

Duffy Elementary School Hosts Guest Author

Students at Duffy Elementary School were delighted by a visit from guest author Karen Rostoker-Gruber on October 18th. In addition to being an award winning author of children's books, Karen also showed another talent to the students; she is a ventriloquist and brought along her highly entertaining puppet "Maria."

Rostoker-Gruber told the students that ideas for books can strike her at anytime. She showed them how she has written first drafts of books on grocery bags and on envelopes. She said that if an idea comes to her in the middle of the night, she will write the ideas on sticky notes in the dark and hope she can make sense of them in the morning.

She read *Rooster Can't Cock-a Doodle-Do* to Kindergarten classes and read *Bandit* to students in grades one through four. Karen explained that the idea for *Bandit* came from a relative that was moving to a new house and although she knew her family would be fine, she was worried about her cat adjusting to the move.

Using her puppet "Maria", Karen showed how an idea is developed into a book from her first handwritten draft, through many changes over time to become a manuscript. She then sends the manuscript out to children's book publishers and waits patiently for an answer. Although she often gets rejection letters, occasionally she will get a phone call from the publisher saying they want to buy her work and a book is born!

This entertaining and educational program was generously sponsored by the Wharton PTA.