



Kite Tales

Society of Children's Book
Writers & Illustrators
~Los Angeles

Kite Tales Home

Winter 2013 Volume 24 Number 4

www.scbwisocal.org

In This Issue

Regional News

- Los Angeles [2](#)
- Orange County/
Inland Empire [4](#)
- Central-Coast [5](#)
- Tri-Region Calendar** [11](#)

Features

- Art Director's Day
by Laura Hoffman [9](#)
- SCBWI Working Writer's:
Retreat 2013
by Nutschell Windsor [12](#)
- From Bugs Bunny to Knuffle
Bunny: What I've Learned From
Animation and Children's Books
by J. R. Krause [14](#)
- Author's Perspective
by Marnie Bates [16](#)
- Poet's Perspective
by Annie Young [18](#)
- A Penchant for Poetry
by Annie Young [19](#)
- Definitions for the Perplexed
by Editorial Anonymous ... [20](#)
- Volunteer in the Spotlight
by Mary Ann Fraser [21](#)

Columns

- Illustrator's Gallery featuring
Christina Forshay [22](#)
- Bulletin
Great News [23](#)
- News from the Internet
by Melissa Northway [25](#)
- A Hint of Humor [26](#)
- Writer's Connection [27](#)
- OC Retreat Details [29](#)

Los Angeles region Writer's Days

Story and How You Can Bust Genres, Cross Media and Reach Readers
March 22 - 23

Saturday – keynotes, first pages panel, exercises, contests and more
Sunday – intensives

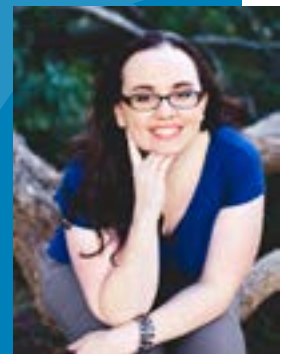
Registration opens end of December: losangeles.scbwi.org/events/2014-writers-days
Heidi Fiedler (editor at Teacher Created Materials and Argosy Press) and Danielle Smith (Forward Literary)



Heidi Fiedler has mended books, sold books, bought books, created, packaged and devoured books. She has worked in publishing for over ten years, with clients ranging from Target to Barnes & Noble. Today she is an editor at Teacher Created Materials, where she is working with work-for-hire authors to produce books on everything from nanotechnology to Abraham Lincoln for the educational market. She is also in the process of launching TCM's new trade imprint, Argosy Press, which is dedicated to creating books that inspire children to read under the covers late into the night. She is currently acquiring chapter book and middle grade series for Argosy Press.

Danielle Smith

is an associate literary agent at Forward Literary Agents where she represents picture books and middle grade authors and illustrators. Her enthusiasm for children's literature began as a young child, but grew exponentially when her own two children were born and shortly thereafter she began reviewing books at her top rated children's book review site *There's A Book*. For more than five years she's been involved professionally with books through print and online publications such as *Women's World* and *Parenting Magazine*. She's also served as a judge for The Cybils awards for fiction picture books for the last three years. Danielle is a middle grade writer, member of SCBWI and can frequently be found on Twitter (@the1stdaughter) talking about anything from children's books to the BBC's "Sherlock" to her own parenting woes and joys.



What I'm looking for and/or recent sales: Danielle is most interested in finding new author/illustrator talent, children's fiction, and creative non-fiction from picture books through middle grade. She enjoys magical realism mixed with food in an MG (think Sarah Addison Allen for tweens), books featuring a multi-cultural cast or character without feeling like that's the focus of the story, and sweet PBs featuring good sibling relationships. Above all she's looking for a great voice and solid storytelling. Recent sales include Julie Falatko, whose recent picture book *Snappy the Alligator (Did not Ask to be in this Book)* sold to Viking Children's in a preempt and will be published in the summer of 2015, and Joanna Rowland whose picture book *Always and Forever* is due out spring 2014.

Authors who will speak at Writer's Days are TBA.



Who's Who in SCBWI-Los Angeles

Regional Advisors:

Sarah Laurenson (RA), Lee Wind (RA)
Sarah at sarah.laurenson@gmail.com.
Lee at jamleewind@gmail.com
Sally Jones Rogan (Assistant RA)

Conference Coordinators:

Illustrator's Day: TBD
Writer's Days: Sarah Laurenson & Lee Wind
Working Writer's Retreat:
Marilyn Morton, Claudia Harrington,
& Sarah Laurenson
Down The Rabbit Hole Sunday Field Trip:
Dawne Knobbe
Creative Toolbox: Sally Jones Rogan
PAL Member Liaison: Candace Ryan
Contest Coordinator: Nutschell Windsor
Volunteers Wanted: **Illustrator's Day Coordinator,**
Critiquenue Coordinator, Catering Coordinator

Schmooze Organizers:

Rita Crayon Huang (Schmooze Schmizard)
Karol Ruth Silverstein & Charlie Cohen
(Westside Writers)
Suzy Block (Westside Illustrators)
Jennifer Swain (San Fernando Valley
Illustrators)
Susan Lendroth & Heather Banis (West San
Gabriel Valley)
Rene Rawls & Deborah Fletcher Blum
(Hollywood)
Laurisa White Reyes (Santa Clarita Valley)
Phyllis Meltzer (South Bay, forthcoming)

Advisory Board:

Jeffrey Cox, Stephanie Jacob Gordon, Maggie
Grinnell, Claudia Harrington, Rita Crayon Huang,
Dawne Knobbe, Sarah Laurenson, Marilyn
Morton, Beth Navarro, Sally Jones Rogan,
Candace Ryan, Lee Wind, Nutschell Windsor.
Emeritus: Judy Enderle, Julie Williams

www.scbwisocal.org,
Webmaster: Jeffrey Cox
jeffery00cox@gmail.com

SCBWI International

Executive (International) Office:

Steve Mooser, Lin Oliver
For general info, membership & other national
SCBWI business:
8271 Beverly Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90048
323-782-1010, membership@scbwi.org
www.scbwi.org

U.S.
RA Coordinator: Tracy Barrett
Assistant RA Coordinator: Patricia Wiles
Illustrator Coordinator: Priscilla Burris
Illustrator Coordinator: Rachelle Meyer
Int'l RA Chair: Kathleen Ahrens
Assistant Int'l RA Chair: Angela Cerrito
Int'l Illustrator Liaison: Bridget Stevens-Marzo
Int'l Publications and Crystal Kite Awards:
Christopher Cheng

SCBWI-L.A. Regional News

Inspiration

And introducing ... Sally Jones Rogan as the new assistant regional adviser for the Los Angeles region!

S. Jones Rogan grew up among the misty Welsh hills of Snowdonia then traveled the world, looking for adventure. With pencil and notebook in hand, she has taken part in the Paris-Dakar rally, sailed rough Atlantic seas and experienced the ancient city of Petra as a royal guest.



A long-time member and volunteer of SCBWI/LA, Sally's first published children's story appeared in *Highlights for Children* (1992). Several magazine shorts later, her novel, *The Daring Adventures of Penhaligon Brush*, (Alfred A. Knopf), made the 2007 New York public library's, "Top 100 Titles for Reading and Sharing," and was nominated for the "Arizona State Readers Award." *The Curse of the Romany Wolves*, also by Knopf, followed in 2009. Both books are listed in California Readers Association's, "California Collection."

Sally encourages all types of book exploration at the LAUSD elementary school library she has called "home base" for 15 years and is still exploring brand-new frontiers in her latest project.

We are so excited to have Sally aboard!

Hello, Members!

During my association with SCBWI as volunteer, board member, and Creative Toolbox coordinator, the biggest thrill has been to watch friends and members grow from fledgling to free-flying authors and illustrators.

I am one of those lucky ducks and can absolutely say that without SCBWI, my own personal journey would have been a longer, lonelier and more

(continued next page)



Who's Who at Kite Tales

KITE TALES is a newsletter published by the L.A. Chapter of the Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators for the SCBWI Tri-Regions of Southern California. Information published in *KITE TALES* does not constitute an endorsement by SCBWI and/or SCBWI-L.A.

KITE TALES Editors

Maggie Grinnell and Beth Navarro
Managing Editors

walkingthruwords@yahoo.com,
kitealeseditor@gmail.com

Sarah Laursen & Lee Wind

SCBWI-L.A. Editors

Mary Ann Fraser, Cen Cal Editor, 805-581-1906
or MaryAFrase@aol.com

Francesca Rusackas & Q.L. Pearce,
Orange/Long Beach/Riverside/
San Bernardino Editors,
ZFRANCESCA@aol.com or
qlpearce@earthlink.net

KITE TALES Layout & Production

Sherrie Petersen

solvangsherrie@gmail.com

KITE TALES Designer

Jennifer Swain

Jen@GetDigitalOrange.com

KITE TALES Proofreader

Marcelle Greene

marcelle@greenepen.com

KITE TALES Illustrator Liaison

Jane Smith

superjane_js@yahoo.com

KITE TALES Subscriptions

Mary Peterson,

mary@marypeterson.com

KITE TALES Ads

Maggie Grinnell,

walkingthruwords@yahoo.com

KITE TALES is free for members at: <http://losangeles.scbwi.org/kite-ales-current-issue/>.

