



Sally Apokedak

Agent

Sally Apokedak owns the Apokedak Literary Agency, a boutique agency specializing in Christian-worldview children's books aimed at the general market. She currently has two agents onboard, a few hardworking interns, and a select group of wonderful clients.

She's been working in children's publishing for 20-plus years. As the manager of the Kidz Book Buzz blog tour she was privileged to work with best-selling authors such as Jeanne DuPrau, Ingrid Law, and Shannon Hale. Now she represents her own list of bestselling and award-winning authors and she teaches online courses to thousands of students in over 90 countries.



Becky Antkowiak

Networking Facilitator

Becky Antkowiak is a writer, speaker, editor, adoptive homeschooling mom, Compassion sponsor and enthusiastic Grammar Floozy. A lifelong serial extrovert, Becky believes every stranger is a friend she hasn't met.

She founded the 540 Club, a free group for writers focused on sharpening writing skills, studying writing craft, and encouraging each other in the writing journey. Becky earned an English Bible MA from Capital Bible Seminary in 2000. When she's not writing or finding ways to connect people, you can find her demolishing, rebuilding, and creating alongside Patrick, her best friend and husband of 20 years. You can find her at 540Club.org or via [@beckyantkowiak](https://twitter.com/beckyantkowiak) on social media.



Candy Arrington

Author, Blogger

Candy Arrington has written hundreds of articles, stories, and devotionals published by numerous outlets including: Focus on the Family, Clubhouse, Encounter, The Lookout, The Upper Room, CBN.com, Care.com, Healthgrades.com, CountryLiving.com, NextAvenue.org, The Writer, Writer's Digest and the Chicken Soup and Cup of Comfort series.

Her blog, Forward Motion, covers various topics related to moving beyond

what holds you back. She is a member of CAN (Christian Authors Network) and ASJA (American Society of Journalists and Authors). She often writes on tough topics (caregiving, grief, loss, difficult relationships, suicide) with a focus on moving beyond difficult life circumstances. Her books include *When Your Aging Parent Needs Care: Practical Help for This Season of Life* (Harvest House) and *AFTERSHOCK: Help, Hope, and Healing in the Wake of Suicide* (B&H Publishing Group).



Misty M. Beller

Author, Editor

Misty M. Beller is the managing editor of Wild Heart Books, a traditional publisher focusing on Christian Historical Romance novels. She's also a *USA*

Today bestselling author with over 20 novels published, as well as a non-fiction book for authors, *How to Market a*

Book Release.

After thirteen years working in professional project management and marketing, Misty uses her experience in the corporate world to develop best practices in her writing and book marketing efforts. It is her passion to help other authors on this same journey.

Misty teaches courses and workshops at writers' conferences around the U.S., educating authors on effective book marketing approaches and helping them apply that knowledge to their own books.



Michelle Cox

Author, Speaker

Michelle Cox is a speaker and the bestselling author of fourteen books. Her newest books are *When God Calls the Heart: Devotions from Hope Valley* (based on Hallmark's mega-hit *When Calls the Heart* and co-authored with Executive Producer Brian Bird) and the *When God Calls the*

Heart Journal.

Michelle's "Life with a Southern Grandmother" posts run each Monday and Thursday at www.Guideposts.org. She has been the food blogger for Fox News Personality Todd Starnes and has written for FoxNews.com, Focus on the Family, Christian Cinema, Whoa Magazine for Women, Leading Hearts Magazine, and numerous other publications. Michelle is the creator of the

Just 18 Summers® brand of parenting products and resources, which will include movies, a documentary, music, books (the Just 18 Summers novel released from Tyndale), and other products. The Just 18 Summers® parenting blog (featuring a staff of writers) has a new post each Monday-Friday. Michelle has been a guest on Home and Family, Hannity, The Harvest Show, Focus on the Family, Babbie's House, Atlanta Live, and on numerous other radio and television stations.



Jimmie Davis

Author

Jimmie Davis is the author of *Virtual You*, the *Girls' Ministry Handbook* and the *Girls' Ministry Idea Book* for Lifeway. Jimmie has led workshops for women, teenage girls, and girls' ministry leaders all over the US. She has contributed to several women's ministry books for Lifeway and several

books as a ghostwriter. Jimmie has written numerous articles and currently serves as a ministry assistant editing and working with printed materials for First Baptist Spartanburg.

Jimmie Davis served in Student Ministry alongside her husband, Sam, for over 25 years. She served on staff as the Girls' Ministry Director at First Baptist Spartanburg, SC for 8 years and as Director of the Deaf Ministry at First Baptist Atlanta for 3 years. Jimmie attended Converse College and has an Advanced Certificate in Women's Ministry from the New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary.



