

Event Management Public Relations Questionnaire Form

Spokesperson: Marcia C. Stankard
Creator and self-publisher of the Spritelees

Phone Numbers: Cell phone (best for day calls and is my official work line)
617-943-3955

Home phone (fine for informal calls or to reach at night)
(781) 551-4427

Email Address: Mestankard@yahoo.com

Website: www.spritelee.com

Where readers can buy book: Website – has an order form
Amazon.com
Baker & Taylor is a distributor for libraries, stores,
etc. and can be reached at 1-800-775-1800

ISBN number: Original book version is
The Spritelees: A Christmas Tale About Kindness
Written by Marcia C. Stankard, Illustrated by Melinda A. Shoals
ISBN 0-9773460-0-5
Price: \$16.00 US, \$20.00 Canada

Revised Version is
The Gift that Saved Christmas
Created by Marcia C. Stankard
ISBN 0-9773460-1-3
Price: \$17.00 US, \$22.00 Canada

Please list FIVE key talking points or personal quotations that pertain to your message:

1. A book is a wonderful vehicle for conveying key lessons to children.
2. This book not only imparts three key messages while providing fun and inspiration, it reinforces the desired behavior with a bonus activity for children.
3. The holidays are the perfect time to introduce and/or reinforce these messages to children, as there are so many opportunities to get involved in outreach to others!
4. The author and self-publisher is demonstrating her own commitment to act kindly by donating all profits to a most worthy cause: pediatric brain tumor research.
5. It's never too early to impress upon children that giving to others is a wonderful gift to yourself.

Overview of the book:

The storyline

The Gift That Saved Christmas was heralded as one of the greatest products of the year by iParenting Media. This award winning children's picture book tells the story of a Christmas Eve when Santa's Elves have the flu. Christmas may not happen, until the Sprittees from Kindness Grove Knoll pitch-in to help Santa. One little Sprittee-in-training, Bob, learns that not every gift in life comes wrapped and that helping others often means helping ourselves.

A wonderful new twist on an age-old moral just in time for the holidays! This engaging, rhyming tale is fun to read-aloud filled with eye-catching illustrations. A perfect book for parents and grandparents looking to reinforce a message about kindness and the importance of giving during a holiday that all-too-often emphasizes receiving.

Bonus Kindness Activity

Beyond an engaging story, this charming book includes a tear-out 8" x 10" certificate

(sparktificate) to incent and reward a child that completes three acts of kindness!

Teacher's Guides

The website has two activity guides to use in the classroom and for home schooling. There are even downloadable sparktificates for use with siblings, groups, and classes!

Donating To Children's Brain Tumor Research

In keeping with the morale of the story, all profits from the sale of this book will be donated to children's brain tumor research. This is the writer and publisher's kind action in honor of thousands of kids who could really use our help.

How would you sum up your message?

Christmas is a perfect time to reinforce three key themes with our children:

1. Kindness starts with you;
2. Helping others brings you (and the other person) joy;
3. Every act of kindness, whether large or small, contributes to brightening our world.

Just as medical doctors inform us that if we feed our children a healthy diet in the early years their bodies will develop more healthfully, so too does a child's social/emotional relationship to giving and philanthropy supported in the early years impact how they develop their charitable threshold as adults. It's never too early to impress upon children that giving to others is a wonderful gift to yourself.

Is there anything that is going on in the media right now that ties into your message? What media topics do you feel comfortable talking about?

- Holiday shopping needs, recommended buy lists
- Children can get greedy at Christmas, combating that aspect of the holidays
- The importance of philanthropy at early ages, encouraging our children to grow to be "people for others".

Topics I can handle best would be:

- My inspiration for the book
- What the messages in the book mean to me and other parents
- How teachers value books that offer classroom activities beyond the story
- A little bit about pediatric brain tumor research

Please supply a biographical sketch:

Education: BA in economics, College of the Holy Cross
MBA from Simon School of Business, Univ. of Rochester

Work Experience: Sales and marketing executive and management team member for a Boston start-up called ChildrenFirst. Took the regional company national and helped grow annual revenue from \$1M to \$18M in my six years with the organization.

Now a stay-at home mother of three incredible children, my nine year old daughter and two sons, ages seven and five. Volunteer Religious Ed instructor, Active PTO and Community volunteer in my hometown of Westwood, MA. Married to a wonderful husband, John, for 13 years. Also have a two-year-old English springer spaniel named Champ. I love nature hikes, fitness and any way of “bringing out the Bob in others”!