Archived issues are available to the public at: <http://losangeles.scbwi.org/kite-ales-archive/>.

Join the online mailing list to receive Kite Tales announcements via e-mail at <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/KiteTales/>.

Submission Deadlines:

Spring - Jan. 15 for March 1 issue

Summer - April 15 for June 1 issue

Fall - July 15 for Sept. 1 issue

Winter - Oct. 15 for Dec. 1 issue

Send comments, articles, great news, questions, etc. to Maggie Grinnell at walkingthruwords@yahoo.com or Beth Navarro at kitealeseditor@gmail.com.

Columns - 500 words max

Features - 800 words max

Interviews - 1400 words max

Poetry - 150 words max

Critique Connections:

Contact Sheryl Scarborough at mediasherpa@gmail.com.

Toot Your Horn & Ads: Follow instructions on page 26 of this issue.

arduous flight. So, when Sarah and Lee asked me to help out as ARA, I figured there was no better way of continuing to help share our region's wealth of expertise and support than to roll my sleeves a little higher.

As with any new position there's much to learn, but I'm excited to participate and look forward to witnessing many more of you flying high in the future!

Sally Jones Rogan

Assistant Regional Advisor
SCBWI Los Angeles

INSPIRATION CORNER

**"Writing is an
act of faith, not a
trick of grammar."**

- E. B. White

Thank you to our SCBWI volunteers!

On October 5, we enjoyed a fast-paced, information-packed **Editor's Day** at Cal State University in Fullerton. Our guest speakers included;

- Joanna Cardenas, Assistant Editor – Viking Children's Books, Penguin Young Readers Group
- Lisa Cheng, Editor – Running Press Kids
- Kat Brzozowski, Assistant Editor – St. Martins Press
- Shauna (Fay) Rossano, Associate Editor – G.P. Putnam's Sons, a Division of Penguin Young Readers Group
- Lauren Rille, Associate Art Director – Simon & Schuster Children's Books
- Jill Corcoran, Literary Agent – Jill Corcoran Literary Agency
- Sara Sciuto, Literary Agent – Full Circle Literary
- Rosanne Thong, award-winning picture book author
- Kelly Gash, professional organizer

We kicked Editor's Day off with a pre-conference art exhibit on Friday, October 4. Each attendee was invited to bring one original piece of art. The artwork was so fantastic that some of the pieces were actually sought after and bought by one of our visiting editors! We are so proud of the talent that we have here in SoCal country.

Joanna Cardenas from Viking talked about common themes and plot structure. She also mentioned that nonfiction is a growing opportunity at Viking.

Kat Brzozowski gave a great overview of the market for series books and the value of the stand-alone book. She also covered the importance for the writer and illustrator to understand the balance between art and commerce.

Shauna Rosanno of G.P. Putnam Sons focused on the elements of a strong first page including an interesting setting and authentic dialog to establish a strong voice.

We also were very pleased this year to welcome our first guest art director, Lauren Rille. Lauren provided written picture book dummy critiques and her unique talk allowed us to get a peek at the behind-the-scenes of an art director's



responsibilities. Lauren also conducted a break-out session, reviewing each portfolio that was brought. Illustrators were present and listening throughout her critiquing. She shared valuable insights and helpful comments, and our illustrators left grateful, challenged and inspired. Our attendees also had the opportunity to participate in pitch sessions, manuscript critiques, and a writing and portfolio contest. The day was rounded out with three "first pages" sessions with the speakers and two guest agents. The icing-on-the-cake was the 42 randomly drawn attendees who enjoyed lunch at a speaker's table. What a delightful opportunity.

Thank you to our CSUF Host, Cliff Cramp and to all of his students volunteers and to our SCBWI volunteers. We could not have done it without you Lori and Bev!

Mark your calendars for **May 2 – 4, 2013 for our Annual Spring Writer's Retreat** at the South Coast Winery Resort and Spa. Our Southern California retreat location is tucked in the heart of Temecula's Wine Country. It is the ultimate getaway. Picture yourself strolling along a serene path through a tranquil vineyard surrounded by lush gardens and waterfalls. It is the perfect setting for a writer's retreat. Our tentative line-up of editors include: Sara Goodman, Editor, St. Martins Press, Martha Mihalick, Editor Greenwillow Books and Noa Wheeler Henry Holt; 4th editor *tba*. Join us for Editor led roundtable critiques, first pages, VIP reception, craft workshops and much more! For details contact Francesca; zfrancesca@aol.com

We have a change coming to our annual program starting in 2014. The Spring Retreat at the South Coast Winery and Spa will still take place in early May 2 – 4, but **Agent's Day will now be October 4, 2014**. We will alternate Agent's Day and Editor's Day (every other year) on the first weekend in October thereon.

We are working on a few special programs for 2014 and we hope that you will be able to join us.

We leave you dear friends with the following inspirational words from one of our favorite authors:

"First, find out what your hero wants, then just follow him!"
- Ray Bradbury

Follow him indeed!

Cheers,
Francesca Rusackas, Regional Advisor
Q. L. Pearce, Assistant Regional Advisor



Grant Gives Hope and Inspiration to Winner

by Toni Guy

I kissed my iPhone twice when I read that I had won the SCBWI 2013 Summer Conference Grant. “They’ll either love it or hate it, but what’ve I got to lose?” I said after mailing my entry. I not only won a scholarship to the summer conference, I won something less tangible: the knowledge that my writing actually might be good. Someone beyond my writer’s group, family and friends (who could all be lying to me) was telling me I could write.

At the conference, I received the courage, hope, ideas, inspiration, and assurance I needed at a perfect time in my writing life. I was surrounded by 1,200 people from diverse backgrounds either living or sharing my dream of becoming a published author. I sat with an assistant movie director one day, a rabbi another day, both aspiring children’s authors. I shared a table with a group of writers who met at the summer conference five years ago, reconnect every year, and are now published authors.

The conference workshops and three-hour writer intensives helped me identify and focus on my manuscript’s weaknesses. After attending “The Chapter One Pact” with Andrea Davis Pinkney, vice president and executive editor at Scholastic, I rewrote my first chapter (for the 100th and best time) during my lunch break.

Now thanks to SCBWI, my dream



Toni Guy

of getting my middle grade manuscript, *Jello Jamieson and the Sister Recycling Machine* published, seems more like a “when” rather than an “if.” I will kiss my iPhone again, and possibly Stephen Mooser, when my manuscript is published.

My SCBWI Summer Camp Conference Adventure

by Barbara Bietz

Attending the SCBWI conference is like eating seven layer chocolate cake for breakfast, lunch, and dinner – sweet, intense, and endlessly scrumptious.

I decided to enter the SCBWI summer conference grant contest because I have never attended the Los Angeles conference. I also needed to jump start my writing, and it seemed like a contest was the perfect way to get back on track. Winning the grant was just the validation I needed to stay inspired and focused on my writing.

The conference was everything I’d ever imagined. The hardest part was choosing which sessions to attend. Each session was chock full of great information, including insights from agents and editors, the craft of writing, the nuts and bolts of nonfiction, and more. The keynote speakers offered enrichment and inspiration. Kirby Larson was particularly memorable. Her presentation connected iconic works of children’s literature with newer books, and underscored how we are all connected.

The social aspect of the conference was a highlight for me. The conference is like camp for writers and fosters camaraderie and a deep sense of belonging to a larger community. I visited with old friends, met online

(continued next page)



friends I'd never known in person, and made new friends who share my passion for the writing life!

I am so grateful to SCBWI CenCal for giving me the opportunity to attend the conference. I encourage everyone to apply next year. There is nothing to lose and everything to gain! SCBWI rocks!

The SCBWI summer conference is always an island of inspiration floating in a sea of possibilities. It is all about words and images, new friends, and enduring connections.



Barbara Bietz

Alexis O'Neill, SCBWI Member of the Year 2013

This year at the SCBWI national conference in Los Angeles, Alexis O'Neill received the SCBWI Member of the Year Award for her 18 years of service to the organization as Regional Adviser to the Central-Coastal (formerly Ventura/Santa Barbara) SCBWI region.



Alexis O'Neill

The Voice of the Conference

by Joan Bransfield Graham

Because writing is about *voice*, perhaps a sampling of speakers should speak for themselves. Laurie Halse Anderson feels the *frenergy*, extols the *sanctity of silliness*, stands ready to *defend, protect, and celebrate childhood*. Surviving growing up with five brothers, Jon Scieszka suggests you *stay in touch with the subversive, child part of yourself*; as a teacher he liked the *nutty kids – the crazy ones*.

Melissa Manlove urges a *strong, graceful approach ... passion ... strange, interesting words*. Peter Lerangis advises be *that first taste of wow* and *... nothing makes sense, but books do*. Kirby Larson explores *history and mystery* with style and heart. Erica Perl believes *all kids should have equal access to books* (www.firstbook.org/authors) – *be a mensch*.

Lin Oliver observes that *specific details are funnier than generalizations*. You have to *LOVE* the character you're putting in *comic jeopardy*; you want to *laugh together – with each other*. Henry Winkler finds that *drama bent to the LEFT* is funny.

