



- **Introducing SIGMUND BROUWER**
- **FOREST OF READING**
Sharon Jennings meets the Director
- **HOW'S BUSINESS?**
Gillian O'Reilly on bookselling in recovery
- **ILLUSTRATOR'S SKETCHBOOK**
Hatem Aly works the angles
- **Front page logo by Martha Newbigging**

CANSCAIP NEWS

CANADIAN SOCIETY OF CHILDREN'S AUTHORS, ILLUSTRATORS & PERFORMERS
LA SOCIÉTÉ CANADIENNE DES AUTEURS, ILLUSTRATEURS & ARTISTES POUR ENFANTS

Introducing SIGMUND BROUWER Prolific Writer & Powerhouse Presenter

By Lorna Schulz Nicholson



THE FIRST TIME I HEARD OF Sigmund Brouwer was back in 2006, at a school author visit. I was new to author visits. I walked into a school auditorium in Ponoka, Alberta, knowing I would soon be standing in front of approximately 150 grade seven and eight students. Yes, I was nervous. I had my presentation ready and was worried about the few slides that I had. Would the students be able to see them? Would they talk while I was talking? Would my voice carry? The auditorium was a good size. The teacher who had organized the event met me, and promptly told me that just a week ago they'd had Sigmund Brouwer in to speak to the students and he had all the teachers dancing in the halls to "Staying Alive."

Then she went on to tell me the students just loved him, were bopping in their seats from his high energy, and since then his books were flying off the shelves. She spoke with this gushing lilt to her voice. She showed me the "Staying Alive" dance move.

Music? Dancing?

Yikes. I had none of that.

Oh, and she also told me he had novels set in the Western Hockey League, and a corporate sponsor was making it possible to give copies to students to encourage reading. (To date, Schlumberger Canada has donated a quarter of a million of his hockey books to students across Canada.) At the time, with my nerves rattling inside of me, all I could think of was—he wrote a hockey story too? I wanted the school to buy my books. They weren't free. I didn't have a sponsor.

It was years later before I finally met Sigmund face-to-face. We were both touring with Wordpower, a tour organized by the Young Alberta Book Society. Authors go out in teams of two, to different areas in Alberta. I wasn't teamed up with Sigmund, but I was in the same area with my partner, a storyteller. Sigmund's partner, author Joan Marie Galat, was a friend of mine so we decided to meet at a restaurant in Bonnyville, Alberta, for dinner after our day of presentations. Right from the initial introduction, Sigmund was engaging and a fun and interesting dinner guest. We talked about sports and family, amongst other things. We did chat a little about our author visits, but it wasn't the entire conversation. When Sigmund was in the restroom, Joan told me that so far, at every school they'd been to, Sigmund was like this superstar presenter. A celebrity of sorts. Teachers and students flocked to him, and the halls were always buzzing after his sessions.

OVER THE YEARS FOLLOWING that first meeting, Sigmund and I crossed paths at many different

conferences. I always noticed his line for book signings, the swarm of students around him, his ability to connect with the students and organizers. By this time, he had named his presentation ROCK & ROLL LITERACY. Even the name sounded intriguing and inspiring and totally entertaining. Finally, I decided that I wanted to see him in action. What was

this presentation all about? Maybe I could learn something. I drove to Monsignor Fee Otterson Elementary/Junior High School in south Edmonton and sat on a bench in the back of the gymnasium.

In amazement, I watched as he unpacked speakers (big speakers), set up a screen (big screen), plugged in all kinds

of wires for all his technology. I was in awe because wires confuse me. The music started as the kids filed in. It was lively, a combination of old and current songs, and the students tapped their feet, and danced. I noticed that he immediately made the students feel like they were attending a rock concert in the middle of a school day. How fun! When the entire gymnasium was filled with curious students, (I'm going to guess around 450), he started talking, his voice carrying to the back with his hi-tech speaker. But he didn't speak for long. He interspersed music, action videos, interviews, in with his verbal stories. The kids were enraptured. About writing! And so was I.

Halfway through, I found myself neglecting my note taking, because I was in the moment. I was moving my shoulders to the music and cheering to the videos. At one point, I also yelled along with the students when he asked for audience participation.



Sigmund Brouwer presenting at Linden Christian School, Winnipeg

Teachers looked at me and we laughed because they were also doing the same thing. Another thing I noticed with Sigmund as he presented was that he had this ability to hype the audience up, but then... he could also bring them down, calm them, quiet them. That is a skill. Sigmund created an entertaining show with his presentation, and it was unlike anything I'd seen before.

Along with his entertainment skills, he also had a message.

Story. Sigmund is all about story.

STORY STARTED FOR SIGMUND when he was in grade three. He wanted to be a published author, and he liked to write stories. This lasted until grade seven when a teacher read one of his stories aloud in class and mocked what he had written. This shut down his love for writing, his dream of being an author and when he graduated grade twelve, he had 57% in English. His teen perspective, (he made it clear to me that in no way does he want to criticize teachers because he's met so many amazing ones), was that English was boring because the teaching of writing was "drill and kill." To him there was an over-emphasis on convention, and no creativity.

Since English was not his strength, or so he thought, he decided to study Economics at Calvin University in Grand Rapids, MI. He was born in Red Deer, Alberta, to parents who had immigrated from Holland and barely spoke English when they arrived. He knew from his parents that there was a big world out there. Sigmund had an adventurous spirit, (when he was eighteen, he spent six weeks biking around France), and wanted to move away from Red Deer for university.

In his third year of his Economics degree, someone from registration made an appointment with him, informing him that he would not graduate unless he fulfilled the English requirement for his degree. He had been delaying this class, hoping he

wouldn't need it. Since he wanted to graduate, he registered for this first year course, dreading taking English. The professor asked the class to write an essay to assess the writing levels of the students, and the topic was "where they lived." Sigmund wrote a tongue-in-cheek essay about living in his car.

Then something happened.

The teacher stood in front of a class of 300, read Sigmund's story, and praised it. This encouragement was enough motivation for him to start writing again. He sat down and plunked away at the keys; a story about a pro golfer, which he admits today was horrible. But he kept writing. He would write, print the story off, edit it, retype it, print it off, edit it, retype and so on and so on. In

the Writers' Market Guide, he noted the magazines that paid the most money. Could he make \$3000 per story? He started pitching stories to magazines like Esquire and GQ. They rejected his stories. He lowered his expectations and hit some luck. His story titled, *Sparrows Fall Uncounted*, was picked up by Western Producer Weekly Farm magazine, and while he didn't get the \$3000 paycheck, he did get one for \$75.

THROUGHOUT HIS TWENTIES, Sigmund had many different jobs. He started a real estate magazine which was later purchased by a big publishing conglomerate. He also worked as a truck driver, painter, grocery store clerk and he even had a short stint at a slaughterhouse. He is from Alberta. Since he loved playing racquetball, (he won a gold medal at the Canada Games when he was twenty-one), he also ran a racquetball club. When he was twenty-six, he decided to bicycle across Canada and write a weekly column for a couple of newspapers on his experience. One paper was even in Halifax. He also decided to get another university degree. This time it was a Bachelor of Journalism Honours degree from Carleton University in Ottawa, Ontario.

"Put this in caps: I DON'T WRITE BOOKS. I write stories. Read stories. Work stories. Daydream stories. Putting story first. Story is foundation and humans are driven by story."

WE WERE HALFWAY THROUGH the interview for this article at Pact Coffee in Edmonton when I finally got around to asking Sigmund, “When did you publish your first book?”

He lifted one eyebrow and replied, “I don’t write books?”

Then he leaned back, smiled, and said, “Put this in caps. I write STORY.”

I laughed and said, “Okay, sure. I can do that.”

Then Sigmund basically gave me a piece of poetry:

I DON’T WRITE BOOKS.

I write stories.

Read stories.

Work stories.

Daydream stories.

Putting story first.

Story is foundation and

humans are driven by story.

MY PEN CRUISED ACROSS my page as I wrote this down. This was the core of Sigmund and his career. STORY. He told me his first story in book form was published in 1990 and was the first in his Accidental Detectives Series: *Lost Beneath Manhattan*. It had been picked up and published by Bethany House Publishers. Sigmund was thirty years old.

It wasn’t long after his first few novels in this series came out, that he had his first school author visit. He still remembers this vividly. It was an elementary school in Olds, Alberta. As he talked about writing to the kids, he noticed that they were fidgeting in boredom. Then he started telling stories. The kids perked up and listened. As he left the school, the teacher handed him an envelope and inside was a cheque. He was shocked.

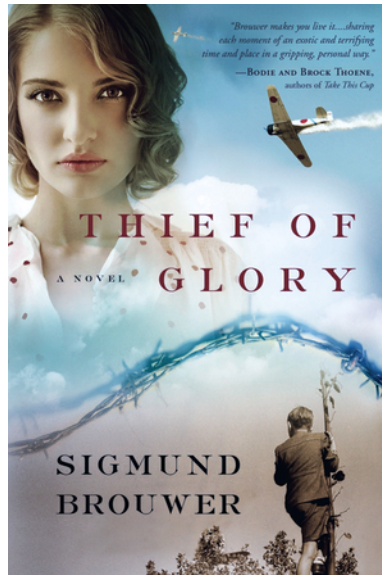
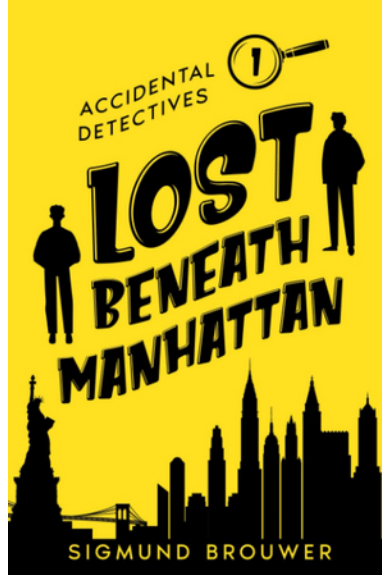
In the parking lot he sat in his car and thought about what had just happened. Two things about the visit motivated Sigmund to pursue writing as a career. First was that it had been fun to get kids

excited about reading, and he wanted to encourage them to write their own stories. Second was the cheque. He could make money doing this and it was fun! Now he needed more bookings.

Over the years his presentations evolved as his audience kept growing. He had to buy a speaker to keep the attention of the kids slouching in the back row. Visit after visit, he watched them enter and noted how awkward they were with the silence. What if he played music? Now he needed more than a microphone; he needed a speaker that could play music. Then he got an A-HA moment from seeing them react to the music as they walked in. He saw their emotion to [with] music. Humans are driven by emotion, and both songs and stories evoked emotion. If he included great music throughout his presentation, and not just when the kids entered, he could create more emotion. He once again honed his presentation and now it consisted of verbal storytelling, music, and short video clips.

Voila! ROCK & ROLL LITERACY was born.

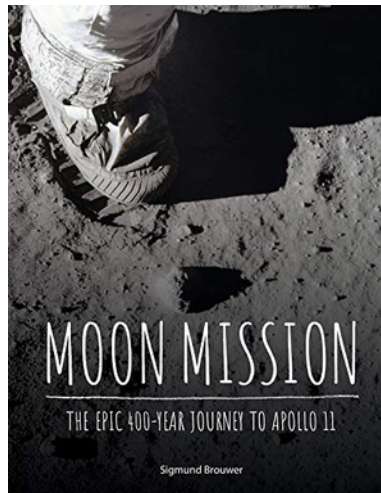
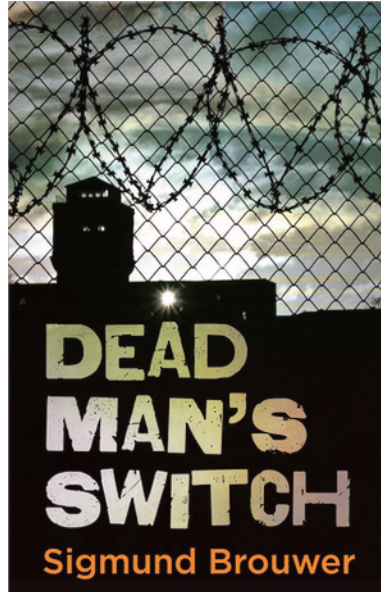
The word got out and the bookings continued. Soon Sigmund was getting bookings for 150 schools in a year. Today, he has reached over a million students with his presentations. He’s been as far north as Tuktoyaktuk and down south to Miami as well as Los Angeles, New Hampshire, and, of course, all over Canada.



