



2018 SCBWI-WI Fall Conference
September 21st - 23rd



SCBWI-Wisconsin News

by Andrea Skyberg, Co-Regional Advisor

Summer is in the air, but Fall is on our minds. That's because the 2018 Fall Conference registration is now open! This year's conference aims to please with an amazing line-up of speakers, some new contests for both writers and illustrators, an intensive, and some creative socials!

Join us September 21-23, 2018 at the Green Lake Conference Center, where this year's theme is Reality Check: Exploring Truth. On Friday, we're offering a pre-conference intensive, The Reality of Money, led by accountant and creative writer Jeff Verkuilen, which includes a meal. We'll have an information fair and meet and greet from 3-5pm featuring our key volunteers and diversity committee, all there to help our participants get set up with critique groups, access the listserv, and answer any questions.

The conference officially begins Friday at 6pm with our opening keynote author Meg Medina! And later we hope to see you at Come As You Are, our Friday night social pajama party! Because we all know the reality of writing and illustrating is usually working in our comfy clothes. Don't forget to bring your dancing slippers.

Saturday is full of keynotes, panel discussions, and critique sessions. Saturday evening we'll have an autograph party along with our art showcase featuring this year's illustration contest applicants who'll be creating three scenes in a sequence using the prompt >>

Two Truths and a Lie. Portfolios will also be on display, and a winner will be selected by Random House Art Director Katrina Damkoehler.

Sunday will feature our faculty panel, and end with a closing keynote by author and musician Tim McCanna.

Conference registration includes all meals for Saturday, breakfast on Sunday, a drink ticket, and both socials. Friday Intensive participants will also have Friday night dinner included.

We're offering the opportunity to purchase multiple critiques this year. All critiques will be in-person, unless you request for them to be written only. For each manuscript submitted, participants will have the option of adding a \$10 entry pass to be in the running for the Manuscript of the Year prize, which in addition to the fame and glory include a discounted conference admission.

Check out this year's great faculty: Author Sarah Aronson, Author Genevieve Artel, Art Director from Random House Katrina Damkoehler, Author Lori Degman, Author Tara Gilboy, Author Joanna Hinsey, Author Michelle Houts, Author Jane Kelley, Author E.M.Kokie, Author Michael Leannah, Editor from Simon & Schuster Emma Ledbetter, Author JoAnn Macken, Author Carmela Martino, Author Tim McCanna, Agent Sean McCarthy, Author Meg Medina, Author Deb Month Manske, Author Baptiste Paul, Author Deanna Singh, Author Stef Wade, VP/co-publisher at Crown Books for Young Readers/Random House Phoebe Yeh, and Author & Illustrator Salina Yoon!

Registration is now open with early bird pricing for members at \$235, and non members \$275. Early bird lasts through July 10—after that pricing will be \$275 for members and \$300 for non members. You can book your room at Green Lake Conference Center now by visiting <https://glcc.org/index.html> or calling (920) 294-3323. We have a block of hotel rooms reserved at a rate of \$104/ night which includes all taxes and fees.

We can't wait to see you there, and that's no lie!

All our best,

Andrea Skyberg, Miranda Paul,
Rochelle Groskreutz, and the
2018 Fall Conference Committee

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Edited by Sandra Nichols
Designed by Leah Danz



Illustrator
Spotlight

Sheri
Roloff

See more of Sheri's work at SheriRoloff.com

Call for Submissions

Authors & Illustrators: if you would like to be an article contributor for an upcoming issue, contact Sandra at nicholssandra5@gmail.com for more details.

Illustrators: if you would like to share your artwork in an upcoming issue, contact Leah at danzillustrator@gmail.com for more details.

From the Trenches

SCBWI-WI Member Focus



The Forbidden Project

By Jane Kelley

Nothing had ever come easily to me, except playing the piano. And that actually backfired. Since I could sight read, I never practiced; so I never really learned to play.

Writing was different. I wrote for decades before I sold my first middle grade novel. That sounds horrifying. Most of that time, however, I wasn't writing for kids. My theater background had led me to playwriting. When that didn't work so well, I tried novels. I did get small bits of encouragement along the way. An essay published in the Milwaukee Journal magazine. A short story published in a literary journal. Plays produced by an off-off-off-off-off-Broadway theater. Just enough success to keep me from quitting, but never enough to keep me from hating that inevitable question, "And what do you do, Jane?"

Who knows how long that would have continued. Fortunately, I was saved by a tremendous insight. It upended my creative process almost as much as when Galileo realized that the planets orbited the sun.

I stopped writing to please myself.
I started writing to reach others—specifically my daughter.

Sofia, who was nine at the time, eagerly devoured the pages I had written in my notebook. I kept writing. She kept reading—until she lost interest. Fortunately, I was able to pinpoint that section. She even articulated the problem for me. "Mom," she said. "You've run out of story." And I had. A funny narrator in extreme circumstances wasn't enough. So I gave my character Megan a reason to be hiking the Appalachian Trail.