Matt de la Peña knows *the writer in me looks at my life in the rear-view mirror* and *the best instructor in the world is great literature*. Jarrett Krosoczka, with a blazing fire behind him, whispers, *Make Magic. Preserve Wonder*. Richard Peck reminds us that *fiction is real life with the names changed, and nobody but a reader ever became a writer*. Presentations reflect the voice of the author, the style of the artist, don't they?

Super Charismatic Book-lovers Weaving Imagination – SCBWI, you've done it again!



Writers' Day Contest Winners

Here are the winners of this year's Writers' Day CenCal writing contest. All judges were from outside of our region. Each manuscript was assigned a number, so the judges did not know names of those who submitted. The contest was open to published and not-yet-published writers, and the results reflect this mix. The works are judged on their own merit and not on the experience or reputation of the author. The designations, Most Promising and Special Mention mean that the manuscripts have stood out enough to capture attention of the judges and are works-in-progress.

Congratulations to Writer's Day Winners



Winners of the 2013 SCBWI-CCWriter's Day

Top, L-R: Barbara Bietz, Anne Knowles, Lisa Marnell, Maddie Burke, Cynthia Bates, Patricia Daniele. **Bottom, L-R:** Greg Trine, Mara Bushansky, Alexandra Stewart, Kate Hovey



L-R: Charles Kochman, Stacey Burney, Carisa Klüver, Amy Lennex

Picture Book Category

Most Promising Manuscript

Elsa's Fairies: Sadness into Sunshine,
by Patricia Daniele

Special Mention

The Unbreakable Doll: The Making of Madame Alexander,

by Barbara Bietz

Stone Songs: Riddles of Earth's Hidden Treasures,

by Kate Hovey

Middle Grade Category

Most Promising Manuscript

Memoirs from a Sixth Grade Bookie,
by Alexandra Stewart

Special Mention

My Grandmother Has a Boyfriend,
by Mara Bushansky

The Knockleppockles and the Great Move,
by Anne Knowles

Hotchkiss,
by Greg Trine

Young Adult Category

Most Promising Manuscript

Dragon Price, by Cynthia Bates

Special Mention

Reset to Zero, by Maddie Burke

Summertime Blue, by Lisa Marnell



A Big Thank You!



Alexis O'Neill with the signed kite she received in thanks for her 18 years as CenCal's Regional Advisor.

SCBWI Central-Coastal SAVE THE DATES

For registration information, go to

www.scbwicencal.org

January 17-19, 2014
Retreat
Shaping Your Manuscript
for Publication
Santa Barbara

February 8, 2014
Workshop Storytelling:
The Writer's Quest
with Mary Ann Fraser
San Luis Obispo

March 8, 2014
Workshop Intensive:
Writing Successful Early
Chapter Books
Ventura

April 5, 2014
Workshop
Poetic License
with Sonya Sones
Santa Barbara

May 7, 2014
ArtWorks-Illustrator's Day
Instructors: Lauren Rille
and Marla Frazee
Thousand Oaks

June 8, 2014
SketchCrawl
Fillmore

BOOK TALK ONLINE

Book Talk is a monthly book discussion group taking place on the SCBWI Central-Coastal California listserv. Discussions begin on the first of each month, facilitated by Lynn Becker (lynnb@mac.com). Readers may join in anytime during the month with comments or questions about the featured book. Book Talk is open to all members of the Southern California SCBWI who are signed up for the regional listserv.

To become a member of the listserv, go to: groups.yahoo.com/groups/SCBWI-CCal/

DECEMBER

Eleanor & Park, by Rainbow Rowell (YA)
Standout debut novel of first love, misfit-high school-style.

JANUARY

The Day the Crayons Quit, written by Drew Daywalt, illustrated by Oliver Jeffers (PB)
Watch out! One boy's crayons are venting! It's great picture book fun.

FEBRUARY

Aristotle and Dante Discover the Secrets of the Universe, by Benjamin Alire Saenz (YA)
Unique coming-of-age novel about two Mexican-American boys in El Paso.

MARCH

Counting by 7s, by Holly Goldberg Sloan (MG)
A 12-year-old genius reshapes her world and everyone in it after losing her parents.

APRIL

The Very Honorable League of Pirates: Magic Marks the Spot, by Caroline Carlson (MG)
Engaging plot, spun with a fun and fabulous voice – it includes pirates and an escape from finishing school.



Portfolio Reviews

by Laura Hoffman

We illustrators had the unique opportunity to spend a day with art directors, an agent and leading children's book illustrators in an intimate setting. This event allowed us to show our best work to top art directors and decision-makers and find out what the people who hire us really look for.

Lauren Rille, Associate Art Director of **Simon & Schuster**, gave us an inside peek of the anatomy of a picture book in her talk, "A Look Behind the Book: The ins-and-outs-and-in-betweens of the picture book process, from start to finish." She demonstrated the intricate bookmaking process, from acquisition and illustrator pairing, to sketches and final art, while describing the fun that takes place in between. Lauren detailed the collaborative "hot potato" process that takes place between editors, art director, design staff, marketing staff, and illustrator – all to create the most beautiful book possible.

Isabel Warren-Lynch, Executive Art Director of **Random House**, gave a motivating talk about "the Emotional Connection," a look at how our illustrations connect with the text and readers. Next, **Cliff Cramp**, an illustrator whose long career spans a wide range of genres (plus, he is a professor of illustration at CSUF), gave an inspired and stirring talk, "Story, Story, Story," conveyed through strategic use of fundamentals of design, as in vantage point, focal point, color, lighting and composition. All this happened before lunch.

Meanwhile, illustrators also had the chance to sneak away for valuable 15-minute one-on-one portfolio reviews by published



illustrators. Here we could gain rare insight to what we can do to improve our presentations. This year, we could choose our reviewer, and I chose **Ken Min**, whose joyful artwork I have admired for years. I have always valued the opportunity SCBWI presents us with portfolio reviews; this is an opportunity that cannot be missed.

After lunch, **Kelly Sonnack**, Literary Agent, Andrea Brown Literary Agency, gave a candid talk on "How to Catch an Agent/Editor/Art Director's attention with your portfolio." She went into details that we really need to know. For example, publishers want illustrations of appealing babies (not gross babies), varieties of emotion, pirates, cowboys, princesses, bunnies, bears and TRUCKS! She also spoke about something we rarely get to hear: the money.

(continued next page)



(above) Kelly Sonnack, literary agent, Andrea Brown Literary Agency

(left) Cliff Cramp gave a presentation, "Story, Story, Story," conveying illustrations through vantage point, focal point and composition.



Jen Lum, Art Coordinator for **Learning A-Z**, exhorted illustrators in her talk “Maximizing Your ‘Net’ Gain,” an art director’s perspective on presenting ourselves online effectively. Yes, art directors do look at our blogs and web sites but they only linger and hire us if our artwork is easy to get to. Finally, **Ellen Mendlow**, who acquires finished illustrated books for Auryn, an app developer, spoke to us about the latest developments and opportunities for illustrators in a growing tablet-based storytelling world.



Ellen Mendlow explains the world of tablet based storytelling.

I came away from the event motivated to put more time and love into my portfolio – the physical “book” and my on-line presence. Art directors look for technical expertise, and the work we put out there shows them what we illustrators are capable of. They also want to see that we can consistently draw characters in many different ways with a broad spectrum of expressions. Eye grabbing portfolios have work that demonstrates purposeful composition and vantage points. The technical quality must be there – but in order to really stand out from the crowd, we have to emotionally connect with our audiences. Illustration is a marriage of art and theatre; our characters must be cast, dressed and put into motion



Jen Lum presented need-to-know information on how art directors find illustrators.

in a set of our creation - as Cliff Cramp reminded us, “When in doubt, act it out.”

This year, we had the chance to enter our portfolios and book dummies for an opportunity to win a 30-minute one-on-one meeting with an Art Director or Agent. In the old days, we would have to fly to New York City and drop off our portfolios and hope that an art director would look at our work – and if we were lucky, we would get a brief meeting.

Here is a list of the illustrators whose outstanding portfolios were chosen for review by the faculty: **Simone Shin, Ashlyn Anstee, Robin Angelides, Sophie McNally, Kimberly Gee, Tanya Maiboroda, Wilson Swain, Danny Beck, Donna Camargo, Kent Culotta, Terry Diefenbach, Christina Forshay, Mike Baker, Lauren Gallegos, and Ken Min.**

From the event’s one-on-one meeting opportunities, each of the Art Directors/Agent selected one **“Professional Choice”** winner out of the six chosen portfolios, free tuition to either one day at the next Writer’s Days (March 22-23, 2014) or to the next L.A. region illustrator event, which will take place in November 2015, an honor bestowed to the following illustrators:

Donna Camargo, Wilson Swain, Simone Shin, and Ashlyn Anstee, who was chosen twice.

Christina Forshay’s beautiful portfolio won the honor of **“People’s Choice,”** earning her 50 percent off tuition either one day at the next Writer’s Day (March 22-23, 2014) or to the next L.A. region illustrator event, which will take place in November 2015.

I will see you there!

Laura Hoffman, Illustrator
<http://www.laurahoffmanart.com>
<http://laurahoffmanart.blogspot.com/>



Art Director's Day Winners: Simone Shin, Donna Camargo, Ashlyn Anstee and Wilson Swain. Christina Forshay, People's Choice Winner, stands in the middle.



