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Logo variation by **Vladyana Krykorka**

# CANSCAIP NEWS

Canadian Society of Children's Authors, Illustrators & Performers  
La Société canadienne des auteurs, illustrateurs & artistes pour enfants

*Introducing...*

## **ROBIN STEVENSON**

By Heather Camlot

"I would like to see every gay doctor come out, every gay lawyer, every gay architect come out, stand up and let the world know," gay rights pioneer and first openly gay politician in the United States Harvey Milk said in 1977. "That would do more to end prejudice overnight than anybody would imagine."

It's hard to imagine that four decades later, prejudice is still alive and well—and living in North America.

On October 1, Longfellow Elementary School in Wheaton, Illinois, cancelled author Robin Stevenson's October 2 visit after a parent complained that the book she would be talking about—*Kid Activists: True Tales of Childhood from Champions of Change*, (Quirk Books, 2019)—had a chapter about Milk even though Robin's presentation would only be mentioning Martin Luther King, Jr., Rosa Parks, James Baldwin, Delores Huerta and Canadian environmental activist Autumn Peltier.



A couple of weeks later, several hundred LGBTQ+ community members and allies gathered in front of the Palmerston branch of the Toronto Public Library to protest its space rental to anti-trans speaker

Meghan Murphy. A similar response occurred in Vancouver last January.

It was during the TPL backlash that I first met Robin. She was travelling to Toronto from Victoria, B.C., to speak at CANSCAIP's Packaging Your Imagination—her topic was *Writing LGBTQ+ Books for All Ages*—and a TPL visit had been set up for her. Robin was unsure what to do—she didn't want to disappoint the students invited to attend, but she, as a member of the LGBTQ+ community, stood by the TPL petition and protest.

After several emails back and forth and consultations with library friends, Robin opted to do the visit. She tinkered with her prepared American presentation—although she didn't visit Longfellow, she did speak at 12 schools during her California and Illinois book tour—and boosted the LGBTQ+ quotient. She would use the TPL visit to educate her young audience, support her community, and promote empathy and understanding.

**“How many boys did Harvey Milk like?”**

I sat in on Robin's visit to the Don Mills branch. Over 100 Grade four and five students packed the room and paid close attention to what Robin had to say. Squirming was at a minimum. When it was their turn to speak, the kids raised their hands and asked questions ranging from the serious, to the curious, to the poignant, to the humorous.

“Having the opportunity to do visits and meet with kids and teens is a pretty incredible thing for a writer,” Robin later said over lunch. “It reminds me of who I'm writing for. I think we so often

underestimate kids and don't give them enough credit for being thoughtful and critical and capable.”

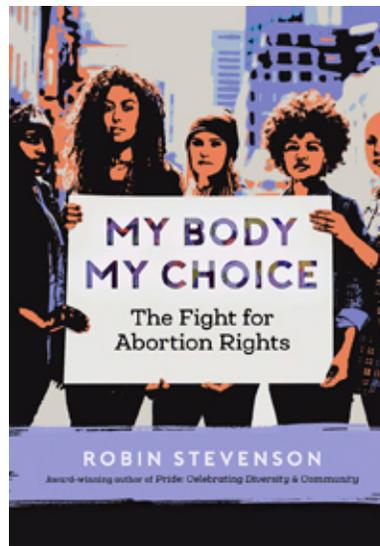
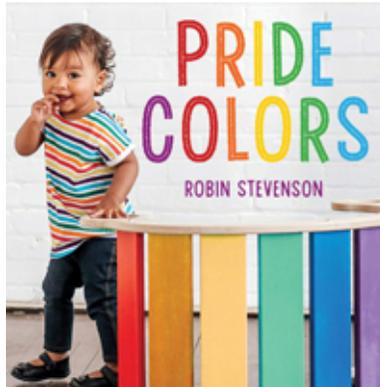
While Robin divides her writing time between fiction and nonfiction, it's the latter that has propelled her into the spotlight recently. Her choice of topics reflects what she's passionate about, what she wishes she had had when she was growing up or when raising her now-teenage son, and what she feels is relevant for kids and teens.

Cases in point, her four 2019 titles: the picture book *Pride Colors* (Orca Book Publishers), about unconditional love and acceptance; the young adult *My Body My Choice: The Fight for Abortion Rights* (Orca), an idea that came to her after Donald Trump's presidential inauguration; the picture book *Ghost's Journey: A Refugee Story* (Rebel Mountain Press), through which she hopes to raise awareness about LGBTQ+ around the world and its criminalization in seventy countries; and the middle-grade *Kid Activists*, about change-makers as children and what drove them to stand up and speak up.

**“When did Janet Mock change into a girl?”**

Tough subjects know no bounds, but Robin says it's the approach rather than the subjects themselves that make them relevant to young readers.

Research is key—and exciting. “I love reading and immersing myself in a subject I'm curious about,” she says. “It's a great way to spend your days, reading, watching documentaries, speaking to people and learning about something you really care about.”



By the time she's wrapping up, she usually has enough material for several books. She distills the information to determine what she wants to include in the current project and then develops an outline. For Robin, the joys of writing nonfiction are the connections she makes and how much she discovers along the way. The biggest downside is that the book is out of date as soon as it's written because the subject is constantly evolving.

Still, she's inspired by the activists she's met around the world and the incredible work they do in dangerous situations. "It makes me feel more committed to speaking up about human rights and privilege and safety, and doing that whichever way I can, big or small."

### "What was your very first book?"

While her non-fiction has taken on a life of its own, Robin spent her first decade as a writer crafting fiction. She's always been a huge reader; childhood favourites include *Emily of New Moon* and *Harriet the Spy*—both about girls who want to be writers—and *A Wrinkle in Time*, about three outsiders. Her mother used to bring home huge cardboard boxes of books from library book sales. In fact, her parents still show up at her door with stacks of books.

Before her son was born, Robin had been a counsellor, mostly working with survivors of sexual assault. While on maternity leave, she found she had a lot more "mental space" even though her days were busy. "I would walk around town with the stroller and I kept a notebook underneath. I would sit down and write whenever he went to sleep." Though she

had no plans to publish or to change careers, writing was something she had always wanted to do.

And she was good at it. Friends encouraged her to send out her manuscript about a girl with telekinetic powers. *Impossible Things* was published by Orca just a few years later. By then, she was obsessed with writing and didn't return to counselling.

### "How do you start fiction?"

Robin draws on her own life when it comes to fiction, from memories of her childhood and teen years to experiences she's had as an adult. She's also inspired by people who have made her think about particular issues, the ways she's seen people in the world struggle and cope with difficult circumstances, and the work she did as a counsellor.

Though she doesn't write with a theme in mind, resilience (*Blood on the Beach*, *Escape Velocity*), dealing with secrets (*Hummingbird Heart*, *The World Without Us*), and anxiety (*Record Breaker*, *The Summer We Saved the Bees*) are ideas that tend to come up repeatedly.

She starts with a character, usually enmeshed in a particular situation, then does some unstructured writing

about that character—discovering who they are, finding their voice, mining the idea to see what comes forward. She loves immersing herself in this new world, writing that first chapter, following the character around and seeing what happens. "Fiction is playful," she says. "It's like having imaginary friends."

Part of the fun is seeing the characters take shape along with the novel. "What I think I know about the characters when I begin a book is quite different



from what I know about them when I finish a book. Often all I know when I start is a very vague and hard-to-pin-down sense of who they are.”

Unlike with her nonfiction, Robin doesn’t create an outline for her novels and acknowledges that early drafts are disorganized and messy and that those first pages will likely not survive. She admits that the further along in a story she gets, the harder she becomes on herself. “With just about every novel, I think it’s utter garbage by the middle and I don’t know how I’m going to make it work,” she says, adding that every time she reaches the halfway mark she promises herself she’ll make an outline for the next book. “But when it goes well, it’s exhilarating.”

### “Isn’t Alexander Hamilton in the movie *Hamilton*?”

Intention in stories, whether fiction or nonfiction, is a weighty topic. As authors and illustrators, we want to educate, to give voice, to show children how the world could be. We want to explain that Alexander Hamilton is in the *musical* “Hamilton” but long before that he was George Washington’s right-hand man who helped win the Revolutionary War and create the U.S. constitution—and why that makes him important. Important enough to be in *Kid Activists*, in a hit musical play... and it seems in an upcoming movie (educating goes both ways).

“Sometimes I try to educate, more obviously in my non-fiction of course, where it’s more direct. But, for example, my next teen novel, *When You Get the Chance* (May 2020), co-written with Tom Ryan, there are some references to queer history,” she explains. “I wanted to include that because of all the young people I’ve met through the *Pride* book who have told me that they didn’t know that history and they need to know it.” A follow-up to *Pride: Celebrating Diversity and Community* (Orca, 2016), called *Pride: The*

*Celebration and the Struggle*, will be released March 2020.

When she’s writing, particularly YA novels, Robin says she is definitely thinking about LGBTQ+ teens who want and need to see themselves reflected in the books they’re reading, something she didn’t have as a teen. She’s thinking about kids who feel like outsiders in any way, who feel misunderstood in any way. “I want to write books that will make them feel more seen and more understood.”

### “What happens if both people die in a duel?”

Once the manuscript is done, then comes the revision process—making sure questions are answered, logic prevails, loose ends are tied up and stumping points are... What does happen if both people die in a duel?

Once upon a time, Robin dreaded revision, but not anymore. She attributes the change to working as an editor on other people’s manuscripts, which helped her develop a better eye not only for their books but her own as well.

When she finishes a first draft, she’ll fix the few things she knows need fixing and then she’ll take a break from the manuscript to get some distance and perspective. This can range from a few days to a few months. She’ll then print out the manuscript, read the whole thing on paper, make notes and try to focus on bigger-picture issues.

