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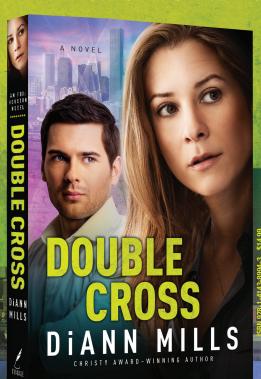
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DIANN MILLS is a best-selling author who believes her readers should expect an adventure. She currently has more than fifty-five books published. Her titles have appeared on the CBA and ECPA bestseller lists and have won placements through the American Christian Fiction Writer's Carol Awards and Inspirational Reader's Choice awards. DiAnn won the Christy Award in 2010 and 2011.















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Deidra Romero is a twentysomething blogger and bookworm. She loves good company, good coffee and a good story. www.deidrawrites.com

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Brock Eastman is the author of The Quest for Truth series by P&R Publishing and Focus on the Family. He's a husband and a daddy and loves to spend time with his family. www.BrockEastman.com



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Dani Pettrey Concludes her Stunning Alaskan Courage Series

With popular reality shows and Alaskan cruises tempting tourists, the faraway state has become a fixation for adventure-seekers. Dani Pettrey has keyed into readers' desires and completed her Alaskan Courage series, which tells stories of the five McKenna siblings. It is a romance/suspense hybrid with loads of action and adventure that cuts straight to the heart.

eef has always been the black sheep of the McKenna clan. In Sabotaged (Center Point) he returns home to work with the search and rescue team of the legendary Iditarod. It is there that he and Kirra Jacobs, who have always been opposites, are forced to collaborate. When Kirra's uncle disappears from the race, the two must work together to discover the truth: Her uncle's daughter has been kidnapped—And the villain has disastrous and far-reaching plans. It is their job to track him down before it's too late.

Romance is a vital component to this story as the attraction between Kirra and Reef grows. Dani admits romantic suspense is a difficult genre to write. And striking the balance between the two can be an arduous task, requiring many rewrites.

"I love writing inspirational romantic suspense because it incorporates

"GOD IS ABLE TO BRING HEALING AND HOPE DESPITE THE WORST OF CIRCUMSTANCES. IT DOESN'T HAPPEN OVERNIGHT MOST TIMES, BUT IF WE TRUST HIM AND WAIT ON HIM, HE IS FAITHFUL TO BRING HEALING—TO TURN OUR MOURNING INTO DANCING."

so many things I love—the thrill of adventure, nail-biting suspense, the deepening of one's faith and plenty of romance," adds Dani.

When asked about her inspiration for the series, Dani says she was drawn to learn more about extreme athletes and those who pursue adventurous careers. Who are these people who put their lives at risk? "I began diving into all the extreme sports and adventure professions, and the McKenna family was born." She adds that she felt the Iditarod was the perfect setting for such a fast-paced, high-stakes book. "The McKennas' world revolves around adventure and extremes. There's no place on earth where you find a better combination of the two than during the Iditarod."

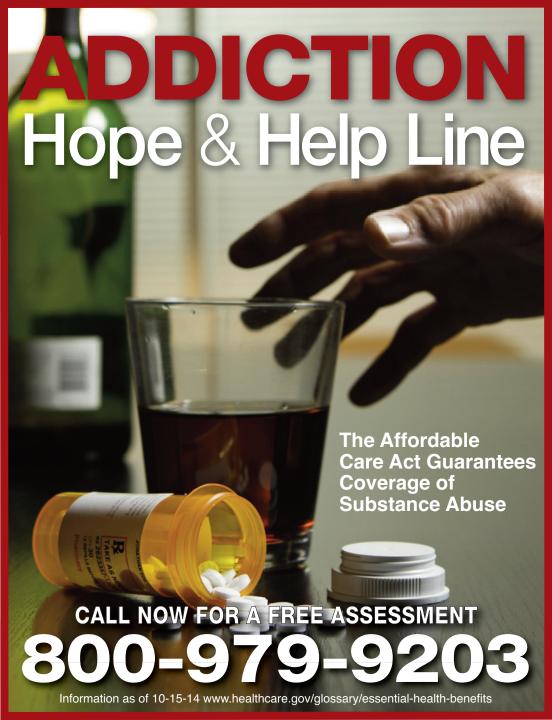
Though the book is a page-turner, don't be fooled. It still packs a punch when it comes to speaking on matters of the heart. The underpinning theme of the book is having hope amidst brokenness. "God is able to bring healing and hope despite the worst of circumstances. It doesn't happen

overnight most times, but if we trust Him and wait on Him, He is faithful to bring healing—to turn our mourning into dancing. God is faithful."