Along with his presentation bookings, Sigmund started to get teachers asking him for writer-in-residence programs. He was at the Horizon School Division in Saskatchewan when he got a brainstorm. What about creating something fun to inspire students to write? He “noodled” it around in his brain and created his STORY NINJA program that is designed for students in grade 3 and 4. This is a unique and motivational program for teachers to use to help students write and think about stories in a whole new way.

WHEN COVID HIT THE WORLD, Sigmund didn’t slow down even though live presentations were non-existent. He thought about how he could present, and still encourage kids to write stories. He wanted to be dynamic and exciting even on-line, so he taught himself how to use broadcasting software to make effective presentations. He learned how to create webinars and video editing to keep the fun factor. He teamed up with Canadian children’s author Eric Walters to create webinars that would excite teachers and students. By including music videos, interviews and cool backdrops, Sigmund was still able to reach students.

He also grew his STORY NINJA program, giving teachers a much needed break from the on-line work they were having to do. During Covid, he worked tirelessly on a STORY NINJA Kit, which consisted of 21 ready-to-use lesson plans, and accompanying videos, that covered story-building, writing and editing. He wanted families to be able to access the program, and students who were studying outside the classroom, as well as virtual classrooms.



Sigmund is passionate about teaching students how to write “STORY”. His philosophy is the opposite of what he learned in high school. His focus starts with content first. He encourages students to think about the story then start writing. And don’t worry about the writing, the sentences, or grammar. Just think about the story and get it down on paper. There’s room later for editing, which is something he encourages. He likens writing story to learning how to play the guitar. He even did a video in a recording studio where he is playing the guitar, learning the song “Smoke on the Water” by Deep Purple. He played it over and over. This video is titled, “Sigmund’s theory on why writing and learning to play the guitar are the same”. It’s all about practice.

SINCE THAT FIRST NOVEL was published in Sigmund’s Accidental Detective Series, he has gone on to publish 151 more. That number is incredible given the number of school visits he does in a year. He isn’t genre driven but story driven and that shows because he has written early readers (Justine McQueen series), hi-lo novels (sports, music, mystery), middle grade, young adult, and literary novels for both children and adults, and he’s even been delving into

some non-fiction lately.

He’s won awards for his work. His young adult novel, *Dead Man’s Switch*, won the Arthur Ellis Award for Canada’s best young adult mystery and was a finalist in the TD Children’s Book Awards. His adult novel, *Thief of Glory*, a story he wrote about his father’s boyhood, won the Alberta Reader’s Choice Award and the US Christie Award for Book of the Year. His

stories are available in ten languages and to date he has sold over five million copies world-wide. Kids Can Press is now publishing his non-fiction stories, *Trapped In Terror Bay: Solving the Mystery of the Lost Franklin Expedition* and *Moon Mission: The Epic 400-year Journey to Apollo 11*.

When I asked Sigmund why he decided to delve into non-fiction after publishing so many novels, he said one word, “Story.”

AT THE END OF OUR CONVERSATION, coffee cups drained, I asked the final question, a typical one: “What’s next for Sigmund?”

His eyes lit up. He launched into a story about a 15-year-old cowboy in 1915. As he talked the energy in his voice grew. The setting is the Calgary Stampede. The boy’s mother is doing out-of-character things for the women’s suffrage movement that the boy can’t quite understand. There are gender issues in the story, the fight for the women’s vote, and a re-evaluation of the main protagonist as to what it means to be masculine. The words flew out of his mouth.



LORNA SCHULTZ NICHOLSON is a full-time writer who divides her time between Edmonton, Alberta and Penticton, British Columbia. She has published children’s picture books, middle grade fiction, YA fiction and non-fiction sports books. She loves presenting to schools to instil her passion for

reading and writing! Oh, and she has a dog named Poncho who she rescued from the streets of Mexico and brought home on a plane.

MEET CONNECT SHARE!



CANSCAIP Members and Friends meet monthly via Zoom to share stories, insights and achievements.

Meetings take place at 7 pm EST on the second Wednesday of each month (except July and August).

Our meetings offer a warm, inclusive and supportive space, shared by our whole cross-Canada community. Each gathering lasts about two hours and includes announcements of new books, updates on Canadian kidlit activities, and a speaker or panel of speakers on a subject of common interest. At the end of each meeting, attendees can linger briefly in breakout rooms for more intimate discussions.

JOIN US!



Save the Date for CANSCAIP's Packaging Your Imagination (PYI) Conference 2022

Saturday, October 29, 2022

For an inspiring and challenging day of learning
both LIVE-STREAMED and RECORDED



KEYNOTE ADDRESSES by Monique Gray Smith & Peter Carver

JOIN US FROM ANYWHERE!

Same prices as last year:
\$125 for CANSCAIP Friends and Members
\$150 for non-members

CHOOSE YOUR OWN PYI

Choose 4 of the 12 Live-Streamed or Recorded sessions
Keynotes included with all registrations
Live-Streamed sessions include your session recordings

PYI SESSIONS WILL BE PRESENTED BY

Helaine Becker, Sigmund Brouwer, Lana Button, Marty Chan, Mike Deas,
Natasha Donovan, Cylita Guy, Soyeon Kim, Tanya Lloyd Kyi, Qin Leng,
Yolanda Marshall, Colleen Nelson, Sara O'Leary,
AND the Breaking-In Panel, AND the Publishing Panel

ONE-TO-ONE REVIEW SESSIONS

Book a 15-minute meeting with a publishing industry professional
who's evaluated 1000 words of your manuscript or your portfolio
Add a One-to-One Live-Streamed OR Recorded session for an additional \$75



Registration begins in July

[PYI Conference Page](#)



BEVERLEY BRENNAN

The Saskatchewan Children's Book Award for *The Girl With the Cat* (Red Deer Press)

CHARIS COTTER

The Hackmatack 2022 Children's Choice Award (fiction) for *Screech! Ghost Stories from Old Newfoundland* (Nimbus Publishing)

TANYA LLOYD KYI

The Red Cedar 2022 (non-fiction) Award for *This Is Your Brain on Stereotypes: How Science Is Tackling Unconscious Bias* (Kids Can Press)

TANYA LLOYD KYI

The Red Cedar 2022 (fiction) Award for *Bansky and Me* (Penguin/Random House)

MIREILLE MESSIER

The 2022 Hackmatack (non-fiction) Award for *Sergeant Billy: The True Story of the Goat Who Went to War* (Tundra Books).

SUSIN NIELSEN

The 2022 IODE Violet Downey Award for *Tremendous Things* (Penguin/Random House)

SHORTLISTED FOR 2022/23 RED CEDAR CHILDREN'S CHOICE AWARD

Caroline Adderson for *Sunny Days Inside and Other Stories* (Groundwood Books)

Charis Cotter for *The Doll House: A Ghost Story* (Tundra Books)

Deborah Kerbel for *Fred & Marjorie: A Doctor, A Dog and the Discovery of Insulin* (OwlKids Books)

Elizabeth MacLeod and **Frieda Wishinsky** for *How To Become An Accidental Activist* (Orca Book Publishers)

Kevin Sands for *Children of the Fox* (Simon&Schuster)
Basil Sylvester and **Kevin Sylvester** for *The Fabulous Zed Watson* (HarperCollins Canada)

Kira Vermond for *Why Does My Shadow Follow Me?* (Annick Press)

SHORTLISTED FOR 2021/22 HACKMATAK BOOK AWARD

Sigmund Brouwer for *Clan* (Tundra Books)

Charis Cotter for *Screech! Ghost Stories from Old Newfoundland* (Nimbus Publishing)

Jan L. Coates for *The Hermit* (Nimbus Publishing)

Tziporah Cohen for *No Vacancy* (Groundwood Books)

Michelle Kadarusman for *Girl of the Southern Sea* (Pajama Press)

Mireille Messier for *Sergeant Billy: The True Story of the Goat Who Went to War*, (Tundra Books)

Melanie Mosher for *A Beginner's Guide to Goodbye* (Nimbus Publishing)

Colleen Nelson for *Harvey Comes Home* (Pajama Press)

Alisha Sevigny for *The Lost Scroll of the Physician* (Dundurn Press)



IN MEMORIAM ~ PAT HANCOCK

It is with great sadness that we announce the passing of Pat Hancock on August 21. She had been coping valiantly with COPD for a number of years, but this summer it worsened suddenly.

Many, many of us will remember Pat at meetings. She was part of CANSCAIP from the very beginning, first as a Friend and later as a full Member. In the early days she organized coffee and dessert after each meeting, but she soon moved on to greater organizational feats. The list is long: helping assemble our first membership directories in the three-hole punched, typed-lists days; working with the early PYI committee to plan and implement our all-day sessions; giving workshops on her specialty: creating Information Books. Even finding us new meeting places when we needed to move.

Pat eventually moved on to being president from 1991-1993, but in the two years she was vice-president she put together perhaps her biggest achievement. When we reached our tenth anniversary, the executive began discussing where CANSCAIP would go next. Our then president Priscilla Galloway said what we needed was a brainstorming session somewhere “off site.” She had the idea, but it was Pat who made it happen. She found a retreat centre on Hamilton Mountain and organized a jam-packed weekend away for about sixty of us. It ran like clockwork and we all left exhilarated and determined to take this organization that had become so unexpectedly successful in new and exciting directions. Pat knew how to run things.

Sharon Jennings remembers:

I joined CANSCAIP over thirty years ago and Pat, greeting Members at the door, was one of the first people who welcomed me. Over the years, I got to know her quite well: we were on the board together, worked *Packaging Your Imagination* together, and spent many hours talking about our shared love of children's literature.

Pat believed in CANSCAIP and in making everyone feel at home. She seemed to think her role was to stand at the back of the room and call out to presenters to ‘speak up’. Always mindful of the needs of others, she didn't want anyone to miss anything that was said.



The most important lesson that Pat taught me was to be inclusive. At meetings, and from her position at the back, she admonished us to give last names when we mentioned a fellow author or illustrator. Otherwise, she feared that we would appear as a cozy clique to new Members and Friends. How was that welcoming, she demanded.

Pat had been ill for some years, unable to attend meetings, and I have missed her big heart, her booming voice, her no-nonsense advice. An era has truly ended with her passing.

Barbara Greenwood remembers:

All the time Pat was helping to run CANSCAIP she was also busy with what she loved best—writing. Creating.

About a year before CANSCAIP began, Pat and I ran into each other in various writers' classes being given around the city. Eventually a small group of alumni of those classes decided to form a writing workshop to encourage each other [Pat Hancock, Barbara Greenwood, Bernice Thurman Hunter, Jean Booker, Vancy Kasper, Sonja Dunn, and for a number of years Kathi Willing]. And for the next thirty years the six of us met the first Wednesday of every month and shared our work-in-progress as well as

marketing information we'd picked up. Then we heard about this new children's organization, so we all trooped along to CANSCAIP to meet more like-minded writers. And it all paid off. Quite soon we were all published, first producing short stories and later books. Most of us were writing novels and Pat was great at critiquing fiction. But she had a mind that ranged widely and with great curiosity over many topics. She found her greatest success in creating information books.

Elizabeth MacLeod remembers:

I edited Pat when she wrote *The Kids Book of Canadian Prime Ministers* (Kids Can Press). I was so impressed by the amount of research she put into the book, as well as her passion and dedication. Pat had an incredible grasp of both history and current events and was able to make a lot of difficult information and concepts so accessible to kids. I also appreciated her sense of humour and enthusiasm for life.

Linda Granfield remembers:

The tagline for the *Brain Quest* Q & A information game decks is "It's Fun to Be Smart!" and I can add that it's fun, and challenging, to make a 144-card deck with 1000 questions *and* 1000 answers with someone as smart and clever as Pat Hancock! (She deserves more exclamation points than the tagline has!!!)

Think about the math for a moment: between 1998 and 2018 we worked on five editions of *Brain Quest Canada*. As the mix of in-the-news Canadians changed, the BQC cards had to change. If we moved a ten-word entry out we only had that same space to fill with new information. And we always had to leave room for the tiny spot illustration that accompanied each Q & A.

