

THE POWER OF PUBLICITY

New Publishing Company Focused on Making Sure Diverse Voices are Heard Launches in June

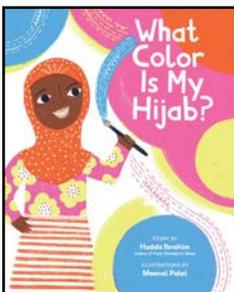
There has been a lot of emphasis lately on making sure people with diverse backgrounds get to be part of the conversation, and a Minnesota couple who emigrated to this country from Somalia wants to be part of the solution.

Hudda Ibrahim and her husband, Abdi Mahad, are launching [Diverse Voices Press](#) on June 26 at the Barnes and Noble in St. Cloud (3940 Division Street in St. Cloud). It is a publishing company that will be devoted to telling stories about diversity.

The press' first book will be *Waa Midabkee Xijaabkaygu* which is the Somali version of Hudda Ibrahim's [What Color is My Hijab](#). The English version came out last year, but due to the pandemic was never officially launched.

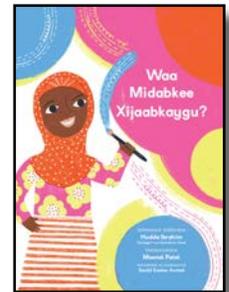


DIVERSE
VOICES PRESS



The June 26 event will also serve to officially launch both versions of the book. The event begins at 2 p.m. and will feature a reading and a Q & A with those in attendance.

What Color is My Hijab? is a beautifully illustrated children's book featuring women from all different professions, including doctors and teachers, artists and politicians wearing their very colorful hijabs, and a variety of clothing. Ibrahim says the variety is intentional as it illustrates that like all Americans, Muslim women come from a variety of backgrounds, cultures and abilities.



Learn more about the book at HuddaIbrahim.com. The publishing company's website is DiverseVoicesPress.com.

***The Triple Play Twins* is Now Part of the Minnesota Twins' Reading Program**

RMA Publicity is excited to share that persistence pays off! A book we promote is now part of the [Minnesota Twins' Reading is Powerful Program](#).

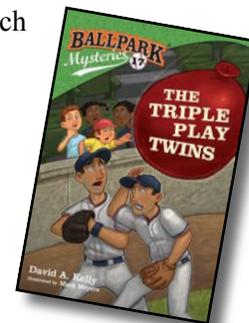
On May 7, the Twins' mascot, T.C. Bear, and Chelsey Falzone from the Twins' front office taped a reading of *The Triple Play Twins* by author David A. Kelly. The reading took place in Bat N Barrell, the bar and event space overlooking right field in the Twins Stadium.

The edited version of the reading, which includes an author statement, is now [up on the Twins' website](#). In addition, the team has purchased hundreds of books, many of which will be given away to young Twins fans.

The first batch of books has already been given away to students in Indus, Minnesota, just outside International Falls. [Here is a link to a story about the reading](#) that has been published in the International Falls Journal.



The Triple Play Twins is the latest title in Random House's Ballpark Mysteries series, which is for children ages 6 – 9. The book delivers a Minnesota baseball mystery with local connections and universal appeal. As main characters Kate and Mike try to discover who's trying to derail the Twins' chances of making the playoffs by causing trouble for the team's star players, twin Twins Marco and Pedro, they come across everything from the St. Paul Saints pig mascot in a Prince outfit to Harmon Killebrew's red stadium chair hanging above the log flume ride at the Mall of America, and a whole lot more.



About the Ballpark Mysteries series

Through the Ballpark Mysteries series, readers can travel by book to each MLB stadium to learn sports history, discover interesting baseball facts, and have an exciting sports adventure. The books are a great way to keep baseball excitement alive throughout the year.

Before getting started on the 17th story in his Ballpark Mysteries series, author David A. Kelly spent time in the Twin Cities visiting all the sites mentioned in the book. He also did extensive research on the Twins. Learn more about the series on the author's website: DavidAKellyBooks.com.

***The Legend of Jet the Gerbil: Could Be the Greatest Gerbil Story Ever Told* Launched in May**

The Legend of Jet the Gerbil - Could Be the Greatest Gerbil Story Ever Told officially released in May during a virtual event held by the Wild Rumpus bookstore. The book was written by Michael Keller, the former CEO of The Pearson Candy Company, as a gift to his father, who is the hero in the story.

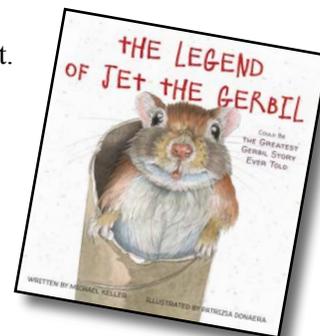
When Michael was a kid, his father, who is a retired cardiologist, saved the life of his beloved gerbil. The book is also dedicated to its illustrator, who worked on the project when COVID was at its worst in her home country of Italy.



Keller officially revealed the book to the world on [KARE 11 Saturday](#) on May 1st. He was on [WCCO Radio with Jordana Green](#) on May 3, and the Pioneer Press newspaper gave the book a rave review that was published in the paper on May 9th.

