it. Because of that, they take the adult route of learning the business, identifying their market, and handling advertising, distribution and finances with a plan.

Making a living at publishing is much more than having a great idea and putting it into print. In fact, that is the easy part. 🐻



## The Well-Fed Writer

By Peter Bowerman

Fanove Publishing, 3713 Stonewall Circle, Atlanta, GA 30339; 282 pp, 6" x 9", trade paperback, \$19.95; [www.wellfedwriter.com](http://www.wellfedwriter.com)

Dozens of books and magazines are on the market to tell you how to make a living off creative writing. That is not practical if you are selling articles for a few hundred bucks apiece. Even at \$1,000 an article, you'd have to sell at least three a month unless you're living with your parents.

There is a lot of other kinds of freelance work available that is more profitable than just articles, stories and books, and those are the markets covered in this book.

Some of these jobs include writing technical manuals, copy for brochures and advertisements, scripts for training videos, and business documents of all kinds.

That kind of writing is not particularly sexy, but there is a high demand from small to large businesses, and the \$75 an hour Bowerman cites is on the low end of rates from my experience.

If you want to make a living writing as a freelancer, this is the book for you. You can still do those stories and articles in your free time.

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## Cooking Lighthouse Style: Favorite Recipes From Coast To Coast

by Frederick Stonehouse  
Avery Color Studios, Inc., 511 D Ave., Gwinn, MI 49841; 240 pp, 7" x 10", trade paperback, \$16.95

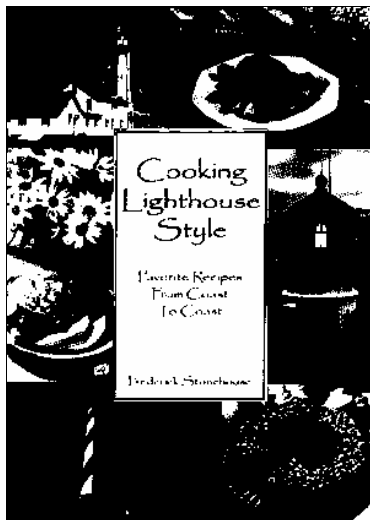
Lighthouses are fascinating. They stand like ghosts in the fog, guiding ships home and away from danger, but they are also lonely and mysterious, set out on the craggiest, most uninviting points of land.

That said, lighthouses are also romantic reminders of times gone by. Each one is unique and has its own story.

This fascinating book features over 100 lighthouses from all over the United States. On each left hand page is a lighthouse with its picture and some of its history, and on the facing page is a recipe from that part of the world.

You'll find recipes like Maine blueberry cake from the Spring Point Ledge Lighthouse in Maine to chicken fried steak from the Matagorda Island Lighthouse in Texas to pan fried Willapa Bay oysters from the Cape Disappointment Lighthouse in Washington.

*Cooking Lighthouse Style* is a deliciously unique way to discover the tastes and bring home the ambience of coastal America.

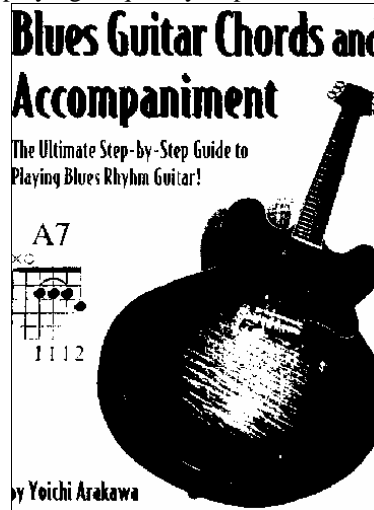


## Blues Guitar Chords and Accompaniment

by Yoichi Arakawa  
Six Strings Music Publishing, PO Box 7718, Torrance, CA 90504; 128 pp; 9" x 12", trade paperback, \$15.95; www.sixstringsmusicpub.com

Is the beginning guitar student in your life sick to death of picking out "Twinkle Twinkle Little Star" note by note? Are you sick of listening to it?

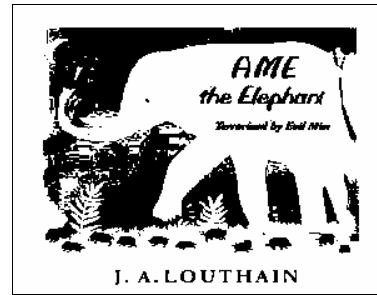
Yoichi Arakawa's instruction books are manna from heaven for beginning and intermediate guitar players who want to get down to playing as quickly as possible.



This wonderful book starts with 12-bar blues progressions that teach the chords and rhythm of simple blues. Just knowing how to play a progression like this, you can start playing with other musicians and build confidence.

From there you are taken on a tour of all the tones, textures and techniques that make playing the blues so pleasurable. You'll learn finger style blues, boogie-woogie, shuffle, and other accompaniment styles.

Along the way you'll learn to read music and TAB. You'll learn a lot of music theory. And you'll probably gain a lifelong love for your guitar.



## Ame the Elephant, Terrorized by Evil Mice

by J. A. Louthain, Illustrated by Andrea Eberbach  
Alexie Books, PO Box 3843, Carmel, IN 46082; 56 pp, 8" x 10", trade paperback, \$12.97; www.alexiebooks.com

*Ame the Elephant* is the story of an African elephant who is attacked by evil mice as he sleeps. When he is startled awake, the mice are already scattering to hide amid the good mice. *Ame the Elephant* is also an allegory for the September 11th attacks.