Pat's dining room table served as our first workspace. Surrounded by stacks of reference books, we sat with file folders (pre-laptop days) filled with notes on scraps of paper: the backs of grocery lists, flyers from the mailbox, yellowed notebook paper, pages torn from magazines or newspapers. The discussion of what and who belonged in the first

edition was loud, fun, and sometimes argumentative. Two Type-As in a room challenging each other to come up with the *best* material and then finding the *best* way to fit the facts into those damn little spots on the cards! *Zut alors!*

Pat's research skills were terrific and her knowledge of sports put me to shame. At all times, Pat kept us focused on producing the best quality *Brain Quest* decks the publisher had ever seen. Edit, edit, edit. Classroom enjoyment *and* learning were our goals. We worked as a flat-fee team dedicated to sharing Canadian history: we were delighted to hear that newcomer Canadians were learning about the country via the decks.

Each new edition of BQC brought us back together but the process changed. Meetings were held via speaker-phone while we cooked dinner. We left each other short phone messages: "What about Justin Bieber? Do we drop him and substitute The Weeknd?" New technology allowed us to both work from home. To be honest, I missed our shared times (in heated debate and in shared laughter) in the Oswald Crescent dining room, the breaks for a cup of coffee and a treat, being able (pre-Zoom) to see her face. I'd like to think Pat did, too.

Pat liked to laugh long and loud whenever something tickled her. How we roared when we heard our BQC was being used by university students during campus-bar trivia nights (for money! for drinks!) rather than by the Grade Five students we had in mind.

Fare thee well, Pat. Your Big Voice has been silenced but your Big Heart lives on.

During the week Pat spent in Sunnybrook ICU her husband, Ron, sent out bulletins each day to friends and family. The last line of the final bulletin read, "At 8:03 on August 21st, Pat breathed her last and became a complex collection of memories."

And so she has.

NOTEWORTHY

TIME TO SIGN UP!

Packaging Your Imagination will be held virtually on **Saturday, October 29, 2022.**

- Keynote speakers will be **Monique Gray Smith** and **Peter Carver**.
- Twelve challenging workshops will be offered.
- **Registration is open NOW! Check the [CANSCAIP website](https://skcanscaip.wordpress.com) for full details.**

CANSCAIP SASK REPORT

SAVE THE DATE: May 19-21, 2023 - The CANSCAIP Prairie Horizons conference will be held **IN PERSON** at the Queen's House Retreat and Renewal Centre in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. The theme is "Challenges and Choices" and will include presentations, panels and a performance. Our presenters are **Art Slade**, **Miriam Körner**, and Ryan Dueck (occupational therapist). Our panelists are **Kristine Scarrow**, **Judith Silverthorne**, **Sharon Plumb**, Wide Open Puppet Workshop, **Bev Brenna** (Red Deer Press), Jeanne Martinson (Wood Dragon Books), and **Miriam Körner**. Our performance will be by Wide Open Puppet Workshop. PLUS the ever popular Open Mic will take place Saturday evening! More details will be posted this fall on our website (<https://skcanscaip.wordpress.com>) and registration will open mid February. Hope to see you there!
Submitted by DIANNE YOUNG, Social Media Team, CANSCAIP Sask.

SPECIAL THANKS to Writing for Children Competition Volunteers: **Joanne Levy** and **Jean Pedziwol** (administration) and 40 more CANSCAIP Members (readers and jurors).

MARKETING KIDLIT: How To 'Tell and Sell' Canadian Kidlit Stories

Four veteran children's authors have come together to create [BookFlap.ca](https://bookflap.ca), an online platform designed to help people navigate the Canadian children's book industry. **Kathy Kacer**, **Marthe Jocelyn**, **Teresa Toten** and **Vicki Grant** have collectively over 100 books in print for young readers from toddlers to young adults.

Featuring a mix of videos, podcasts and written pieces, [BookFlap.ca](https://bookflap.ca) explores the process of "telling and selling your stories" in the form of mini-masterclasses, artist demonstrations, interviews, essays, kid book reviews, and a Q&A forum. The founders have gathered a growing community of renowned Canadian and international creators, as well as agents, publishers, and promotion specialists, whose insights are to be shared with fellow artists, educators, students, and readers. [BookFlap.ca](https://bookflap.ca) went live on May 25, 2021. Please visit! To find out more, contact, hello@bookflap.ca.

LOGO VARIATION

Our front-page logo variation is by **Martha Newbigging**. You can see more of her work in *Attack of the Killer Ideas Book: Tips and Tricks for Young Directors* (Annick Press) written by Mark Shulman, *Research Ate My Brain: The Panic-Proof Guide to Surviving Homework*, (Annick Press), and many others.

USING SOCIAL MEDIA

From time to time CANSCAIP would like to help promote its Members and Friends and their work on our social media, through #FollowFriday as well as other campaigns. Do you know of a CANSCAIP Member or Friend whose work (behind the scenes or public) you admire and feel deserves more recognition? Or are you a Member or Friend who would appreciate a shout-out? Be sure to follow CANSCAIP on [Twitter](https://twitter.com/skcanscaip) and [Facebook](https://facebook.com/skcanscaip).

FOLLOW CANSCAIP


Looking for some new creative friends? There is now a handy page on the CANSCAIP website where the Twitter handles of our professional members are listed (<http://canscaip.org/page-1862893>). Let's follow each other and help promote each other's work. And follow [@CANSCAIP](https://twitter.com/CANSCAIP) too.

FINDING CANADIAN BOOKS


49thshelf.com is a website devoted to Canadian books. Produced by the Association of Canadian Publishers together with the Canadian Publishers' Council, and with funding from the Department of Canadian Heritage and Ontario Creates, its purpose is to make it easier for readers to discover Canadian books in all genres, from bestselling authors to new talent, from publishers large and small, from all regions of the country.

ILLUSTRATORS

We are looking for more logo variations to dress up the NEWS. For inspiration, you can view our current ones at the logo site on our home page. If you are a full CANSCAIP Member and an illustrator and you would like to submit your version for possible use, here are the specifics: Digital submission is preferred, so scan your art at 300 dpi and email the file to office@canscaip.org. Make sure you put CANSCAIP Logo Submission in the subject line. We'd love to have colourful, playful art.

**The Canadian
Children's
Book Centre**



**Over 40 years
of supporting
Canadian authors
and illustrators!**

**Become a
member today.**

www.bookcentre.ca



From the President's Desk

By Sharon Jennings

One of the nicest things about this cross-our-fingers-and-hope-it-dies period of Covid is meeting up with people whom we haven't seen for over two years—not even on Zoom. So I was thrilled when Meredith Tutching agreed to let me take her out for lunch and interview her for this column. She did note, however, that there are far more interesting people to interview than her. Not for those of us toiling in the children's book world!

Meredith is the Director of the Forest of Reading Program. As such, whether you know it or not, she is one of the most important people in our lives. Why? Meredith gets our books (the ones that make it onto the Tree lists) out to the most important people: our young readers. If you are fortunate enough to find your book nominated for a Tree (as most creators have fondly dubbed the awards), you will see more sales than ever before and be asked to more schools and libraries than you thought possible. In other words, royalties and income. Most publishers have little to no money for marketing and promotion, and some publishers (we all secretly believe) don't seem to have much interest in some of our books. But if you make it to a Tree list, your marketing dreams will come true. (Not *Fifty Shades of Grey* true, but still.)

Newcomers, or those of us not paying attention, may be wondering: what exactly is a Tree award and why is it important? The program is made up of ten reading categories or divisions, from primary grades to high school young adult, English and French. The tenth category is for adult titles. There are also ten juries of approximately fifteen volunteers each—

educators, library professionals, booksellers. These juries choose ten books for their lists. They are mindful of the fact that these awards are about the enjoyment of reading. It is a recreational (not literary) program. In other words—FUN!

The truly brilliant aspect of this program is that once the titles have been selected and the books received by participating schools/libraries, it is the kids who vote (excluding the Evergreen, adult division). Over a few months, they read each (most) of the books and get into heated arguments with their classmates about why this book or that should win. Then they vote; the votes are counted; the winners are announced. Some of us think that our book should have won. But how do you rant against a bunch of six-year-olds? Or sneer at teenagers rolling their eyes? There isn't a cash prize for winning, but, even better, there is the bulk sales of our books and the adoration of our fans. On a side note, sometimes a reader will tell you, "I didn't vote for your book." Why, thank you for sharing, young man.

BACK TO MEREDITH. She didn't set out to have this career. She graduated from Queen's University with a degree in geography. She is also a professional synchronized skating coach and consultant, in addition to mentoring with Skate Ontario and Skate Canada. This last may seem irrelevant to us, but as she enthused over lunch about her ideas and goals for the Forest program, I could picture her out on the ice, demanding precision and sharp lines and keeping many athletes working smoothly together.

Meredith took a two-week job with OLA (Ontario Library Association) back in 2001. She's now been there for over twenty years. In the early days, Meredith was the assistant to the Executive Director of the OLA, and the Forest job took up 30% of her time; in 2009 it became her full-time job. Meredith had so many ideas for going bigger and better, and she was so enthusiastic about kids and reading and promoting creators that the job couldn't be contained in a few hours a week.

Now, the Forest is the largest recreational reading program and the largest children's literary event in Canada. And Meredith has still more plans for further growth. She has always dreamed of expanding the program to fill the gaps in other provinces, and to do so, she finally managed to remove the program from the OLA website and obtain a standalone Forest website—forestofreading.com. This made it easier to reach out to schools across Canada with a program that could be seen as national, rather than piggybacking on an Ontario institution. Historically, there have been four schools outside of Ontario; this year there are almost fifty. Meredith wants to get to 200 by June 2023.

Just to be clear: books from published creators across Canada have always been eligible for the Forest Program. Meredith wanted to change the number of *schools* that would participate in the Program. So, if you live in Saskatchewan and your book is nominated for the Blue Spruce, you can now (or hopefully soon) get school visits in your home province and not have to travel to the participating schools in Ontario. (But then you might miss the 'I feel like a rock star' ceremony in Toronto as you are swarmed by autograph-seeking readers.)

The Program is always changing as it receives feedback. There are occasionally some complaints and grievances from creators and publishers (I'm

shocked!) and, therefore, the team continues to take steps towards greater transparency. Once the books have been chosen, Meredith holds a meeting every September, in partnership with the Official Wholesaler, so that the publishers can learn about

any new developments with the program and ask questions. The lists of nominated books are kept confidential until the official announcement in mid-October. And before that announcement, the wholesaler has pre-packaged listed books in order that they may go out immediately. Last year, the Official Wholesaler, Tinlids sold over 105,000 books alone.

Occasionally, the Program has been accused of 'hiding' things (Hmmm. That sounds intriguing!) Meredith is careful to make sure the rules for

submission and participation are clear and understood. Also, there is a ten-clause contract between the wholesaler and publisher which must be upheld. For example, there is a fee for each nominated book (\$550.00 for a Silver Birch title), the book must be published and available by October 15, and there must be a guaranteed number of books ready to ship (approximately 3500 copies for each Silver Birch title).

Smaller publishers pay willingly and order in the books because this is marketing that they can't afford and offers big dividends. Interestingly, it is some of the larger publishers who get huffy.


SOMETIMES, PUBLISHERS GET HUFFY as well when a book they expected to be on a list isn't there. On the other hand, I mentioned to Meredith that some of my colleagues aren't sure if their books got submitted. If we have such doubts, we are allowed to ask; however, she won't divulge the reasons why the book was declined.



Another way our books are getting into our readers hands: all one hundred titles are sent to a company (AERO—Alternate Education Resources for Ontario) that makes each title accessible in several formats for young people with print disabilities.

So much work done on our behalf, and that isn't all of it! For years, library staff ran the program in their individual schools. Now the Forest and its volunteers do it all because of, as Meredith stated, "the erosion of school libraries." And, by the way, Meredith liaisons with over 250 volunteers. Another by the way, only 7% of the Forest budget comes from government funding. And one more: Meredith divulged that she doesn't read our books. *What?!* She feels that if she reads one, she will have to read them all. So why is she in this job? "I love the logistics of it." Yup. Out there on the ice with her whistle!