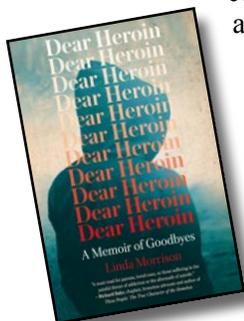
The book is currently being carried in many Twin Cities bookstores, including

Wild Rumpus and Barnes and Noble in Minneapolis. Learn more about the book at: Jetthegerbil.com.



***Dear Heroin: A Memoir of Goodbyes* Launched in May**

A Minnesota mother's moving tribute to her son also launched in May. *Dear Heroin: A Memoir of Goodbyes* by Linda Morrison is the story of Michael Morrison, who committed suicide in 2012 after a four year battle with substance abuse.



Mike was a popular student at St. Paul's Central High School, and before he died had asked his mother to share his story if anything ever happened to him. In addition to sharing details of her family's struggle, the book also provides resources for families who fear their own children may be abusing drugs. A story about the book was published in the May 1 edition of the [Sun This Week newspaper](#).



Learn more about the book on the author's website: DearHeroinBook.com. Books are available for purchase now direct from the distributor: Itascabooks.com.

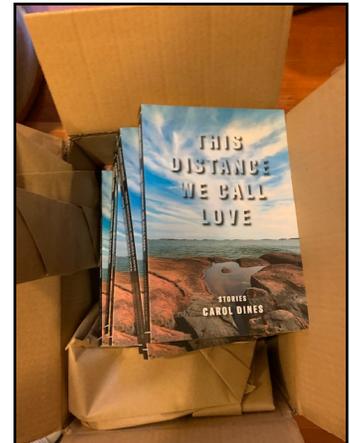
***This Distance We Call Love* Has Rolled Off the Presses**

Congratulations to Carol Dines, author of the short story collection *This Distance We Call Love*. Her book releases in August 2021 and a box containing the first batch of books to roll off the presses just arrived.

Told through the voices of mothers and daughters, husbands and wives, children and friends, the stories take their title, *This Distance We Call Love*, from the interwoven themes of connection and disconnection. While some relationships fall apart, others remain entrenched in old patterns, grappling with notions of self and duty.

Altogether, the 13 stories in the collection delve deep into our changing world, revealing how the internet, climate change, violence, illness, aging and work impact our families, marriages and friendships.

A virtual launch event is planned for Aug. 4th. It will be hosted by Magers and Quinn in Minneapolis. Learn more about Carol's work at www.CarolDines.com.



Cinco de Mayo Celebration at The Waters of White Bear Lake Covered by WCCO Television

[WCCO Television](http://www.WCCO.com) in Minneapolis covered the Cinco de Mayo celebration in the parking lot of The Waters of White Bear Lake on May 5. There were lots of smiles at the first big community celebration in over a year.

The parking lot transformed into a festival grounds of sorts to celebrate both Cinco de Mayo (which commemorates the Mexican Army's victory over the French Empire at the Battle of Puebla, on May 5, 1862) and the end of COVID restrictions. Now that nearly everyone who lives at or works in the senior living community in the East Metro has been fully vaccinated against COVID 19, guests are once again being allowed to visit the community, and plans are in the works to resume offsite trips. In addition, programming is finally on the cusp of returning to what many would consider to be “normal.”



Learn more about The Waters, where residents thrive, at www.TheWaters.com.

Constitution Day Celebration at The Waters of Plymouth Featured in MN Sun Sailor Newspaper



It is estimated that about 16.5 percent of Minnesotans, or 868,361 people living in the state, are of Norwegian descent, including about 20 people who live at The Waters of Plymouth senior living community.

In their honor, and because there is a lot to celebrate these days with the pandemic finally under control, they held a party at the community on Constitution Day, which this year fell on May 17. Constitution Day or 'Syttende Mai' (simply meaning May Seventeenth), marks the day Norway declared itself independent of Sweden back in 1814.

[The MN Sun Sailor newspaper](http://www.MNSunSailor.com) published a story about the event in its May 27 edition.

Tips for Putting on a Successful Virtual Event

By Rachel M. Anderson, Publicist, [RMA Publicity](#)

In last month's newsletter article, I wrote about the biggest benefit of virtual events and why they are likely here to stay. This month the focus is going to be on how to put on a successful virtual event.



I have probably been involved in the planning and execution of about a dozen virtual events in the past year, and can tell you without a doubt the most successful ones are those in which the author got involved in promoting the event. Whether you are hiring someone else to do the planning and setup for you or not, if you want people to attend it is critical that you notify people in your network about the upcoming event.

This may mean reaching out to people via phone calls, social media, using online marketing techniques, and of course engaging in publicity to get the word out. Here are some tips that will help you plan, promote and execute a successful virtual event.

1) Decide if you will do the event yourself or partner with a local bookstore

Early on in the pandemic, and before bookstores started offering virtual events on a widespread basis, I adopted what ended up becoming a pretty slick way to launch a book. I first set up the event on ZOOM, then went over to Eventbrite to create an event invitation.

