

Author Interview Questionnaire

1. What made you decide to become a writer? (This will also be on the blog)

I didn't exactly decide to become a writer. It's something I always did, an aspect of who I am. A combination of things made me decide to write for publication, but being without a job when my children started school was a biggie. It was the perfect time to recommit myself to writing, even though life interfered enough over the years to put writing aside several times. I always came back because I couldn't do otherwise!

2. How long did it take to get published the first time and how did it happen?

At one time or another, I tried my hand at everything from poetry to children's picture books to comedy sketches to teleplays. When I joined RWA, I recommitted to writing for publication, but had been an RWA member for right at 23 years before I sold. I pitched to a Berkley editor in the spring of 2006, followed up on the submission in early 2007, and was offered my very first contact a few weeks later. What a high!

3. What would you do differently the next time?

What would I do differently? How long do you have?

Seriously, the Number One thing I'd do differently is to focus more on my strengths as a writer, and focus more energy on writing, not revising.

4. What advice would you give an aspiring author?

Identify your strengths and make those your mantra, and then persist!

5. What (or who) inspires or influences your writing?

Every author I read inspires me to improve, develop, and evolve as a writer.

6. Do you have any works in progress you'd like to tell us about?

I'm working on Book 3 in the vampire series, and on several other projects including a cozy mystery series.

7. What are your latest releases and when/where can we find them? (photos/jpegs would be great for this)

Last Vampire Standing will be released May 5, 2009, and is the second book in my vampire mystery-romance series. The short blurb is:

Cesca Marinelli is on an afterlife high with a fun job, good friends, and nice new digs—until a budding stand-up comic, Jo-Jo the Jester, escapes from his Atlanta nest looking for sanctuary. Worse than Jo-Jo's bad jokes, a psychotic vampire with a murderous agenda has followed Jo-Jo to Florida, putting everyone close to Cesca in danger. She must discover what the not-so-comic mess has to do with an energy-sapping plague knocking off the country's head vamps. Even it kills her. Again.

My debut book that's currently out is *La Vida Vampire*, Berkley trade. The short blurb is:

She's Gidget with Fangs? Cowabunga! Buried for more than 200 years under an old Victorian house, Cesca Marinelli is unearthed in a time when vampires are a protected species and dives into her second chance at afterlife. Soon she's living la vida vampire as a surfer girl, a fiend for bridge, and a ghost tour guide in St. Augustine, Florida. That is, until the tide turns and brings a stalker, a shifter, and a killer into the

picture. Cesca is forced to team up with sexy ex-slayer Deke Saber who insists that she stop passing for mortal and embrace her vamp powers. If she doesn't, she could be the next victim - and this time, the wipe out will be permanent.

8. After you got your first contract, were you asked to do revisions? How did that go?

The revision process for my debut book, *La Vida Vampire*, went wonderfully well! I enjoy the layering process of revisions, and my editor's comments were aimed at clarifying various points and more tightly weaving certain story threads.

BLOG QUESTIONS

1. How long have you been writing professionally?

On and off, I've been writing with the goal of publication for over 30 years.

2. What do you do for fun when you are not writing?

I might walk on the beach, do some gardening, read, be with family, or go play downtown (aka do research and soak up

atmosphere!). I was re-learning to surf until I sustained an arm injury that's still being resolved. Actually, I should say I was re-learning how to fall off of and get back on a surfboard.

3. Do you write full-time or part-time?

I write full-time and try to keep to a schedule. Since my hubby's now retired, that schedule is more elusive than I'd like it to be.

4. Where do you reside (state only or city & state)

I live in St. Augustine, Florida.

5. Tell us about your latest release/releases. (Logline or back page blurb or about your hero/heroine)

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murderous agenda has followed Jo-Jo to Florida, putting everyone close to Cesca in danger. She must discover what the not-so-comic mess has to do with an energy-sapping plague knocking off the country's head vamps. Even it kills her. Again.

6. Do you have any appearances/book signings scheduled this year? And where/when are they?

I have several appearances and singings lined up, and several more yet to be arranged and/or confirmed. The confirmed gigs are:

In St. Augustine

Saturday, March 14, 1-4 p.m., the St. Augustine Barnes & Noble. Booksigning event with copies of *La Vida Vampire* available.

Saturday, May 9, time TBA, St. Augustine Barnes & Noble. Booksigning event with copies of *Last Vampire Standing* and *La Vida Vampire* available.

Friday, June 6, 5-8 p.m., Second Read Books, 51 D Cordova, St. Augustine, during the First Friday Art Walk. Booksigning with both books available.

Saturday, June 20, 10:30-11:30 a.m., Florida Writers Association, St. Augustine chapter. Presenting a workshop at the monthly meeting to be held at the **main library**.

In Daytona Beach

Date and Time TBA, Daytona Beach Barnes & Noble, 1900 W International Speedway, Daytona Beach, FL 32114, 386-238-1118. Both books will be available for the signing.

In Washington, D.C.

Wednesday, July 15, Marriott Wardman Park Hotel, 5:30-7:30 p.m. The "Readers for Life" Literacy Autographing will be held in conjunction with the Romance Writers of America annual national conference. The autographing is free and open to the public.

Friday, July 17, Marriott Wardman Park Hotel, time TBA, Berkley Booksigning.