

# Author's Spotlight

## Edith Hope Fine

by Grace Nall

Award-winning Children's Book Author, Edith Hope Fine, and member of SCBWI-San Diego, has recently published her 15th book, *Water, Weed and Wait*. The Hamilton Children's Garden at the San Diego Botanic Garden provided a scenic backdrop for the debut book, coauthored by Angela Demos Halpin.

The idea to write the book began in 2007. Fine's love for gardening, along with Halpin obtaining a grant to begin a school garden program at Sandburg Elementary School (San Diego Unified School District), helped to create *Water, Weed and Wait*.

"Every school garden takes on its own individual stamp," said Fine. "We needed a book (that was) general and not specific to climate. With the increasing awareness of being active and eating healthy, she said, there's the joy of exploring the outdoors, as well."

Kids are more apt to taste foods from a garden," said Fine. The hands-on experience helps bring out the academic aspects of learning science and math. A school or community garden sprouts, no matter what season. All it takes is researching, planting, and organizing a team of volunteers whose tender loving care helps to nurture a garden. She advises those interested in starting a school garden program to contact an organization, such as the San Diego County Master Gardener Association.

Children and parents gathered at the book signing as they listened to Fine read her book aloud. She has a way of engaging them by periodically stopping to show them potted plant displays and answering their



questions. She even gets them motivated to start a garden by handing out seed pods attached to bookmarks.

When asked if she could be any character in the book, Fine chose Miss Marigold. "I'm an avid amateur gardener who has tomatoes, basils and herbs growing in my front yard," said Fine.

Planting is to a gardener what writing is to an author. Nurturing either one takes time. Fine always finds a way to "dig" deeper to make her stories come alive. She is a voracious reader, an avid researcher of "nitty-gritty" grammar, a story teller and award-winning author who captivates our imagination.

### Fine's Author Tips

1. Have an idea file
2. Write your idea on a piece of paper and date it
3. Create a website
4. Have business cards
5. Start a blog for your book, such as <http://waterweedwait.blogspot.com>

Edith Hope Fine has also written *Armando and the Blue Tarp School* (California Young Reader Medal); *Nitty-Gritty Grammar*; *More Nitty-Gritty Grammar*; *Under the Lemon Moon* (Parents' Choice Award Honor Book); *Cricket at the Manger*; and *Cryptomania* among others.

For more information visit her website at [www.edithfine.com](http://www.edithfine.com)