TWO HOURS FLEW BY. We finished our lunch—chicken and avocado sandwiches and lemon-mint slushies. To be accurate, Meredith finished; I still had half a sandwich to get through as I scrambled to take notes, hoping that I would be able to decipher my own shorthand. She left, and I kept scribbling. Meredith's final words were about what a close and supportive and helpful community we have. "There is room for everyone in this program." She also mentioned that, "Sometimes, creators are hard to herd." Don't we know it!

Creative Writing Masterclasses

Led by Today's Leading Authors

September 22 – October 2, 2022

BOOK NOW

FestivalofAuthors.ca

WELCOME!

by Monique Polak

In this column we welcome our newest Members.



JENNIFER BRITTON is a teacher and a musician, and the author of *If You Could Be Anything* (Nimbus, 2022). Originally from Ottawa, she always felt called to the east coast and has lived in both New Brunswick and Nova Scotia. Forever a teacher, Jennifer's writing engages

young readers by inspiring them to think critically and creatively about the world and their place in it. Jennifer currently resides in Hubley, Nova Scotia, with her husband and three children.



JULIEN CHUNG is a designer and illustrator of children's books. Because being a graphic designer for a major metropolitan newspaper is very serious business, Julien began drawing quirky animal characters to lighten things up. A party of dapper little penguins on a milk glass

launched Julien's illustration career. His stylized characters and designs are on products and books around the world—from pet dishes to piggy banks, from Reykjavik to Tokyo. With ten published books including Mary Lyn Rae's *Vroom! Vroom!* (Simon & Schuster, 2021) and several more in the works, Julien has earned accolades for his illustrations from 3x3 magazine, the American Society of Illustrators,

Applied Arts, the Bologna Children's Book Fair, and the Nami Concours to name a few. He lives and works in Montreal.

WESLEY KING is the #1 New York Times Bestselling author of 13 novels for middle grade and young adult readers, including the Wizenard Series, *OCDaniel*, *The Vindico*, and more. He has won over 20 literary awards and currently resides in Port au Port, Newfoundland.



BRITTANY LANE is a children's book illustrator based in Stouffville, Ontario. She is the illustrator of the interactive guessing game *Rock? Plant? Animal?* (Owlkids Books, 2022). Outside of illustrating books for kids, she does product illustration, private commissions and she maintains a fine art practice in which she makes large scale wildlife art pieces using chalk pastel on blackboards. She works out of her studio in her home and lives with her husband and their lovely dog Luna.



**PRITI BIRLA MAHESHWAR**

was born in India and moved to Montreal, then Toronto with her family. She graduated from the University of Toronto, majoring in French and completed her Association Montessori International CASA training. She then moved to the US where she

completed a Master of Education in Curriculum and Instruction from Cleveland State University. Priti taught at Princeton Montessori and then the Red Oaks School in New Jersey. She moved back to Canada in 2009 and for more than ten years, she has taught French at St. John-Kilmarnock in Breslau, Ontario. Priti recently completed her Picture Book Intensive Certificate through Vermont College of Fine Arts. *Chaiwala!*—illustrated by **ASHLEY BARRON**—is Priti's first book. She is currently supply teaching as she continues to work on her writing. Priti is married and has a daughter at university.



JOY NORSTROM (she/her) is a contemporary fiction writer and social worker residing in Treaty 7 Territory, Calgary Alberta. Her first picture book, *Marjorie Magic*, illustrated by Anushka Shenoy, will be released by Dixi Books in November 2022 and she can't wait to share this

story with readers of all ages, but especially those who dream of magic. Joy also writes for older readers. Her novels, *Flying the Nest* (2020) and *Out of Play* (2016) feature quirky characters facing real life issues. Joy enjoys outdoor adventures with her family and reading late into the night when she should be asleep.

JUAN (JOEY) QI is an illustrator who was born in China and now lives in Calgary. About twenty years ago, a magazine asked her to illustrate for them. From there, she began her career as an illustrator. During this time, she illustrated publications, some picture books and comics. She also provides illustrations to companies for their brands. These illustrations are used in advertising, on social media and websites. No matter where her work will appear, Juan's goal is always to tell a good story.



GILLIAN SZE is the author of multiple poetry collections and picture books, including *My Love For You Is Always*, illustrated by Michelle Lee (Philomel, 2022) and *You Are My Favourite Colour*, illustrated by Nina Mata (Philomel, 2021). Her book *The Night is Deep and Wide* was listed as one of the Best Books for Kids in 2021 by the New York Public Library. Gillian studied Creative Writing and English Literature and received a PhD in études anglaises from Université de Montréal. Originally from Winnipeg, she now lives in Montreal, where she teaches creative writing and literature. Learn more about Gillian by visiting www.gilliansze.com or following her on Twitter and Instagram @gilliansze






JO TREGGIARI is the multi-award nominated author of five books for children. Her most recent young adult novel, *The Grey Sisters* (Penguin Teen, 2019) was a finalist for the Governor General's Literary Award, the Crime Writers of Canada Award and the Ann Connor Brimer Children's

Literature Award. Her new book, the YA thriller *Heartbreak Homes*, will be published by Nimbus in October 2022.




When **JOCELYN WATKINSON** was growing up, she was the only hockey sister in the cold arena reading Baby-Sitters Club books while rambunctious crowds cheered, and her little brother played goalie for the local rep hockey team. Had there been more opportunities at the time

for girls in sports, she might have been on the ice, rather than sitting in the stands! But with a well-developed love of literature and sports, Jocelyn enjoys writing sports-themed books for children and most importantly, writing in rhyme! Her books include *The Three Canadian Pigs: A Hockey Story* (Sleeping Bear Press, 2022). Jocelyn is an ex-pat Canadian living in California with her husband, son and golden retriever, Sinclair. When not fussing over stanzas and rhyming couplets, Jocelyn likes to play soccer and board games, craft anything from cross stitch to string art, refurbish old furniture—all while sipping on a hot cup of tea.



The Canadian Children's Book Centre



**Over 40 years
of supporting
Canadian authors
and illustrators!**

**Become a
member today.**

www.bookcentre.ca

NEWS ROUNDUP

By Elizabeth MacLeod

ATLANTIC REGION

Welcome to new Friends **Angele Bourque**, Dieppe, NB; **Susanne Connolly**, Port George, NS; **Gillian Salmon**, Fredericton, NB; **Shirley Heringer Sellars**, Mount Pearl, NL; **Natasha Wells**, Massey Drive, NL.



MICHELLE ROBINSON is celebrating the release of three new picture books: *When Ice Cream Had a Meltdown*, *The Pumpkin Who Was Afraid of the Dark* (both Scholastic) and *Planet Football* (Walker). Michelle is looking forward to appearing at the Toronto International Festival of

Authors in October. She is a new member of CANSCAIP, having recently moved from Great Britain, where she is a hugely successful children's author. Michelle lives in Tatamagouche, NS.

JO TREGGIARI is delighted to announce that her new young-adult murder mystery, *Heartbreak Homes* (Nimbus Publishing), will be released October 11. In the wake of a brutal brawl at an illegal house party, guests find a lifeless body—and this is only the first. Escalating violence drives outsiders Frankie, Martin and Cara to forge new bonds and together unmask a killer. Told from multiple perspectives and featuring a cast of queer and marginalized kids, this book is about what compels us to kill and the true face of justice. Award-winning author Tom Ryan (*Keep This to Yourself*) calls it “a thrilling, twisty mystery. An absolute must read.” Jo lives in Lunenburg, NS.

QUÉBEC

Welcome to new Friends **Georgina Rilling**, Quebec City, **Liliana Tommasini**, Laval.

ANDREW KATZ and Juliana

Léveillé-Trudel are bear-normously excited for the launch of their picture book *A Starlit Trip to the Library*, in French *Voyage de nuit à la bibli*. It's the sequel to their Forest of Reading-nominated debut, *How to Catch a Bear Who Loves to Read* / *Comment attraper un ours qui aime lire* (all CrackBoom!).



Look for launch events in Montreal and Toronto and come enjoy readings by the creators as well as a performance of “Julia’s Song”—a lullaby in the voice of the main character, Julia, written by Andrew, sung by Taes Leavitt. Bring any young readers in your life for a fun event! Andrew lives in Montreal.

ANNE RENAUD will be facilitating two writing workshops this fall for the Quebec Writers’ Federation (QWF) on the topics of researching picture book biographies and writing for kids’ magazines. Space is limited. Information on dates, times and pricing is available on the QWF website. Anne lives in Westmount.

GILLIAN SZE is delighted to announce the release of her third picture book, *You Are My Favourite Colour* (Philomel Books), illustrated by Nina Mata. The lyrical story of parental love celebrates and takes pride in the many shades of brown skin. *Kirkus Reviews* praises it as “a sweet, languorous celebration of brown skin in all its infinite shades and of multiracial, multifaceted families. Lovely.” Gillian lives in Montreal.



JANE BAIRD WARREN's middle-grade novel debuted October 4. *How to Be a Goldfish* (Scholastic Canada) is a gripping story about lost and found family, fierce friendship, warm griddle cakes and finding the courage to be who you were always meant to be. Cover art for

the book is by Julie McLaughlin. The launch will be held Quebec-style—cinq à sept—on October 20 at The Cliff House in Ayer's Cliff. A celebration of community and friendship, the launch includes a presentation of *How to Be a Goldfish* to the Language Arts Coordinator for the township's English-language schools. A special package of Canadian books will also be gifted to Jane's small village school. The books include *The King of Jam Sandwiches* (by **ERIC WALTERS**), *On the Line* (by **PAUL COCCIA** and **ERIC WALTERS**) and *Winterkill* (by **MARSHA SKRYPUCH**). Jane sincerely wishes she could gift all of this year's wonderful Canadian middle grade titles. She lives in Ayer's Cliff.

ONTARIO (OUTSIDE TORONTO)

Welcome to new Friends **Kathy Aneziris**, Richmond Hill; **Helen Baumander**, Kingston; **Cheryl Charles**, Waterloo; **Elaine Fung**, Oakville; **Janet Hambly**, Markdale; **Kate Jenks**, Kitchener; **Oana Mitsuk**, Newmarket; **Sharon Nichols**, Calabogie; **Graham Payne**, Kirkland Lake; **Elizabeth Poyser**, Innisfil; **Emily Smith**, Whitby; **Sheryl Spencer**, Mount Forest; **Susan Stott**, Pontypool; **Deborah Tiffin**, London; **Eleanor Tyldesley**, Burlington; **Jillian Watson**, Waterloo.

SARA DE WAARD is the recipient of the Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario (ETFO) Writer's Award for Women for her debut novel *White Lies*

(DCB/Cormorant Books). The book was released May 14. Sara celebrates the accolade with her two teenagers. She lives in Dain City.

MARTHE JOCELYN's fourth (and final) book in her middle-grade mystery series about kid detectives Aggie Morton and Hector Perot will be published November 1. *The Seaside Corpse* (Tundra Books) is illustrated by Isabelle Follath, with audiobook narration by Sarah English.

The story takes place in the summer of 1903 on the Jurassic Coast of England. Aggie is an imagined version of twelve-year-old Agatha Christie. This time she's at camp with palaeontologists and delving into the seabed for the bones of an ichthyosaur... and coming up with a very dead human as well. Marthe lives in Stratford.



DEBORAH KERBEL is delighted to announce the arrival of two new books for young readers this fall! *When Spider Met Shrew* (Groundwood Books) is a picture book about friendship and community. Illustrated by Geneviève Côté, it's published in September. Deborah's second book is *The Late, Great Endings: Stories of the Last Survivors* (Orca Book Publishers). It's a non-fiction picture book about extinction illustrated by Aimee van Drimmelen and will be published in October. Deborah lives in Thornhill.

LYNN LEITCH is happy to report that her debut picture book, *Dinos Driving* (Pajama Press), will be released this fall. Illustrated by **SCOT RITCHIE**, this book asks why each dinosaur would choose the vehicle they drive. Ideal for two-to-five-year-old readers who love dinosaurs and cars, *Dinos Driving* inspires questions about why things belong together.

Book launches will be held in Vancouver (on October 15) and Burlington (in December). Lynn lives in Burlington.