“With my first book, I made the mistake of rewriting the first chapter ten times before realizing I needed to just delete the first four chapters,” she says. Twenty-five fiction and nonfiction books later, she now has a mental list of questions to ask herself when it comes to the second draft—a list that should be tacked up in every writer’s office:

- Does the pacing sag anywhere?
- Does the ending feel too rushed?
- Are there characters who don't contribute?
- Are there two characters playing the same role?
- Are there places in the early part of the book when I didn't know the character yet?
- If so, is the voice off?
- What themes have developed in the story?
- Which ones should be made clearer or expanded upon?
- Are there underdeveloped relationships?
- Are there subplots or threads that don't go anywhere?
- Are there subplots or threads that don't support the story?

She'll try to address these issues, then she'll read the manuscript again with a closer look at detail, scenes, dialogue and language. She'll tighten it all up and when she's no longer sure what else she can do, she'll pass it on to a few friends for feedback.

### **“Do you have a pet?”**

When she's not writing, revising or visiting students, Robin enjoys spending time with her son, partner, parents and friends. Getting out on the water—sailing and paddle-boarding—is a favourite. In fact, not long after she and her partner met, they quit their jobs, bought a sailboat and sailed to the Bahamas and back. *A Thousand Shades of Blue* (Orca, 2008) was based on that journey. Unsure what to do after they returned, the couple stayed in Hamilton, Ontario, for just over half a year, then travelled to Southeast Asia. Back in Canada once again, they decided to settle in Victoria to raise their family, which includes one fifteen-year-old, one dog and one cat.

Robin also spends a lot of her time volunteering with refugee sponsorship. “It's brought really amazing people into my life,” she says. “And there is a lot of overlap between my writing, my friends and the refugee sponsor groups.” The overlap can be seen in *Ghost's Journey*, about gay couple Rainer and Eka and their cat, Ghost, who flee the dangers of Indonesia for the safety of Vancouver. All royalties go to the Rainbow Railroad, which helps LGBTQI people escape violence and persecution, and Rainbow Refugee, which helps LGBTQ+ asylum seekers resettle in Canada.

### **“What time is it?”**

As Robin wraps up her presentation at the Don Mills branch, she asks the students what they think activism is. The kids raise their hands and answer: “protests,” “hunger strikes,” “setting an example.” She then asks them what activists do. More hands, more answers: “I see people picking up trash from the sidewalks,” “encourage people to fight for climate change.” For her final question, she asks what the kids can't do until they're 18. One student says “Drink.” Instead of going any further, Robin jumps in with “Vote.”

She wants the students to understand that even though they are young, their opinions and voices matter, that they can write letters, that anything they can think of to make change is a type of activism. “For me,” she tells them, “writing is what I do. If I'm really caring about an issue, one of the things I can do is write about it.”

Which brings us back to the controversies in the United States and in Canada. Six weeks after the school cancellation, Robin was invited back to DuPage County, Illinois—where Wheaton is located—by State Representative Terra Costa Howard to “talk about her book and the need to let ALL children know that they are valued for who they are and what they can become,” says the Facebook event page.

And in that crowded basement room in Don Mills, a student asks one last question that is perhaps most telling of how important Robin's work—in front of and away from the computer—is to creating a more accepting and understanding world.

***“Is Kid Activists in every single library in Toronto?”***



***HEATHER CAMLOT is the author of the forthcoming nonfiction book *What If Soldiers Fought with Pillows?* (Owlkids Books) and novel *The Other Side* (Red Deer Press). Her debut novel, *Clutch*, was named among Kirkus's Best Middle-Grade Historical***

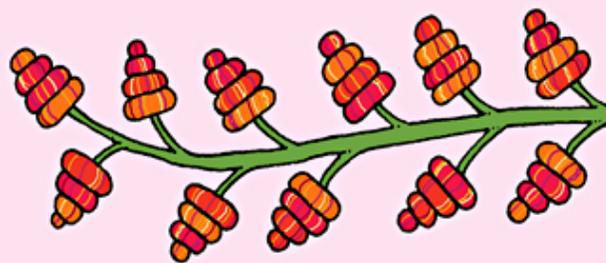
***Fiction of 2017 and is a 2018 Skipping Stones Honour Award winner. She is the speaker coordinator for CANSCAIP's Packaging Your Imagination conference as well as a journalist, editor and translator. For more information, please visit her website at [heathercamlot.com](http://heathercamlot.com).***

# freedom to Read week

February 23–29,  
2020



freedomtoread.ca



Book and Periodical Council

# Congratulations CANSCAIP Members!

## Anne Dublin

The Canadian Jewish Literary Award (Youth) for *A Cage Without Bars* (Second Story Press)

## Sylvia McNicoll

The Hamilton Arts Fiction Award for *Body Swap* (Dundurn Press)

## Susin Nielsen

The Vicky Metcalf Award for Literature for Young People

## Heather Smith

The TD Award for Children's Literature for *Ebb & Flow* (Kids Can Press)

## SHORTLISTED for the Governor General's Award for Children's Illustrated Book

Cary Fagan for *King Mouse* (Tundra Books)

## SHORTLISTED for the Marilyn Bailey Picture Book Award

Shauntay Gray for *Africville* (Groundwood Books)

## SHORTLISTED for the Geoffrey Bilson Award for Historical Fiction

Kathy Kacer for *The Sound of Freedom* (Annick Press)

Marsha Forchuk Skrypuch for *Don't Tell the Enemy* (Scholastic Canada)

Beryl Young for *Miles to Go* (Wandering Fox)

## SHORTLISTED for the John Spray Mystery Award

Kelley Armstrong for *Aftermath* (Penguin Teen)

Liam O'Donnell for *Tank & Fizz* (Orca Book Publishers)

Kevin Sand for *Call of the Wraith* (Aladdin)

## SHORTLISTED for the Norma Fleck Non-Fiction Award

Rob Laidlaw for *Bat Citizens: Defending the Ninjas of the Night* (Pajama Press)

Bill Slavin and Erica Fyvie for *Trash Resolution: Breaking the Waste Cycle* (Kids Can Press)

## SHORTLISTED for the Lane Anderson Award for Science

Etta Kaner for *Wild Buildings and Bridges* (Kids Can Press)

Bill Slavin and Erica Fyvie for *Trash Resolution: Breaking the Waste Cycle* (Kids Can Press)



Award-winning authors  
Debbie Ridpath Ohi & Ruth Ohi  
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[debbieohi.com](http://debbieohi.com) [ruthohi.com](http://ruthohi.com)  
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# Noteworthy

**READ CANADIAN:** The first-ever national **I Read Canadian Day** ([www.ireadcanadian.com](http://www.ireadcanadian.com)) will take place on **February 19, 2020**. A new nationwide initiative that celebrates the richness, diversity, and breadth of Canadian literature, has been announced. The **I Read Canadian Day** will empower families, schools, libraries, bookstores, and organizations to host activities and events by reading Canadian books for just fifteen minutes. For all the details on how this important and exciting event came to be, see the President's Column on page 10.

**PROJECT 99A:** In August of 2019, CANSCAIP author/illustrator & presenter **Josephine Vaccaro-Chang** registered a not-for-profit organization called, "Project 99A". In describing this new organization she says, "Our mission is to elevate global literacy by collecting books and sharing them with those in need. To date, the organization has shipped books to Malawi, Florida, the British Virgin Islands, Trinidad & Tobago, Cambodia and Newmarket, ON. Interested in donating some books? Please visit [www.Project99A.ca](http://www.Project99A.ca) for a list of upcoming book drives. Enthusiastic Literacy Ambassadors (volunteers) welcome. For additional information contact: Josephine Vaccaro-Chang via e-mail at: [info@Project99A](mailto:info@Project99A) or by telephone at: 905-787-9656

## 2019 WRITING for CHILDREN Competition

CANSCAIP is pleased to announce the winners and finalists of the 2019 Writing for Children Competition. Each of the winners receives \$500. The entries of the winners and finalists are sent to children's publishers Annick Press, Kids Can Press and Scholastic Canada for consideration.

And the winners are:

## PICTURE BOOK

WINNER – Tina Hahn for *Too Small?*

FINALIST – Jane Blondie for *The Tail of Hickory Dickory*

FINALIST – Chang Hong for *A Day With Dad*

## EARLY READER

WINNER – Joan Dombrady for *The Four (Famous) Little Pigs*

FINALIST – Kathy Rondeau for *Fearless Friend*

FINALIST – Suzanne Socken for *The Whole World is a Story*

## CHAPTER BOOK

WINNER – VJ Hamilton for *Missing Red Herring*

FINALIST – Joan Dombrady for *Gingerhaven*

## MIDDLE GRADE

WINNER – Lily Quan for *The One and Only Rosie Chen*

FINALIST – Nancy Kay Clark for *Adam's Problem*

FINALIST – Jennifer Irwin for *Death by Instagram*

## YOUNG ADULT

WINNER – Victoria Jones for *Caleb's Crossing*

FINALIST – Joan Dombrady for *InterCHANGE*

FINALIST – Aaron Rabinowitz for *Junior Slump*

The 2019 Writing for Children Competition received more than 500 entries. The next Writing for Children Competition opens in **March 2020**.

## CANSCAIP SASK HORIZONS REPORT

• CANSCAIP Sask has been running a series of "Meet Our Members" posts on their website. Members answer a set of questions and include photos of their workspace and other things. Starting soon we're going NATIONAL! If you would like to be part of our "Meet Our (National) Members" series, check out previous posts ([skcanscaip.wordpress.com](http://skcanscaip.wordpress.com)) and then email Dianne Young ([canscaipsask@gmail.com](mailto:canscaipsask@gmail.com)) for the list of questions and other details.

- The extremely popular First Thousand Words Editing Fundraiser is returning January 2020! Details are posted on the website ([skcanscaip.wordpress.com](http://skcanscaip.wordpress.com)).