Fans will both rejoice and mourn the end of this series. But Dani hinted that readers might see the McKennas once more. Dani remarked, "It's definitely a possibility." Fans can certainly look forward to a new four-part series from Dani titled Chesapeake Valor. The first book will release in early 2016. **FFE**



SABOTAGED
ALASKAN COURAGE #5
Dani Pettrey
Center Point







Interview with Pioneer and Trailblazer, Kathy Tyers

I'm honored and excited to interview Kathy Tyers, a pioneer and champion for the Christian science fiction genre, about the re-release of her popular Firebird series. If not for her development of the genre, my own series might never have been published.

Brock: Kathy, how did you come up with the idea for the Firebird series?

Kathy: During the summer of 1983, the third Star Wars movie was released and the U.S. Air Force Thunderbirds came to town. While working in my vegetable garden I tried to imagine a sequel to "Return of the Jedi," and one night I stayed up feverishly writing down notes. The first draft of that novel was unpublishable fan fiction—but I joined a writers group and started learning the craft, replacing all the copyrighted material with my own ideas and characters. On a note of delightful irony, 10 years and four novels later I was asked to write a Star Wars novel that took take place during exactly the time period I had imagined that summer in the vegetable garden.

Brock: It's neat to see how God works things out. We'll talk about Star Wars later. First, though, tell us about the main characters in Fusion Fire. Who are they, and what makes them unique? Kathy: Lady Firebird is a wastling, the extraneous third child of a noble family, and she was born only for insurance that the line won't die out. When her eldest sister's heirs are born, she is expected to seek a noble death. She trains as a fighter pilot and is sent on a suicide mission. But things don't work out that way.

Brennen Caldwell is the only surviving son of an ancient messianic lineage. He's a man of deep faith, but because of



FUSION FIRE FIREBIRD #2 Kathy Tyers Enclave Publishing

his ancestors' experiments in genetic engineering, he is also a highly trained telepath. Recently I heard that a reader had called him "swoon-worthy."

Brock: That sounds like high praise. Would you mind giving us one fact about each main character that no one else knows?

Kathy: When Firebird was in her early teens, on vacation at the family retreat at Hunter Height, she went out with a group of friends for a day of hunting. She was an excellent shot, but she couldn't bring herself to pull the trigger, and for the rest of the vacation she was mercilessly belittled by her older sister Phoena. Phoena is one of the main villains in Firebird and Fusion Fire.

Brennen isn't fond of traveling passenger-class or even as command staff. He would much rather pilot.

Brock: It's always fun to hear information the author knows, but has not shared in the story. In three sentences, what is *Fusion Fire* about?

Kathy: Firebird is forced to confront her own sin and darkness, even though she's a "good" person. It's also about two rescues, one that succeeds and one that goes terribly wrong. And Firebird and Brennen learn that sometimes, there's a terrible price for keeping vital secrets.

Brock: How do you believe the "Firebird" series relates to the lives of readers?

Kathy: In the "Firebird" series, humanity's history changed direction even before Christ was born. I think readers have enjoyed following this what-if thread of alternate history, as well as the deepening relationship of two warrior heroes who are deeply

GOD KEEPS HIS PROMISES NO MATTER HOW LONG IT TAKES, AND HIS CHARACTER NEVER CHANGES.

in love with each other and their God—but who certainly aren't the type to settle down and live happily ever after. Not even as parents ... but that's another story.

Brock: What is the biblical background or basis for the Firebird series?

Kathy: God keeps His promises no matter how long it takes, and His character never changes.

Brock: And as promised, tell us about your experience with Star Wars.

Kathy: People usually ask how I got to write a Star Wars tie-in novel. Alas, it was simply because I had already published four science fiction novels with the publisher (Bantam) that got the book contract from Lucas Licensing. I got a second chance when a different New York publisher (Del Rey) got the Star Wars contract, and—get this—one of the editors who had originally read and rejected Firebird scolded me for not rewriting it and sending it back to her ... and she asked me to participate in their New Jedi Order series. I can't tell you how

honored I felt. So that was my second Star Wars invitation.