Go to www.scbwisocal.org/calendar.htm
for information on regional events.

SCBWI EVENT CALENDAR – Save These Dates 2014

MONTH	DATE	DAY	TYPE	REGION	DESCRIPTION
JANUARY	17-19	Fri-Sun	EVENT	CC	Retreat - Shaping your Manuscript for Publication
FEBRUARY	8	Sat	EVENT	CC	Workshop - Storytelling: The Writer's Quest
	21-23	Fri-Sun	EVENT	INT'L	CBWI Annual Winter Conference
MARCH	8	Sat	EVENT	CC	Workshop - Intensive: Writing Successful Early Chapter Books
	22-23	Sat-Sun	EVENT	LA	Writers' Days
APRIL	5	Sat	EVENT	CC	Workshop - Poetic License with Sonya Sones
MAY	7	Wed	EVENT	CC	ArtWorks - Illustrator's Day

Critique Connections



On-Line FREE

Longing for a critique group?

Why not join Critique Connections Online to find a buddy or two? It's easy, and open to SCBWI members who reside in the Tri-Regions of Southern California. Critique Connections Online is not an online critique group or a manuscript exchange; it is a way to link up with like-minded people to allow you the possibility of creating your own critique group.

Best of all, it's free!

To access the contact information or start your own group, join by e-mailing your request to critiqueconnect@yahoo.com. Questions can be addressed to the same e-mail.

Once you've joined the Yahoo! Group, you will be asked to provide information about yourself for a database and for an introductory e-mail.

Others in the group can then connect directly with you and you with them.

Sheryl Scarborough, Critique Connections Online Coordinator
critiqueconnect@yahoo.com



SCBWI Working Writer's Retreat 2013

by Nutschell Windsor

The registration for this year's **Working Writer's Retreat** sold out in a record two-and-a-half days. And it's no wonder that it did. I have attended **SCBWI-L.A.'s Working Writer's Retreat** for four years in a row, and just when I think things couldn't possibly get any better, Sarah Laurensen and the other organizers come up with some new way to push the retreat up to a whole new level.

The retreat was held at the Holy Spirit Retreat Center in Encino from September 20–23. This year's theme was *Critique. Revise. Repeat.* We did a lot of that during the weekend, but we also managed to squeeze in some moments to socialize and bond with our fellow attendees.

Our esteemed faculty included Eden Street literary agent, **Liza Pulitzer-Voges**, Beach Lane Books VP and Publisher **Allyn Johnston**, HarperCollins Children's Book Editor **Andrew Harwell** and that dynamic duo of authors, **Judy Enderle** and **Stephanie Gordon**.

To arm us with the necessary tools needed for a weekend of revising and critiquing, co-organizer **Claudia Harrington** facilitated a panel on revision. Our weekend mentors shared tips and techniques for revising, as well as their take on what "voice" means on the page.

As usual, attendees were divided into two major groups: the "Award Winners" and the "Best Sellers."

Each group was further subdivided into five teams of four people each. Sarah, scheduling genius that she is, made sure that an Award Winner always roomed with a Best Seller. This arrangement meant that we all had solo

use of the room to revise (or nap) while our roommates were at their critique sessions.

The feedback that we received from faculty members and critique partners was truly helpful. So many revision ideas bubbled from the critiques that some groups even held

extra sessions on their own during their breaks.

The organizers thought of everything a writer could possibly need. There was an endless supply of tea and

coffee in the break room and each critique room was packed with snacks we could munch on during the sessions. And to

balance out the thousands of snack calories we consumed during the weekend, exercise guru Lynette Townsend led us in a series of stretching exercises. Aside from looking after our physical comfort, retreat organizers also took care of our mental and emotional well-being. They made sure that we had time to socialize and unwind after a long day. The wine and cheese social on Friday night helped us connect with attendees



2013 attendees



(continued next page)



outside of our groups, while Saturday's karaoke night allowed us to let loose and even discover new singing talents. It was the perfect way to help us relax for the retreat's final and most nerve-wracking event: The First Pages Reading Session.

All 40 participants were given three minutes each. They read for a minute or so, and the rest of the time listened to what the panel had to say about their work. The first pages reading panel were composed of faculty



First pages panel

members Liza Pulitzer-Voges, Allyn Johnston and Andrew Harwell, along with two other acquiring literary agents, Jill Corcoran and Richard Florest. Panelists later said they were amazed by the quality of the attendees' writing. Some of the panelists even requested submissions from authors whose work had impressed them.

Working as a volunteer for this retreat has given me an even greater appreciation of the event. I saw just how much thought, effort, time and heart the organizers put into the retreat in order to ensure that it runs smoothly and that each participant has a memorable time.

On top of that, being the retreat's official photographer allowed me the pleasure of

capturing fun moments and fond memories from the weekend. And while I will never reveal secrets from memorable karaoke night, I can tell you this: unbreakable bonds of friendship were formed during this weekend, and wonderful memories were forever etched into our souls.

I have pictures to prove it.

Nutschell (pronounced Noo-shell, in case you're wondering) is a middle grade and young adult fantasy writer. She is also SCBWI-L.A.'s contest coordinator, and the founder and president of the Children's BookWriters of Los Angeles (www.cbw-la.org). Nutschell reports on various writing events, and shares writing tips and techniques via her blog www.thewritingnut.com, and her twitter page [@nutschell](https://twitter.com/nutschell).



Karaoke



From Bugs Bunny to Knuffle Bunny: What I've Learned From Animation and Children's Books

by J. R. Krause

Who says you can't learn anything from watching cartoons?

I loved Bugs Bunny as a child. I loved him so much that I wanted to draw Bugs perfectly. My elementary school noticed these efforts and eventually, the kids starting calling me "the artist."

As luck would have it, I started a career in television animation shortly after graduating from college. Here I am, 20 years later, and still employed by Hollywood.

Animation functions like an assembly line. As a designer, I create models to be animated by teams of both traditional and computer animators. I'm at the beginning of the so-called assembly line.

About 10 years ago I started writing and illustrating picture books. People often ask me how animation influences my output as an author-illustrator. After some consideration, I can see that animation has taught me many things that apply directly to books, as both are about telling stories after all.

An animated movie or television show begins with a script, just like a picture book begins with a manuscript. Animation then goes to the "design and storyboarding" phase, which is similar to creating a picture book dummy. Characters need to be designed, backgrounds developed, and scenes need to be composed. This is similar to deciding page breaks and composing illustrations in a book.



The evolution of a character from POCO LOCO; the rooster was originally a yellow duck that began as a dapper white duck.

Animation is broken into scenes or sequences. Each scene or sequence needs to convey something, even though the tone or purpose will vary in each. Books

work the same way. On each page of a picture book some sort of event needs to happen; turning the page is similar to cutting to a new scene.

Typically, animation begins with an "establishing shot" which establishes the time and place. Visual details can be included to provide clues about the main character.

The next scene, whether it be dialogue or an action sequence, usually introduces the main character.

The first page of a picture book can work in the same way. Take a look at *The Snowy Day* or *Where the Wild Things Are*. We are introduced to Peter and Max in their bedrooms. The first illustration in each reveals a bit about who the main character is and what the story will be about. The next page sets the story into motion.

(continued next page)



Continuity is an important part of these book dummy sketches. The viewpoint shifts 180 degrees, from indoors to outside. The foreground in one becomes the background in the other.



Continuity is key in picture books and animation. If a character is wearing plaid pants, they should be plaid throughout the book unless there's a reason to make a change. This can be a problem in animation as many artists are involved in various stages and overall continuity needs to be carefully monitored. It's a lot easier with picture books as the job typically lies with a single illustrator. Children love pointing out elements that establish continuity throughout a picture book. It's like a game of "I Spy." The mouse in *Goodnight Moon* is a great example of this.

"Art is elimination of the unnecessary."—Waldo Salt

In both animation and book making, I'm always amazed by the amount of work that never sees the light of day, as each requires a lot of exploration. Creating is often an organic process and much of the effort tends to be shed as the project matures. Of course creating animation is very different than creating a book; never mind the budget, time-frame, and intended audience for each.

The purpose of a picture book is unique. By nature it's interactive and sometimes even ritualistic. Most picture books are meant to be read aloud. Picture books can seem so simple, yet many are profound. Remember that a picture book will be read many times over, perhaps even in a single sitting. A great picture book should offer and inspire new dialogues each time it's read. A picture book needs to engage on many levels.

Most of children's animation on television is "character-driven." Think of *Dora the Explorer*, *Wonder Pets* and *Yo Gabba Gabba*. These shows follow a repeating story template for each episode. Kids love these shows, but most of the appeal is in the characters as the stories may be somewhat secondary.

Olivia is an example of a character-driven picture book. The original book simply lays out who Olivia is. Publishers love picture books with strong characters

like Olivia. They tend to sell well and there's greater potential for sequel books and character licensing. Picture books in this vein are very similar to, perhaps even influenced by television animation, (and vice versa. "*Olivia*" is now an animated television show).

Most picture books tend to be "content-driven" where the concept or story, rather than the character, is the main hook of the book. *The Knuffle Bunny* books by Mo Willems are good examples of content-driven picture books, albeit with very identifiable characters.

