



Prairie Song

Nebraska Regional Newsletter



Featured Illustrator

KATHLEEN GADEKEN

WWW.KGADEKEN.COM

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Upcoming Events

April 23 – Meet & Pitch
with Alexandra Weiss

April 25, May 9 – Shop Talk
online 7:30 CST

June 11 – Portfolio Review Day
with Melanie Figueroa

July 14 – Writing from the Inside Out
Nonfiction Workshop begins

Scholarships available!

We have two equity and inclusion scholarships available to cover the cost of the Writing from the Inside Out Nonfiction Workshop that starts in July. If you are a member of a traditionally underrepresented group, please apply! If you know someone who write for kids (or wants to) who qualifies, let them know. We don't want these fabulous scholarships to go to waste! Applications due by April 30.

A Word from Our Regional Team



Alison Pearce Stevens
Regional Advisor

After five years at the helm of the Nebraska region, I am thrilled to announce that I have been appointed for a second term! SCBWI has been instrumental in my growth as an author, and my goal as the Regional Advisor is to support your growth as well. Whether you're writing, illustrating, or translating, whether you're just starting out or a well published book creator, my goal is to help you work towards that dream of creating stand-out books for kids.

Regional teams (Regional Advisors and Illustrator Coordinators) don't work in a vacuum. Our region is thriving thanks to our dedicated team of volunteers (check out the last page to see them all!), and Chloe and I are eternally grateful to the members who have stepped up to help us shape our region and the events we have on offer. (If you were wondering, Chloe and I are volunteers, too.)

A new policy requires all regional volunteers to reapply after one year in their position. This allows people to try new volunteer positions, ask to continue what they've been doing, or step down, creating spots for new volunteers to join the ranks. Whether you're a long-time volunteer or ready to get your feet wet, please take a few minutes to review the volunteer positions and [fill out an application](#).

The start of a new term as Regional Advisor also brings an opportunity to reflect on what we're doing well—and how we can improve. We need to know what you want out of your membership, so we can best support you. To help us better plan, please take a moment to [fill out this brief survey](#).

We will be changing up the format of Shop Talk in the fall. Each month we'll do one interactive Shop Talk meeting and one Regional Meeting that features a presenter, previews upcoming regional events, and allows you to ask questions of the Regional Team. Shop Talk and Regional Meetings will likely fall on different days of the week to allow more people to attend, and we need to know which days work best for you and what kinds of topics you'd like to have us cover. SCBWI is your organization, so tell us what you need!

The number of successes in our region grows each year. Congratulations to everyone who took steps toward their dream of publishing great kidlit. Here's to another fabulous year!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Alison".



Agent's View



Stephen Fraser joined The Jennifer De Chiara Literary Agency as an Agent in January 2005. Prior to that, he worked at HarperCollins Children's Books, where he edited such creative talents as Mary Engelbreit, Gregory Maguire, Michael Hague, Ann Rinaldi, Kathryn Lasky, Brent Hartinger, Stephen Mitchell, and Dan Gutman. His clients have won prestigious awards, including the Newbery Honor Medal, the PEN International Award, the Edgar Award, and the PEN USA award, all awarded for children's or young adult books.

He began his career at Highlights for Children and later worked at Scholastic and Simon & Schuster. A graduate of Middlebury College in Vermont, he has a Master's degree in Children's Literature from Simmons College in Boston. He represents books in a wide range of genres.

Because he was previously an editor, Stephen is an editorial agent. He looks for the potential in a manuscript and figures out how to bring it to full flower. He is happy to toss ideas around with a client, read a partial, or give feedback on a full manuscript. He won't let a manuscript go out on submission until he feels it is ready. He's especially fussy with picture books.

Stephen is always looking for good, original writing, particularly stories for young readers: picture books with delicious words; middle grade stories that endure; stories with strong characters and plots; and young adult novels that have identifiable teens; and hopeful, interesting stories for the soon-to-be adult. He also enjoys a good mystery, a good ghost story, some poetry, or something with a bit of theater. Send him something that will dazzle him.