Megan and I both reached our goals. She became a better person. I finished my novel and found an agent, Linda Pratt. After a rewrite, she submitted the book. Nine months later, Shana Corey, an editor at Random

House Children's Books bought *Nature Girl*. She also bought my second novel, *The Girl Behind the Glass*. *Nature Girl* earned out its advance. I thought I was set for life. I had a wonderful agent and an amazing editor who believed in me. What could possibly go wrong?

As I said, I should have known better. Nothing was going to be easy.

The third novel I wrote was different from my first and my second. That shouldn't have been a deal breaker. The real problem was that I had forgotten what I had learned. I didn't write it for a reader. I wrote it to amuse myself.

My agent TRIED to sell it. My editor TRIED to like it. I TRIED to rewrite it. I may yet find the proper way to revise it. At this moment, however, it isn't even on the back burner. It's somewhere in the freezer disfigured by layers of thick frost.

I didn't despair. Well, I did. But I couldn't allow myself to quit. I started other projects. One of them was about a boy with too much imagination. Clint McCool finally took his place on my shelf six years later in 2017. He didn't save me from the dreaded doldrums (which actually are a section of the Atlantic Ocean with hardly any prevailing winds where sailing ships can languish for weeks). Something else did.

The Forbidden Project began, like all my others, in my notebook. I called it the F. P. because writing it made no sense. The idea was preposterous. It was actually painful to consider. The girl suffered from cancer, like I had. Because of her illness, she was living >>

in a fugue state, visited by hallucinations, one of which was a parrot. "What matter?" the parrot said. Which she thought meant, what's the matter? What does it matter? The parrot's words were a reference to Dr. Pepperberg's scientific study in which a parrot had been taught to identify objects by shape, color, and matter.

I mention all that in the spirit of full disclosure. You can see why it was a forbidden project. It was esoteric! It broke my rule about writing for others! It had unbelievably disparate elements! It could never coalesce into a story.

And yet it wouldn't let me go.

I was obsessed. With the parrot. With the consequences of illness. With loss of friends and identity. With the search for home.

I kept returning to the F.P. notebook. Reading passages. Feeling in some way transported. And then putting it aside. I tried to write other things. They went nowhere. I would get discouraged. And return to F.P.

As I wrote, some aspects were abandoned. (I'm ashamed to tell you about the three old wizards who walked around tripping on their beards.) Others deepened. I researched all kinds of birds. My cat Blackberry and



I spent many hours observing pigeons strutting on the roof across the street. I never name my characters at first. They live as initials for several drafts. Eventually the girl A became Alya. The parrot Z became Zeno just like the Greek stoic philosopher who said, "A friend is another I." Now I had a whole

new area to explore. Can there be friendships between different types of birds? Between a girl and a parrot?

Layer upon layer. Discovery after discovery. Did you know that colonies of wild parrots live in many parts of Brooklyn? Did you know that parrots, when bored, will self-mutilate and pluck at their breast feathers? Did you know that pigeons can fly hundreds of miles to find their way back home?

Eventually F.P. came out of hiding. I shared *The Desperate Adventures of Zeno and Alya* with my agent who, for the first time ever, didn't ask me to rewrite. She shared it with several editors, two of whom loved it. Liz Szabla loved it the most. Together we brought it to the shelves in 2013. It received several honors, including being chosen as one of CCBC's best books of 2014. As they said: "Jane Kelley's novel is an irresistible mix of humor and warmth, magic and the messiness of real life."

My Forbidden Project brought me a second wind. It's my most respected novel. As I think back on those days, I try to remember the lessons Zeno and Alya taught me. Every book has its own story. Every book needs to be written in its own way. But certain precepts almost always apply.

Be passionate

Your readers will love what you love.

Be patient

It will take you a long time to get it right.

Be persistent

As my character Trail Blaze Betty said, "The only way to fail is to quit."

Be purposeful

Know what you want your reader to feel, know why you are writing, and know that what you do will matter in the end. ■

For permission to reprint this article, contact Jane Kelley at janelkelleybooks@gmail.com



© Emily Erickson

Illustrator
Spotlight

Emily
Erickson

See more of Emily's work at EmilyEricksonIllustrates.com

The Write Way

Writer Tips



Write, Revise, Repeat: Rethinking the Revision Process

By Sandra Nichols

I opened the attachment and began to read. I had seen this before. In fact, this was the third time I will read pages 1-22. The rough draft. The draft submitted to the little critique group I am part of.

Now don't misunderstand me. I will happily read any draft a fellow writer sends me. I know the value of "the reader" when I'm working on a writing project. We need each other for support, for guidance, and if anything for confirmation that we are on the right track. What worries me, though, is a writer getting caught in the first chapter loop, driving on the round-a-bout and never steering towards the road named Final Chapter.