Did I have any doubts about writing Star Wars? Not the first time. But the second time, I was already working with Steve Laube, who was at Bethany House Publishers, on the third novel in my Firebird series. I was actually more excited about the Firebird books than Star Wars at that point, so I asked Steve for advice. He laughed like he thought I was crazy, and he told me to take Del Rey's offer. It was the only time in my life that I wrote two books in a single year. I don't think I would do it again. The stress was overwhelming. But what a year!

Brock: Kathy, thank you for taking time to share about your "Firebird" series and your writing journey. I know you've inspired me. I look forward to whatever future projects you write.

Kathy: Thank you, Brock! FFE

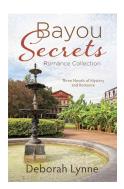
Suspense With a Hint of Romance

Author Deborah Lynne's book, *Bayou Secrets Romance Collection* (Barbour Books) is actually three novels packaged together—perfect for these page-turning, edge-of-your-seat reads fans will want to devour. Deborah answersd our questions about her new release.



This book is really three in one. Why did you decide to package it this way?

My publishing house, Oak Tara Publishing, connected with Barbour Publishing and decided to put three books by various authors in Oak Tara's house into one book. Together they are releasing them one at a time. I'm very excited about this joint venture. Blessed, for sure. This will be placing three of my books—*Crime in The Big* Easy—Be Not Afraid, and Testimony of Innocence—in chain stores across America, Wal-Mart and Costco are two that I know of. So all who are looking for a good suspenseful read—or should I say three good reads—look for mine in the store nearest you.



BAYOU SECRETS ROMANCE COLLECTION Deborah Lynne Barbour Books

Can you tell us if there is a common theme that runs through these three books?

The common theme is all the stories take place in the southern part of Louisiana, an area that's called Bayou Country. Another thing they have in common is that the books are suspenseful with a touch of romance. Another common thread is that my books are inspirational. Don't get me wrong, I don't preach in my books. But one or more of my characters are people who believe in Jesus Christ and it comes through, threaded gently into the story.

These are all romantic suspense stories. Why do you enjoy writing stories that weave the two genres together?

When I first started reading, every book I picked up was a romance. Then one day I read a mystery. By this time I was writing romance that evolved

"I LOVE ALL MY CHARACTERS—EVEN THE EVIL ONES—BECAUSE I UNDERSTAND WHAT MAKES THEM DO WHAT THEY DO."

into romantic mysteries. The next thing I knew, I had started reading suspense—books that kept me on the edge of my chair. Before you know it, that's where my books started turning. I am blessed that when my ideas come to me (I believe from the Lord) some still come as romance, some as mystery, and some as suspense.

If you had to pick one, which one is your favorite and why?

It's hard to admit this, because I love all my characters—even the evil ones—because I understand what makes them do what they do. Not that it's right—for sure it is wrong. But the love is in my heart for them. Anyway, to answer your question: Samantha Cain is the driving force of the mystery series that I write and love. Her character came from me working the night shift as a dispatcher for a trucking company and hearing a loud noise outside at two or

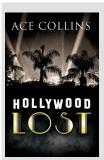
three in the morning. The idea for my character witnessing a killing and then becoming the next target ... well, it's part of me. So you'd think I'd say *Be Not Afraid*, as my favorite, but I can't. To be truthful, my favorite so far is *Crime in The Big Easy*. Maybe because I wrote it before *Be Not Afraid*, or just because my characters—Taylor Jaymes & John Bradley—from *Crime in The Big Easy* took a spot in my heart and won't let go.

Why do you think these stories will connect with readers?

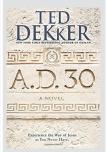
The readers will feel like they are in the middle of it; my characters pull the readers into the story. And I also believe none of my stories are predictable.

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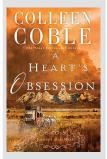
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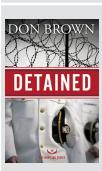
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THE BROKEN BLADE BY ANNA THAYER

Reviewed by Michael Foster



THE BROKEN BLADE
THE KNIGHT OF ELDARAN #3
Anna Thayer
Lion Fiction

Anna Thayer's trilogy, The Knight of Eldaran (Lion Fiction), is a story of knights, kings, servants and heirs. It is also a story of betrayal, forgiveness and, ultimately, the eternal struggle of good versus evil.

The trilogy tells the tale of Eamon Goodman, who rises from a lowly position in the ranks of knights serving the Master, who rules all of River Realm since the defeat of the King. Eamon, on taking the mark of the throned (those who serve the Master), feels that there is another choice. He soon learns of the "wayfarers," who are secretly working to bring back the true King.