Please list 9 questions that you wish to be asked that reflect the messages you wish to communicate:

1. The success of this book surprised even you, tell us about that:

Well, the first version of the book happened almost accidentally and came together so effortlessly. I printed 3,000 plus books in Hong Kong, opting to self publish in an effort to raise real money for a cause I cared about.

The book really took off! It won a parenting award designating it “one of the greatest books of the year” by iParenting Media, over 2,000 children voted it in the top 5% of their favorite books out of 3,000 books submitted by a contest run by the American Library Association and the books flew off the shelves locally, due largely to amazing local press. The first print run sold out in a short 14 weeks.

Which lead me to improve and revise the book, recognizing that there was plenty of room for improvement!

2. Why do children and adults love the Spritelees so much?

Answer: Children seem to enjoy the book because it rhymes and the illustrations are fun and whimsical. They can relate to the spritelees because they are small children, only they have the magical capability to spark and zoom. Wouldn't all children want to spark and zoom? And so they are interested and intrigued.

Parents and teachers enjoy the messages taught in the book. It has also been tremendously well received that there are activities on the website that allow a teacher or any adult interested in furthering discussions beyond a book to additional activities, kindness journaling and kindness math!

Kids today are looking to relate back to a website, we are training them to do this with Disney, Nickolodean, etc. and so any book that offers a way to “give

feedback, share your thoughts, log on and learn more” seems to resonate better in today’s book buying society. The spriteles offers that.

3. There are a lot of new fun words in your book. Where did the name the Spriteles come from? What does it mean to “spark”? How does a child earn a spark pack?

The spriteles is a play on words. I realized early on that the quality I want to celebrate and cultivate in children is simply, sprightliness. All toddlers you meet are sprightly – prone to action and amusing because of wit and originality. And then what happens? We, the adults in their lives, squelch their motivations to act and be original...which is why adults are so seldom sprightly! I want to more openly celebrate that quality and develop it more fully – gearing their actions, of course, towards kindness!

S.p.a.r.k. is an acronym for “small people acting really kind”.

Sparkpacks are a playful reward for acting kindly three times in a row. The spark packs are the source of zooming (translation flying) power! A sparkpack is something all spriteles earn in Kindness Grove Knoll. Again, children adore backpacks!

4. How would you summarize the key messages taught in this book?

Simply that in a fun way, the book reinforces three messages I would like my children to truly integrate into their way of thinking at this early stage in their life:

1. It is important to be kindhearted
2. Giving can be magical. For you and the person that you give too.
3. Every act of kindness matters, no matter how large or small.

If my children can start to recognize the gifts in their lives that are NOT gift-wrapped and learn that they can multiply those gifts by being more kind and charitable, than I will have succeeded in one very important way as a parent.

5. Tell me about the bonus kindness activity in the book.

After I wrote the book I wanted to go one step further, a call to action, if you will. I wanted children to be inspired to not just read a book and put it away and go back to the television, but rather, to read a book and jump off the sofa motivated to do kind things. So, what do you dangle for a carrot to a preschooler to get them to act? I looked at my own children and their interests and realized that children would want to be honorary spriteeles! How better to designate an honorary Spritelee than with a sparktificate! It congratulates them for adding their sparks of kindness to this world and making the world a brighter place!

6. What inspired you to donate proceeds to children's brain tumor research?

The theory that you can't moralize to others if you aren't willing to do something yourself. I wanted to demonstrate, on a very real level, a commitment to kindness.

7. Do you know any child with a brain tumor?

Unfortunately yes. One of my best friend's from college has a child that was diagnosed with a JPA brain tumor at age two, 80% was removable surgically and 20% was not because of its location on his brain stem. He has been on chemo ever since the age of two. He doesn't have a memory of life without chemo. How do you experience that as a friend and not feel as if your children have won the health lottery? I have to help any way that I can. This little boy is a precious human being. His parents are amazing. There has to be more that we can do.

8. What have you learned from self-publishing that you could share with others who are interested in the same?

That self-publishing is a lot of work – you are establishing a business in addition to creating its products. But this also leaves you in control and can be tremendously rewarding. There are resources out there for anyone seeking to bring their own book into this world. An amazing number of people will comment to me that they have a book inside of them waiting to pop out, and I would encourage anyone serious about seeing it through to go the route I have chosen!

9. Do you have a website where we can get more information?

Yes, it is www.sparkkindness.com (or also www.spritelee.com.)

Spriitelee is spelled with two i's because the motto for spriitelees is, of course, "every i makes a difference"!