The purpose of this book is to explain what happened on September 11th to children aged 7 to 10. That is obviously a tough task to accomplish without either scaring the children or confusing them.

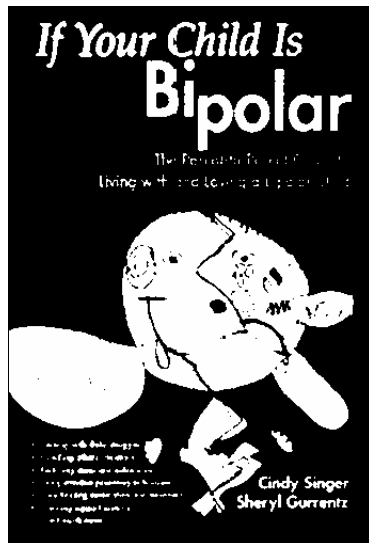
This little book is meant to be read to the children, either by a teacher or parent, so they can ask questions and discuss their feelings.

The reading grade level of this story is higher than the age group it is meant for. This is a relatively long story with some words made up to emulate the animals' language. So it is unlikely a child that age could read the book alone.

The story can also be scary, but the way the animals handle the situation stirs hope and shows how looking at various sides of a problem can bring about the best solution.

Ultimately, I can't imagine a better book to use with children to examine the motivations and reactions of people and governments worldwide concerning the attacks.

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## If Your Child Is Bipolar

by Cindy Singer and Sheryl Gurrentz

Perspective Publishing, 2528 Sleepy Hollow Dr., #A, Glendale, CA 91206; 211 pp, 6" x 9", trade paperback, \$18.95; [www.familyhelp.com](http://www.familyhelp.com)

For a parent of a child with Bipolar Disorder, also known as manic depression, life can be hell. We have a nephew who has been diagnosed with it, and I can't imagine how his mother keeps going.

This book not only presents facts and advice for dealing with the illness, but more importantly lets parents know that others are facing the same problems they are and that there are ways they can improve the situation.

Cindy Singer is the mother of a Bipolar child and Sheryl Gurrentz has a brother with the disorder. They have gathered hundreds of stories from parents and children to illustrate the problems and techniques for dealing with Bipolar children.

This is an exceptional guide for parents in this situation. It is easy for parents to feel like what is happening to their child is their fault, or that they are alone. *If Your Child Is Bipolar* shows that there is hope and support.

## Announcements

- **Copylaw.com** is Attorney Lloyd J. Jassin's legal site for publishers and other arts professionals. The site features lots of valuable information on copyright, trademark, contract, libel and other legal issues. An interesting new article on the site is "Copyright Termination: How Authors (and Their Heirs) Can Recapture Their Pre-1978 Copyrights". Jassin will be moderating a workshop at the Small Press Center ([www.smallpress.org](http://www.smallpress.org)) in New York on January 15th, titled "Getting Published: What Literary Agents and Editors are Looking for in 2004". See the web sites for details.

- **New Magazine Publishers** is a new newsgroup for just who it says. You can find it at [groups.yahoo.com/group/newpublishers](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/newpublishers).

- **Oaktree Systems** (4462 Middle Country Rd, Calverton, NY 11933-1185; 800-726-8163; [www.oaktreesys.com/truth](http://www.oaktreesys.com/truth)) is a full service fulfillment company for magazine and newsletter publishers.

- **Fulco Fulfillment** (30 Broad St., Denville, NJ 07834; 973-627-2427; [www.fulcoinc.com](http://www.fulcoinc.com)) is another full service fulfillment company. Fulco has software that lets you access your data in their database, letting you view account information, run reports, etc. from your PC.

- **Western Publications Association** (823 Rim Crest Dr., Westlake Village, CA 91361; 815-495-1863; [www.wpa-online.org](http://www.wpa-online.org)) is a non-profit, educational group supporting the magazine publishing industry. Their web site offers members information on starting a publication, articles, Q&A with publishing experts, a searchable membership directory, and much more.

- **BF Printing** ([www.bfprinting.com](http://www.bfprinting.com)) offers articles and other information on all aspects of printing on their web site.

- **Lost Addresses.** If this issue has been forwarded from your old address, it is because my hard drive died and so did my latest backup of this mailing list. Fortunately I found one that was about a year old, which is much better than nothing. If I have your address wrong, let me know.

- **Jadis Communications** (6396 Carriage Crossing, Stone Mountain, GA 30087; 770-879-8725; [www.jadisinc.com](http://www.jadisinc.com)) is a full service public relations, publicity and media relations company. They are paid on a performance and project-fee basis. Their "No-Risk P.R." program, for instance, lets you pay only for the interviews that you accept.

- **Bookman Marketing** ([www.bookmanmarketing.com](http://www.bookmanmarketing.com)) offers a wide variety of services for self-publishers, including cover and web site design, editing, distribution, e-mail and direct mail campaigns, press kits, and print advertising.

- **Cambey & West** ([www.cambeywest.com](http://www.cambeywest.com)) is a full service magazine and newsletter fulfillment company. Call Jane Giles at 845-267-3490 to request a free copy of their fulfillment newsletter.

Advertising: Insert ads, in the form of flyers to be inserted in newsletter mailings, are welcome. Send 200 copies of the ad with \$50, and the ad will be mailed with the next issue of the newsletter. Contest and other events or promotions that solicit money in the form of reading or other entry fees will not be accepted.

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