"Art is elimination of the unnecessary." – Waldo Salt

When creating my own picture books, some of my inspiration comes from animation, but more and more it's from the unique and profound concepts behind so many great picture books. I also try and revisit who I was as a kid. What did I like? What would inspire the six-year-old me to pick up a particular book? If Bugs Bunny was on the cover, chances are I'd read it!



J.R. Krause: Self portrait

J.R. Krause is the author-illustrator of *Poco Loco*, (Two Lions / Amazon 2013), which he co-wrote with his wife Maria Chua. The sequel *Happy Birthday, Poco Loco* will be published Fall 2015. J.R. also has worked on many animated television shows including "*The Simpsons*," "*King of the Hill*," "*Futurama*," "*Drawn Together*," and "*The Critic*." He is credited as John Krause. www.jrkrause.com



My Road to Publication

by Marnie Bates

Whenever I tell people that I'm an author, they instantly become fascinated by my age. I partly blame my dimple.

Excuse me, but how old are you?!

And upon hearing my answer (23), somebody within earshot tends to proclaim, "Holy crap! I could be your mother!"

Um, I think my parents would've broken that news to me by now. I have a theory that explains my early success, though. (Spoiler alert: I'm not a prodigy.) I suspect you'll relate to it. Most of us wanted to write in high school. Or at the very least, we wanted to see our name on the cover of a book.

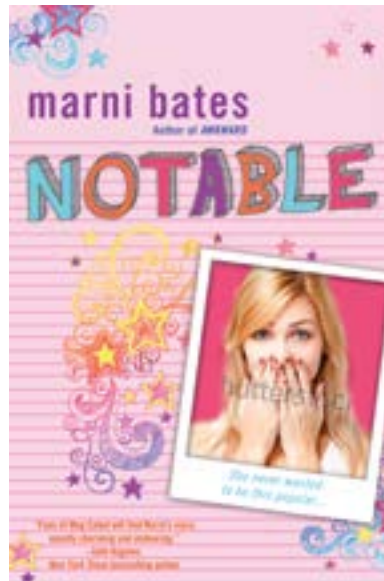
And then the worst thing ever happened. The kiss of death for all aspiring authors. Someone asked what we wanted to do professionally.

"Write novels? That's a tough industry..."

"Hahaha! Oh. You're serious. Maybe you'll teach creative writing someday?"

"You should take a few business courses in college. Major in something useful."

We heard that we weren't good writers when compared against, oh, I dunno ... *Hemingway*. That to be a real artist we had to come from a tortured past. There were **rules**. Arbitrary ones about adverbs and adjectives that seemed very important. We wrote "said" instead of "clucked" or "whimpered" because that was deemed better.



A consensus was reached: *We were not worthy of being writers.*

We needed to be practical. Realistic.

So we didn't write, or if we did, it was a secretive act. *It doesn't mean anything, we told ourselves. It's just for fun.*

We worked crummy jobs to pay the bills, attended college, heck, maybe we got married and had kids. We planned to survive on Top Ramen ... or defer our loans by forging ahead to grad school.

And then something awful happened. Cancer. Breast cancer. It's a tumor, but it might be benign. It wasn't us, but our mom. Maybe we tried to stop that person from doing that thing, but it didn't work, and we blamed ourselves.

Maybe it wasn't one specific event, but we cried after work. We wiped away tear tracks and reapplied makeup in bathroom stalls, because if the stress showed on our faces we could kiss that promotion goodbye.

That's when we started reading again.

Books that made us burst out laughing. Books that shredded our hearts, even as they reminded us of our humanity. Books that eclipsed our problems.

We thought, I miss this. I want to do this. Now. We became time thieves, stealing minutes from work to jot down dialogue in the aforementioned bathroom stall.

We drank way too much caffeine.

(continued next page)



We pitched agents. We smiled through gritted teeth when people asked if we would be the next J.K. Rowling. We debated giving up entirely when we received form rejection letters.

We finished one manuscript and started another.

Sparkly bits of confetti burst in our hearts when we found an agent ... but then came another wave of rejection from acquiring editors.

We worried. We stressed. We sent neurotic emails.

And then we got The Call.

It's a small advance, but the royalty rates are great.

It's an eBook-only deal, but it will get your foot in the door.

It's going to auction!

You should self-publish this and create a grassroots movement

Some debut novels become *New York Times* Best Sellers. Some go out of print. Some get rave reviews from Kirkus ... only to be ripped apart on Goodreads.

Somebody reviewed my debut YA novel by saying, "Awkward is the devil's way of poisoning young minds."

Not even kidding.

So where does my story deviate from the one I laid out? I benefited from author blogs.

I read every scrap of Meg Cabot's advice. I'm paraphrasing, but these are essentially her rules:

1. Don't tell anyone you want to be a writer – they will only try to talk you out of it.
2. Don't take writing classes – they will probably kill your soul.
3. Write.

I paid for the Willamette Writers Conference with my babysitting money. And when I heard that a publishing company was hiring teenage girls to write memoirs, I figured I had nothing to lose by applying.



Marni Bates

I signed my first book contract during my freshman year of college, and by that point there was no turning back. Ready or not – I was so not – my life story was going to be exposed for anyone and everyone to read.

So I buried my nose in books and kept writing.

Here's what I know to be true: I'm not myself without a project. Sure, my characters drive me nuts! But they also make me exquisitely happy. This job does not come easily. Not for me, not for anyone. You have to decide whether you can finish a novel, tear it apart in edits, send it out into the world for criticism, and then start the process all over again.

But if this is something you want more than anything else in the world, then I vote you plunge in. Right now. Don't beat yourself up for lost years – they're not truly missing. Life tested you in a million different ways during them.

So let's stare down the blank page today.

Marni Bates began her writing career at the age of 19 with her autobiography, Marni, for HCI's *Louder Than Words* series. Her debut fiction novel, *Awkward*, has been translated into Portuguese, Spanish and Hungarian and has been optioned by Disney Channel as a made-for-TV movie. She has three other novels with KTeen: *Decked With Holly*, *Invisible*, and *Notable*. You can visit www.marnibates.com or follow her on Twitter @MarniBates.



Where I Am Supposed To Be

by Annie Young



We are all born poets – born with the parts that make us poetic. Children, especially, are drawn to poetry like bees are drawn to honey. Nursery rhymes, for instance, have opened the doors for many infants into the wonderful world of poetry. Poetry engages children with its enticing chants, rhymes, and finger play, and also encourages early literacy. Poems allow the child to play with words while developing language, cognition, and social/emotional functions. I surmise that it was at this early point that my journey began.

I spent most of my childhood creating poetry in my head. I was a lonely child and at a very young age, poetry took me on this journey into my imagination. I would spend hours studying the details of life. I inspected the rough crevices of the bark of a tree, watching ants weave in and out and round and round. I imagined myself as an ant lost, scurrying, following the other ants in a crazy haze. My escape and release happens when I transfer these experiences in my head to paper through writing.

We all know what poetry is and what it is not. Yes, sometimes it rhymes. It's a wonderful play on words. I'm not here to talk about semantics. I want to discuss what drives poetry. What is it that puts that fire under someone, that sparks that passion . . . that raw emotion, and drives them to craft words onto paper? Everyone has that creativity inside of them. I'm not here to speak on what poetry can do. I'm here to get into how poetry makes us feel.

I love poetry. No, love is not a strong enough word. I need poetry as any child coming into this world needs poetry. Without poetry in my life, I would be empty. For children today poetry helps them deal with the injustices of their world. Without this form of expression, we would be wandering the earth without purpose, allowing our anger and frustrations to be pushed down inside, deeper and deeper.

I did my master's thesis on stress and school children. I compared the effects of stress on children with stress on adults. Of course, what caused great stress to a youngster did not compare with what caused adult stress, but that did not matter. The cause of the stress is inconsequential. How it made them feel mattered. Many adults cannot understand that children are able to experience the same impact of stress that adults experience. On top of feeling stressed, children have the added pressure of not being able to deal with their problems in a healthy way. Poetry helps children deal. It's important now more than ever. Our children face many harsh realities. They need to have a channel for their feelings.

(continued next page)



That is how poetry saved me. As I got older, I wrote poetry to express my teenage angst. It was dark, depressing, and full of dread. I wanted to share it with the world; I wanted the world to feel my pain. Recently, while cleaning my garage, I found my old high school poems buried under the stuff of memories. The poems were still dark and dreadful; but mainly they were sad. I could not bear to read my poems again and proceeded to bury them. If I could do a memorial service, I would. But at the time, those poems served their purpose: to express myself; to channel my emotion; to put into words the despair I could not handle with grace and maturity at that time of my life.

It is no surprise, then, when I say my idols in my teenage years were Sylvia Plath and Emily Dickinson. Their poetry moved me. I related to their raw honesty, their loneliness, and their fascination with death. Both were repressed women who were able to express themselves in their writings and poetry. Ms. Plath and Ms. Dickinson have been my guides in my journey in discovering who I am, and what I am meant to become. At first, I thought I needed to find my voice, but I was mistaken. I believe what is more pressing is to become a voice to those who have none. As a special education teacher, most of my students lack communication skills. They have the same feelings of frustration, anger and stress as everyone else. My journey has brought me here. I want to be a voice for my students. I want to be a voice for all children with disabilities. No, I cannot always expect compassion and understanding from the world at large, but if even one person reads my poetry and is touched by it, then I will know that this is where I am supposed to be.