Stephen is open to submissions from SCBWI Nebraska members until October 15, 2022. To submit, send your query to fraserstephena@gmail.com with the subject line "SCBWI Nebraska." In the body of the email, include a one-paragraph bio and a one-paragraph synopsis of your manuscript. Be sure to mention the age category, genre, and word count. Attach the first 20 pages of a novel or the full picture book text.



see more of Kathleen's work at www.kgadeken.com

Let's Celebrate



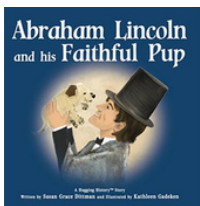
Applause please! Mary Beth Rice was a winner in the #50PreciousWords 2022 contest!



WooHoo! Kathy Sattem Rygg's manuscript was selected for Haunted States of America.



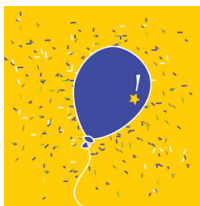
And, again, way to go Kathy Sattem Rygg's just released *Cheet's Victory and Other FUNtastic Short Stories!*, a collection of 24 whimsical short stories for kids ages 5-9, available on Amazon. Cover by Kelly Laine Designs.



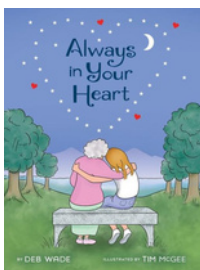
Let's hear it for Kathleen Gadeken who illustrated *Abraham Lincoln and His Faithful Pup*, which launched March 19! The book, written by Susan Grace Dittman, as well as the stuffed animal FIDO, designed by Kathleen, are both available at Hugginghistory.org.



Congrats to Danielle Herzog who just signed her first book deal—a picture book that will be published fall of 2023 by Beaming Books!



Way to go Linda Stephen who will speak at more than 10 libraries, parks and events across Nebraska this summer. Linda is the author/illustrator of *The Day We Went to the Park*.



Let's celebrate Deb Wade's April 12 release of *Always in Your Heart*, a picture book to help children and others learn how to cope with grief.



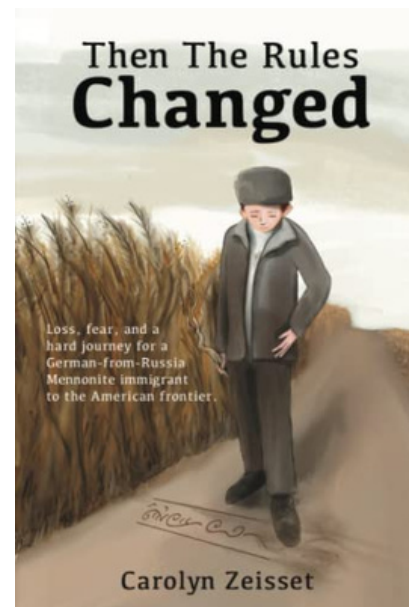
★ Carolyn Zeisset ★

Timing is everything, but sometimes coincidental timing is eerie.

Carolyn Zeisset wrote the first draft in 1977. She finished it as part of a pandemic writing project. On Feb. 16, 2022, Prairieland Press released *Then the Rules Changed*.

The story follows a boy and his family immigrating to the American plains. In the 1870s the Czar of Russia declared the German-speaking people in South Russia (now Ukraine) were part of Russia. They are now known as Germans from Russia.

Eight days after the book's release, the current Russian leader declared that Ukrainians are Russians and sent troops into southern Ukraine, where the novel begins.



cover design by Kathleen Gaden

A premise of the story is that an immigrant is first an emigrant. Loss of the known, fear, an imagined future, and an arduous journey is followed by the unknown, more fear, difficult realities, and struggles toward a new life.

The book offers historical context behind current events. Although written for middle schoolers, grandparents and great-grandparents are reading the story and using it to start conversations about their family's stories. Prior to a program about the book at a senior living community, the chef served a Ukrainian dinner, and the chaplain followed the program with a project for residents to send aid to refugees.

