



VIP Celebrity Guest of the Month

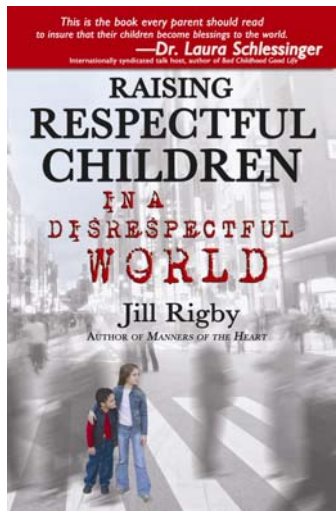
Jill Rigby



JILL RIGBY is an accomplished author, speaker, columnist, television and radio personality, and Founder/CEO of Manners of the Heart Community Fund, a non-profit organization working to bring a return of civility and respect to our society.

Things were different, though, in 1989 when a simple assignment at her twin boy's elementary school sparked a flame propelling Jill into the national spotlight as one of the nation's foremost authorities on manners-in the home, in the classroom, and in the marketplace.

After teaching table manners to 150 children in her local school, she became inundated with requests for her curriculum. As demand grew, so did the curriculum, which is now in over 700 elementary schools in the U.S. and abroad.



Jill speaks to thousands of educators, parents and businesses across the nation each year. Whether helping parents raise respectful children in our disrespectful world or training executives in effective communication skills, the definition of manners remains the same-an attitude of the heart that is self-giving, not self-serving.

In addition to Manners of the Heart, Jill's latest book, **RAISING RESPECTFUL CHILDREN IN A DISRESPECTFUL WORLD**, from Howard Books, has been endorsed by Focus on the Family, Family Life Today, Dr. Kevin Leman, John Rosemond, and many others.

She currently has two books in the works for a 2008 release date, *The Reality of the Grand Illusion* and *The Business of Manners* with Howard Books, a division of Simon & Schuster.

Jill is the very proud mother of grown twin sons, Boyce and Chad, who testify to her contagious passion. They reside in Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

Visit Jill's website at: www.thecommunityofmanners.com

By sharing the stories and thoughts of boomer women who have achieved the dreams of their heart, we hope to empower and inspire our readers to do what it takes to begin living a life of purpose. As a Boomer Babe who has traveled some rough terrain to get to a place of walking in purpose and living her dreams, Jill took some time from her busy schedule to answer our questions for readers of Boomer Babes with Brilliant Dreams.

Please welcome...JILL RIGBY:

1. As a Boomer Babe, what do you find most comforting about growing older?

The Freedom of the Fifties!! In my forties, I fought every wrinkle. When I crossed the battle line into my fifties, those wrinkles became badges of honor for having survived the tumultuous forties! On a more serious note, I finally know beyond a shadow of doubt who I am and why God brought me here. My questions have been answered and now I'm ready to win the war!

2. At what point in your life did writing become your career and did it find you or did you find it?

Oh, my goodness, writing most definitely found me. I still consider myself a speaker, not a writer. Four years ago I attended the Mt. Hermon Writers' Conference at the insistence of writer/speaker friends and found myself called to the stage the last night to share my writing aspirations with the audience! I didn't have a book in mind and instead shared my desire to bring a return of respect and civility to our society through our elementary school curriculum, *Manners of the Heart!*

A literary agent approached me later that night and asked for a book proposal. I have to tell you the truth... I didn't have a clue about how to begin to write a proposal, much less a book, so this patient professional sent me a document titled, "How to Write a Non-fiction Book Proposal." I followed the instructions line by line. Six months later I sent him a rough proposal using my most popular seminar as a guide, *Raising Respectful Children in a Disrespectful World*. And, voila! I was now "officially" represented by Steve Laube, Literary Agent.

Two years earlier I had met two delightful ladies on the floor of CBA (Christian Booksellers Association.) We chatted over coffee for an hour. When I returned to my hotel, my roomie clued me in on who they were and how much she wanted to hate me for the way things "just happen" to me! Little did I know these women were the publisher and acquisitions editor for Howard Books! We kept in touch, so when my agent offered the book, they were one of the first to "jump at it."

3. As a little girl, what were the dreams of your heart and have you realized those dreams in some form or fashion as a Boomer Babe?

Tough question, Allison. The only dream I had as a little girl was to be a wife and mother. I wanted to be the supportive wife who stayed home, cooked, cleaned, and raised wonderful children. I wanted the white picket fence, the shaggy dog, and kids tracking in mud. I envisioned taking care of everyone...family, friends, and neighbors. I wanted to be involved in my church and community. I knew exactly what I wanted my life to be. God filled me with more domestic talent than "you know who" and not one tenth of her busy savvy. Me, a career woman...never, never, never.

I married my childhood sweetheart and for almost twenty years lived out that dream. I adored my husband, my twin sons, my neighbors, church, and community. The day my husband walked away, I thought my life was over because he had been the center of my life. Our sons were entering sixth grade. We were devastated. We begged and pleaded, but to no avail. His mind was made up. I discovered that my love was not enough to change his heart. After six months of weeping, sorrow beyond words, and a very dark depression, the Lord lifted the veil from eyes so I could see I had been in the palm of His hand all along. Slowly, and not so surely, I made a decision to put the agony my husband had wrought in my life on the back burner and focus on my role in the demise of our marriage. I asked God to show me myself through His eyes.

You know what I discovered? I had formed my opinion of who I was based on the opinions of others. It was time to find out who God created me to be. I call those months the most wonderfully difficult season of my life. He convicted me of hidden sins. He called me to offer forgiveness. He even called me to pray for more love for the one who had wounded me. The love that had nearly destroyed me turned into a divine sacrifice when I began praying the impossible. Our wise and omnipotent Lord used that love to heal me. He taught me and in turn, my precious sons, how to love the sinner and hate the sin, protecting us from bitterness and loneliness. He finally showed me His purpose for my life was planted in the bottom of my heart, as I believe he does for all of us. The volunteer manners program I had developed for the boys' elementary school was to become my life's work.

4. How important is it for us to listen to our hearts and why?

Our minds can deceive us in a way that denies our hearts. Nothing the world has to offer can compare to His plan for our lives. Our enemy will play mind games with us, convincing us we're of no value, that we have no purpose beyond what we can see. The images we see with the eyes of our minds are man-made. The images we see with the eyes of our hearts our God-made! I love the verse in 2 Corinthians 4 that says, *"So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal."* Other verses that offer insight are found in Ephesians 1, *"I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, and his incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is like the working of his mighty strength, which he exerted in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms."* That says it all for me. When I look with the eyes of my heart, I find my God-given purpose and the strength through Christ to accomplish it.

5. What single piece of advice would you give to a fellow Boomer Babe sister who decides she has not been listening to the dreams of her heart and wants to change course in midlife?

If I can do it, so can you! My older brother and younger sister both retired at 50...life started for me at 50. I've told them as they grow older, I'll be growing younger. I feel like I'm 25 and just beginning! My ship has left the dock headed for deep waters. While my brother and sister watch sunsets near the shore, I'll see sunrises over the horizon! I'm going to ride the waves, not watch them as they come in. It's in the deep waters that faith is built and life is found!

The End ...but for Jill Rigby and anyone willing to take a risk, it's really only the beginning!