

Reaching Past The Pain

Author Brings Children and Families a Message of Hope

From February 2003 to January 2005, Karen Pavlicin's life changed dramatically. In less than two years, her husband, Bob, died of colon cancer at age 38, she was laid off from her corporate job, and her 64-year-old father died of a sudden massive heart attack.

Her son, Alexander, was very close to his dad and PaPop. "He had many questions about death, heaven, how God answers prayers, and mostly how you go on celebrating life after something bad happens," Karen says. "I wanted to give him a story that would help him see that sometimes a little bit of faith is all we need to deal with the changes in our lives."

At the same time, Karen had been thinking about her own childhood, especially fishing with her dad and gathering apples with her family on her grandmother's porch. She combined some of those memories with a story about 10-year-old Andy to create *Perch, Mrs. Sackets, and Crow's Nest*, a novel about loss, hope, and faith from a child's perspective.

The book also includes excerpts from her musical CD entitled *Little Bit of Faith*.

*You can't keep searching for reasons why,
You'll miss what's right in front of your eyes.
If you show a little bit of faith, you know
God will take care of what comes tomorrow.*

Karen hopes her novel and her music will take people on a journey through grief and loss and back again to hope. "All of us, especially children, deal with losses every day," she says. "I hope my words will encourage and inspire readers to get up the next morning and keep going."

Writing to help others cope is something that comes naturally to Karen. She is widely recognized as an expert on coping with military life.

"My husband served with the Marines. I felt called to serve military families and support them by sharing what I had learned in his deployments—including his ultimate deployment to heaven," she says. Karen spoke with hundreds of other military families to find out

how they dealt with long deployments and the stress of military life. She compiled their stories and sage advice as well as her own experience into two books: *Surviving Deployment: A guide for military families and Life After Deployment: Military families share reunion stories and advice*.

Two years ago, Karen was asked to give feedback on the script for *Grace is Gone*, a new movie starring John Cusack, about a man whose wife dies in Iraq. He can't bring himself to tell his children, so he takes them on a road trip instead.

"I could definitely relate to Cusack's character," she says. "Alexander was with us when his dad died, so he was very aware of our situation. Still, the first thing I wanted to do was bring him to Disney World—someplace magical where we could escape reality for just a little while."

Karen has also been asked to speak to women and families about her faith, celebrating life amid challenges, and finding balance in daily life. She brings a sense of humor and practical ideas to her workshops and family talks. Although she has faced difficult trials, Karen lives joyously—striving to inspire others through her everyday celebration of life.

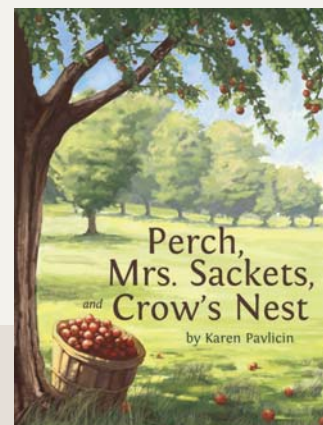
When asked what she considers her mission to be, she replies, "First, being a good mom. There is nothing more important than raising a child in a loving home. Second, through my writing, my music, and my work with families, I strive to help others feel less alone in their struggles.

"Any of us can get through any challenge," Karen says, "if we know we are not alone and if we have others around us who are there to listen, support us, and help us laugh and have faith."

"[My son] had many questions ... I wanted to give him a story that would help him see that sometimes a little bit of faith is all we need to deal with the changes in our lives."



Karen Pavlicin



Karen Pavlicin is an award-winning writer, editor, and dynamic national speaker known for her practicality, inspirational insight, and sense of humor. An accomplished business leader, hall of fame athlete, and devoted mom, Karen strives to inspire others through her everyday celebration of life. She is the founder and board chair of The Andermax Foundation, a nonprofit organization that grants funds to find cures for major illnesses, use nature and the arts to heal people, and improve communities to eliminate poverty. Her independent record label, Andermax Records, donates 100% of profits of her CD, *Little Bit of Faith*, to cancer research. Her literary contributions include the award-winning titles: *Surviving Deployment*; *Life After Deployment*; and *Perch, Mrs. Sackets, and Crow's Nest*. Learn more about Karen at karenpavlicin.com.