- **SAVE THE DATE!** The next CANSCAIP Prairie Horizons Conference will be May 21-23, **2021**. The organizing committee is already busy planning.  
— **Submitted by Dianne Young**

**LOGO VARIATION:** Our front-page logo variation is by **Vladyana Krykorka**. You can see more of her illustrations in her classic titles *Baseball Bats for Christmas* and *A Promise Is A Promise* as well as many more, all from Annick Press.

**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? If so, please [fill out this form](#). Your info will not be shared with any third parties. And be sure to follow CANSCAIP on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#).

**FOLLOW CANSCAIP:** Looking for some new 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 too.

**FINDING CANADIAN BOOKS:** [49thShelf.com](http://49thShelf.com) is a website devoted to Canadian children's books. Produced by the Association of Canadian Publishers together with the Canadian Publishers' Council, and with funding from the Department of Canadian Heritage and the Ontario Media Development

Corporation and a lead sponsorship from Amazon.ca., 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.

**CREATIVE WRITING:** If you are teaching a course in writing or illustration for the children's market, we'd love to send you **a package of brochures about CANSCAIP and about Packaging Your Imagination to distribute to your students**. Email our office ([office@canscaip.org](mailto:office@canscaip.org)) to let Helena Aalto know how many you may need.

**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](mailto:office@canscaip.org). Make sure you put **CANSCAIP Logo Submission** in the subject line. We'd love to have colourful, playful art. Those who find scanning a challenge can send paper art to the CANSCAIP office.



# From the President's Desk

By Sharon Jennings

To discuss the importance of the inaugural **I Read Canadian Day** on **February 19th, 2020**, I'll begin with two personal experiences.

My first book, *Jeremiah and Mrs. Ming*, was published in 1990, and illustrator Mireille LeVert was nominated for a Governor General's Award. I was in Montreal at that time, participating in a conference with our publisher Annick Press. Anne Milyard and I walked by a bookstore and I expressed my surprise that the GG nominated books were not on display in the window. Mireille lived in Montreal, so wouldn't they at least feature our book? Anne replied that publishers have to pay for window space and, as well, for books that are displayed face out on shelves.

Many years later and (I thought) much less naive, I did volunteer work for a Canadian philanthropist promoting the need for middle-grade novels in countries overseas. During one conversation, I mentioned how difficult it was for Canadian children's creators to get much publicity in our stores and newspapers and thus make a living. His response stunned me. "Does a parent want to buy a Canadian book or the *best* book?"

I'll give you a moment to re-read that last sentence and let it sink in.

I know that many of you have had similar experiences, after which we engage with our publishers, sign petitions, write letters to the editors of various newspapers, grumble amongst our colleagues, and cry into our beer. We also give thanks

to such programs as The Forest of Reading in Ontario, and others suchlike across Canada, as well as The Canadian Children's Book Centre.

Eric Walters frequently calls me Don Quixote and makes fun of my insistence on tilting at windmills (i.e. the powers that be). So I have to laugh that Eric has taken on a windmill of gargantuan proportions.

Passionate about Canadian books, their creators, and readers, Eric viewed with dismay the falling sales for our books (down by almost 50% over the last ten years), and the small percentage—15%—of Canadian books purchased. He decided that something had to be done, and done *now*. He came up with the idea of getting every student in our country to read a Canadian book for 15 minutes on one particular day. But how to get anyone, let alone everyone, to take



Photo by Debbie Ridpath Ohi

this proposal seriously?

Eric began his crusade by getting as many concerned players as possible, from across Canada, into one room. In June of 2019, about 40 people—creators, publishers, librarians, bookstore owners and managers, wholesalers, reviewers, organizations (including The Writers' Union of Canada), and educators—came together at the Book Centre to pitch ideas and raise concerns. That in itself was a momentous accomplishment!

Eric, being rather wily, asked Martha McClew, who is the Director of Operations, Canada East, Terry Fox Foundation, to give a brief pep talk about her involvement with schools and the Terry Fox run. Martha was instrumental in getting over ten thousand schools to sign up to participate in the run. "Dreaming Big" was the title of her speech to us, and I found myself thinking of President Obama's "Yes we can."

Eric tapped into his extensive network and by the day of the June meeting, already had dozens of principals, teachers, and even school boards enthusiastically embracing the project. Eric approached his local MP Lloyd Longfield (who thankfully was re-elected!) who agreed to give it his all to promote this day. A few of those present in June suggested that we go slow and plan for a day in 2021. I almost laughed out loud at the expression on Eric's face. 'Go slow' and 'Eric' do not belong in the same equation.

At that June meeting, we also discussed how bookstores and libraries might participate. It seemed logical that such venues would celebrate the event for a week or more, as it didn't make sense to organize displays for only one day. But schools could determine when (and even which day if the 19th doesn't work best) they would ask their teachers to choose a book and read aloud, or give their students 15 minutes to read quietly.

The Steering Committee for **I Read Canadian** is Rose Vespa, Executive Director of CCBC, Shelagh Patterson, Executive Director of the Ontario Library Association, Meredith Tutching, Director of Forest of Reading, Eric Walters, and myself, in my role as President of CANSCAIP. I am very proud that CANSCAIP's name and logo are on all promotional material and that we are involved on all levels. As I explained to the others, so often organizations come

up with ideas for creators and our books, without consulting us. Somehow we get relegated to the children's table while the adults discuss weighty issues about our care and feeding. In particular, there were two items that were of utmost importance to Eric and me and needed our oversight: there would *not* be one book chosen to be read Canada-wide, and authors and illustrators would *not* be expected to do a visit for free. Everyone on the steering committee stressed that this day should be fun and not require much work to participate.

When this column appears, we will be a little over two months away from **I Read Canadian Day**, and we can all pitch in to make it a success. First, visit the website ([www.ireadcanadian.com/day](http://www.ireadcanadian.com/day)) and familiarize yourself with the content. And then spread the word. If you have a school or library visit lined up, ask if they know about **IRC**. Show them how easy it is to sign up and get downloadable materials. Encourage your own kids' schools to get involved. Visit your local library and bookstore and ask if you can help them participate. Nothing wrong with you glad-handing patrons and customers as they peruse the shelves. And drop in to your government representatives and ask for their support.

The purpose of this event is to raise awareness of Canadian books for young people, and to celebrate the richness, diversity, and breadth of our literature. Who wouldn't want to be a part of that?



FEBRUARY 19, 2020 IS  
#IREADCANADIAN DAY!

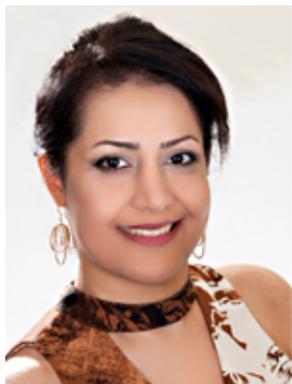


SIGN UP AT [IREADCANADIAN.COM/DAY](http://IREADCANADIAN.COM/DAY)

# Welcome!

by Monique Polak

*In this column we welcome our newest Members.*



**NASIM ABAEIAN** was born in Isfahan, Iran in 1980 and spent her childhood in Genova, Italy, in an artistic ambiance full of inspiration. In 2003, she earned a Bachelor's degree in Visual Communication from the American University of

Sharjah, UAE, and headed to the US to complete her Master's degree in Illustration at the Savannah College of Art and Design. After five years of teaching art and design at Zayed University in Dubai, Nasim is finally in Toronto, living her Canadian artistic dream. Constantly looking for ideas and inspiration to create narratives and stories to illustrate, she is currently a sessional faculty at OCAD in Toronto, a member of the Society of Children's Books Writers and Illustrators, and works as a freelance illustrator and art Instructor at the Winged Canvas Art Hub and Richmond Hill School of Art in Ontario.

Amongst the books she has illustrated are *Prince of the Seas* (Kalimat, 2014) and the upcoming *Namul Wants To Be A Butterfly*.

**SHARI BECKER** was born in Montreal, Quebec, and spent much of her childhood reading, drawing and staring off into space during class time, imagining her pencils and erasers were characters in a magical kingdom. Shari graduated from Concordia University with a Bachelor of Arts in Communication Studies and from New York University's Gallatin School with a Master of Arts in children's multimedia. She has created, written and conceived

original content for Nickelodeon, Disney-owned companies, and even an Emmy Award-winning puppeteer. Shari is the author of a critically acclaimed YA novel, *The Stellow Project* (Skyscape), and two picture books, *Maxwell's Mountain*



(Charlesbridge Publishing), a Junior Library Guild Selection and Charlotte Zolotow Honour Book, and *Horris Grows Down* (G.P. Putnam's Sons). She lives in Massachusetts with her husband, their two daughters, and their dogs, Lexi and Winnie.

**OKSANNA CRAWLEY** is the author and illustrator of the Super Hammy reading series of levelled books, in English and French, published by DC Canada Education Publishing. After retiring from a 25-year career teaching kindergarten,



English as a Second Language and Reading Recovery, Oksanna decided to do something with all the stuff she'd learned! She combined her love of writing and art with her passion for helping children learn to read and... bingo! Books! Oksanna has been taking art lessons at Sheridan College and writing lessons because we're never too old to learn new tricks. She lives in Brampton, Ontario with her wonderful family and would love to own a dog. When she was a little girl, she had a hamster named Hamlet who became the inspiration for Super Hammy.

**ALISON GEAR** spent twenty years on Haida Gwaii, off the north coast of British Columbia, where she started writing children's picture books. She was privileged to meet an innovative publisher, Tonya Martin, of McKellar & Martin Publishing Group, Ltd., who was interested in publishing voices that would not otherwise be heard. The voices of children on Haida Gwaii were exactly what Martin was looking for. Alison's first professionally published book, *B is for Basketball*, written in collaboration with students on Haida Gwaii, was the first children's book about Indigenous basketball in the country, as well as being commemorative of a significant Indigenous annual event in northern BC—the All Native Basketball Tournament. Her most recent picture book, *Taan's Moons*, honours traditional Haida knowledge of the changing seasons, and was brought to life through felted illustrations which came entirely from the children's imaginations.