Dr. Edna Ellison

Author, Poet

Dr. Edna Ellison, a humorist, poet, and storyteller known as "the Christian mentoring guru," lives in Spartanburg, SC. Former editor of a national Christian women's magazine, *Royal Service*, she later served as a denominational consultant, speaker, and writer in Alabama and California. Currently Edna is a past president of Advanced Writers and

Speakers Association.

Edna has been a keynote speaker in London, Frankfurt, Panama City, and other world class cities. She has spoken and led writing conferences in almost every US state, including Alaska and Hawaii. An award-winning poetry and writing teacher on the high school, college, and post-graduate

level, Edna is the author of 23 books and over 400 magazine articles. Her life has been featured in a Focus on the Family magazine, where she has also been published. A people-lover, she also loves teaching Bible studies, editing, and leading prayer retreats—and most of all, playing with her granddaughter, Blakely.



Linda Gilden – Director, Carolina Christian Writers Conference

Author, Coach

Linda Gilden is an experienced writer, speaker, editor, and writing coach. Author of the popular Love Notes series, Mommy Pick-Me-Ups, Called to Write, Why You Do What You Do, Words To Live By, and many ghostwritten books, and with hundreds of magazine articles to her credit, Linda Gilden loves to share a great story.

A national speaker on the training staff of CLASSEMINARS, Inc., Linda enjoys helping others discover and grow their communication skills. She teaches at national writers conferences and “Writing to Expand Your Ministry” in the Women’s Ministry Degree Program at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. A wife, mother, and grandmother, Linda’s favorite times are those spent with her family. Linda finds tremendous joy in directing the Carolina Christian Writers Conference and the CLASS Christian Writers Conference in NM. Lindagilden.com



Linda Goldfarb

Author, Podcaster, Editor

Linda Goldfarb

Linda Goldfarb is an award-winning author of the LINKED® Quick Guide to Personalities series, international speaker, professional actress, podcaster, and audiobook narrator. She is a traditionally and independently published author who holds a board-certified advanced diploma in Christian life coaching.

As the podcast host of Your Best Writing Life, Linda interviews industry experts weekly, keeping her current with all things writing related. Linda

works with EABooks Publishing as the Audiobook Division Director, Acquisitions Editor, and Voice Professional. She loves helping writers and speakers take God's next best step to reaching their publishing goals and beyond. In her personal ministry, Linda helps her coaching clients recognize God's next best step for their personal and professional lives. She and her hubby, Sam, have four adult children and many, many, grandbabies. They live in the Texas hill country and enjoy hiking, playing golf, and relaxing with family and friends as often as possible.



Lori Hatcher – Chaplain

Author, Editor

Lori Hatcher is a women's ministry speaker, author, magazine editor, blogger, minister's wife, and healthcare professional. She shares an empty nest in Lexington, SC with her husband, David, and her vast collection of books. Lori served as the editor of South Carolina's *Reach Out*, *Columbiama* magazine for more than a decade. A homeschool mom for 17 years, she's authored three (soon to be five) devotional books, *Refresh Your Faith*, *Uncommon Devotions from Every Book of the Bible* (Our Daily Bread Publishing); *Hungry for God ... Starving for Time*, The Christian Small Publisher Book of the Year; and *Joy in the Journey – Encouragement for Homeschooling Moms*. Lori's also a freelance writer for Crosswalk.com, Our Daily Bread, and Guideposts. Her feature articles and devotions have been published by Proverbs 31 ministries, *The Upper Room*, *War Cry*, *Today's Christian Living*, *Christian Living in the Mature Years*, *The Mother's Heart*, *The Old Schoolhouse*, and *Columbia Metropolitan Magazine*.

A contest-winning Toastmasters International speaker (ACG, ALB), Lori loves to use stories to impart spiritual truth. *Encouraging*, *inspiring*, and *entertaining* are the words people use most to describe her. You'll find Lori pondering the marvelous and the mundane on her blog, *Hungry for God. . . Starving for Time* (www.lorihatcher.com). You can reach her at LoriAHatcher@gmail.com.