JOANNE LEVY is delighted to announce her latest middle-grade release in the “Currents” series. *The Book of Elsie* (Orca) follows Elsie Rose-Miller who is determined to be brave and fierce, standing up to prejudice—of many kinds—in her community. *The Book of Elsie* has been

chosen as a Junior Library Guild Gold Standard Selection and has already received great reviews. “Strong first-person narration thoughtfully explores experiences of antisemitism and prejudice,” says *Booklist*. “Levy presents a realistic, gutsy, problem-solving youth navigating difficult situations with the love and support of community, friends and family.” Joanne lives in Clinton.

AMANDA WEST LEWIS is thrilled to have her novel *These Are Not the Words* (Groundwood) on the American League of Poets list of recommended reading for young people. Go to poets.org/2022-summer-books-list-young-readers to find out more. *These Are Not the Words* is a semi-autobiographical novel written in verse and prose poetry. The form allowed Amanda to deal with themes of mental health, addiction and loss in a personal and intimate way from the perspective of a 12-year-old girl. Amanda is incredibly honoured to be on a list that includes such luminaries as Jacqueline Woodson and Nikki Grimes. Amanda lives in Perth.

SYLVIA McNICOLL is pleased to announce that on July 21 the Honourable Karina Gould, Member of Parliament for Burlington, Ontario, presented Sylvia with a Platinum Jubilee Hero Award for her role in

producing *Writing the Rollercoaster, Stories of Our Pandemic Experience* (Bluefoot Press). Together with Lynda Simmons, Sylvia created writing tip videos and gave workshops as well as collected, selected and edited stories and poems for the anthology. It was then published and distributed free of charge through various Burlington locations. Sylvia lives in Burlington.

SHANE PEACOCK's latest novel, *The Book of Us* (DCB), his first in several years, will be a departure in style and tone. A unique story for teens, it explores the question of how boys should treat girls, from a boy's perspective, a boy learning from his mistakes. The book will be published in October. Shane lives in Cobourg.



MARIE PRINS is happy to announce that her debut picture book, *Who's Walking Dawg?* (Red Deer Press), will be published in fall 2023. The story was inspired by her dog's desire to roam on his own when his loving, but distracted, family was too busy to walk him. And oh, what an adventure he had! Marie lives in Colborne.

JUDY ANN SADLER's latest picture book, *The Digger Dance* (Owlkids Books), delightfully illustrated by Yong Ling Kang, will be dancing into book stores this October. When Grandma tells her grandson that diggers dance, he runs to the field to check it out. But he's too late, the diggers are done for the day and the next day



it's raining. To fill the time, he plows through his books, digs through his toy box and dumps, scoops and unloads ingredients as he helps Grandma bake. Eventually, though, the sky clears and the construction site rumbles back to life. Do diggers dance? You'll have to dig in to find out! Judy Ann lives in London.

MARSHA SKRYPUCH is honoured to announce that the Holodomor Research and Education Consortium (holodomor.ca) is funding the cost of 30 of her school and library virtual presentations for her newest novel, *Winterkill* (Scholastic Canada). The book is set in Ukraine at a time when the Soviet dictator was committing the Holodomor or genocide of Ukraine by starvation. This funding is timed to commemorate the 90th anniversary of the 1932–33 Holodomor in Ukraine. Schools interested in applying for funding can contact Marsha via her website. Marsha lives in Brantford.

TORONTO

Welcome to new Friends **Sarah Armenia, Leo Bishop, Carole Buium, Jolie Carey, Thereza Dos Santos, Celestine Hall, Emily McKernan, Barbara Wade Rose, Janet Smyth, Laura Thompson.**



LAURA ALARY is excited to announce the publication of *Here: The Dot We Call Home* (Paraclete Press), illustrated by Cathrin Peterslund. When a child finds clues that others have lived in her house before her, she begins to wonder about them and about those who will come after

her. The more she wonders, the more her sense of

home expands, stretching to include an entire planet. *Here* helps children begin to think of themselves as both descendants and ancestors and to comprehend that people of every place and time share one home and the task of looking after it. Laura grew up by the ocean in Halifax and has also spent many hours exploring the beaches of Prince Edward Island—one of her favourite spots on this dot we call home.

HEATHER CAMLOT is pleased to report the release of three books this fall. *Secret Schools: True Stories of the Determination to Learn* (Owlkids Books) spotlights 15 covert classrooms from around the world and invites readers to think deeply about the meaning of and access to education. Illustrated by Erin Taniguchi, it will be available September 15. *The Prisoner and the Writer* (Groundwood Books) will be published October 4. Written in verse and illustrated by **SOPHIE CASSON**, it tells the story of the violently divisive Dreyfus Affair and Emile Zola's explosive letter, "J'Accuse...!", which explained that Captain Alfred Dreyfus was blamed, charged, tried and convicted of treason... only because he was Jewish. Heather will be participating in a group virtual book launch on September 22 for *I Can't Do What? Strange Laws and Rules from Around the World* (Red Deer Press), illustrated by Mike Deas.



ANNE DUBLIN reports that the Association of Jewish Libraries Canada (AJL-Canada) is reaching out to CANSCAIP members who might want to join the organization. The chapter is part of the international AJL, whose members include authors, librarians, publishers and teachers from all over the world. For more information, please contact Anne.



CAROLINE FERNANDEZ is happy to announce two fall book launches with two amazing Canadian publishers. *Asha and Baz Meets Mary Sherman Morgan* (Common Deer Press), launches in September as book one in a new chapter book series centring on STEM (Science,

Technology, Engineering and Mathematics), history and women in science. It's illustrated by **SHANNON O'TOOLE**. Also launching in September is *Hide and Seek: Wild Animal Groups in North America* (DC Canada Education Publishing), illustrated by Erin Mercer, it's a picture book that follows a monarch butterfly's migration through North America.



CAROLE GIANGRANDE is thrilled with the publication of her second picture book, *The Laundromat Cat* (Pandamonium Publishers), on October 1. It's an action-packed cat-and-mouse story, with fantastic illustrations by Yuee Huang. Join the chase

as Sudsy the cat and Whiskers the mouse mess up the laundry and end up friends. *The Laundromat Cat* is for readers ages three to seven.

ELAINE KACHALA announces the publication of her first book, *Superpower? The Wearable-Tech Revolution* (Orca Book Publishers), illustrated by Belle Wuthrich. Readers will discover how technological innovation can help people survive, live better lives and thrive. But what if technology helps some people but not others? What if super strength results in endless work? What if living in a virtual world affects our

humanity? Can innovation go too far? Readers meet the inventors, designers, engineers, scientists and young people asking these questions and navigating the next tech frontier of wearable computing. *Superpower?* launches October 18 and is part of "Orca Think," a nonfiction series for middle-grade readers introducing them to issues making world headlines. TEACH Magazine profiled *Superpower?* in their July/August 2022 issue. You can visit Elaine's website for current news and free downloadable resources including a Teacher's Guide.

ETTA KANER is delighted to announce the publication of not one, but two nonfiction books this fall. The first is a guessing game for younger children, entitled *Rock? Plant?*

Animal? How Nature Keeps Us Guessing (Owlkids). It's illustrated by **BRITTANY**

LANE. Etta's second book is a nonfiction graphic novel entitled *Beware the Burmese Pythons and Other Invasive Species* (Kids Can Press) and illustrated by Phil Nichols.



KAREN KROSSING announces her nonfiction picture book *One Tiny Bubble* (Owlkids Books) illustrated by Dawn Lo. Over billions of years, the many unique life-forms now on Earth evolved from the same few ingredients—ingredients that once bubbled together to create LUCA, our Last Universal Common Ancestor. Tinier than a cupcake sprinkle, LUCA was a one-celled being that triggered mighty changes. You and every life-form on our planet share this one relative, making us all part of the oldest family on Earth. Grounded in science, *One Tiny Bubble* is a poetic reminder of our fundamental connection to the extraordinary life around us.

MARY BETH LEATHERDALE had the great pleasure of working with tennis star Bianca Andreescu on her picture book *Bibi's Got Game: A Story about Tennis, Meditation and a Dog Named Coco* (Tundra). After many COVID months of remote communication, Mary Beth was delighted to finally meet Bianca and Coco in person (and in dog) this summer and celebrate the release of the book—gorgeously illustrated by Chelsea O'Byrne—at the Bay-Bloor Indigo in Toronto.

ELIZABETH MACLEOD's book *Meet Joseph-Armand Bombardier*, illustrated by Mike Deas, was published September 6. *Meet David Suzuki* (both Scholastic Canada), another book in this series about amazing Canadians, was a starred selection in the list of “Best Books for Kids & Teens 2022” from the Canadian Children's Book Centre. The books in this series are also available in French. Liz's book *Monster Fliers from the Time of the Dinosaurs* (Kids Can Press) has been translated into Danish by publisher Lamberth ApS. She provided the back-cover blurb for **HEATHER CAMLOT's** new book, *I Can't Do What?* (Red Deer Press).

KENNETH OPPEL's new middle-grade supernatural thriller *Ghostlight* (Puffin Canada) is out this fall, published simultaneously in the United States (Knopf) and the United Kingdom (Guppy Books). *Publishers Weekly* described the book as “*Stranger Things* meets *Ghostbusters*” and Kenneth can live with that!



BARBARA REID will join author Emil Sher to share their picture book *I Love You More* (Scholastic Canada) at the Toronto International Festival of Authors (TIFA) on Sunday, October 2. Barbara will also take part in TIFA's Big Draw event on Saturday, October 1 from

2:00 to 4:00 p.m. Big Draw is a space where kids of all ages can drop in and create some book inspired art. There will be Plasticine—what's not to love?

ANNA ROSNER is pleased to announce the simultaneous October 10 publication of her young-adult hockey biography *My Left Skate: The Extraordinary Story of Eliezer Sherbatov* (Great Plains Publications) and its translation by André Gagnon, *Sherbatov:*



Le garçon qui voulait jouer au hockey (Éditions Hurtubise). As a star teenage hockey player in Montréal, Eliezer is destined for the National Hockey League until a bizarre rollerblading accident leaves him with no feeling below his left knee. Eliezer must walk with a brace for life. After two-and-a-half years off the rink and three operations, Eliezer decides nothing will stop him from turning pro, not even his disability. His hockey trajectory leads him all over the globe, including to Mariupol, Ukraine, where he plays in the Donetsk region. On February 24, 2022, Eliezer is awakened by bombs exploding just a few kilometres away and must find a way to escape the country.

KEVIN SYLVESTER has two books out this fall. *Apartment 713* (HarperCollins) is a time-travel mystery. Kevin is also releasing *In the Game* (Scholastic Canada). It's the fifth book in the goofy “Hockey Super-Six” series.

VIKKI VANSICKLE is delighted to announce the upcoming publication of her ninth book, *P.S. Tell No One* (Scholastic Canada), in February 2023. Told in the form of a secret diary shared between four anonymous seventh graders, *P.S. Tell No One* is a frank, funny and necessary middle-grade novel about navigating the physical and emotional realities of

puberty. *P.S. Tell No One* is a spiritual successor to the iconic *Are You There God? It's Me, Margaret* by Judy Blume and will be Vikki's first novel since the multi-award winning *The Winnowing* (Scholastic Canada).



SUE TODD has illustrated a series of six whiskey labels for Rabbit Hole Distillery in Kentucky. You might think, that's not for children! But the theme Sue chose involved characters from *Alice in Wonderland*. The limited edition series depicts Alice, The White Rabbit, Mad Hatter, Queen

of Hearts, Caterpillar and the Footmen, all created in Sue's linocut style with a steampunk twist.

FRIEDA WISHINSKY and **ELIZABETH MACLEOD** are pleased that their book *How to Become an Accidental Activist* is nominated for the Red Cedar Book Award. The next, and third, book in the "Accidental" series is called *How to Become an Accidental Entrepreneur* and was published September 13. It contains profiles of famous and lesser-known entrepreneurs organized into chapters such as "Be a Planner," "Go Green," "Stick to It" and "Find Your Niche." "Concise, intriguing stories of people who have achieved their dreams bolster this book of advice for aspiring entrepreneurs. An informative ... inspiring guide for kids with big dreams," says *Booklist*. The book is already a Dewey Diva Pick! Go to orcabook.com/Assets/PDFs/TeacherResource/HowToBecomeAnAccidentalEntrepreneur-Poster.pdf to print a poster from the book. Frieda and Liz's book *A History of Just About Everything: 180 Events, People and Inventions That Changed the World* (Kids Can Press) has been translated into Russian by Piter Class Ltd.