Annie Young is a children's writer and teacher. She earned her B.A. in psychology with an emphasis in child development at UC Irvine and an M.A. in education at National University. She co-authored Using Signing Time for Children with Down Syndrome.

At first I thought I needed to find my voice, but I was mistaken. I believe what is more pressing is to become a voice to those who have none.

Living with Autism

by Anni

What you see is not what you get
I haven't shown you my personality yet.
Get to know me and you will see
Just how same we both can be
I am like you; although not exactly a clone
But don't you like basketball, cars, to be
alone?

And just like everyone, I need to share
Just how annoying if all you do is stare.
I will scream, and sometimes jump
I may run into you with a thump.
But please take the time to talk to me
Or you'll never know how real I can be.
When you talk to me, keep it straight
Keep it simple so I can relate.

You can be my friend, but please no hugs,
As everyone knows, touching me bugs.
I don't need haters, bullies and trolls;
I need friends, family, understanding souls.



Definitions for the Perplexed: Self Publishing

by **Editorial Anonymous**— *A Blog of a Children's Book Editor*
Reprinted with permission from
<http://editorialanonymous.blogspot.com>

Janet Reid has done a fine job of covering the Harlequin brouhaha, so I needn't go over it again here.

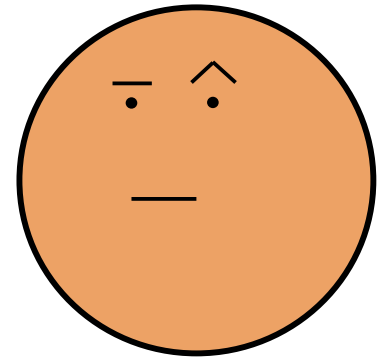
And the **SFWA** has helpfully delineated the differences between vanity, subsidy, and self-publishing.

Let me just get this out of the way: There's nothing wrong with self-publishing. Not intrinsically. And a very small and extremely lucky and persistent percentage of self-publishers manage to sell their self-published works in enough quantity to make a profit. In a few extremely rare instances they sell well enough to be picked up by a trade publisher.

But there IS something wrong with self-publishing presses: They're shitheads.

Self-publishing presses reliably tell their, ahem, *clients* all the things that will happen: their book *will* have an ISBN. It will be available through Amazon. It *will* have "distribution."

What they do not tell their clients are all the things that won't happen: It *won't* be available at both national wholesalers. Even if it is, it won't be available on a



returnable basis to bookstores. It won't be available at a normal trade discount to bookstores. It *won't* have been edited, designed, or illustrated in a professional manner, which is what the book-buying public expects.

Which means it won't have a snowball's chance in hell of placement in bookstores, and 999 times out of 1,000 it *won't* have a snowball's chance in hell of selling. *Period.*

If self-publishing presses were educating their clients about all of that, I would have nothing at all against them. But education would cut into their profits. So they *won't*.

Next issue: "Issues" books

From Editorial Anonymous: "If you have questions, e-mail them to editorialanonymous@hotmail.com, and I'll try to answer them. But seriously, don't try to query me or submit to me. I'm anonymous. If you submit to me or query me at this e-mail address, I will use your letter / submission on the blog. Be warned."

Writing Connections

Debra Mostow Zakarin

Author Websites Marketing & Promotional Services

www.zoitmedia.com

Significant discount offered for SCBWI members

Writer's Ink

Judith Ross Enderle & Stephanie Jacob Gordon

CRITIQUE BY MAIL
www.writersinkville.com

1 to 5 pages \$75; additional pages \$8 each
Second critique of same manuscript half price

judink@aol.com
"We can't guarantee a sale,
we can guarantee a tighter manuscript."



Central Cal Illustrator Coordinator
MARY ANN FRASER

I have been a member of SCBWI since 1986. During most of that time, I was raising my three boys, writing one-to-two children’s books a year, speaking at schools, and maintaining a decorative painting business. As much as I wanted to be more fully involved, there simply weren’t enough hours in the day. Oh, I had my bursts of volunteerism, primarily with the initiation of an illustrators’ retreat, which I co-organized with Lisze Bechtold, but that was as much as I could manage back then.

Then a few years ago, I realized that my boys were getting older and there were no more soccer games, scout outings, or PTA meetings to attend, no more bake sales, no more Eagle projects. My time had come at last. I spoke to Alexis O’Neill, RA *extraordinaire*, explaining that I had finally found some pockets of time and, as a recovering soccer mom, figured I’d better put it to good use or I’d be sideline cheering on kids I didn’t know – could be creepy. She immediately asked if I’d like to take over as our region’s KITE TALES editor. I eagerly accepted.

One thing quickly led to another, and I soon became our regional illustrator coordinator. I struck gold when Kathryn Hunley graciously agreed to become my assistant. One of my first tasks was to redesign the Central-Coastal California logo – a project that had been begging for attention for years.

As the new CenCal IC, my focus has been to continue building community amongst our illustrators. But how best to do that? A survey was our answer. Through it, we learned what our illustrators were looking for – the chance to meet other illustrators working in the field as well as art directors and editors who could hire them.

In answer to those needs, I initiated **SketchCrawls**, organized our 2012 ArtWorks with Laurent Linn, managed the Illustrator Gallery at Writer’s Day, and this year introduced our CenCal Traveling Sketchbook project. To my surprise, these events have often drawn in many authors! Already plans are underway for next year’s ArtWorks on May 7, which will feature the

...my focus has been to continue building community amongst our illustrators.

awesome and two-time *Caldecott* honoree **Marla Frazee**, and Simon and Schuster associate art director, **Lauren Rille**. I don’t know about anyone else, but I can’t wait.

In the meantime, I continue to write and illustrate fiction and non-fiction for preschool through young adult. My latest books are *Heebie-Jeebie Jamboree* with Boyds Mills Press and the *Ogg and Bob* books, written by my son, Ian Fraser. Other titles as well as my portfolio can be found at www.maryannfraser.com.

And now, my duties are once again changing. As of January 1, 2014, I will be our new regional adviser. Am I a bit daunted about taking over from Alexis O’Neill, who has served our region for 18 years? You bet, who wouldn’t be?

Fortunately, I will have the remarkable and talented Rebecca Langston-George as assistant RA. For me this is the ultimate opportunity to give back to the organization which has nurtured me and my career for 28 years.

I’ve always believed that you get out of an organization what you put into it. Never has this been truer than with SCBWI. Our members are the most generous, encouraging professionals I have ever had the good fortune to meet. They are my colleagues, my friends, my mentors, my guardians in an ever-changing profession. With people like that, how could creating children’s books ever feel like work?



Editor’s Note:
It has been a pleasure working with Mary Ann on KITE TALES. I love reading about her region’s news. We wish her the best with her new role. She will be amazing!



Christina Forshay

As a child coloring and watching cartoons were high on **Christina Forshay's** to-do list. And opening that brand-new box of crayons on the first day of school was just the best ever! There was something about that "new crayon" smell. Come to think of it, she still thinks those things are pretty neat-o!



One late night, Christina did an Internet search for "children's book illustration" and **The Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators** was the first thing that popped up. Becoming a member of **SCBWI** was a huge step for Christina's career. Attending the conferences and schmoozes provided her with knowledge of the industry, networking situations and friends!



For most of her childhood, Christina revolved between wanting to become an architect, an animator and a graphic designer. It wasn't until her first year at California State University Long Beach that she realized that children's illustration was the way to go. However, after graduating from CSULB with a B.F.A. in



Christina has illustrated a few books in the past two years, including *The Really Groovy Story of the Tortoise and the Hare*, by Kristyn Crow and *Goodnight Baseball*, by Michael Dahl. She also works on early readers and educational illustration for clients such as MacMillan and McGraw Hill.

illustration, Christina worked in a field other than illustration for a few years. She finally realized that the "office life" wasn't for her and she decided to dedicate herself full-time to creating the illustration career she always wanted. But how?

Christina is working currently on another picture book to be released in 2014

(shhh – the title is top secret right now). She also is developing her own stories as an author-illustrator and will shop those around in the very near future.





Great News

Hanging Off Jefferson's Nose: Growing Up On Mount Rushmore by **Tina Nichols Coury**, illustrated by Sally Wern Comport, (Dial Books for Young Readers, May 2012), was named one of the best children's books for 2013, by the National Council for Social Studies.

In August, **Joan Bransfield Graham** was named the winner of the 2013 SCBWI Book Launch Grant for her new book *The Poem That Will Not End: Fun with Poetic Forms and Voices* due out January 28, 2014. Her book, *Flicker Flash*, was published in October in Japanese by Fukuinkan Shoten Publishers. *Splish Splash* is celebrating its 20th year in print. www.canetwork.weebly.com/joan-bransfield-graham.html

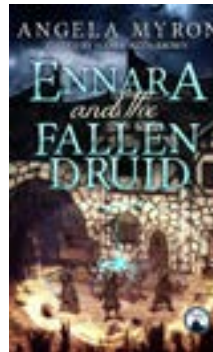
Michelle Markel's *The Fantastic Jungles of Henri Rousseau* (illustrated by Amanda Hall, Eerdmans) has won the 2013 PEN/Steven Kroll Award for exceptional picture book writing. The \$5,000 prize is one of several literary awards conferred annually by PEN America. The book also received a Parents' Choice Gold Award for picture books, and is a Bank Street College Best Children's Book of 2013.