Publication brought together a team of Nebraska SCBWI members. Nancy Sharp Wagner owns Prairieland Press. Kathleen Gaden designed and illustrated the cover. Karla Wendelin (former Nebraska member) copy edited, and Betty Ann VanDeventer proofread the manuscript.

Then the Rules Changed is available at Amazon, Barnes & Noble, or your favorite independent bookstore. If the book is not available in the store at the time you are shopping, the store can special order it from Ingram. Learn more about the author and book at carolynzeisset.com.

Coming Attractions

Writing from the Inside Out Nonfiction Workshop



Nonfiction is one of the hottest forms of kidlit, and this is your chance to get in on the action! Our Nonfiction Workshop kicks off in July and runs through April 2023. In this virtual workshop, award-winning authors Teresa Robeson and Jennifer Swanson will guide collaborative groups through the process of planning, researching, and writing nonfiction.

The team will highlight different approaches to nonfiction, covering picture books to young adult and everything in between. Our collaborative model gives you feedback as you plan and develop your manuscript and deepens your knowledge while you help others through their drafting process. Zoom sessions will take place the second and fourth Thursdays from 12:00 - 1:30 p.m. Central Time, July 2022 to April 2023. [See details here.](#)

But wait, there's more! Workshop participants will get exclusive submission opportunities with acquiring agents and editors. Don't miss out! Registration closes May 31.

Portfolio Review Day

Mark your calendar for June 11! That's when Melanie Figueroa—a Root Literary agent who is looking to build her illustrator list—will be available to critique your work.

Melanie can help you evaluate your work with a critical eye and identify areas for improvement. She will provide a written critique of your work before the in-person event. On June 11, you will have a 15-minute Zoom meeting with Melanie to ask follow-up questions or ask about the publishing industry more broadly. [Click here for more details.](#) Portfolios due May 6.



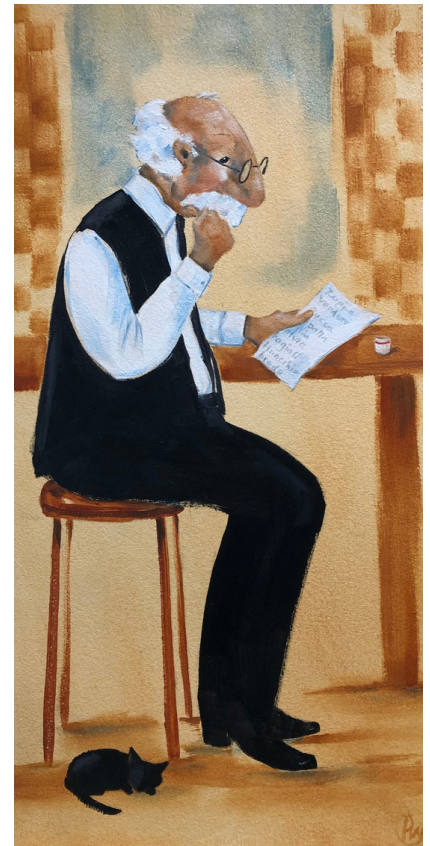
Maximizing Your Membership

Have you tried but not yet found that perfect agent or publisher? Are you thinking about self-publishing but don't know how to start?

Wait no longer! SCBWI's new all-inclusive book, *The Essential Guide to Self-Publishing Books for Children*, is here. And it's free with your SCBWI membership!

The Guide will walk you through the seven steps of self-publishing and provide detailed information on marketing and promotion, guidelines for choosing the right self-publishing service and platforms as well as models for your author and/or illustrator business.

SCBWI recently unveiled The Guide created by Karen P. Inglis and Orna A. Ross. [CLICK HERE](#) to download *The Essential Guide to Self-Publishing a Children's Book*. Print copies are available to order as well for the cost of shipping.



Paula Wallace
www.paulawallacefineart.com

Nebraska Discussion Board

Are you looking for someone to critique your hook, pitch, logline, or query letter?

Search no more!

You will find one or more of your Nebraska Kidlit colleagues to share their expertise.

Post your work on our Nebraska Discussion Board.

[Click here to post.](#) (Log in first!)