MANITOBA, SASKATCHEWAN & ALBERTA

Welcome to new Friends **Amy Langen**, Regina; **Candace Stephenson**, Calgary; **Lindsay Woollard**, Winnipeg.

DOROTHY BENTLEY's timely adventure story *Escape from the Wildfire* (Lorimer Kids & Teens) enables young readers to consider the consequences of ever-more-frequent disasters triggered by climate change. The book includes study helps for teachers with curriculum tie-ins, as well as further study suggestions. With themes of resiliency and adaptation, students become aware of their own agency to bring about change. Dorothy will be touring bookstores and schools both in-person and virtually. Check her web site for dates and locations. Dorothy lives in Okotoks, Alberta.



BEVERLEY BRENNAN's picture book *The Girl with the Cat* (Red Deer Press), illustrated by Brooke Kerrigan has won the 2022 G. Murray and Edna Forbes Foundation Children's Award, which is a Saskatchewan Book Award. Nine-year-old Caroline learns that her favourite bronze sculpture is soon to be lost from a local gallery. The power of art and the impact of a child's voice are key themes in this true story about taking action. Bev lives in Saskatoon, SK.



LORNA SCHULTZ NICHOLSON has three books out this fall. *Good Morning Sunshine: The Joey Moss Story* (Sleeping Bear Press) is a picture-book biography illustrated by **ALICE CARTER**. *Carey Price* (Scholastic Canada) is the latest instalment in Lorna's nonfiction middle-grade "Amazing Hockey Stories" series and includes graphics by D.A. Bishop. *Behind the Label* (Red Deer) is the fifth book in Lorna's "One-2-One" series, suitable for upper middle-grade and high-school students. Lorna lives in Edmonton.

JOY NORSTROM is pleased to share that her picture book *Marjorie Magic* (Dixi Books Ltd.), illustrated by Anushka Shenoy, will be published in November. Can ordinary, un-magical Marjorie belong in a family called Magic? Join Marjorie on a journey to discover just how extraordinary she is. *Marjorie Magic* is a story about belonging, determination and grit. Joy lives in Treaty 7 territory in Calgary.

LINDA TRINH is thrilled to announce the first two books in her debut early chapter book series "The Nguyen Kids" (Annick Press) will be released in October. Siblings Anne, Liz and Jacob are given gifts passed on to them by their Grandma Nôi. These gifts tie them to their ancestors and their Vietnamese heritage. The siblings tap into the power of these gifts to help them work through the social justice challenges they face and explore who they are. *The Secret of the Jade Bangle* follows eldest child Anne and *The Power of the Pearl Earrings* follows middle child Liz. Linda is a Vietnamese Canadian author who writes fiction and nonfiction for children and adults. She explores identity, cultural background and spirituality. Her work has appeared in anthologies and literary magazines. Linda lives in Winnipeg.

BRITISH COLUMBIA, YUKON, NUNAVUT & NORTH WEST TERRITORIES

Welcome to new Friends **Kim Benson**, Squamish, BC; **Tanya Elchuk**, Vancouver; **Carol Faubert**, Vancouver; **Braden Hallett**, Kamloops, BC; **Doeun Rivendell**, Nanaimo, BC; **Jane Sawyer**, Port Alberni, BC; **Stacy Thomas**, Squamish, BC.

E.G. ALARAJ would like to celebrate the release of the cover art for her first work of fiction, a bedtime board book entitled *When Stars Arise* (Orca Book Publishers). Set to launch April 11, 2023, the board book features poetic verse by E.G. and stunning original artwork by artist/illustrator Martyna Czub. *When Stars Arise* is a gift for any family struggling with bedtime routines and active toddlers who just need a little more help settling down. You can pre-order a copy through the publisher and other retailers. E.G. lives in Vancouver.

KAREN AUTIO reports that in July her chess-themed short story for young readers called "You Can't Win" was included in the textbook/studieboeken *Stepping Stones ed 7.1* (Noordhoff) for secondary schools in the Netherlands. Karen's picture book *I Can, Too!* (Scholastic Canada)



and its French translation *Moi Aussi, Je Peux!* (Éditions Scholastic) are about accessibility, adaptive equipment, inclusion and friendship. Illustrated by Laura Watson, the books are for ages three to seven and will be released October 4. At Mission Branch Library in Kelowna, British Columbia, on October 23, Karen will launch *I Can, Too!* and **LORAIN KEMP** will launch her children's novel *Luna* (Crwth Press), with their readings simultaneously interpreted in ASL. For

more information, visit Karen's web site. She lives in Kelowna.

NORMA CHARLES is excited to announce that her picture book *The Big Question* (Groundwood) will be published in spring 2025. Norma lives in Vancouver.

GLEN HUSER reports that at the Writers' Guild of Alberta gala on June 11 his novel *Burning the Night* (NeWest Press) was awarded the \$10,000 Robert Kroetsch City of Edmonton Book Prize. "*Burning the Night* artfully blends the present and the past, the personal and historical, as protagonist Curtis takes a deep dive into the history of a possibly queer relative and comes face to face with his own repressed identity," said the jury. "Through subtle writing, Huser asks the reader to pay careful attention to subtext, as what is left off the pages of history is just as important as what is recorded." Glen lives in Vancouver.



GEORGE M. JOHNSON announces that his picture book *Sophia's Secrets* has been published in Dutch as *Kleine geheimen* (both Clavis Books) or *Small Secrets*. Sophia shares her secrets, from sneaky to toothy to hopeful, in delightful ways, including whispering one to the breeze and dropping

another into a puddle, but the best way is to share one with her brother. The story draws on George's daughter Sophia's small secrets, including one involving disappearing broccoli. He looks forward to the English version being published in spring 2023. The text of *Sophia's Secrets* won the Pacific Northwest Writers' Association award for the best children's story in 2018. George lives in Kamloops, BC.

SHACHI KAUSHIK is delighted to announce her forthcoming picture book *Diwali in My New Home* (Beaming Books), illustrated by Aishwarya Tandon. It's a heartwarming story of celebrating Diwali, the festival of lights, in a new place with those unfamiliar with the holiday. The book is a perfect gift to add to your Diwali gift basket. *Diwali in My New Home* will be available September 27 and can be pre-ordered from Amazon. Shachi lives in Vancouver.



LORAIN KEMP is excited to report that her book *Luna* (Crwth) was released August 30. For readers ages 7 to 11, *Luna* is about a cougar cub's struggles to return home after an accident splits her from her family. However a lone wolf has other plans for her. This will be the first book Loraine has both written and illustrated, but the fifth one she has illustrated. On October 23 at the Mission Branch Library in Kelowna, British Columbia, Loraine will launch *Luna* with **KAREN AUTIO**, who will be also launching her latest book *I Can, Too!* (Scholastic Canada). There will be activities and readings for kids during the book launch. Loraine and Karen had previously partnered for their book *Growing Up In Wild Horse Canyon* (Crwth). Loraine lives in Kelowna.

JOHN WILSON's latest title, *Peace and War: Three Decades that Changed the World, 1914–1945* (Amazon Print on Demand), is an updating of three previous titles (*Desperate Glory*, *Failed Hope* and *Bitter Ashes*). Lavishly illustrated with original photographs, the accessible text and informative sidebars provide a readable introduction to this defining and complex period in recent history for kids and teens or anyone with an interest in the past. We cannot understand

the intricacies of our modern world without knowing this segment of history. John writes in Lantzville, BC.


INTERNATIONAL

Welcome to new Friend **Joni Nemeth**, Chandler, Arizona, USA.


GORDON KORMAN wants everyone (in the world!) to know that his one-hundredth book, *The Fort*, debuted July 28 right onto the NYT bestseller list. And while he was crowing over that, he happened to check the paperback list and there was *Restart* (both Scholastic,) holding at #1! Sometimes things do go right! Gord lives in Great Neck, New York, USA.

LAWRENCE SCHIMEL's translation into English of *Balam, Lluvia, y la casa* (The Emma Press) won a Poets, Playwrights, Editors, Essayists, Novelists (PEN) Translates Award from English PEN. The book is by Guatemalan writer Julio Serrano Echeverría, illustrated by Yolanda Mosquera and forthcoming in the United Kingdom. *Tú me sostienes*, Lawrence's translation into Spanish of *You Hold Me Up* (Orca Book Publishers), written by Monique Gray Smith and illustrated by Danielle Daniel, was published in August. Upcoming translations into English include the picture book *Madani's Best Game* written by Fran Pintaneda and illustrated by Raquel Catalina, in October and *Different: A Story of the Spanish Civil War* (both Eerdmans), written by Mónica Montañes and illustrated by Eva Sánchez Gómez, in November. Lawrence lives in Madrid, Spain.

Members can be contacted via the form on the CANSCAIP site [Membership page](#).



The Canadian Children's Book Centre



**Over 40 years
of supporting
Canadian authors
and illustrators!**

**Become a
member today.**

www.bookcentre.ca

· CANSCAIP News Feature ·

How's Business?

The State of Children's Bookselling in 2022

By Gillian O'Reilly

How's business? That's a complicated question for an independent bookseller. With lockdowns, restrictions, adaptations, experiments and constant pivoting, they've found the last two years have been difficult. As things get back to a kind of normal in 2022, they are enjoying having customers back in the store; building on some of the innovative workarounds they developed; and hoping for a satisfying fall.

For writers and illustrators of books for young people, children's booksellers are among our most important advocates and a vital link in connecting us with our readers. We checked in with some of them to find out more about their struggles over the last two years and what 2022 has brought them.

IN HALIFAX, SUZY CROCKER is the manager of [Woozles](#), Canada's oldest operating children's bookstore. "[Business is] going really well," she says. "I'm just going to put you on hold for one sec." The only person in the store at that moment, she has to

help a customer, conduct a phone interview and unpack 120 boxes of Lego.

In Toronto Eleanor Lefave, owner of [Mabel's Fables](#), says, "People have really embraced coming and shopping again." She revels in being able to

hand sell books in person. "To be able to find out who [the customers] are buying for, give them four or five books, have them sit on the bench and read and make a selection—you can't replicate that online."

Customers, especially younger

ones, have become more mindful of the importance of shopping local, she says. Business has been good in 2022 although it has slowed a bit as people have more opportunities to travel or go to theatre.

IN POINTE-CLAIRE, QUEBEC, [Babar Books](#) owner Maya Byers says, "We've done really well this year." While online sales have dropped, the retail sales are up 15% and the overall sales (including institutional) are up 10% from last year. She attributes this to the



push to shop locally and the fact that the store offered free deliveries during the pandemic.

“Thank goodness we had a good website, we survived because of Book Manager,” says Byers. The inventory system used by many independents, Book Manager proved invaluable to booksellers across the country as customers learned to use it to order online or by phone. It became even more useful in early 2021, when the company added a Shop Local button that directed customers to their nearest independent booksellers.

“Every bookstore experience is different,” says Melissa Bourdon-King, owner of Kelowna’s [Once Upon a Bookstore](#). “Some thrived through COVID... Some really struggled. Some are in between—that’s us.”

FROM THE THREE-YEAR-OLD Once Upon a Bookstore to the 43-year-old Woozles, booksellers found innovative ways to provide essential advice and get books into customers hands.

The curatorial role of a children’s bookseller continued but online, as retailers developed book lists on all sorts of interests and themes, based on inquiries from both regular customers and teachers. Other things were forced online, too; Woozles’ Cheaper by the Dozen loyalty card was computerized. “People still wanted their points,” says Crocker.

In 2020 and 2021, curb-side pick-up systems became the order of the day. Depending on provincial regulations and/or bookseller inclinations, this lasted from as short as four months to as long as 10 months

in the case of Mabel’s Fables. Lefave recalls, “[The store was] a terrible mess” with long lines of boxes in alphabetical order snaking through the store. “Even if you wanted to come into the store, I wouldn’t have let you.” Delivery service became essential for some stores and has continued even as restrictions relaxed. Maya Byers explains, “We’ve had a driver delivering for the past year. We are still doing free delivery in the West Island and within Quebec for a flat rate of \$7 for orders under \$75. We’ll see.”