Anni's Attic by **Anne Loader McGee** (Vendera Publishing, November 2012) received an honorary mention in both the San Francisco Book Festival and the Paris Book Festival.



This is a fictional novel of two cousins who find escape from the horrors of the escalating Civil War when they discover a seemingly magical secret attic and a trunk filled with mysterious old items. www.annemcgee.com

Angela Myron's first book, a middle-grade fantasy entitled *Ennara and the Fallen Druid*, recently won a silver medal at the Moonbeam Children's Book awards.



For her new book, *The Kite That Bridged Two Nations*, **Alexis O'Neill** worked with the Oakwood Cemetery, where the subject of her book is buried, and the Niagara Falls Museum to launch her book internationally in Niagara Falls, New York and Ontario, Canada on the weekend of September 27-29, 2014. Local kite clubs will supervise family kite-making activities. For more information, contact Alexis at AlexisInCA@aol.com

In October 2013, Shelf Media Group launched a new digital-only review magazine, *Middle Shelf: Cool Reads for Cool Kids*. *Middle Shelf* features books from large, small, and indie presses all aimed at readers between the ages of 8 and 14. Each bimonthly issue includes author interviews, reviews, excerpts, cover artist spreads, and much more! The inaugural issue of *Middle Shelf* features an interview with Margaret Petersen Haddix. At the helm of *Middle Shelf* is SCBWI member, published author, and mom of five, **Laurisa White Reyes**. *Middle Shelf* is a valuable resource for the home and classroom, connecting kids, parents, librarians, and educators to the best books available today. For a free subscription to *Middle Shelf*, visit www.shelfmediagroup.com/pages/introducing-middle-shelf.html.

Facebook: www.facebook.com/middleshellmagazine

The Five Lives of Our Cat Zook by **Joanne Rocklin** was nominated for the following state reading awards: Vermont Dorothy Canfield Fisher Book Award, Texas Horned Toad Book Award, Florida Sunshine State Young Readers Award, Missouri School Librarian Association Readers Award.

(continued next page)



Ice Island (Random House) by **Sherry Shahan** is on the Bank Street College of Education’s “Best of Books, 2013” list for ages 9-12 in the adventure category. The story features young teens and their sled dogs. Woven into the story is information about the 1925 serum run.

Sherry Shahan’s YA novel *Purple Daze* (Running Press Teens) was produced as a play in San Louis Obispo. Sherry also wrote the script.



Karol Ruth Silverstein’s picture book manuscript *Other* was named the 2013 Barbara Karlin Grant runner-up.

April Halprin Wayland’s poem, *When Mom Plays Just for Me*, from Myra Cohn Livingston’s book, *Poems for Mothers*, appears on the home page of the United States Children’s Poet Laureate Kenn Nesbitt!

Lee Wind is excited to be a producer, writer and on-air contributor for a new half-hour public radio program about children’s literature called “*Kid Lit with Lisa Loeb*.” It debuted in September 2013 with “The Y.A. Explosion” and has two more episodes in the works for this year. Find out more (and listen to the program) at kidlitradio.org

CLASSES

Art Center College of Design Night Program (626) 396-2319 or www.artcenter.edu/atnight
Otis College of Art and Design
(310) 665-6850 or (310) 665-6950
Email: otisce@otis.edu

Illustrating Children’s Books, an intermediate course taught by Deborah Lattimore 2/3 to 4/21, 10 meetings (no class on 2/17 & 3/17).
Otis College of Art and Design
9045 Lincoln Blvd., L.A., 90045
(310) 665-6800

UCLA Extension Writers’ Program www.uclaextension.edu/writers

As the largest and most comprehensive university-related writing program in the nation, the UCLA Extension Writers’ Program equips new and practicing writers with the tools they need to tell their stories and to seek publication and production. UCLA offers more than 500 annual onsite and online writing courses in writing for the youth market, as well as fiction, memoir, personal essay, poetry, playwriting, publishing, feature film, and television writing.
For more information: (310) 825-9415.
To enroll: (310) 825-9971 or (818) 784-7006.

Fiction or Nonfiction: What’s Best for Your Story?

taught by Caroline Arnold
Shaping your idea and turning it into a book just right for your intended audience involves many choices. This workshop covers both fiction and nonfiction techniques and how to use them to create a book for children that is both fun and informative – just right for the child and just right for you. From picture books to chapter books, you will learn how to develop an idea into a framework for a book or article, choose a point of view, write lively prose, and conduct research. Special attention will be paid to organizing material; selling your story to trade, school, library, and magazine markets; and editing your work.

Saturday, March 1, 2014
10 a.m. to 3 p.m.
Registration in the UCLA Extension catalog (listed under Writing for the Youth Market).

Writing In Rhyme for Young Children

taught by Terry Pierce
An eight-week online course for UCLA Extension Writers’ Program from January 15-March 5, 2014.

Join Terry in UCLA Extension’s newest online children’s writing course where you’ll romp into the world of rhyming children’s books. Through readings and creative writing exercises, you’ll explore rhyme, rhythm, repetition and language, as you complete a first draft of a rhyming picture book. For more information: www.uclaextension.edu/



by Melissa Northway

Times have changed for aspiring and established authors with the technological advances that provide the opportunity to self-publish and be successful. And with the social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter — these channels really help get the word out about us as authors and about our stories. I have heard from authors who are published through traditional publishing companies that they are often expected to help promote their books as well. In the iOS and Android App market, so much of your success depends on how much you get out there and promote yourself and your storybook app.

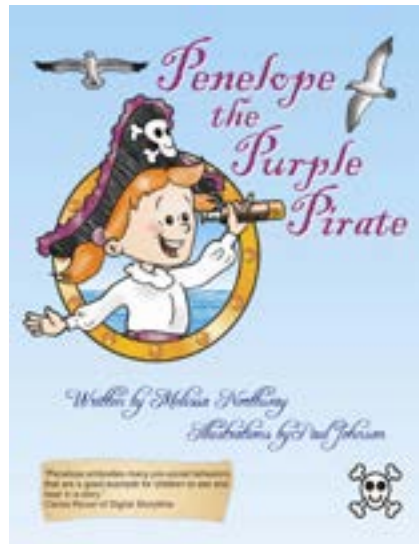


I was asked to write an article about whether authors can find success with a storybook app. There are so many ways to do this — either by working with your publishing house that probably already has companies lined up who do this type of work, or by researching the market and finding a developer who will create your app for you. You can work out a situation where you pay them for the work and/or pay some money up front and offer them a percentage of sales. There are many ways to create a storybook app. I recommend researching the market to see what makes the most sense to you. But to get back to the question — can an author find success within the app world?

My first children’s story, *Penelope the Purple Pirate*, was released through PicPocket Books in January, 2011. So much has changed in the app world since then but one thing has stayed the same — the need for a new or established author to work hard at promoting their app. Having an author Facebook page and Twitter account are necessary in establishing a connection with your audience. And I always recommend to new authors to set up a simple website. All of these platforms help you to establish a connection with your audience. Because at the end of the day, that is who will most likely purchase your next book or storybook app when it is released.

On my two websites, I try to provide our followers with information and content that will be useful in their daily lives. I really care about the people I have met through Facebook and Twitter and it really makes my week when they send in pictures of their children playing on the iPad with Penelope or of their kids dressed up as pirates! It is important to work with other indie developers/authors and talk to them about their more successful marketing campaigns — those that have helped make their storybook app stand out among the thousands of book apps available. Recently, a group of leading industry authors created the Book App Alliance to help parents and educators find quality storybook apps and to provide resources for authors. Joining the BAA is a great first step once you have your storybook app created.