**STEPHANIE KAIN** is a children's writer and a professor of English. She wrote the Emlyn and the Gremlin series so that kids with two moms would see themselves represented in books in a natural and fun way. Steff holds a PhD in creative writing and teaches grown-up kids how to write great novels. She loves to talk about books, creative work, and making fun food. Contact her to come for a school visit at [steff.f.kneff@gmail.com](mailto:steff.f.kneff@gmail.com).

**KURT KIRCHMEIER** lives and writes in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. His short stories and poems have appeared in numerous magazines and anthologies including *Abyss & Apex*, *Shimmer*, *Weird Tales*, *Tesseract* #15 and #22, and elsewhere. His debut middle grade novel *The Absence of Sparrows* (Little, Brown Books for Young Readers) is now available in bookstores and libraries. When Kurt isn't reading or writing, he enjoys being outside and photographing nature. He has a particular fondness for birds.

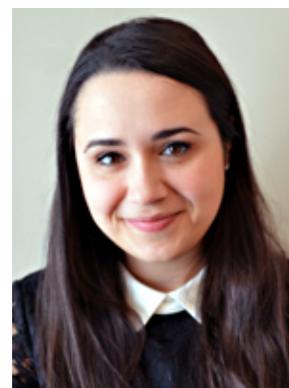
**MARLA LESAGE** loves to tell stories—both real and imagined—through urban sketching, painting, illustration, and writing. She works in watercolour and ink and is mostly self-taught. Her art can be found in several NB schools and in private collections in Canada, the US, and Australia. *Pirate Year Round* (Acorn Press, 2019) is her first picture book. She has also been published by Chicken Soup for the Soul and Skipping Stones Magazine.



**GOLALEH MO** is an illustrator and author of children's books and journals. She has published 18 books for children. All her books are published in Persian (Farsi). She has recently completed the illustrations for a new book called *Alphabet Animal*. She obtained her B.A. in psychology from Azad University, and early childhood education (ECE) from Seneca College.



**SHANNON O'TOOLE** is a Toronto-based illustrator, painter and elementary school teacher. Her playful illustration work is inspired by the unique and humorous characters in her life. Books she has illustrated include *Stop Reading This Book!* (Common Deer Press, 2019) and the upcoming *The*



*Adventures of Grandmasaurus* (Common Deer Press). Aside from illustrating books for children, Shannon has exhibited her artwork in galleries across Ontario. When she is not drawing, Shannon can be found curled up with her dog, Edgar watching old movies.



**MARINA PINTO MILLER** is the author and illustrator of *Jonathan's Number Party*, commissioned and published in 2018 by Eyeseeme, the largest African American bookstore in Missouri. The book fills a gap by representing children of

colour and children with disabilities. It's described as "life changing for readers with dyslexia and dyscalculia; educational, engaging, inclusive and endearing." More to come! Marina has two other completed, illustrated stories in an unpublished series entitled *The Beloved Equation*. Since 1997, she has integrated fine art, illustration, and creative writing along with sound using her synesthesia, to produce over 75 commissioned works, including paintings of music and licensed designs, all done by hand. Her doctoral dissertation, *Reflecting on the Grave and the Bones Within*, was published in 2012 by Oxford Archeopress, *British Archeological Report 2425*. It is only 58 pages long. Marina's writing style, even as an academic, is distinguished by clarity and brevity.



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# NEWS ROUNDUP

By Elizabeth MacLeod

**Deadline for SPRING NEWS: February 20, 2020**  
**We'd love to hear from you! Let us know about your new books, tours, awards, launches, etc. Email the details, including your town and province, with the subject line: SPRING NEWS to [NewsRoundup@canscaip.org](mailto:NewsRoundup@canscaip.org).**

## ATLANTIC REGION

Welcome to new Friend: **Jaime Horbul**, Halifax.

**JAN COATES** published three books in 2019. *Say What You Mean (Mean What You Say)* (Nevermore Press) is a middle-grade novel with themes including mental health, homelessness and a fairy dogmother! *Dancing With Daisy* (Running the Goat Books & Broadsides) is a tall-tale picture book illustrated by the amazing Josee Bisailon. Jan wrote, illustrated and published the picture book *Karissa & Felix*, which she hopes will find its way into the hands of kids looking for hope after loss. Jan lives in Wolfville, NS.



**CHARIS COTTER's** novel *The Painting* (Tundra Books) tied for top place at the Hackmatack Children's Choice Book Award in June. This is the second Atlantic Canadian award for *The Painting*. In 2018 it won the Ann Connor Brimer Award for

Children's Literature at the 2018 Atlantic Book Awards. In October Charis set out once again to spread goosebumps among Newfoundland children, on her eleventh Annual Ghost Tour of Newfoundland Schools. Since 2009 she has been taking her lively book presentations and Newfoundland ghost stories

to schools from St. Lawrence to Bonavista, from St. Bride's to Bay de Verde and from Bell Island to Random Island. Over the years Charis has presented to more than 5000 Newfoundland students, encouraging the love of reading—and a healthy respect for ghosts! Charis lives in Western Bay, NL.

**PATSY MACKINNON** had four of her published illustrations selected for the Writers' Federation of Nova Scotia "1000Words" Illustration Exhibition. It took place from November 12 to December 1 at the Teichert Gallery in Halifax. The illustrations were from her books *King of Keji* and *Evangeline* (both Nimbus Publishing). Patsy lives in new Waterford, NS.

## QUEBEC

Welcome to new Friends: **Mera Chatman**, Montreal; **Maureen Marovitch**, Lachine.

**JUDITH HENDERSON's** three-book series "Big Words Small Stories" (Kids Can Press) has recently been green-lit as a children's animated television series. The series of books includes *The Missing Donut*, *The Travelling Dustball* and *Smell the Daisies* and was illustrated by T.L. McBeth. There will be 65 five-minute episodes and Judith will also be composing the theme song and underscore. Production begins in 2020. Judith lives in Westmount.



**ANDREW KATZ** and Juliana Léveillé-Trudel were flab-"bear"-ghasted to learn that their debut picture book, *Comment attraper un ours qui aime lire (How to Catch a Bear Who Loves to Read)* (CrackBoom! Books)

was nominated for Le Prix Peuplier, part of the 2020 Forest of Reading Awards. The book is illustrated by Gemini Award-winning children’s animation director Joseph Sherman. Andrew and Juliana are looking forward to meeting kids who love to read at the Forest of Reading Festival in Toronto in May 2020 and they extend “bearnormous” congratulations to all the Forest of Reading nominees. Andrew lives in Montreal.

**NATALYA KURTOG** is pleased to announce that the Stupino Philharmonic in the Moscow Region will be giving New Year’s performances based on her book *The Feast of Pilots* (Governor of Perm). The show for children and adults is called *It’s All about the Hat* and will take place from January 5 to 7, 2020. Natalya is also preparing a new book for children called *Tales of the Hare* (International Foundation for Slavic Writing and Culture) in Arabic. Previously these fairy tales were published in Russian and Italian. She not only wrote these fairy tales, but also drew the more than 60 colourful illustrations and designed the book as well. Natalya lives in Montreal.



**ANNE RENAUD’s** book entitled *Emma’s Germs* (Peanut Butter Press) has been shortlisted for the 2020 Blue Spruce Award. Her book *Fania’s Heart* (Second Story Press) will be part of the “Youth Literature and the Holocaust” exhibit at the

Montreal Holocaust Museum until March 1. Anne will be giving a reading of the book at the museum on January 26, 2020. She lives in Westmount.

**RAQUEL RIVERA** is thrilled that her young-adult historic-adventure novel *Yipee’s Gold Mountain* (Red

Deer Press), won the Quebec Writer’s Federation Prize for Children’s and Young Adult Literature at the Quebec Writer’s Federation Gala and Awards Ceremony in Montreal on November 5.



The jury described *Yipee’s Gold* as “an exciting page turner, but more than that it is a deeply layered story that explores colonialism, violence, gender, race, sex and friendship... Rivera deftly creates the physical worlds of [two] teens; we understand life among the rivers and trails in the pine-covered hills... [as well as] the world of ranches, horses, campfire suppers and cattle roundups. A thoroughly researched, thought-provoking and moving historical novel.” Raquel lives in Montreal.

## ONTARIO (OUTSIDE TORONTO)

Welcome to new Friends: **Jennifer Aire**, Oakville; **Steve Brown**, Caledon; **Anna Sofia Chi**, Mississauga; **Marina Djokic**, Ottawa; **Caroline Gravel**, Kanata; **Michael Hance**, Oshawa; **Donna Houghton**, Waterloo; **Val Hummel**, Elmira; **Fariba Kalhor**, Richmond Hill; **Mo Markham**, Kitchener; **Michelle Martinez**, Brampton; **Lotus Menezes**, Mississauga; **Stacey-Ann Morris**, Ottawa; **Alison Myers-Gomez**, Oakville; **Marylynn Miller Oke**, Whitby; **Jane Parker**, Ottawa.

**KYLIE BURNS** is pleased to announce that her latest non-fiction books were recently released. *Tornado Readiness* and *Wildfire Readiness* are part of a series called “Natural Disasters—Meeting the Challenge” (Crabtree Publishing Company). These books examine the scientific study of natural disasters, including what causes them, how people are affected, new technologies for prediction and

innovative strategies to prepare for such events in the future. Designed with educators in mind, this series provides current information, case studies, scientist and researcher bios and free downloadable teacher's guides online. Kylie lives in Uxbridge.