Before the pandemic, Woozles offered free deliveries once a week to customers within a 30-minute drive of the store. Once the pandemic hit, “We were the only delivery game in town for kids’ stuff.” In the midst of the lockdown, they were up to 30 deliveries a day and Crocker notes they have had “a wonderful roster” of drivers. Initially Woozles

offered free delivery no matter what sized order; now there is a \$50 minimum and deliveries are less frequent.



IN KELOWNA, Once Upon a Bookstore offered free local delivery by Bourdon-King's mother, co-owner of the store, who joked that it was the start of her third career. They have continued that for "a few local and loyal customers" with a \$40 minimum.

For some booksellers, there were extra challenges during these difficult times—in Bourdon-King's case, it was having barely eight months of normal operation before the lockdowns began. For Woozles, it was moving a 43-year-old operation mid-pandemic.

Once Upon a Bookstore opened only in July 2019. Bourdon-King says, "A lot of people discovered us during COVID, but because we were new, we didn't have customer base to build on. And trying to build customer base during a pandemic is trickier, because what you are selling

as a bookstore, is in-person browsing."

The pandemic necessitated a change to their website—from an information site ("It said, here's information and you can look for stuff if you want.") to an ordering site where people could actually shop.

Her original vision had been to make Once Upon a Bookstore a real event space for families in a city that is bursting with kids. This included having an events coordinator on staff. That went out the window with COVID except for some experiments in online offerings. In 2021, she was able to plan a few really small, outdoor events, but by the middle of the year, she says she stopped having success. "People wanted something different."

Two events that did work well were a Spooky Halloween and an Easter Egg Hunt. She is repeating

the former this year, but with a big difference—the freedom to plan. "With COVID, everything was knee-jerk; we were never able to plan... This year, I am able to think in August about what I will do for Spooky Halloween."

AND THEN THERE'S THE CHALLENGE of moving during lockdown. After more than four decades at its original location—an old house with stairs and nooks and crannies—Woozles moved less than two

kilometres to a new wheelchair- and stroller-accessible space on the ground floor of a just-completed residential and retail building.

Why do it at such a difficult time? "We had talked about the prospect of moving, but it felt too hard," says Crocker. Online ordering, however, showed them the

addresses of their patrons. "We could see where people lived who supported us and it wasn't Birmingham Street."

Permit delays meant the store was out of operation for almost a month while the new site was completed (opening day was November 20, 2021) but the new space is working well, despite the loss of tourism sales which had been a feature of the summer and fall in the old location. "Sales are up every month over the last year, in some months up to pre-COVID levels." It's easier to directly greet customers because the sales desk faces the door and "we couldn't have been welcomed more warmly [by the neighbourhood]." In the end, the stress of moving was more than worth it.



SOME SUCCESSES OF THE PANDEMIC PERIOD are continuing even as things become more normal. Before COVID, Mabel's Fables had begun a monthly book subscription service, where the recipient would get a monthly book selected by the staff for that age group. "The subscription service was embraced by grandparents who couldn't see their grandkids." From about 50 children a month in pre-pandemic days, the list is now approaching 500 a month, from unborn babies to age 83-year-olds (who receive adult books).

As well, Mabel's Fables started Zoom-based "Mystery Book Clubs" ("mystery" not for the genre, but because each book was a surprise). Participants picked up a book or received it in the mail; a week later, they received a list of questions, and the following week, the club met on Zoom. "We learned a lot," says Lefave. "It really helped shaped how we order." For example, she was quite nervous about Lawrence Hill's first book for children, *Beatrice and Croc Harry*. "They loved the book. Now it sells like hot cakes, because kids loved it."

SOME OF THE PROBLEMS OF THE PANDEMIC have abated but haven't gone away. Booksellers are facing continuing supply chain issues. While some distributors are working well, others have been notorious for long delays. With certain suppliers, an order that might have taken a fortnight can now take a month. Suzy Crocker points to the two weeks she found herself without a single copy of *Goodnight Moon*. "I've been here 13 years and that's never happened. It was awful."

And the economy itself is uncertain. Tourism really came back in Kelowna this summer, says Bourdon-King. But "Inflation hit very hard, house insecurity is a real issue... Even customers who are well off, talk about tightening their [spending]. We're continuing to look for more markets."

Nevertheless, children's booksellers are cautiously looking forward to fall and the Christmas season. With her second child only six months old, Melissa

Bourdon-King is planning a four-week "stories and songs" drop-in for babies and caregivers. "Kelowna's having a real baby boom, so it's an opportunity."

Byers is hoping to resume Babar's story hours and book clubs in September but the store's big play area remains closed and staff are still masking. "We're not quite out of the woods yet."

That's a comment that applies not just to the day-to-day operations of Babar but to all children's bookselling in 2022. In an industry that has always been precarious, children's booksellers scrambled to survive during the pandemic. Through innovation and enormous effort, they have emerged to look toward the fall season with cautious optimism. Canada's authors and illustrators can be grateful that the people who provide the vital connection between us and our readers are once again welcoming their customers into their stores.

GILLIAN O'REILLY is the co-author (with Cora Lee) of *The Great Number Rumble: A Story of Math in Surprising Places* and the former editor of *Canadian Children's Book News*.



• CANSCAIP News Feature •

Black Write Talent Incubator at Kids Can Press

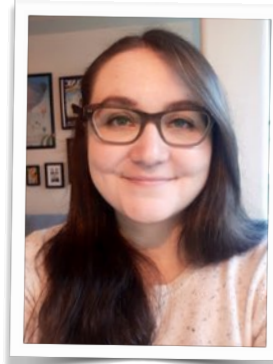
With Kathleen Keenan & Heather Beaumont

In the past few years many kidlit publishers across Canada, including Annick Press, Kids Can Press, Orca Book Publishers, Owlkids Books and Second Story Press, have been working with creators from communities that were under-represented in children's books.

When Kids Can Press initiated their [Black Write Talent Incubator](#), CANSCAIP Friend Heather Beaumont successfully applied for a spot where she worked with KCP editor Kathleen Keenan. CANSCAIP has asked Heather and Kathleen to talk about the program and their experiences in working together on one of Heather's manuscripts.

Why and how did Kids Can Press initiate the Black Write Talent Incubator?

KATHLEEN KEENAN: We'd been looking for a way to support aspiring Black children's book creators, especially writers new to the industry or looking to break in. Kids Can Press and animation company Nelvana are both subsidiaries of Corus Entertainment, and Nelvana had similar goals around reaching out to Black creators to develop original concepts. Both KCP and Nelvana are looking for the same thing—compelling stories and strong characters—even though we work in different areas of children's content. So, we joined forces to create the Incubator. We put out a call for story proposals and illustrator portfolios, and participants could choose to submit to either KCP or Nelvana, or both at once. The editorial team reviewed all the submissions and each KCP editor chose one writer to work with.



How did you hear about it, Heather? Did you submit a manuscript or just the outline of an idea?

HEATHER BEAUMONT: Early last year, I approached a friend to ask if he had any contacts at Corus. I wanted to submit an animation script as a writing sample. My friend told me about the Black Write Talent Incubator and I submitted both an animation script and a picture book manuscript.

Which works best from KCP's point of view—manuscript or idea?

KK: For picture books, I always prefer to read a full manuscript. I want to get a clear sense of the plot, pacing, and character arcs, as well as the strength of the writing and the illustration potential. For all that, I need the full story! For non-fiction, we often start with just an idea and work with writers to develop it more fully, usually ending up with an outline and sample chapter to take to an acquisitions meeting. So: a manuscript for picture books, an idea for non-fiction.

How did you two work together? How often? How long?

KK: It was so much fun to work with Heather. On our "introductory" Zoom call, we talked for an hour and a half! After that, over a period of about three months, we had three more virtual meetings. Heather told me more about her inspiration and her goals, and I answered her questions about the industry and KCP. In between meetings, I sent edits by email and she revised the draft, then we discussed the changes.

Heather also had a meeting with members of our publishing and marketing teams.

HB: We met virtually on four occasions for a minimum of one hour. Kathleen asked questions about the manuscript and my vision for the story. Right at the start, Kathleen worked out the page breaks and spreads and asked for my thoughts.

We discussed wording, phrases, sentences, the arrangement of words and line edits. She made suggestions. She was always respectful of what I wanted and my vision for the story. We discussed end pages, art notes and illustrator choices for different types of books. I also attended a virtual meeting with Kids Can Press's Associate Publisher, Naseem Hrab and Communications Strategist, Michaela Cornell. I was already familiar with Naseem because she has presented at CANSCAIP as an author. We talked about the value of word of mouth in marketing kids' books and making a book topic or subject that editors might not initially be interested in more appealing or presenting the story in a more innovative way.

What are some of the significant learnings or memorable moments for each of you during process?

HB: I produced my first dummy! Kathleen talked about using an economy of words and leaving spaces for feelings. Mostly, we hear about leaving spaces for art. We spent time discussing the way the words appear on the page, the flow, building tension and not crowding words onto one page. I think only in terms of the story. But Kathleen as an editor appears to think about the story as a whole but also, page spreads and the way the words are presented on the page. She shared book titles that she's edited and we both shared book titles we've enjoyed.

KK: I've loved being part of this process and getting to chat about books with Heather. From our first conversation, I was impressed by her taste and how much she's read. As a writer, she's thinking about what makes a book work, but I think she always remembers she's first and foremost a reader and

enjoyer of picture books. It was refreshing for me to tap into that mindset and be inspired by her enthusiasm. We had some fascinating conversations about why we loved certain books!

Heather, before you applied for KCP's program, what other resources had you used to build your writing and your connections?

HB: CANSCAIP has always been a great resource to find out about events, books, book releases, authors and new opportunities to learn. I've attended both in-person and virtual monthly meetings. I attended CANSCAIP's Packaging Your Imagination (not for the first time) during the pandemic and signed up for my first One-to-One evaluation with Groundwood's Karen Li.

In the early days and months of the pandemic, I participated in a number of learning opportunities and virtual events. I participated in a half-day conference, BIPOC Writers Connect, presented by the Writers' Union of Canada. That connected me with author Nadia Hohn, who is also a member of CANSCAIP, and she reviewed a YA manuscript. I took an online course, Writing for Children and Animation with Jill Golick. I also connected with Cheryl B. Klein, Lee & Low's editorial director, thanks to another friend, who alerted me to Klein's offer to critique the first 250 words of a manuscript.

It's been a while, but I've attended the Albert Lahmer Memorial Lectures at the Lillian H. Smith Library. Over the years, I've taken classes with Anne Laurel Carter, Sharon Jennings, Barbara Greenwood and Peter Carver. I've participated in a few writers' groups and shared my writing for critique. I've met with a number of editors to discuss submissions and future projects. I've also participated in the Toronto Public Library's Writer in Residence Programs and had my writing critiqued by established children's authors.

Kathleen, how likely is it that Heather and other writers will get published as a result of participating or is this program as mainly a way to let beginning writers work with an editor?

KK: The Incubator was designed to help writers learn more about the industry and the editorial process with the goal of working toward publication. Although we couldn't guarantee publication, we did select manuscripts that we felt had strong potential. I thought that Heather's story was a good fit for KCP, and I'm happy to say that I'll be bringing it forward to an acquisitions meeting. I can't wait to share it with the team.

Even if a story isn't a fit for KCP, the Incubator helps participants learn more about what editors are looking for, which should serve them well as they continue to write and submit stories to other publishers.

By submitting to the Black Write Talent Incubator, do writers relinquish any rights to their material? Are writers compensated for their participation?

KK: No, there is no monetary compensation for participation in the program. Writers do not relinquish any rights to their material. If a manuscript is acquired for publication, the author retains the copyright.

Is there anything else about this program you'd like to share with our readers?

HB: It was great fun! I really enjoyed meeting and working with Kathleen. The Incubator was a fabulous opportunity to get my work read; to make new connections in the industry; receive feedback about my writing; to learn about resources and how other writers and editors approach developing stories.

KK: Though submissions for the Incubator are closed right now, we hope to continue the program in the future. The blackwrite.ca website has a list of FAQ, too. I encourage anyone who's interested to check

that out. Also, writers can always submit their manuscripts, and illustrators can submit their portfolios, at any point—KCP's submission guidelines can be found here: <https://www.kidscanpress.com/writers>.