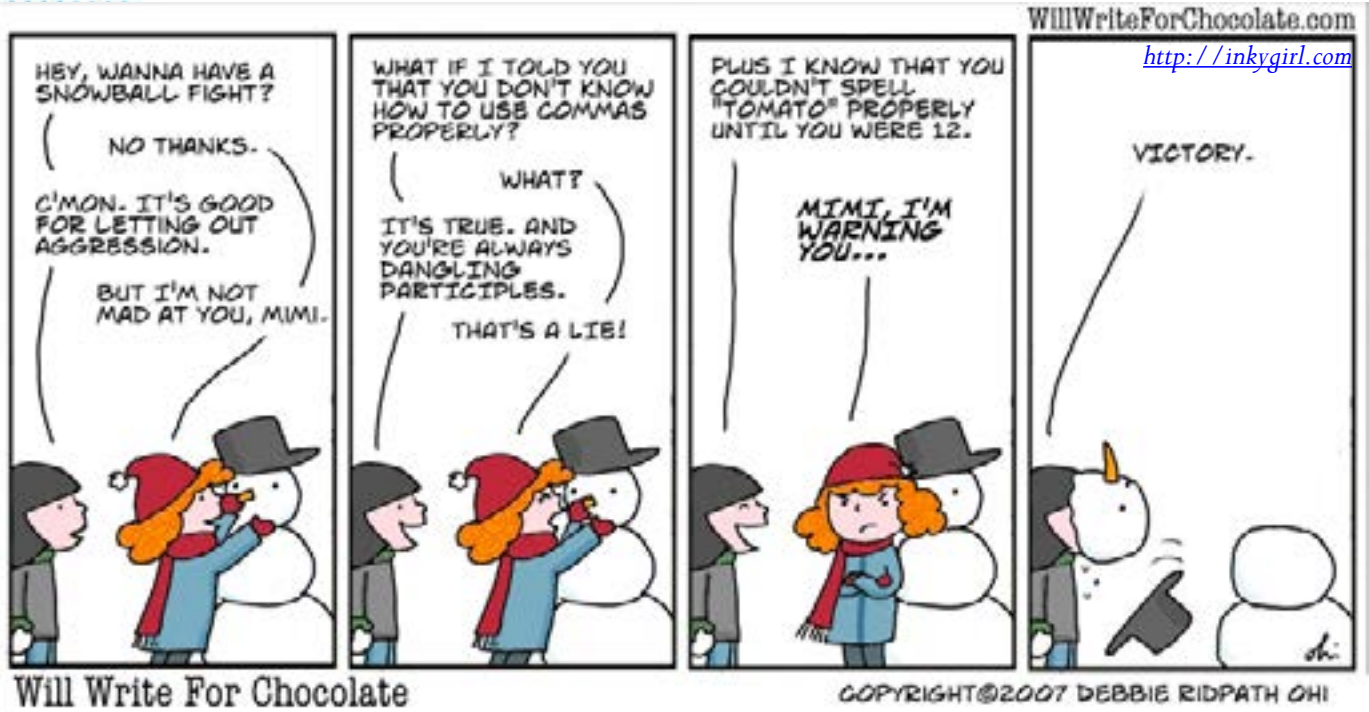
So to answer the question: Yes, an author can find success by creating a storybook app and it was a great start for me. I was a new author when *Penelope the Purple Pirate* was released as a storybook app through PicPocket Books. The app and book has gone on to win several awards and we have over 30,000 downloads in all parts of the world! Just like most things in life – hard work will usually get you where you want to go. If you work hard, research the market, talk to others in the industry and make sure to produce a quality story and app, the skies the limit to your success!



Melissa Northway, M.S., is the author of the award-winning storybook apps and books *Penelope the Purple Pirate*

and *Gerry the Giraffe*. She is a board member of the BAA and founder of the lifestyle site Dandelion Moms, which encourages women to pursue their dreams — whatever they might be. You can find her at www.melissanorthway.com and www.dandelionmoms.com.





Writing Connections

**Second Set
of Eyes**

Cynthia Willett Sherwood

Professional copyediting services for authors:
affordable rates & quick turnarounds

Credentials & client testimonials at
www.secondsetofeyes.com

Present Perfect
Writing and Editorial Services

Specializing in:	Detailed critiques
• Grammar and punctuation	\$4.50 per page
• Verse rhyme and scansion	\$45.00 minimum
• Dramatic structure	Discounts above 20 pages

Evelyn Hughes
(310) 467-1067 • PrsPerfect@aol.com

Critique Connections Online **FREE**

Longing for a critique group? Why not join Critique Connections Online? It's open to SCBWI members who reside in the Tri-Regions of Southern California. Critique Connections Online is not an online critique group or a manuscript exchange; it is a way to link up with like-minded people to allow you the possibility of creating your own critique group. Best of all, it's free!

E-mail your request to critiqueconnect@yahoo.com. Questions can be addressed to the same e-mail. Once you've joined the Yahoo! Group, you will be asked to provide information about yourself for a database and for an introductory e-mail. Others in the group can then connect directly with you and you with them.



Writing Connections

Writing Connections Disclaimer: KITE TALES accepts members' ads for writing and illustrating businesses and activities. An ad in KITE TALES does not imply endorsement by SCBWI, and members are reminded to request additional information from advertisers. We retain the right to refuse and to suspend ads.

Got a New Book Coming Out?

Tell your publisher's publicity person which state awards it's eligible for. Go to the Central Los Angeles Public Library downtown, to the Children's Literature department. Ask the librarian to help you pull up "Awards & Prizes from the Children's Book Council." The Library will maintain the subscription only if it's used. It's the only resource of its kind! To look up each state award individually, you would have to know the name of the award or sponsoring agency.

To place an ad in *KITE TALES*:

Contact Maggie Grinnell at

walkingthruwords@yahoo.com

Ads must be submitted in .pdf or .jpg format

300 dpi preferred, black & white or color OK

Link to your website at no extra charge

Ad costs are for one calendar year (4 issues) as follows:

Business card size: 3.5" w x 2" h = \$30

1/4 page: 3.5" w x 3.75" h = \$60

1/2 page: 7" w x 3.75" h = \$90

Full page: 7" w x 8" h = \$120

Make checks payable to: SCBWI-L.A.

Toot Your Horn in *Kite Tales*!

For the benefit of booksellers and librarians, *Kite Tales*, twice per year lists new books written or illustrated by members. Send us: ISBN#; Title by author, illustrator; Ages ? and up; Genre and publisher; Author or book website. Is author SCBWI member? Is illustrator SCBWI member?

Sorry, no self-published, print-on-demand or subsidy/vanity press books.

E-mail Beth Navarro at:

kitealeseditor@gmail.com

The next "Toot Your Horn" will appear in the spring issue.

Next Deadline: March 15, 2014



Writing Connections

EDITORIAL SERVICES OF LOS ANGELES (ESOLA)

EDITORIAL SERVICES OF LOS ANGELES (ESOLA)

is devoted to helping writers make their work the best it can be.

EDITORIAL SERVICES OF LOS ANGELES

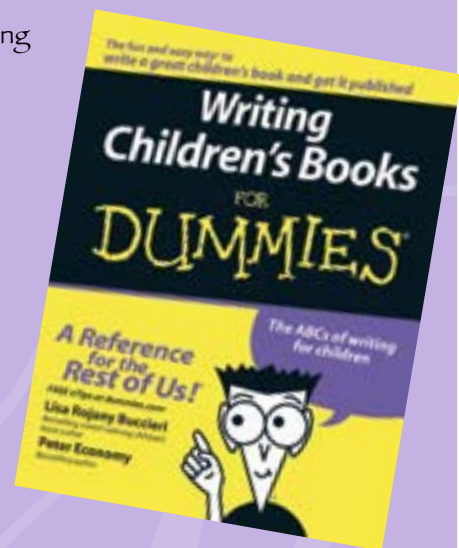
has been in business for over 20 years, and has helped many writers—of both children's and grown-up books—get published or improve their chances for publication.

ESOLA offers personalized, detailed services, everything from line editing to ghostwriting:

- Detailed line editing and critique letter
- Creative and publishing list development
- Proposal writing and editing
- Literary consultations
- Writing workshops
- Book doctoring
- Copy editing
- Ghost writing
- Proofreading

ESOLA can also help you craft a great query letter—so include it if you want help with that as well!

LISA ROJANY BUCCIERI
EDITORIAL SERVICES OF LOS ANGELES
Email: EditorialServicesofLA@gmail.com
www.editorialservicesofLA.com



Lisa Rojany Buccieri is a publishing executive with over 20 years' experience in the industry. Lisa has also written over 100 children's books. She was lead author on *Writing Children's Books for Dummies* (Wiley, 2005), and co-wrote the *New York Times* bestseller, *Fund Your Future* (Berkley, 2002) with Julie Stav. Lisa's latest comes this October: *Surviving the Angel of Death: The Story of a Mengele Twin at Auschwitz*, with Eva Kor (Tanglewood Books). Her books have received various accolades, such as reaching #1 on the Publishers Weekly Bestseller List two years in a row (*Make Your Own Valentines*, PSS/Putnam), and winning the American Bookseller's Pick of the List (*Giant Animal Fold-Outs: Kangaroo & Company*, PSS/Putnam). Most recently, she spearheaded the Intervisual Books launch of their first grown-up publishing program for Spring 2007. She was the founding V.P. & Publisher of Americhip Books, a children's book packaging company focusing on adapting technologies such as light, sound, paper-engineering, and animation for books. Lisa has also been Editorial/Publishing Director for Golden Books, PSS/Penguin Group, Intervisual Books, Gateway Learning Corp (Hooked on Phonics), and others. She charges by the hour for her editorial services, depending on the length of the manuscript or project. References available upon request.



Mark your calendars for May 2-4, 2014

..for our annual **Spring Writer's Retreat** at the South Coast Winery Resort and Spa. Our Southern California retreat location is tucked in the heart of Temecula's wine country. It is the ultimate getaway. Picture yourself strolling along a serene path through a tranquil vineyard surrounded by lush gardens and waterfalls. It is the perfect setting for a writer's retreat.

Our tentative **line-up of editors** include: Editor **Sara Goodman** of St. Martins Press, Editor **Martha Mihalick** of Greenwillow Books, and Editor **Noa Wheeler** of Henry Holt, fourth editor TBA.

Join us for editor-led roundtable critiques,
first pages,
VIP reception,
craft workshops and much more!

For details contact Francesca:
zfrancesca@aol.com