Melissa Henderson – Contest Director

Contest Director

Award winning author Melissa Henderson writes inspirational messages sometimes laced with a bit of humor. With stories in books, magazines, devotionals and more, Melissa hopes to encourage readers. Melissa is the author of “Licky the Lizard” and “Grumpy the Gator.” Her passions are helping in community and church. Melissa is an Elder, Deacon and Stephen Minister. Follow Melissa on Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest and at <http://www.melissaghenderson.com>



Tammy Karasek

Author, Blogger

You'll find Tammy using humor and wit to bring joy and hope to every aspect in life. A lifetime of bullying and criticism from family became the driving force of her passion to always encourage others. She's gone from down and defeated to living a Tickled Pink life as she believes there is always a giggle wanting to come out! All because of HIM. She's the Social Media Coordinator for the Blue Ridge Mountains Christian Writers Conference. The Blog Editor for Word Weavers International, Past-President and current member of Word Weavers Upstate SC. Past-President of Cross N Pens Writers Group, and President of ACFW Upstate SC. She's a member of My Book Therapy/Novel Academy. A writing team member for The Write Conversation, contributor for the Learn How to Write a Novel Blog and others. Published in the Divine Moments Compilation Book—Cool-inary Moments. She's married to her college sweetheart, Larry, a mom to their daughter, Kristen and excited to add a son-in-law in 2021. Born and raised in Ohio, she now lives in South Carolina. Connect with Tammy at <https://tammykarasek.com>.



Katy Kauffman

Author, Editor

Katy Kauffman is an award-winning author, an editor of [Refresh Bible Study Magazine](#), and a co-founder of [Lighthouse Bible Studies](#) (not the same as Lighthouse Publishing of the Carolinas). She graduated from Luther Rice Seminary with a BA in Religion (2004), and she has taught the Bible to women and teens. Katy loves working with writers on *Refresh* and compilations such as *Feed*

Your Soul with the Word of God, a 2020 Selah Awards finalist.

At the conference, she represents *Refresh*, and will gather names of potential contributors, provide information about the magazine, and collect articles for the 2021 issues. She contributes regularly to three blogs on writing, and her Scripture-based writing can be found on CBN.com, on [thoughts-about-God.com](#), and in online magazines. To subscribers, Katy sends a monthly writers' newsletter called [The Lighthouse Connection](#), filled with inspiration, writing tips, opportunities to submit, and a freebie or giveaway.

Katy enjoys spending time with family and friends, hanging out with [My Artsy Tribe](#) on Facebook and Zoom, and planting flowers all year long. She makes her home in a cozy suburb of Atlanta, Georgia.



Terri Kelly

Author, Teacher

Terri Kelly is the author of *Mary Slessor: Missionary Mother*. As a writer she has contributed to several books, including *Divine Moments*, *Stupid Moments*, *Faith and Family* and *Spirit and Heart*. Terri has published articles in *Kids' Ark Magazine*, *Clubhouse*, *WHOA Magazine*,

Asheville Lifestyles, and numerous online publications. She is a teacher at writing conferences and assistant director of Asheville Christian Writers Conference in Asheville, North Carolina. Terri helps teachers survive and thrive the classroom at terribkelly.com.



Larry J. Leech II

Author, Coach

Writing coach of award-winning novelists, Larry J. Leech II has spent nearly 40 years working with words. After a 23-year journalism career that began in 1981, Larry moved into freelance writing and editing in 2004. He has ghostwritten nearly 30 books, edited more than 250 manuscripts, and written back cover copy and press releases for numerous publishers. Larry teaches at numerous conferences nationwide and can be found online on Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and his website, www.larryleech.com.



Wendy Leech

Appointment Coordinator

Wendy Leech has served in the magazine publishing industry for over thirty years. Specializing in managing production and design teams, Wendy is creatively organized. Volunteering at writers conferences is a passion as she delights in helping writers connect and flourish. Wendy has been married to Larry J. Leech II for 20+ years. They recently move to Upstate South Carolina to be close to their son, daughter-in-law and new granddaughter.



Edie Melson

Author, Blogger

*Edie Melson—author, editor and blogger—***Find your voice, live your story...**is the foundation of Edie Melson's message, no matter if she's writing for fiction readers, parents, military families, fiction readers or writers. As an author, blogger, and speaker she's encouraged and challenged audiences across the country and around the world. Her numerous books reflect her passion to help others develop the strength of their God-given gifts and apply them to their lives. She's a leading professional within the publishing industry and travels to numerous conferences as a popular keynote, writing instructor and mentor. Her blog for writers, The Write Conversation, reaches thousands each month and is consistently chosen as a Writer's Digest Top 101 Websites for

Writers. She's the Director of the Blue Ridge Mountains Christian Writers Conference and the Mountainside Marketing Conference, as well as Vice President of the Advanced Writers and Speakers Association and the Social Media Director for Southern Writers Magazine. In addition, she's a regular columnist for Guideposts.org, Just18Summers.com and PuttingOnTheNew.com. Connect with her on Twitter and Facebook.