Eventbrite allows you to sell tickets to an event, and I would set up a few different options: a free ticket for people who just want to attend, but not buy a book; a ticket that includes the cost of a print book and shipping; or one for free attendance and a downloadable eBook.

Once you create the invitation and upload the contact emails for the invitees, Eventbrite takes care of sending out the invitations, collecting payment for tickets, and sending out the ZOOM link for you. The system even sends reminders leading up to the event. The only thing Eventbrite doesn't do is ship out the books that are sold. That falls on either the author or the person helping them out to do.

The day of the event, sometimes I'd be the one doing the introductions and leading the Q&A.

Sometimes the author would have a friend handle the introductions.

If you instead partner with a bookstore, the store employees would take care of getting books to people who purchase them and executing the event. All you need to do is promote it, and of course show up. Another benefit of partnering with a local independent bookstore, the opportunity to support a local business and build a relationship with people who can help sell your book beyond the launch.

2) Select a platform you are comfortable using

If you decide to do the event on your own, using the ZOOM and Eventbrite integration isn't the only way to execute it. If you are more comfortable using Facebook Live, Instagram Live, or YouTube Live, they all integrate with Eventbrite too.

3) Promote your event

In order to guarantee a successful event, you need to promote it. You can't just expect people to find out about it on their own. Yes, the majority of guests will come because they received an invitation from you, but it is possible to expand beyond your network.

A good rule of thumb is to start promoting the event 4-to-6 weeks prior to the event. You can post the Eventbrite link to your social media (Facebook, Linked-in, Twitter, etc.) If you're not using Eventbrite, create a Facebook event so people can RSVP, or have people RSVP through a form on your website. You can also use Google Forms.

In addition to using social media, other ways to promote are through email marketing, or more old-fashioned techniques, such as picking up the telephone and calling people, by sending out postcards, or by putting up flyers in the local coffee shop.

4) Make the event engaging

Think of a virtual event as a show of sorts. It is a lot more interesting to take in a show that has props in the background than one where you're just staring at a talking head for an hour.

One tactic I've used is to create a virtual poster of the author's book that can go over my shoulder when I'm doing the Q & A, and I recommend that my authors sit in front of a physical poster of their book cover, or have a bookshelf over their shoulder where copies of their book or books are prominently on display.

It's also a good idea to have some kind of slideshow or PowerPoint going during the presentation. For children's books, I typically recommend authors have the entire book made into slides so they can do a reading as the audience follows along.

5) Do a practice run

When the event is about a week or so way, it is a good idea to do a practice run, and make note of EVERY setting on your computer so you can replicate it the day of the event. Early on in the pandemic, I worked with a client who had done a test run with me a week before the event that went perfectly, then the day of the event she thought it would be a good idea to add a microphone to her setup without telling me ahead of time. When I checked in with her before the event was supposed to start, there wasn't any sound coming from her computer.

The problem persisted well into the event. The publisher and I had to do a little tap dancing to keep people engaged until we were able to figure out how to get the sound problem fixed.

Another important tip for virtual events, make sure your Internet connection is stable, and that you have a quiet space with limited background noise.

As far as what format you will use for a virtual event, that is really up to you, but here's an outline of the process that has worked for many of the authors I work with:

- 1) Share a welcome message, and during this time let attendees know their microphones will remain off until the end of the event.
- 2) Tell attendees to type questions they have for the author into the chat box (or comments if doing Facebook Live) and tell them the author will answer questions throughout the event. You can announce that everyone who asks a question will be entered into a drawing.
- 3) Turn the event over to the author who will say a few words, then do a reading.
- 4) Conduct a brief Q&A with pre-drafted questions, then add in some additional questions typed into the chat.
- 5) As the event is wrapping up, announce the winner of the drawing.
- 6) Author shares their final thoughts.
- 7) Put up a graphic of the book cover and all the places books are available for purchase.
- 8) Microphones are opened, and an open discussion and reception takes place.

If you are interested in working with RMA Publicity to execute and promote a virtual event for a book launch, or to set up a book tour, [contact us here](#).

Next Month's Publicity Tips Article:

It May It May Still Be Summer, But Now is the Time to Start Getting Ready for the Upcoming Holiday Season

MEDIA OPPORTUNITIES

If your book is relatable to any of the following events observed in June or July 2021, let us know! RMA Publicity may be able to help you secure publicity in the print, broadcast and/or online media for your book.

June is...

Adopt a Shelter Cat Month
Alzheimer's and Brain Awareness Month
Audiobook Appreciation Month
Effective Communications Month
Gay and Lesbian Pride Month
National Oceans Month
PTSD Awareness Month
Rainbow Book Month

Also Observed in June...

Baby Boomers Recognition Day – June 1
National Gun Violence Awareness Day – June 4
PTSD Awareness Day – June 27

July is...

National Make a Difference to Children Month
National Minority Mental Health Awareness Month
Worldwide Bereaved Parents Awareness Month

Source: 2021 Chase's Calendar of Events

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