Heather Beaumont works in marketing and communications, and has been an active Friend of CANSCAIP since 2014. She loves a good story and while curiosity may have killed the cat, it's what keeps Heather reading and writing.

Kathleen Keenan is an editor at Kids Can Press. Previously, she was an editor at Inhabit Media and Nelson Education and also worked as a bookseller for over a decade. She lives in Toronto.

As well as Kids Can Press, you may be interested in checking out these kidlit publishers.

- Annick Press is “seeking applications from LGBTQ2SIA+ writers, Black writers, Indigenous writers, writers of colour, writers living with disabilities.”
- Owlkids Books is “creating books that reflect and include a diversity of voices, communities, and experiences.”
- Second Story Press is “committed to finding #OwnVoices authors...and publishing more creators from communities who have been traditionally underrepresented in books.”
- Orca Book Publishers “[has] a particular interest in publishing books that celebrate the lives of Indigenous people.”

Business Briefs

WRITING WORKSHOPS

Ted Staunton leads Writing Children's Fiction courses I and II, Tuesday and Thursday evenings. *Classes are currently held on Zoom.* Writing I surveys all genres of kidlit. Writing II is a workshop for experienced writers. Click the links below for the George Brown College Continuing Education website: [Writing Children's Fiction I](#) or [Writing Children's Fiction II](#).

Ted also offers individual manuscript mentoring for writers who want to work one-on-one. He provides detailed comments, suggestions, and followup discussion. **For more info visit:** www.tedstauntonbooks.com.

MANUSCRIPT EVALUATION

Make Your Story Shine! Frieda Wishinsky offers both writing coaching and editorial services for picture books, chapter books or non-fiction proposals. Frieda is an acclaimed children's book writer, editor, teacher and speaker. Contact Frieda at: 416 222 2694, frieda.wishinsky@gmail.com. Website: friedawishinsky.com.

MANUSCRIPT EVALUATION

Popular freelance editor **Bev Katz Rosenbaum** is a former in-house fiction and magazine editor, college-level writing instructor and multi-published author. She offers detailed, low-cost, quick-turnaround developmental edits (critiques) on all types of fiction. Details at <http://bevkatzrosenbaum.com/>. Or you can email Bev at bevrozenbaum@yahoo.ca.

MANUSCRIPT EVALUATION and COACHING

Need a big-picture critique or a developmental edit? Looking for story coaching? **Susan Hughes** is a veteran kidlit author and experienced editor. She'll assist with texts from picture books to YA, graphic books, free verse novels, fiction and non-fiction. Learn more at <https://www.susanhughes.ca/manuscript-critiques-editing-story-coaching> or contact her at susanhughesbooks@gmail.com.

BOOK EDITING

Your words taking wing! S. Robin Larin specializes in developmental, stylistic, and copy editing of children's fiction from picture books (including rhyming ones!) to YA. Please visit her website at <https://robineditorial.com> and contact her at robin@robineditorial.com to discuss how she can help your words take wing. (Member of Editors Canada.)

DIGITAL VIDEO SERVICES

Have an idea you'd like to turn into video? Or just want a sample of your presentation for your website or your next writer-in-residence application? **Epilogue Productions** will work with you to make it both memorable and affordable. They can shoot footage, edit and insert previous content whether stills or video, and help you post to social media. For more information and to see sample videos, visit Epilogueproductions.com or email Craig McNicoll at craig@epilogueproductions.com.

BOOK TRAILERS


Bring your stories to life for your prospective readers through a book trailer. Videographer Tim Clark will create a professional, 1 to 3 minute trailer for a story in any genre. Watch his trailer for *The Choice* by Kathy Clark which was named video of the week on the Open Book website. Contact Tim at tim@studiomograph.com.

MARKETING

Editor's Note: In the 2018 summer issue Beth Pollock offered a DIY Guide to marketing. Her recommendations:

1. [Query Tracker](#): Scroll to the bottom of the home page for a list of the newest agents in the database (who are usually hoping to build their portfolios). You'll also find a list of the newest agent updates, showing which agents have just opened/closed to queries or moved to a new agency.
2. The [Writer's Digest Guide to Literary Agents](#)
3. [Literary Rambles](#) is a wonderful resource for children's writers.
4. [Manuscript Wish List](#): Search by genre and see if anyone wants to read a manuscript just like yours. Alternatively, choose a few agents you'd love to be reped by, and follow them on Twitter.
5. For information on publishers, check at Query Tracker (see above). See also: The [Association of Canadian Publishers](#) (ACP) website for a list of Canadian publishers. Search by "Children's Books" or "Teen and YA" to find all the Canadian publishers looking for those genres. Similarly, [UK Children's Books](#) names British publishers of children's books.

VISITING CREATORS: Librarians and teachers interested in having author, illustrator and performer visits can check members' pages on the CANSCAIP website at www.canscaip.org.

**Creative
Writing
Masterclasses**

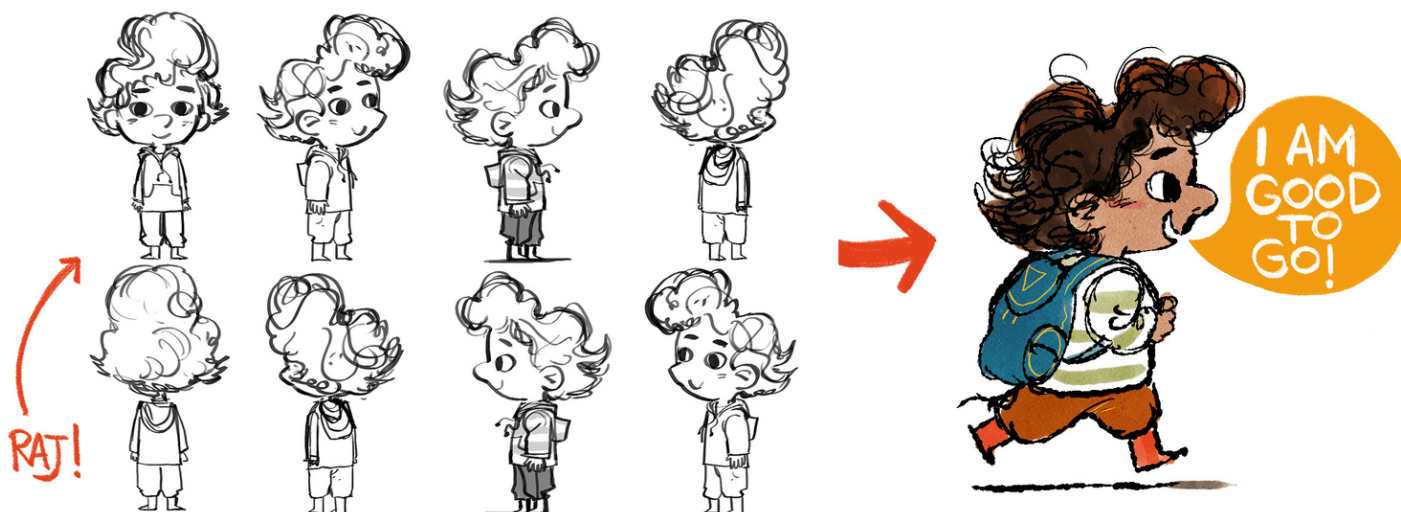
Led by Today's Leading Authors

September 22 – October 2, 2022

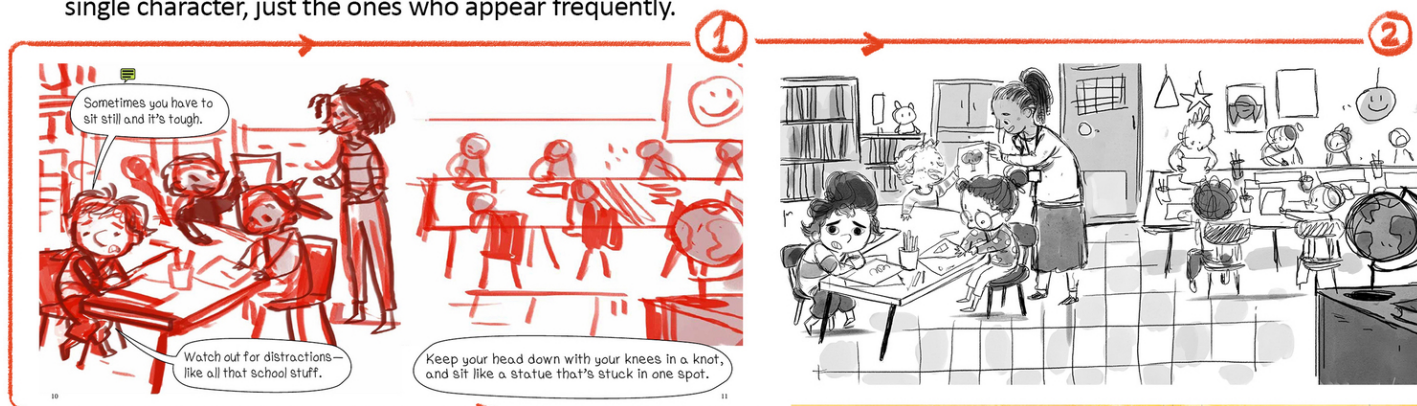
BOOK NOW

FestivalofAuthors.ca

HATEM ALY'S SKETCHBOOK



To acquire a feel for the characters in a character-driven book, I like to start by looking at their designs from various perspectives and use that as guide for the spreads that follows. I don't do this to every single character, just the ones who appear frequently.

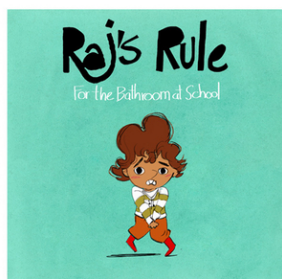


To allow for a fresh implementation, I leave all of my sketches unfinished, missing details, and rough. If I make the sketching really neat and detailed, I might as well utilize it in the finalized version, otherwise, the freshness and spontaneity would be lost.

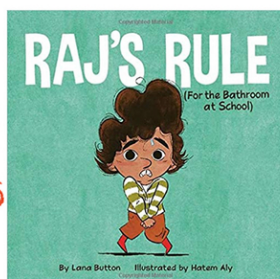
Finally, I finish the spread and, if I'm pleased with the style and colour palette, I use it as a guide for the rest of the book. When I finish a book, it's important for me to put it aside for a while and come back to it later. This is when I send it to the publisher for review, and while I wait for any notes, I'll be able to look at it again with a fresh eye, taking all of the notes into account.



Et Voila!



COVER
→
PROCESS



TO FOLLOW
OR IF YOU HAVE
ANY QUESTIONS
(OR TO JUST)
SAY HI!



CANSCAIP NEWS

A QUARTERLY BULLETIN OF THE CANADIAN SOCIETY OF AUTHORS, ILLUSTRATORS & PERFORMERS
LA SOCIÉTÉ CANADIENNE DES AUTEURS, ILLUSTRATEURS ET ARTISTES POUR ENFANTS

Volume 44 Number 4 · Fall 2022

CANSCAIP, 720 Bathurst St., Suite 412, Toronto, ON M5S 2R4 416-515-1559

CANSCAIP BOARD

ELECTED EXECUTIVE MEMBERS

President	SHARON JENNINGS
Vice President	Lana Button
Past President	Bill Swan
Treasurer	Paul Coccia
Member at Large	Jennifer McGrath
Friend at Large	Caroline Bennett

APPOINTED MEMBERS AND COMMITTEES

Recording Secretary	Deb Attas
Program Committee	Lana Button Loretta Garbutt Sharon Jennings Catherine Rondina Patricia Storms

Illustrators' Rep	Michele Nidenoff
Membership Chair	Rita Bates
Listserv Manager	Marsha Skrypuch
Social Media Outreach	Ellie Arscott Caroline Fernandez Jean Mills Mahtab Narsimhan

PYI Conference Committee	Lana Button Heather Camlot Jillian Dobson Sharon Jennings Jean Mills
--------------------------	--

CANSCAIP STAFF

Administrative Director	Helena Aalto
-------------------------	--------------

CANSCAIP NEWS

Editor	BARBARA GREENWOOD
Contributors	Hatem Aly Sharon Jennings Elizabeth MacLeod Lorna Schulz Nicholson Gillian O'Reilly Monique Polak

Front Page Logo Variation	Martha Newbigging
Newsletter Production	Rob Morphy

