

Senior Spotlight of the Month

by Debbie L. Sklar



Published Author Has Message



Lynette M. Smith, who is 60-something, has written an interesting book called, "How to Write Heartfelt Letters to Treasure: For Special Occasions and Occasions Made Special." It provides the context and tools to help people write unique letters of appreciation from the heart, not only for special occasions such as birthdays, cultural and religious rites of passage, and career and military occasions, but also for occasions made special, such as honoring teachers, mentors, students, good friends, product creators and service providers. The book culminates with two especially powerful chapters, "Bringing Meaning to a Life Well Lived" and "Mending a Torn Relationship."

Here is more about this talented lady.

Q: Where were you born and raised?

A: I was born in Pasadena, CA., and grew up in the San Gabriel Valley. When I married, my husband and I moved to Yorba Linda, where we've been ever since.

Q: What were your career dreams growing up?

A: In grammar school, I wanted to be a fine artist; in high school, a commercial artist; in college, a fashion designer; then, after a 9-year secretarial career, to be self-employed.

Q: Are you retired or still working?

A: I'm a full-time freelance copyeditor (AllMyBest.com), helping writers get the respect and results their writing deserves. I work mostly with authors, plus a few publishers, marketing professionals and small business owners.

Q: Secret to keeping young?

A: Life is such fun, and each day is filled with reasons to be grateful. Focusing on gratitude helps keep you happy. And when you're happy, you're young at heart.

Q: Hobbies, spare time?

A: I collect vintage and contemporary purple art glass and art pottery. I also enjoy reading—Dean Koontz, Michael Crichton, Orson Scott Card, and J. K. Rowling. And I like working out to Big Band music.

Q: Family?

A: I married my wonderful husband, Ben, in 1976. Our son Byron—an only child—was born in 1980. He married his bride, Rachael, in 2008; they live in Arizona and last August gave us a beautiful granddaughter, Kaelin.

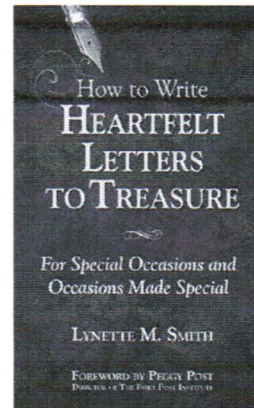
Q: How long did it take to complete your book?

A: My comprehensive reference book, "How to Write Heartfelt Letters to Treasure: For Special Occasions and Occasions Made Special," was conceived Nov. 10, 2011, when, in response to my wondering aloud to a colleague whether to write the book, a quietly confident voice in my head responded, "Your book will be published by Aug. 15." I chose to honor that voice and, after a 9-month gestation, my book was delivered last August.

Q: Is it your first?

A: It is my first full-length book, although in 2009 I published a series of four tips booklets relating to brides, grooms, and their parents' writing letters of appreciation to one another, to commemorate a marriage. Those booklets were inspired by the framed treasured letters my son and his wife presented to their respective parents at their wedding rehearsal dinner; we were all deeply moved by their heartfelt gesture.

Q: Any other books in the works?



A: Rather than writing another book, I'm focusing on my Big, Achievable Goal: to get millions of people, worldwide, to write letters of appreciation so they can establish, enhance, and even rebuild their relationships and thus change their world. The book has great tips and an appendix filled with useful tools for writing those letters. I'm now planning workshops and presentations to show people how to express their gratitude in writing; and I'm developing a number of appreciation-based projects, such as a kit for teachers to have their students write a letter of appreciation, and another kit for consumers that provides descriptions and tools for a wide array of fun appreciation projects and games that can be done individually or at showers or birthdays.

Q: Where can people buy it?

A: The soft cover book is available now, and the eBook version soon, online through

Amazon.com, BarnesAndNoble.com, and other online retailers. Signed and/or custom-inscribed books are available through my publishing website, GoodWaysToWrite.com.

Q: Three things you still want to do?

A: I have three important messages to convey to as many people as possible. First, help others know they've made a positive difference during their lifetime; it will bring greater meaning to their lives. Second, express your appreciation in a handwritten or printed and signed letter; it is more permanent than an easily misplaced email or text message. Third, if you have an ailing relationship with a loved one, take steps to forgive or be forgiven, in order to heal that relationship and return to a state of peace and love—for everyone's sake.

Q: Any other tidbits you want to share?

A: I'd like to invite anyone who has ever written or received a letter of appreciation—something more than a thank-you note—to share their experience with me via email to Lynette@GoodWaysToWrite.com, for possible inclusion on the "Heartfelt Stories" page of my publishing website. Such brief, firsthand accounts will show others the positive outcomes of writing and receiving these letters, so they will be inspired to write letters of their own.