Beth Patch

CBN.Com

Beth Patch manages CBN.com's Spiritual Life channel, one of five magazine-style sections of the award-winning Christian website. She holds a Journalism Master's from Regent University and a Communication Bachelor's from the University of Virginia. She acquires, reviews, and approves all devotions, Spiritual Life-themed articles, and online Bible courses on CBN.com. She publishes the approved content on the site, as well as, promotes each post via subscription emails and social media. Beth also manages Christian Courses, Bible in a Year, and Daily Devotion reading plans. On occasion, she interviews best-selling Christian authors and writes movie reviews for CBN.com's Entertainment section.



Karen Porter

Publisher, Bold Vision Books

Karen Porter is an international retreat and seminar speaker and a successful businesswoman. She is the author of seven books, including *If You Give a Girl a Giant...Fighting for Your Life*; *I'll Bring the Chocolate: Satisfying a Woman's Cravings for Friendship and Faith*; and *Amplify!*

Karen is a frequent guest on regional and national radio and TV programs. She writes a regular leadership column for *Leading Hearts Magazine* and has contributed to national magazines such as *Focus on the Family*, *Discipleship Journal*, and *American Taste*. She has also written curriculum for Lifeway Resources.

Business/Professional

Karen and her husband, George, own Bold Vision Books, a traditional Christian publishing company. The two also own Stone Oak Publishing, a hybrid publishing company, and Kae Creative Solutions, a communications consulting firm.

Karen served as Vice President of International Marketing of a major food company in Texas for more than 30 years. She traveled around the world and her varied experiences (including dinners with Fidel Castro and other heads of state) contribute to the richness and depth of her writing and speaking.

Trainer/Mentoring Ministry/Certified Coaching

As a certified coach of speakers and writers, Karen helps aspiring writers learn the craft of writing, as well as editing and developmental book doctoring. Karen coaches speakers in her Amplify! program, helping speakers refine content development, stage presence, and storytelling.

Karen served on the board of CLASSEMINARS, INC, as well as lead trainer on the national staff. She also serves on the board of First Place 4 Health, one of the nation's top health and nutrition programs, and she is president of Advanced Writers and Speakers Association.

Personal

Karen is a people person, plain and simple and you will love to laugh with her and maybe even cry a little as she shares her joys and struggles. Karen says her marriage to George is her greatest achievement, but she'd love to talk to you about her five grandchildren! In her spare time, Karen continues her life-long quest to find the perfect purse.



George Porter

Publisher, Bold Vision Books

George Porter is a brother, husband, father, and grandfather who loves God. As a science teacher for more than 23 years, George brings the scientific world to life in his presentations, Bible teaching, and writing as he helps his audiences embrace the God who made us all.

George is co-owner of Bold Vision Books, an independent, Christian publishing company. George serves as general manager, acquisitions editor, and publisher.

As a teacher in both public and private schools, George served as curriculum team leader and on campus site-based committees. He judged Science Olympiads, implemented pilot curriculum on drug awareness in cooperation with Baylor College of Medicine, and coached tennis teams.

George is a graduate of Texas A&M University and has done graduate work in physiology, biochemistry, microbiology, and cell biology at Baylor College of Medicine. He served as a combat medic and paratrooper in Vietnam and as a bacteriologist in the Surgical Research Unit at Brooke Army Medical Center in projects involving the treatment of burn patients.

George is married to Karen and has two children. He makes his home in Texas.



Molly Jo Realy

Author, Podcaster

A Southern Belle from Southern California, Molly Jo is a writer, editor, social media ninja, and producer of Aaron Gansky's Firsts in Fiction podcast. She has been featured in children's magazines, on blogs and devotional websites, and her short stories have earned her awards and scholarships from nationally acclaimed writing programs. She is the founder of New Inklings Press and author of *The Unemployment Cookbook: Ideas for Feeding Families One Meal at a Time* and other books available through her website and on Amazon. She offers seminars and personal coaching on self publication and building social media/marketing platforms. Frankly, My Dear . . . is her blog where she shares her thoughts on Faith, Family, Food, and Fun, and her corner of the world affectionately known as Bedford Manor (the lesser known one, of course), named after Bedford Falls because, after all, it *is* a wonderful life. You can find her on Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, Instagram, and as a regular contributor to several blogs.



Rhonda Robinson

Author, Marketer

Rhonda Robinson is an author, speaker, and marketing coach with EA Books Publishing. She began her writing career as a mommy blogger, back in the day, when they were called newspaper columnists. As the managing editor for a large content marketing company Rhonda taught and led teams to create high traffic, viral content, and engagement rich social media management. Hundreds of her articles and columns have been published in magazines, newspapers, and influential conservative sites. Her new book, *FreeFall: Holding on to Faith When the Unthinkable Strikes*, released in January, 2020.