**JOYCE GRANT** is excited to announce that *Gabby* (Fitzhenry & Whiteside) is back—in paperback. Quirky Gabby is putting together letters and creating words to solve problems. The new book is illustrated by Jan Dolby, has a striking, redesigned cover and is available everywhere! *Gabby* was an OLA Top 10 Best Bet, a CCBC Best Books for Kids and Teens and won the Rainforest of Reading Award (in Montserrat). Joyce lives in Hamilton.

**MARTHE JOCELYN** reminds CANSCAIPers to save the date February 19 for celebrating “I Read Canadian Day”. She is having a launch party that day for her new mystery *The Body Under the Piano* (Tundra Books). It takes place at McNally Books on Bay Street in Toronto at 6:00 p.m. Come one, come all—if you loved Agatha Christie books, this will be just your cuppa tea! Marthe lives in Stratford.



**TERRY LYNN JOHNSON** is pleased to share that her upper-middle-grade novel *Dog Driven* (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt) is a Junior Library Guild selection and has received two trade reviews. This is her first book to receive two stars! *Kirkus's* starred

review says, “A densely plotted, fast-moving, thematically rich tale set at the intersection of ability and disability.” “Johnson shows the deep bonds and trust between musher and dogs,” says *Booklist's* starred review. Terry Lynn lives in Whitefish Falls.

**HEATHER KIRK's** book *Seeking Peace: The Quakers* (Borealis Press) was sold this year at Sharon Temple National Historic Site in Sharon, Ontario, about 50 kilometers north of Toronto. The book was also given as a gift to new teachers at Pickering College in Newmarket, Ontario. Pickering was originally a Quaker school. Quakerism is one of the longest nonviolent resistance movements in history. Heather lives in Barrie.

**CASEY LYALL** is excited to announce that her middle-grade mystery novel *Howard Wallace, P.I.* has been optioned by The Mother Company, eOne and Drew Barrymore's Flower Films. The book's sequels, *Shadow of a Pug* and *Sabotage Stage Left* (all Sterling Children's Books), are also a part of the deal. The production companies aim to turn the three books into a half-hour comedy series. Casey lives outside of London.

**JEAN MILLS** published her second young-adult novel, *Larkin on the Shore*, in October. It's the story of a teenager trying to overcome traumatic events in her recent past by helping her grandmother set up a bookshop café in a small Nova Scotia town. The setting is one Jean knows well—she spends her summers on the shore in Pugwash, Nova Scotia. Jean's first novel, *Skating over Thin Ice* (both Red Deer Press), was nominated for the 2019 Red Maple Fiction Award and was named to the 2019 United States Board on Books for Young People Outstanding International Books List. She lives in Guelph.



**AIMEE REID** celebrated kindness and friendship at the launch for her book *You Are My Friend: The Story of Mister Rogers and His Neighbourhood* (Abrams Books for Young Readers). The event took place on November 23 at the central branch of the Hamilton Public Library. There were music, crafts and prizes at this free, family-friendly event. Aimee lives in Hamilton.

**SUSAN ROSS's** book *Drat That Cat!* (Giggles Press) has been honoured as a finalist in both the Children's Picture Book: Softcover Fiction category of the 2019 Best Book Awards and the 2019 International Book Awards. Both are sponsored by American Book Fest. Susan lives in London.



**KATHY STINSON** is happy to be anticipating the publication of three upcoming projects—a picture book based on the work of the founder of the International Board on Books for Young People (IBBY) Jella Lepman (Kids Can Press); a picture-book

biography about Anne Dagg, the world's first giraffologist (Fitzhenry & Whiteside); and a twenty-first-century version of her book *Bare Naked Book* (Annick Press) from 1986. Kathy is currently working on yet another picture book and contemplating a dive back into her adult-novel-in-progress, as well as the Stubbs Lecture she is scheduled to deliver next fall. Kathy lives in Rockwood.

## TORONTO

Welcome to new Friends: **Phyllis Bordo, Emily Bradley, Jacque Buncel, David Cobb, MacAllan Dale, Naomi De Gasperis, Shanda Deziel, Robert Dunlop, Mark Ellwood, Naomi Fromm, Juel Hogg, Emma Hunter, Sandra Love, Priya Ann Mathew, Kathy OCraven, Donna Reid, Charlotte Safieh, Aleeza Wagner, Rosalyn Yake, Fatemeh Yousefi.**

**ETTA KANER** is delighted that her book *Wild Buildings and Bridges: Architecture Inspired by Nature* (Kids Can Press) was chosen as one of three finalists for the 2019 Lane Anderson Award in the young readers category. This award, created by the Fitzhenry Family Foundation, honours the best science writing in Canada both in the adult and young readers category.

**KAREN KROSSING** is thrilled to announce that in January 2020 she graduates from the Vermont College of Fine Arts with an MFA in Writing for Children and Young Adults.

**ELIZABETH MACLEOD's** book *Meet Tom Longboat* has been nominated for the 2020 Silver Birch Express Award. This is the third book in her latest biography series; the first book, *Meet Viola Desmond*, won the 2019 Silver Birch Express. The fourth book in the series, *Meet Elsie MacGill*, received a five-star review from *CM Magazine*. The reviewer said it's a "wonderful book about an interesting and inspiring subject" and "the language is flowing and exciting." The fifth book in the series, *Meet Willie O'Ree* (all Scholastic Canada), about the National Hockey League's first black player, will be released December



26. The book will be available in French as *Voici Willie O'Ree*. Liz enjoyed speaking about the series at the Vancouver Writers Fest in October. Her book *Super Cats: True Stories of Felines That Made History* (Annick Press) is nominated for a Rocky Mountain Book Award.

**KENNETH OPPEL's** latest book, *Bloom*, will be published in February 2020. Aimed at readers aged 10 to 14 years, it's the first book in a new sci-fi adventure trilogy. The first title features some really, really mean plants. The second book, *Hatch*, will come out in fall 2020 and the final volume, *Thrive* (all HarperCollins Canada), will be published in spring 2021.



**BARBARA REID's** newest book *Watch It Grow: Backyard Life Cycles* (NorthWinds Press/Scholastic Canada) will hatch on December 26. This non-fiction picture book features Plasticine artwork and simple text celebrating the lifecycles

of four familiar plants and animals: monarch butterfly, oak tree, green frog and sunflower. Barbara will be sharing *Watch It Grow* along with tips for bringing art and science together in the classroom at the 2020 Reading For The Love Of It Conference on February 20 and 21, 2020, in Toronto.

**SUE TODD** has created linocut art for a story about Mayan agriculture appearing in the February 2020 issue of *Ask* magazine. *Ask* is a science magazine for ages 6 to 9, part of the Cricket magazine group. Sue also created illustrations depicting an African folktale for the digital educational publisher Read

Ask Chat and she is currently working on a new board book for Orca Book Publishers.

**VIKKI VANSICKLE's** latest picture book, *Teddy Bear of the Year* (Tundra Books), illustrated by Sydney Hanson, will be published January 21, 2020. In this warm and cozy ode to small acts of kindness, the teddy bear's picnic gets a modern twist, complete with service awards, bear-oke and a gentle nod to corporate culture. *Kirkus* says the book "sincerely celebrates kindness and comfort." The book has been included in Dolly Parton's Imagination Library program. Vikki will be hosting teddy-bear-picnic-themed events throughout the spring at bookstores and libraries.

**FRIEDA WISHINSKY's** picture-book biography *How Emily Saved the Bridge, The Story of Emily Warren Roebling and the Building of the Brooklyn Bridge* (Groundwood Books) earned a starred review in *Booklist*. *Kirkus* called the book "a strong and honest homage to a remarkable woman."

**FRIEDA WISHINSKY** and **ELIZABETH MACLEOD's** book *How to Become an Accidental Genius* (Orca Book Publishers) received a glowing review in the *Globe and Mail* in September. Reviewer Jeffrey Canton said, "[Frieda and Liz] introduce us to amazing geniuses whose curiosity, tenacity and passion led to some great discoveries... Who knows? You might be an accidental genius too." Frieda and Liz are working on a sequel to *Accidental Genius*—more news to come soon!

**DANIELLE YOUNGE-ULLMAN**, award-winning author of *Everything Beautiful is Not Ruined*, is thrilled to announce that her next young-adult novel is coming out July 14, 2020. *He Must Like You* (both Penguin Teen Canada and Viking Children's Books) is "an

authentic, angry and surprisingly funny and romantic novel about sexual harassment.”

## MANITOBA, SASKATCHEWAN, ALBERTA

Welcome to new Friends: **Lee Kolenick**, Saskatoon; **Lorraine Pundyk**, Blairmore, AB; **Erin Sawatzky**, Winnipeg; **Daniel-Ayoade Yewande**, Calgary.



**MIRIAM KÖRNER's** award-winning novel *Yellow Dog* (Red Deer Press) celebrates its German release under the title *Winter Dogs* (Oetinger Taschenbuch). In this coming-of-age adventure, the young protagonist finds solace in the bond

with his dogs, the connection to nature and the understanding of his place within. The book deal was initiated at the Frankfurt Book Fair, which will feature Canada as Guest of Honour in 2020.

Miriam's picture book *When We Had Sled Dogs: A Story from the Trapline: ācimowin ohci wanīhikīskanāhk*, co-authored by Ida Tremblay, recently won a Moonbeam Silver Award in the Multicultural Non-Fiction category. Her book *When the Trees Crackle with Cold: A Cree Seasons Activity Book* (both Your Nickel's Worth Publishing), co-authored by Bernice Johnson-Laxdal, won a Moonbeam Bronze Award in the Educational, Science and History Activity Book category. Both books are collaborations with Cree Elders and celebrate traditional lifestyles and Cree language. Miriam lives near La Ronge, SK.

