



Hello and welcome to the first edition of “Behind the Book!” Yes, that’s the best title you’re getting from me. This marks the first of a series of author sit-downs, both locally, around the country, and even the world! It will not only give you a look into the minds of various authors, but some first hand advice if you’re looking to jump into the crazy world of writing! So, without further ramblings, let’s begin!

Writing is a tricky business. To some, it comes naturally; a simple matter of putting pen to paper, or hands to a keyboard. But to others? It takes some prodding for that hidden gift to show itself.

“I never enjoyed writing. I will put that out there first.” Robin Bee Owens, author of a variety of children’s books. Based in the southeastern part of North Carolina, she described how writing didn’t really emerge in her life right at first.

Robin initially wanted to be a math teacher, the lure of it all always drawing her in. She explained, “I was even a math tutor in college. To think I have eleven books published, three of them translated into Spanish and one translated into Italian . . . This truly amazes me and when I think on it for any length of time, I do begin to laugh.”

Owens expanded, “My first book, Dabby and Maxie, is based on the project I began and run for military children. I wrote her story down so that I can save my voice from having to tell it over and over again.” While seeming to be



a mere convenience, this is the story that would launch Owens career as a published author.

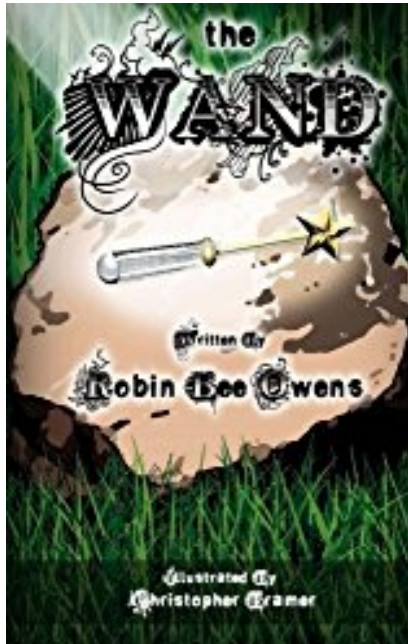
“My ultimate favorite [piece of work] would have to be The Dabby Series,” Owens proclaimed, “Being raised military and then being married to an Army soldier, this series is most like my life. A life of moving from place to place and having to deal with deployments and temporary duties. Saying goodbye, being the new student, getting rid of things that you like having but are not necessary, these are all part of the military life.”

Owens continued, “My biggest hope is to help civilian children learn what life is like for the military kids. Maybe they will be a little more willing to get to know them when they enter their classroom as a new student, be a little more welcoming. My second hope is to help military children realize that they are not alone in this world, and to help them see what advantages they have over the civilian children. They get first-hand knowledge of the world around them and of the different cultures in this world.”

Owens has been able to reach out to many children and their families, involved with the military. She’s done many things in her life to connect to children connected to the military, ranging from her stories to her own project she runs. “Most definitely. The Dabby Project has its own Facebook page. On that page are pictures of the children that have been involved in the project and have hosted Dabby or one of her friends. Also, outside of the Dabby series, being military, I have been a leader in the Family Support Group which is now the Family Readiness Group. I have had to help families and their children in directing them of services within the military that will help them with the needs they have, especially when the active component is deployed.” Owens explained.

With so much going on in her life, it’s no wonder she continues to struggle with writing. “Another struggle is the marketing aspect. I have never taken any marketing courses in school, why should I have, I was concentrating on mathematics. I am not a natural sales person, unlike many in my family.” Owens said, explaining further that while her family would be able to assist her, they live too far away for it to be a feasible task.

When asked if the advertising aspect has gotten any easier with practice, Owens humorously responded, “No. I keep trying though. I *have* done several interviews with newspapers and I have done a radio interview.” And she doesn’t let any of it stop her. Owens, even through the obstacles she faces, still plans to write her stories that will reach the hearts of children everywhere.



Owens is even planning to go down the cinema path for her latest novel she's working on. "I have written a small chapter book called *The Wand* and have been told many times over that this book would make a cute movie. I have been researching small time producers and contacting them." She continued, "I would like to be involved in writing the lines for the actors and have a say as to who plays what parts. I also wouldn't mind playing a small part as a teacher in it."

When asked what advice she would give to aspiring writers, Owens stated, "Go take classes on grammar, writing, and marketing. These classes will be a huge help with getting your story written and sold. The most important thing is this, just write. Write it down. Even if you don't like how it sounds at first, just continue to write it down. After you are finished, walk away for a few days and then go back and read it. You will see where you want to make changes and then make them. Once you are satisfied with it, have someone you trust read it. Listen to their advice. I would also suggest hiring an editor. Let someone that isn't close to your work, close to you, read your story. They will be able to make unbiased suggestions and critiques."

Robin clearly has had an impact on children everywhere with the stories she has told, and will certainly continue to do so. "I have always wanted to contribute to organizations that help families and children. Writing has given me a way that I can do this. When I go on book signings, I am able to contribute a portion of my proceeds to a worthy cause. It has opened my eyes to how many families, children and also animals that are in need of help every day." Owens expressed.

You can find Owens' books everywhere from Barnes and Noble, to simply hopping onto Amazon! You can also check out her Facebook page, *The Dabby Project*, and find an author page on her publisher's site; [InknBeans.com](http://InknBeans.com)