Illustration Submission

Would you like for your art to be featured in our future newsletter?

Please send to: **Chloe Burgett** at nebraska-ic@scbwi.org

Label file as **firstname_lastname.jpeg**. (no bigger than 8 mb)



Shop Talk Recap



A summary of the Shop Talk discussion led by Nancy Sharp Wagner on dialogue

Written by Mary Beth Rice

Want to learn about a fun character development tool? Consider using Enneagram personality types in your dialogue creation. The Enneagram is a system of personality typing that describes patterns in how people interpret the world and manage their emotions. The Enneagram describes nine personality types and maps each of these types on a nine-pointed diagram which helps to illustrate how the types relate to one another.

The nine types are listed below:

- 1 REFORMER: rational, idealistic, principled, purposeful, self-controlled, and perfectionistic
- 2 HELPER: caring, interpersonal, demonstrative, generous, people-pleasing, and possessive
- 3 ACHIEVER: success-oriented, pragmatic, adaptive, excelling, driven, and image-conscious
- 4 INDIVIDUALIST: sensitive, withdrawn, expressive dramatic self-absorbed, and temperamental
- 5 INVESTIGATOR: intense, cerebral, perceptive, innovative, secretive, and isolated
- 6 LOYALIST: committed, security-oriented, engaging, responsible, anxious, and suspicious
- 7 ENTHUSIAST: busy, fun-loving, spontaneous, versatile, distractible, and scattered
- 8 CHALLENGER: powerful, dominating, self-confident, decisive, willful, and confrontational
- 9 PEACEMAKER : easygoing, self-effacing, receptive, reassuring, agreeable, and complacent

We often write dialogue that matches our own personal Enneagram type. Studying all nine types will help in the creation of more unique, diverse characters. Try this dialoguing exercise: Create a scene or problem to solve and then create dialogue from selected Enneagram types. Rewrite the same scene using a different set of types.

Thanks to Nancy Sharp Wagner for introducing this concept to Shop Talk participants in March!

Check out these additional online resources:

- Watch [this short YouTube video](#) presented by FFS Media on supercharging dialogue with Enneagram Talk Styles.
- [Take the Enneagram Personality Test](#) yourself for free.
- Research [Enneagram characteristics in children](#) for potential use in writing your kid-lit dialogue.

Mary Beth

Take Flight With Help From Our Volunteers



LEADERSHIP



Regional Advisor

Alison Pearce Stevens
nebraska-ra@scbwi.org



Regional Illustrator Coordinator

Chloe Burgett
nebraska-ic@scbwi.org

COMMUNICATION AND OUTREACH



Social Media Coordinator & Webmaster

Tim Hantula
scbwi.nebraska.socialmedia@gmail.com



Published Author Liaison

Shelly Nosbisch
scbwi.nebraska.pal@gmail.com

PROGRAMMING



Webinar Coordinator

Sheli Petersen
scbwi.nebraska.webinars@gmail.com



Retreat Coordinator

Nancy Sharp Wagner
scbwi.nebraska.retreats@gmail.com



Promotional Coordinator

Rosalind Reloj
scbwi.nebraska.promotion@gmail.com



Critique Group Coordinator

Judith Snyder
scbwi.nebraska.critiques@gmail.com



Shop Talk Co-Coordinator

Mary Beth Rice
scbwi.nebraska.shoptalk@gmail.com



Shop Talk Co-Coordinator

Ashley Karges
scbwi.nebraska.shoptalk@gmail.com



Newsletter Coordinator

BettyAnn VanDeventer
scbwi.nebraska.newsletter@gmail.com

FOLLOW US AND FIND MORE ON:



Credits: Fall 2021 Texas Woman's University Community-focused Design Studio
Layout Design: Nely Martinez, McCrae Milton, Simran Prasai | Banner Design: Roshad Bonner, McCrae Milton |
Feature Title Designers: Kelly Milliorn, Edgar Obregon, Susana Pina, Amanda Tritschler-Tucker | Teaser Layout Designer: Roshad Bonner
Art Director: Professor Sheli Petersen