**SALLY MEADOWS** has done it again! Her new book *When Crocodiles Cry: 365 MORE Amazing Facts About the Animal Kingdom* tackles such questions as: What creature has magnetic teeth? What kind of fish

climbs trees? What colour does a reindeer's eyes turn in winter? This book is the second in her "Amazing Facts" series and is a follow-up to *When Sleeping Birds Fly: 365 Amazing Facts About the Animal Kingdom* (both Siretona Creative), which was nominated for the 2019 The Word Awards. Go to [sallymeadows.com/free-stuff](http://sallymeadows.com/free-stuff) to download free worksheets and extension activities for both books. They're a fantastic resource for families, schools and homeschoolers and they engage children with science facts in a fun, creative way. They are also an amusing read for adults! To keep up with all of Sally's news, go to [sallymeadows.com](http://sallymeadows.com) to sign up for her newsletter. Sally lives in Saskatoon.

**PATRICIA MILLER-SCHROEDER** is pleased to announce that her prehistoric-adventure novel, *Sisters of the Wolf* (Dundurn Press), will be published in fall 2020. Aimed at a middle-grade audience, the story is set 40,000 years ago in Ice Age Europe. It's a tale of friendship, difference, culture clash and survival as two girls, one Neanderthal and one early modern human, and their wolf companion embark on a dangerous quest to find their families. This is Pat's first work of fiction, but she is the author of seventeen non-fiction books on the environment, nature and wildlife. She lives in Regina.

**GWEN MOLNAR's** book *Bygumbo* (Dempster + Craig Books), has been selected for inclusion in the Capital City Press Collection. The collection will be unveiled on February 14, 2020, at the opening of the new Stanley A. Milner Library in Edmonton. The Capital City Press Team will be exploring programming opportunities to highlight this collection over the coming year. Gwen lives in Edmonton.

**COLLEEN NELSON** is excited to announce her win for Young Adult Book at the High Plains Awards for *Sadia* (Dundurn Press). The High Plains Awards are

held in Billings, Montana, and celebrate literature from the high plains/prairie regions of the United States and Canada. Colleen lives in Winnipeg.

**MARIE POWELL** recently had two poems published by *The Sunlight Press*. Go to [thesunlightpress.com/2019/10/08/new-york-times-lady-clutterbucks-dinner-party/](https://thesunlightpress.com/2019/10/08/new-york-times-lady-clutterbucks-dinner-party/) to read “New York Times” and “Lady Clutterbuck’s Dinner Party.” Marie lives in Regina, SK.

## BRITISH COLUMBIA, YUKON, NUNAVUT, NWT

**DEBORAH HODGE** was happy to be included as a speaker in a recent Vancouver Children’s Literature Roundtable gathering where the new Sheila Barry Best Canadian Picture Book of the Year Award was announced. It was an uplifting event that paid tribute to the late, wonderful Sheila Barry, one of the most important editors of our time. Authors who had worked with her told stories about their experiences and shared memorable, touching, heartfelt and often funny reminiscences about her. They all felt honoured to be part of this special day. Deborah feels lucky to have worked with Sheila at both Kids Can Press and Groundwood Books. Deborah lives in Vancouver.

**TANYA LLOYD KYI**’s new middle-grade novel, *Me and Banksy* (Penguin Random House), will be released this spring. It’s the story of 13-year-old Dominica, whose private school is covered in security cameras. Someone begins sharing stolen footage, including a shot of Dominica flipping her shirt right-side-out in the library. Who has access to the cameras and why are they doing this? Dominica and her best friends, Holden and Saanvi, are determined to find out. In the process, they start a Banksy-inspired street art campaign about privacy and surveillance. Tanya lives in Vancouver.

**MONICA NAWROCKI** launched a mixed-media show called “Island Time, Reflections by Three Island Artists,” December 6 at the Cedar Hills Art Gallery in Saanich, British Columbia. Flash fiction, poetry and short stories by Monica are offered in conjunction with mono-prints by Janny Thompson and ceramics by Ester Strijbos. The show runs until December 29. Monica lives on Cortes Island, BC.

**MAHTAB NARSIMHAN** is excited to announce the release of her latest picture book, *You and Me Both* (Owlkids Books), illustrated by Lisa Cinar, on April 15, 2020. Inspired by a true event, this is a story of two boys with



more in common than meets the eye. A joyful story about friendship, diversity and how the things that we share are more than skin-deep. Mahtab lives in Furry Creek, BC.

**MARGRIET RUURS** has signed a contract for a book titled *This Is Where I Live* (Kids Can Press), a map book featuring children in unique locations around the world. Margriet attended the launch of the Italian version of her book *Stepping Stones, A Refugee Family’s Journey* (Orca Book Publishers) in Bari, Italy recently. This winter she is conducting author presentations at schools across Europe. Margriet lives on Salt Spring Island, BC.

**ELLEN SCHWARTZ**’s middle-grade novel *The Princess Dolls* (Tradewind Books) was nominated for the 2019 Vine Awards for Canadian Jewish Literature. Ellen lives in Burnaby, BC.

**ROBIN STEVENSON** launched two new books this fall—*Kid Activists* (Quirk Books) and *Ghost's Journey: A Refugee Story* (Rebel Mountain Press). Her young-adult nonfiction book *My Body My Choice* (Orca Book Publishers) was selected by *School Library Journal* as one of the “18 Best Nonfiction Books of 2019.” Robin presented at CANSCAIP’s “Packaging Your Imagination” conference in Toronto in October and spent two weeks touring in California and Illinois. She was at the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) convention in Baltimore in November and will be at the Ontario Library Association SuperConference in Toronto in January. Robin looks forward to connecting with writer friends at both. She lives in Victoria.

**Editor’s note:** *Members can be contacted via the form on their CANSCAIP site Membership page.*



## MEET CONNECT SHARE!



Never miss a meeting: [www.canscaip.org/EventsCalendar](http://www.canscaip.org/EventsCalendar)! Add CANSCAIP events straight to your calendar or inbox with handy RSS and calendar tools.

**Montreal:** CANSCAIP meetings are held regularly. For more information, contact **Carol-Ann Hoyte**. [kidlitfan1972@yahoo.ca](mailto:kidlitfan1972@yahoo.ca)

**Toronto:** Meetings are held on the second Wednesday of each month, ten times a year.  
**Meetings in winter-spring 2020:** January 8, February 12, March 11, April 8, May 13, June 10. See website for location and topic: [www.canscaip.org/Monthly-Meetings](http://www.canscaip.org/Monthly-Meetings).

**Saskatchewan:** Your Saskatchewan representative is **Dianne Young**. [dianne.young@sasktel.net](mailto:dianne.young@sasktel.net).

## THE SEVENTH ANNUAL CLAIRE MACKAY MEMORIAL LECTURE

In 2013 CANSCAIP renamed our PYI Keynote Address in honour of our co-founder Claire Mackay. As an ongoing and constant reminder of the strong vision Claire had for CANSCAIP as an organization of support and outreach, we decided that the memorial lecture would be printed in our newsletter as well as delivered at PYI.

**On Saturday, October 26, 2019 we welcomed JAN THORNHILL to deliver our seventh annual Mackay Lecture.**

I HAD A LUCKY CHILDHOOD. It was filled with art, science, books, and nature. We lived on the outskirts of small towns near fields and creeks and woods where we kids hung out. There was no supervision. We ran wild. This was normal for a lot of kids in the Sixties. I also got sent up north to camp for a month each summer—starting when I was six. That was normal back then, too.

My father was the science guy, a metallurgical engineer, a walking encyclopedia, and an inventor. My mum was a Dutch war bride. Without batting an eyelash, she went straight from the Hague to spending summers in the bush as the camp cook. She's the artist in the family. She's also always been a book fiend. Even now, the only reason she locks her apartment is to protect her books from thieves.

Our parents read to us, every night—*The Cow Who Fell in the Canal* (I love that the title uses “Who” instead of “That”), *Curious George*, the Alice books, Aesop's fables, *The Wind in the Willows*, and, starting very early, Hilaire Belloc's *The Bad Child's Book of Beasts* and *Cautionary Tales*. We also regularly got books from the library.

Later, when I moved on to adult books I read what was on my mum's shelves—almost all written by Brits: the Mitford and Bronte sisters, Aldous Huxley,



Evelyn Waugh, Somerset Maugham. I also read *Fanny Hill*, which I expected to be truly pornographic since it sported a homemade brown paper cover and was hidden at the back of my mother's sweater drawer. When I finally asked about it years later, pointing out *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, *Lolita*, and a couple of Henry Millers on her shelves, she laughed and said, “You don't think I did that, do you?” Apparently it was our elderly babysitter's silent way of voicing her disapproval when we were little.

So, yes, over the years, there've been a lot of books, many of which have been important to me. Some, though, have been duds.

Which is why I've never been under the delusion that the books I've made over the years will be inspirational to every kid who picks one up. Of course, I have a pretty good chance with already self-identified young naturalists. But what about all those other kids? I want to get through to them, too.

Because I actually have a message. It's pretty basic as messages go: We humans are part of the natural world, and everything in this living world is connected.

It might be basic, but it's not an easy concept to get across. In fact, it's really complicated. Just try telling a grade one class that they're animals. Then watch half of them look *really* disturbed. They think they've been insulted. But, it's not an insult. It's just a simple fact. We *are* animals. And, as animals, we're all connected—to each other, and to all other life on this planet. But I don't want to hit kids over the head with this message. I want them to put it together themselves. And I want as many of them to get it as possible. So I've had to become a sneaky preacher.

Nothing can happen, though, without engagement. So, how to engage them? Mostly I try to make books that I think I, myself, would have liked when I was a kid. Though I was an animal and nature nut, there were other things I liked too. I liked art and science and stories and the sounds of words. I liked mystery and puzzles and being grossed out or scared by things I knew couldn't hurt me. And everybody's like that. So I've broken this talk down into the different kinds of readers that I've tried to appeal to, and the different techniques I've used to draw in these readers.

Let's start with...