In the first volume of the trilogy, *The Traitor's Heir*, Eamon learns that he is descended from the First Knight, who betrayed the King. He is filled with conflicting feelings, since he is not sure whom he wants to serve. Two voices, one from the Master and another from the King, try to guide him toward their own side.

In *The King's Hand*, Eamon rises in the ranks of the throned, coming ever closer to

the side of the Master himself.

In the conclusion. The Broken Blade. Eamon must battle his own emotions as he tries to appeal to the Master while at the same time preparing the way for the King to return. Betrayed by others, and betraying the one woman he loves. Eamon suffers the loss of those closest to him. Swiftly, Eamon has risen to the top of the government hierarchy, to be the Right Hand of the Master. At the same time, he has secretly become the true King's First Knight. Pulled in both directions, Eamon wonders each step of the way if he is doing what he is called to do. Can he find forgiveness for his own weakness and betrayal? As the battle for the River Realm reaches its head. Eamon makes his final choice and finds that he must deal with the consequences, which will affect both the kingdom and his own life.

Anna Thayer has presented an excellent allegory of the call on each of us: No man can serve two masters, so which master will we choose, regardless of the consequences?

Michael Foster has taught for 30 years in both public and Christian schools. He is currently teaching English at Northland Christian School in Kansas City, Missouri. In his free time, he reads books and collects vintage children's book series.

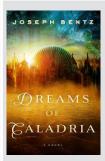
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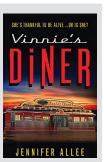
THE BROKEN BLADE

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Amy Clipston Discusses the End of Her Roadside Assistance Series

Author Amy Clipston has written plenty of Amish novels, but only a handful of contemporary reads. With her new novel, *Miles from Nowhere* (Zondervan), she is concluding her Roadside Assistance trilogy with a book that could easily be considered contemporary, YA or romance. She answered our questions about this new project, her inspiration and the truth behind the fiction.



This book, *Miles from Nowhere*, is a contemporary romance. You've only written a few contemporary novels; why is that?

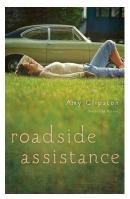
Miles From Nowhere is the third and final book in my Roadside Assistance trilogy. Book one is Roadside Assistance and book two is Destination Unknown. Creating this series gave me the opportunity to write outside of the Amish genre, and it was a fun challenge. I hope to write more contemporary books in the future.

Miles from Nowhere is about a young girl and how transformative one summer can be. What motivated you to write this story?

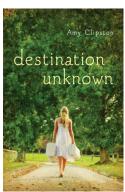
Since this was the third and final book in the series, my editor and I brainstormed ideas together. This book gave me the opportunity to write about Chelsea, who is Emily's best friend from Roadside Assistance. The first book in the series took place during their junior year in high school, and book two took place during senior year. Miles *From Nowhere* finishes the series during the summer after graduation. Since Chelsea loves to sew and create costumes, she's working on a community theater production of Grease. My editor and I decided it would round out the series to end it during the summer before the characters leave for college.



MILES FROM NOWHERE ROADSIDE ASSISTANCE #3 Amy Clipston Zondervan



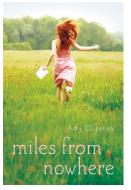
"WHEN I WAS IN SCHOOL, I LONGED TO BE ONE OF THE COOL KIDS, AND IT TOOK ME YEARS TO STOP WANTING TO FEEL ACCEPTED AND FIND MY OWN SELF-WORTH."



Are there any tidbits of this plot that are pulled from your own life?

Chelsea's life is very different from mine since her parents divorced when she was little and they are remarried. She lives with her mother, stepfather and two younger half-brothers. I can relate, however, to Chelsea's struggle to feel like an accepted part of the crowd. When I was in school, I longed to be one of the cool kids, and it took me years to stop wanting to feel accepted and find my own self-worth.





I enjoy writing YA books, but they are always challenging to me. I try to include a lesson in the story, but there's a fine line between keeping the story interesting and sounding "preachy." I also worry that the stories won't appeal to young adults. I hope that my readers enjoy Chelsea's story as much as they enjoyed *Roadside Assistance* and *Destination Unknown*.

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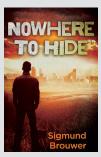
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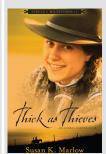
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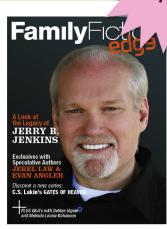
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