

Melanie Bowden Newsletter
August 2007

Hi Girls and Boys of Summer,

Is your summer going well? I hope you're taking some time to relax and enjoy things like swimming pools, lakes, oceans, baseball games, ice cream, and vacations. A few of those are still on my list, so it's good summer's not over yet.

Here is my latest writing news:

1) **AUGUST POSTAGE SPECIAL.** Have you wanted to order an autographed copy of *Why Didn't Anyone Tell Me?*, but haven't had the time? For all of August, the postage per book will be only \$1 (marked down from \$3.) No matter how many you order, each book is \$16 (\$15 for the book and \$1 for postage.) Are you, or do you know, a pregnant or new mom? Are you going to be attending baby showers or new baby celebrations sometime in the future? Now would be the time to stock up. I sign each book to the recipient(s) and include a personal message. **Email me to place your order. Deadline: August 31st.**

2) When I counted up all of the subscribers to these monthly updates, I was thrilled to learn that there are 179 of you. Wow! Thank you for sticking with me and reading about what I'm up to each month. Do you know someone who would like to join the crowd? I'd particularly like to add more writers so we can help each other out by sharing tips and success stories.

3) **Redbook Rejection Letter** - Yes, I'm happy that I received a rejection letter. Why? Because the editors took the time to include a handwritten message. As those of you who pitch to the national magazines know, most of the time you get a generic rejection letter with no hint of what they thought of your idea. My note says, "Thank you for your submission. This was a good idea, but unfortunately it doesn't meet our editorial needs at this time. Good luck!"

Magazine writers out there understand why, even though I was rejected, it was a happy day for me. Everybody else, have fun laughing at how silly writers are. :)

4) **Recent Blog Topics:** Affirmations for New Moms, World Breastfeeding Week, This Shocked Me, Book Recommendations, Two Minutes in the Shower, and Date Nights. Go [here](#) to find them all and more. I had 658 visits to my blog in July--a new record!

5) **Mothering Magazine Chat Coming Soon** - My [Mothering Magazine online chat](#) will be Wednesday, August 15th, at 10 a.m. Pacific, 11 a.m. Mountain, 12 p.m. Central, and 1 p.m. Eastern. We will be chatting about motherhood and, in

particular, the postpartum year.

6) **Writing Coach Services:** Would you like to learn how to get your writing published? I will work with you on researching writing markets, writing and polishing up query letters and manuscripts to ready them for submission, managing the writer/editor relationship (including negotiating for higher fees), and many other areas of magazine and book publishing.

Special rate for the first coaching session: \$30 an hour or \$40 for 90 minutes. After the first meeting, my fee is \$40 an hour for individuals, or \$25 an hour per person if you and another writer would like to meet with me together. Coaching can be done in person or by phone.

You can also arrange a special coaching session to cover everything from my *Magazine Writing for Beginners* class (I'll mail you the class materials in advance.) The fee is \$40 **total** for up to 2 hours of instruction.

7) I took a risk on July 28th and participated in the **Writer's Weekly Summer 24-Hour Short Story Contest**. I don't think I've written fiction story since I was in 3rd grade and wrote about an abominable snowman climbing over Big C Mountain (my Riverside friends know what I'm talking about!), so the contest was a challenge and a half.

You are provided a topic and have exactly 24 hours to submit your story. I'm happy to say that I wrote a story I'm proud of and submitted it before the deadline. I actually had fun. Keep your fingers crossed that my entry, *Stay Calm*, wins a prize. Wouldn't that be a hoot? Winners are announced near the end of August.

To find out about the Fall contest go [here](#).

8) Joyce Maynard Talk - I was so lucky to attend a free presentation by the author, Joyce Maynard, at my local library which, even luckier me, I could walk to from my house. Maynard has written numerous articles and books and is especially known for her novel *To Die For* (that was made into a great 1995 movie starring Nicole Kidman) and for revealing in her memoir *At Home in the World* that she had a 10-month affair with J.D. Salinger when she was 18 and he was 53.

She discussed her writing, the affair (and the backlash she received for writing about it 25 years later), her family, and her workshops on memoir writing. One thing that particularly stuck with me was when she emphasized the importance for writers to give themselves space to write. She sees the time that writers are exercising, gardening, reading, daydreaming, housecleaning, or just relaxing as

vital to one's creativity. I've been thinking a lot about how much pressure I put on myself to produce, produce, produce work. When I give myself time and space, my writing is so much richer.

On that note, I'm off to boost my creativity as Maynard suggests. Enjoy the rest of the month.

Melanie Bowden

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<http://motherhood.booklocker.com>