### **THE SPORTS FANS**

Oops. Sorry. I've got nothing.

So how about...

### **THE ANIMAL LOVERS**

Kids, as a general rule, love animals, which is a good thing, since we're more willing to protect the things we love. Of course, there are a few different *kinds* of these animal lovers. Some are very specific—the butterfly or cat or dinosaur fanatics, for instance. Mostly, though, it's a battle between those who love animals... just so long as they're cute and not in any

way scary, and those who think absolutely all creatures are awesome—even tapeworms. I try to cater to all of them.

There are a lot of animals in my books, and a lot of different species. There are 50 species in *A Tree in a Forest*, and more than a hundred in *The Wildlife ABC*, and the same number in *I Found a Dead Bird*. The total for *Before & After*, which has at least 21 per page, is almost 150 species, all of which are named in the borders.

I like to mix well-known animals with ones that kids might not yet know. They get the pleasure of recognizing the familiar, which, I think, makes them more open to the unfamiliar ones, like the kestrel in *Wild in the City*. I think familiarity lessens fear. And I'm not beyond doing "cute"—especially since I was told years ago that "cute" sells. Hence, using "One Panda" for the cover of the *Wildlife 123*. And everybody's a sucker for babies. So I use them, too.

But cute for cute's sake hasn't really been my shtick—except in *Over in the Meadow*, a book I did more or less out of desperation after the pain from what turned out to be malignant tumour growing in my arm made it impossible for me to continue doing traditional paint-on-paper illustration.

But some kids want more than just pictures of animals. They don't *only* want to know that a beaver has a flat tail, they want to know why.

These questioners are...

### **THE SCIENTISTS**

When I'm in a school, before I pass around a deer skull, I tell the kids to look for the tiny tooth marks on it, where a mouse had gnawed on it to get calcium and other minerals that can be hard for herbivores to find in plants. One grade-one child asked afterwards, "Didn't the deer *mind* when the mouse was chewing on its head?" Apparently I'd neglected to explain that the deer had been long dead before the mouse came along.

But these kinds of questions make my heart swell. These are the kids who are saying to themselves, “Something here doesn’t quite make sense. I’m missing something and I want to know what it is.” These are young scientists. And they need to be nurtured.

So even in my picture books for the very young, I try to provide some of the answers to questions kids might have. From the very beginning, I added end notes to my books that offer important information that for one reason or another couldn’t be included in the main text. So if a three-year-old asks about the beaver’s tail in *The Wildlife ABC*, a parent or teacher, who might not know the answer, can find it.

Since most of my books are about animals, my focus is on Life Sciences. There’s not a lot about chemistry or physics. But zoology, botany, cell biology, ecology, anatomy, evolutionary biology, genetics, microbiology, physiology, population biology? I’ve touched on all these things. And not just in the books aimed at older kids.

For instance, *I am Josephine*—illustrated by the wonderful Jacqui Lee—is an introduction to the concept of scientific classification, which I wrote after one of those times I called a young class “animals.” “I am not an animal,” one child said defiantly. “I am a human being!” Yeah, well, you’re actually *both*—and a few more things, besides. Classification doesn’t show up in the Ontario school curriculum until grade 2—when kids are 8 or 9. In my opinion, that’s way too late. Which is why this book is geared towards 4- to 8-year olds.

And it’s also never too early to introduce kids to the concept that humans have a top-heavy effect on other life forms and natural environments. Some kids notice this connection early on.

These are...

## **THE ENVIRONMENTALISTS**

I learned about the extinction of the Dodo when I was 2 or 3, because that’s when my dad regularly read

Hilaire Belloc’s poems to us. This is the end of The Dodo:

*The voice which used to squawk and squeak  
Is now forever dumb—  
Yet may you see his bones and beak  
All in the Mu-se-um.*

And when I was a little older, still before school, there it was again in *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland* as Charles Dodgson’s alter ego. And I learned about the Passenger Pigeon from the diorama at the ROM the first time I was taken there, probably when I was 5 or 6. Which was when I probably saw Canada’s only stuffed Great Auk, too.

I’ve always thought: get them young. Let the outrage start early. It worked for me. Which is why the animal I chose for the first picture in my first kids’ book, was the Great Auk. And there they are, the last two Great Auks with their broken egg.

*A is for Auk  
Who lives by the sea,*

Of course it *should* be past tense for an extinct bird, but I was told that that was too depressing a way to start a book. Almost 30 years later, I illustrated the same scene again in *The Tragic Tale of the Great Auk*. My life is full of full circles.

For some kids, though, a story like the Great Auk’s is too in-your-face depressing. They don’t want descriptions of slaughter. So, in other books, I sneak in the important part in the back pages. Like in *The Rumour*, which is a retelling of an ancient Buddhist tale, where I explain in the end notes that, although there are crazy numbers of animals in the book, it would be impossible to see so many today, since each of the six featured species is either endangered or threatened.

ONE OF THE WAYS SOME KIDS ARE LED to the last page of the book is through the illustrations. They want to see the next picture, and the next, and the next.

These are...

## **THE ART LOVERS**

My mum, the artist, stuck a crayon in my hand when I was about two. And that was that. I drew all the time, through my childhood, into high school, then art school, then ten years of editorial illustration before I finally found my true calling. And then that tumour started growing, which eventually resulted in a 13-year hiatus from illustrating.

At first I'd thought it was a work-related injury caused by years of doing repetitive scratchboard scraping movements. I did a lot of that scratching. And I also did a lot of dot painting, and other fiddly little things. In 2000, for *The Rumour*, I switched to going mostly digital to lessen my work time—I actually only painted 12 running hares, and half as many of all the other animals, then scanned them and then put them all together on the computer.

Even assembling the photo-collages of *Over in the Meadow* proved to be too much to do, which forced me to switch to using primarily photos in 2005 for *I Found a Dead Bird*, *This Is My Planet* and *Who Wants Pizza?* I did, however, do a few photo-collages in each of them.

I was finally properly diagnosed in 2007 and was treated in the sarcoma unit at Mount Sinai. My arm was saved! Yay! And I'm still alive. Double yay! But the surgery left me with restricted hand and wrist movement. It took me a few years to figure out how to work with this handicap, using the same painting program I used for *The Rumour*. Basically, I just go in really close on the screen and scribble with the stylus in a tiny space. At actual size, it looks like I have a lot more control than I do.

I have a lot of influences in my work. I steal from everywhere, from everything I've ever seen—Vermeer, for instance. I've always loved his black & white tiles, which I've used many times in black and white editorial illustrations, and once in my own kitchen, and then in a bathroom, and, most recently,

in *The Triumphant Tale of the House Sparrow* on a page that's a tribute to my Dutch ancestry, and to my mother for having introduced me to art, and to Vermeer, when I was very young.

The problem with art, though, is that everyone's preferences are different. I don't even like a lot of what I've done myself over the years. That's what a burn barrel is good for. But because of this, I don't take it personally if kids, or adults, don't like one or more of my visual styles.

But maybe those readers prefer to look for hidden or subtle details in illustrations. I call these kids...

## **THE DETECTIVES**

Kids love looking for things, and finding things, especially if they're hidden. I mean, who doesn't like the "Aha!" moment. Personally, I'm addicted to it: I'm happiest when I'm in the woods with our dog Ruby, looking for fungi I've never seen before, and simply looking for anomalies in pattern, which allow me to find skulls and feathers and signs of interesting animal behaviour. Like last winter, when I found my husband Fred's big footprints side-by-side in the snow behind this tree. Why had he been standing so close to the tree? Was he peeing? And then the "Aha!" moment. He'd been hiding on the dog.

In books, kids especially like to find things that the adults haven't noticed. I like to give them lots of these opportunities. It's the kids, for instance, who first notice the deer mice spilling out of the falling tree in *A Tree in a Forest*. They're also the ones who find the Canadian flag I planted in the background suburbs. I don't think the American publisher ever did notice it.

And it's also usually the kids who pick up on what I call the "ghosts" of animal characters in *Crow & Fox* (reprinted as *Folk Tails*). These are all 2-animal stories starting with Elephant and Hare in India. In the second story, Hare and Tortoise from Africa, the elephant character has been dropped, but there are tiny *African* elephants in the background, a pattern

that continues through the book. A very cool thing, that wasn't planned or even noticed on my end, had to be pointed out to me by a child. Every story in the book is about either food or water.

In *The Rumour*, the Detective Readers only need to be told once—on the first page—that one of the things the main character worries about is having green eyes. I don't need to specify that she's the only green-eyed hare in the book. They're already turning to the page with two hundred plus running hares to look for her.

In *Before & After*, the whole concept is based on having kids carefully search each page for the animals identified in the Before border before turning the page to see what's happened or changed over the chosen time frame.

When I wrote *Kyle Goes Alone*, gloriously illustrated by Ashley Barron, which is about a young sloth who climbs down to the ground alone for the first time, to poo, I was absolutely shocked when reviewers called it a potty training book. I thought I'd written an introduction to camouflaged animals in the rainforest. I'm a little dense sometimes.

I know from experience that the more practice you have looking for things, the more observant you become. And the more observant you become, the more easily you find deviations in pattern. These are skills that help us to see and make connections.

Some people like time connections more than anything else. These are the...

## **HISTORY BUFFS**

In *A Tree in a Forest* the focus of the text is on a single maple tree and all the other animals in a maple forest. Humans are rarely mentioned, but I put in a visual human history timeline in the background, starting in 1763.

When I was a kid, the social studies year I liked the most was when we learned about Canada's First Peoples and pioneers. The focus was on day to day living: the chewing of skins to make them supple; the

moving stealthily through the forest on moccasined feet; the clearing of forests with the help of horses so soil could be tilled; the building of log cabins, and the drilling of maple trees with brace and bit to collect the sap. I don't remember anybody mentioning anything about conflict that year.

