

**Environmental Media Association  
TAB's Keynote Speech at EMA Awards Evening  
May 22 – Los Angeles, CA**

We've seen many fabulous **people** – and heard so many fabulous **stories!**

Are you feeling inspired? I sure am!

These are the people, the stories, that remind us all of **our greatest personal power – our voices.**

And...our chance to **see our lives as stories** we get to write for ourselves – **stories that can truly change the world!** (Which is more important than ever today, in these perilous times.)

Now, to close this incredible 2-day event...I want to tell you a brief story:

In my **Merlin Saga** books, the origin story of the great wizard Merlin – which Disney is working hard to make into an epic feature film – young Merlin gains **all his greatest inspiration** from Nature. As well as all his Magic.

How does young Merlin learn how to be the greatest wizard of all times? How does he learn about courage, compassion, generosity, grace, sacrifice, healing, and the Magic of Nature?

From **Running** with the Deer. **Flying** with the Eagles. **Swimming** with the Whales. **Flowing** with the River and the Wind...and the most mysterious river of all, the one called Time.

Here is one example, a brief passage from my **Merlin Saga** which I'd like to read to you (at Debbie Levin's request): The passage when Merlin discovers his power to shape shift, **to become another kind of creature – the moment he becomes a deer:**

*I heard more sounds than I'd ever known existed. They washed over me in a constant stream – the continual pounding of my own hooves, the*

*echoing reverberations through the soil, and the whispers of a dragonfly's wings. Then I realized that somehow, in a mysterious way, I was listening not just to sounds, but to the land itself.*

*I could hear, not with my ears but with my very bones – the tensing and flexing of the earth under my hooves, the changing flow of the wind, the secret connections among all the creatures who shared these meadows, whether they crawled, slithered, flew, or ran. Not only did I hear them; I celebrated them.*

*For we were bound together as securely as a blade of grass is bound to the soil.*

So...may you **lift your wonderful voices** for the Earth!

May you **tell your stories with passion and courage.**

And wherever you go...may you **run with all the grace and power of a Deer.**