Rhonda's greatest accomplishment was gaining 574 pounds and losing 500 to win the grand prize of nine children with an unexpected bonus of 32 grandchildren. As a recovering political junkie, she restores her barefoot soul in the peaceful hills of Tennessee with her high school sweetheart.



Cindy Sproles

Author, Speaker

Cindy Sproles is the cofounder of Christian Devotions Ministries and the cowriter of the popular *He Said, She Said Devotions* written with her cofounder, Eddie Jones. Cindy's devotions and articles are published in Christian newspapers across the eastern seaboard, including *Common Ground Christian Newspaper*, *Tri-County News* and *Hometown Christian News*. She is a speaker to women's conferences addressing not only the heart of women but also their biblical responsibilities to their families. As a teacher and speaker for Christian Writers Conferences, Cindy teaches writing skills and how to write placing God in the forefront. She is a contributing author to CBN.com and is the Executive Editor for www.christiandevotions.us and the Devotional Acquisitions Editor for Lighthouse Publishing of the Carolinas. Cindy works along side Scott McCausey and Eddie Jones to cohost the syndicated Blog Talk Radio show, *Christian Devotions SPEAK UP*. Her newest book, *Mercy Rains*, transports readers to nineteenth-century Appalachia revealing the thorny path from bitterness to forgiveness. Cindy is also the coauthor of *He Said, She Said – A Devotional Guide to Cultivating a Life of Passion*. She is the mother of four sons and lives in the mountains of East Tennessee with her husband. Cindy can be contacted at www.cindysproles.com.



Les Stobbe

Agent

An active Literary Agent for 25 years, Les Stobbe now helps writers as writing coach on non-fiction books and as ghostwriter. He started his writing and editorial career as founding editor of the weekly *Mennonite Observer* in Winnipeg. He became selling floor manager of the Moody Bookstore in Chicago. He then served as editor of *Christian Bookseller Magazine*, then editorial director of Cambridge Publishers in Winnipeg. In 1970 he moved back to Chicago to become editorial director of Moody

Press. Since then he has been book club vice-president, president of Here's Life Publishers, curriculum managing editor at Scripture Press, vice president of marketing and communications at Evangelistic Association of New England, Journalist in Residence at Gordon College. Along the way he has written curriculum, journalism lessons, 14 books and hundreds of magazine articles. His website is at www.stobbeliterary.com



W. Terry Whalin

Editor, Author

Terry Whalin understands both sides of the editorial desk—as an editor and a writer. He worked as a magazine editor and his magazine work has appeared in more than 50 publications. A former literary agent, Terry is an Acquisitions Editor at [Morgan James Publishing](#).

He has written more than 60 books through traditional publishers in a wide range of topics from children's books to biographies to co-authored books. Several of Terry's books have sold over 100,000 copies. Terry's book, [10 PUBLISHING MYTHS, INSIGHTS EVERY AUTHOR NEEDS TO SUCCEED](#) (Morgan James Publishing) is his latest book. His one of his most recent books is [BILLY GRAHAM, A BIOGRAPHY OF AMERICA'S GREATEST EVANGELIST](#) (Morgan James Publishing). Also Terry has an innovative online training course to help authors effectively connect with literary agents and editors called [Write A Book Proposal](#). Terry is a popular speaker and teacher at numerous writers' conferences and an active member of the [American Society of Journalists and Authors](#). He lives near Denver, Colorado and has an active following on [twitter](#).



Craig von Buseck

Author, Editor

Dr. Craig von Buseck is a published author and Editor of Content for Inspiration.org, the website of Inspiration Ministries in Charlotte, North Carolina. Craig's new book, "I Am Cyrus: Harry S. Truman and the Rebirth of Israel", is being released by Lighthouse Publishing of the Carolinas on April 22. Learn more at vonbuseck.com.

Aaron Zook

Author, Speaker



Aaron M. Zook, Jr.—an award-winning author and speaker—entertains with a purpose in his books and presentations. He's thrilled thousands of readers through his YA Christian mystery/adventure Thunder and Lightning series about two inquisitive boys and their dogs who solve one crisis after another around the world. Aaron volunteers in church and in

the community. Check out his info, fun facts, and books on his website—Zookbooks.org, BoldVisionBooks.com, or Amazon.com. Aaron is a retired U.S. Army Colonel and lives with his wife, Joyce, in Holly Lake Ranch, TX. They have two married sons and four wonderful grandchildren.