That came later, when school history classes turned into a litany of taking and fighting. I loathed it, and dropped it in high school as soon as I could.

But I found history presented differently in other places. The Time-Life Library of Art, which was in so many high school libraries back then, was fabulous in the way it cross-checked between different artists of an era as well as exploring day-to-day life, economies, religion, politics and contemporary events. Taking this even further was a wonderful book I first read when I was about 17, *Rats, Lice & History* [1935], by Hans Zinsser, who developed the typhus vaccine. It's a fantastic combination of biology, digressions about combining art with science, epidemiology, biographies of the rat and flea, and the eye-opening history of how various microorganisms—not military strategists—were the decisive factors in the outcomes of thousands of years of wars.

I thought about this kind of broad inclusiveness when I was writing *The Tragic Tale of the Great Auk* and *The Triumphant Tale of the House Sparrow*. Really, there's so much history in these two books that the word "tale" in the titles could just as well have been replaced with the word "history." But that would have stepped on the *story* aspect of these two books.

And story is of great importance to a large percentage of readers...

## **THE STORY LOVERS**

Though I've done a lot of "concept" books, and pure non-fiction, I love stories. Who doesn't? So I tried to write *A Tree in a Forest* as the gripping tale of a maple tree, because I wanted the reader to *care* about the tree, to think "Oh, no!" when one of the trees' limbs

breaks off after an ice storm. I don't know if I was successful or not, but if I can get *any* kids to care about a tree, I've done my job, especially if I've done it without anthropomorphizing.

Which brings us to *Is This Panama?* and *Winter's Coming*, illustrated by Soyeon Kim and Josée Bisaillon respectively. These were my forays into combining hard science with anthropomorphized, talking animals. I'll warn any writers, though, that there is a kickback against such combos, since research shows that young children have problems separating fact from fiction. Still, I think that if kids care about a character, which is easier to do if that character has familiar human traits or reactions, they are more likely to *listen* to other parts of a story, or to continue reading it on their own. Which is why I tried to tell the "tales" of the Great Auk and the House Sparrow—to engage kids and make them care about the two main characters—even though these two main characters are species, not individual birds. If I can lure them into reading these books from one end to the other, they're also going to get bits of human history, evolution, biology, ecosystems and conservation.

There's harsh stuff in these two books—a lot of killing of auks, and a lot of killing of sparrows. But I tried to temper what are, essentially, litanies of slaughter, with lighter, easier to take pages, both in the illustrations, and by using humour, suspense, and really cool factoids in the text. Of course, kids' taste in cool factoids includes things that many adults don't like talking about.

I call these ones the...

### **THRILL SEEKERS**

They're the ones who put on the brakes for words and phrases like "ick," "yuck," "gross," "monkey toes," and "bird saliva." These kids also love other verboten topics—such as the excretion of waste products, something every living thing on this planet does. You know—pooping and peeing.

Some of them are also fascinated with almost anything related to death. This was made clear to me when I told a group of kids that I was working on a book about death. Two boys, their eyes and mouths wide open, turned to each other... and hugged. That's when I knew I was on the right track.

There's lots of stuff in *I Found a Dead Bird* for these kinds of thrill-seeking kids. The favourite spread, is, of course, animal decomposition. The kids pore over the time lapse photos of the decaying baby pig, and they marvel at the goofiness of the close up maggot's head.

One year at camp, I found a dead, partly buried shrew at the edge of the sandy playing field. I knew enough not to touch it with my fingers, so I poked at it with a stick. I was just starting to flip it over when I was startled by two large black and red beetles scurrying in the sand beneath it. Probably I screamed. I was so taken aback that I let the corpse fall back on top of them.

My curiosity got the better of me. I gathered up my courage and flipped the shrew all the way over. The beetles were gone! Not understanding how they could have disappeared so quickly, I immediately gave them magical attributes. I simply didn't have enough information to do otherwise.

Now I know a lot more about the whole process, and it's beautifully complex. The beetles are called burying beetles. Both male and female will dig under a small dead animal until the loosened soil collapses around it. Before completing the burial, the female lays eggs, and when the larvae hatch they can feed at leisure without worrying about other scavengers. But what I didn't learn until I was working on this presentation is that even before burying it, the beetles do something else to protect their children's food: they shave the fur off the carcass so they can paint the naked corpse with an antimicrobial excretion which slows its decay. And guess what else.

After the eggs hatch, the adults hang around to help feed their young.

I think that's awesome.

I'm a fungi fanatic and when I'm not working on my books, pretty much all of my time is spent studying the fungal world, looking for ones I've never seen before, photographing them, cataloguing them, reading about their evolutionary complexities and learning about startling connections between them and other living things. I try to share some of this stuff on my blog, <https://weirdandwonderfulwildmushrooms.blogspot.com>.

For me, it's all about awe. That's what I'm looking for: those mouth-open, wow moments when I learn something that changes my world view, those "Aha!" moments, those moments when I feel insignificant as an individual and, instead, feel connected to everything.

There's a mushroom, for instance, *Laccaria bicolor*, which, like many fungi in forests, has a mutually symbiotic relationship with trees, in this case, pine trees. Underground, its mycelium is bound to the root-tips of one or more nearby pines so they can trade nutrients. The fungus gets food, in the form of sugars from the tree. The tree is provided with minerals and other nutrients, and has water delivered from beyond the stretch of its roots. In a healthy forest, there are thousands of these relationships between hundreds of species. But this mushroom is special. It's also a hunter. It hunts tiny soil-dwelling springtails. When the tip of one of its mycelia's microscopic filaments senses a springtail underground, it injects a lethal venom. And then it feeds the springtails' nitrogen to its tree partners—which sounds to me almost as if the pines themselves are carnivores. Awesome? Right?

The more I learn about the natural world, the more of these moments I have—in the woods or while researching—and even while pulling up images to use for this lecture.

There's actually someone else in a photo I took of a dead shrew and burying beetle that I didn't see when I first downloaded it from my camera—that I didn't see until I was putting together this presentation. There's an orangish-brown thing attached to the beetle's side. It's a mite. It turns out this kind of mite isn't a beetle parasite. It's a hitchhiker—a hitchhiker with a very restricted diet: the only things it eats are fly eggs and larvae—the most aggressive competitors of the burying beetle's own larvae. Now, how great is that?

When I visit schools, I always take what I call my "museum-in-a-bag. It's a bunch of skulls, desiccated insects, snake skins, dinosaur bones, a mummified bat and two hummingbirds—just stuff I've found over the years. I explain what everything is and then I pass it around.

I have a photo of a boy in northern Labrador looking at one of the mummified hummingbirds in a jar. It's the first one he's ever seen in real life. His expression is incredible—furrowed brow, mouth open. I don't think he's ever seen anything more beautiful in his young life. Or more amazing.

This boy isn't just looking at a hummingbird. He's experiencing the wonder of evolution, of biodiversity, of the physics of light refraction, of the life cycle. He's holding in his hands an example of the complexity of life on this planet.

And that's what I want kids to get from my books.

***JAN THORNHILL has been writing and illustrating science- and nature-based non-fiction children's books for the past thirty years. Her most recent title, The Triumphant Tale of the House Sparrow, is a companion volume to The Tragic Tale of the Great Auk, which won the 2017 TD Canadian Children's Literature Award, the Roundtables of Canada Information Book Award and was a finalist for the Governor General's Award. Jan lives in the woods near Havelock where she immerses herself in the same natural world she writes about.***

# BUSINESS BRIEFS

## MARKETING

**Editor's Note:** In the Summer 2018 issue Beth Pollock offered a DIY Guide to marketing. As a reminder, here are the websites she recommended:

1. [Query Tracker](#) For information on publishers. And scroll to the bottom of the home page for a list of the newest agents in the database. 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 like yours. Alternatively, choose a few agents you'd love to be repped by and follow them on Twitter.
5. The [Association of Canadian Publishers](#) (ACP) website features a list of Canadian publishers.
6. [UK Children's Books](#) names British publishers of children's books.
7. CANSCAIP's listserv: members often share news about publishers and agents who are open to submissions.
8. The following websites can help you polish your writing and learn about the industry:
  - [Kidlit](#) (writing advice from manuscript editor Mary Kole)
  - [Quill and Quire](#) (news about the Canadian publishing industry)
  - [Nathan Bransford](#) (advice on writing kids' books from an author and former literary agent)
  - [Harold Underdown](#) (articles and advice on writing, illustrating and publishing, and occasional updates

on staffing changes in the "Who's Moving Where" column).

- [Quick Brown Fox](#) (the lowdown on writing workshops, book launches, reviews, and agent interviews).

**TED STAUNTON** leads **Writing Children's Fiction courses I and II**, Tuesday and Thursday evenings. Classes are held at Mabel's Fables bookstore in central Toronto. Writing I surveys all genres of kid lit. Writing II is a workshop for experienced writers. Click the links below for the George Brown College Continuing Education website: <https://writing-children-s-fiction-i/> or <https://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 fees and more info go to: [www.tedstauntonbooks.com](http://www.tedstauntonbooks.com).

**NON-FICTION EDITOR: Ann Benedek's** years as a corporate journalist, and as Features Editor of the Anglican Church of Canada's award-winning national newspaper, provided her with strong skills in proofreading and copy editing. If you have a non-fiction manuscript in need of polish, as well as fact checking, please email Ann at [ann.severn@gmail.com](mailto:ann.severn@gmail.com).

**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](http://www.canscaip.org).

**SEMINARS:** For information about PWAC (Professional Writers Association of Canada)'s seminars on freelance writing see [www.networds.ca](http://www.networds.ca).

# Dharmali Patel's **SketchBook**

I start with a quick thumbnail drawing, and then move on to character exploration and development.



I create the line art



And then I work on a grayscale and coloured version to nail down the mood



Last but not least, I have fun adding the needed details, lighting and Texture to the Final.





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# CANSCAIP NEWS

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