Ray Bradbury, one of the 20th century's most influential science fiction/dystopian writers and author of the classic *Fahrenheit 451*, believed in the power of getting the story down from beginning to end, no stops and side trips along the way. Once written, then it was time for grueling revision work. He's not the only writer that espouses this approach. Stephen King echoes this idea of working through the whole story in his must have writer's guide *On Writing*. King describes a sleepless night at a London hotel. A story idea keeps him awake. Giving into that creative surge, he spends several hours writing down the story idea that kept spinning round his mind. Sixteen hand written pages later, King had the base for what would become his novel *Misery*.

I can hear you right now, "That's not how I write. I need to carefully work through my story and build my plot, step by step." That's great. I get it. I'm not one who can sit and work through my story all in one sitting either. The point is to create a first draft, no matter how messy, from beginning to end. Then and only then, get down to the hard work of revision.

So what is revision? What revision is not is editing: checking for spelling errors, those misused words, double typed words, verb tense issues, and sentence structure gone awry. There is a time and place for editing and that time is not in the revision phase. Admit it, running a word search on your manuscript to make sure you didn't use your when you should have used you're does not tighten the plot or bring a character to life.

Revision, that wonderful blend of creativity and logic, is difficult for my students to embrace.

The years of primary and secondary writing experience have carved a message on their interior psyche-cavern wall "people are born writers or not." How untrue. People who understand writing is a process get it. The need to revise is not a sign of incompetence, it is a step in the journey of creative expression.

I like how Cheryl Klein describes revision in *The Magic Words: Writing Great Books for Children and Young Adults*. She reminds us that the word revision, which comes from the Latin *revisare*, means to see again. "I believe your revision process should indeed start with seeing again: **stepping back** to recharge your creative batteries..." I don't know about you, but when I'm working on a scene or chapter or extended piece of writing, I need to recharge my creative batteries over and over again. Here are a few ideas for making this happen. >>

1. Step back

I mean literally. Step away from your writing for at least four hours, but preferably a day or more, in order to see it with fresh eyes. There is brain science behind this. Our brains fill in what is not there and also hold onto patterns. To break this, you need to step away from what you are 'seeing' or 'hearing' for at least four hours. Be prepared to "step back" again and again before you save that final draft.

Revision breaks down to four basic concepts: adding, taking out, substituting, and rearranging. However, define a task for your revision sessions.

2. Identify purpose

I follow the Kurt Vonnegut advice, if it doesn't move the story forward, take it out. Ask yourself how the character, dialog, description, action, or whole scene advances the story.

3. Find the conflict

Each scene should have some tension. Ask yourself "where is the conflict in this scene?" Conflict is anything that gets in the way of your character achieving their goal. A red traffic light can do the trick if your character is wanting to get home.

4. Seek balance

What do I mean by this? Balance the showing with the telling. I know, you've heard "show don't tell" over and over again. But a well written story does both. A character needs that introspective moment and a setting needs some description. Read through any chapter in a J.K. Rowling or Suzanne Collins YA or MG book, and you will see a masterful blend of showing and telling. You need both to build a story.

5. Fine tune

Make those sentences sing. Let those early drafts get the ideas down. Save the later drafts for fine tuning those sentences for just the right note, rhythm, and punch. Otherwise, you may spend hours crafting those perfect sentences only to cut them out when you revise for purpose or balance.

Revision takes time and effort, but keep telling yourself this is all part of the writing process. It focusses your creativity on a specific task. Exactly how you go about doing this creative/ logic work is up to you. What is universal for all strong writers is that they do it. ■

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Illustrator
Spotlight

Lisa
Konkol

See more of Lisa's work at Konkol.com

Drawing up Inspiration

Illustrator Tips



The Art of Entering Contests

By Rebecca Hirsch

Entering art/ illustration contests is equal parts thrilling, challenging, and frightening; especially if you're just starting to show your work. I love a good challenge myself, and so I've been entering contests for several years now with some disappointment but also some success. I'm a firm believer in the growth potential of putting yourself (and your work) out there, and so here are my top tips for success if you're thinking of entering one.

1. Read all the rules carefully

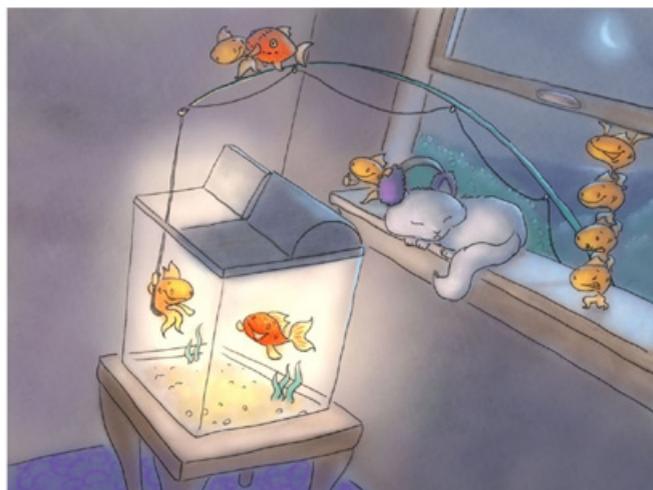
This is my number one tip. I write a post-it note with all the specifications and requirements and keep it right next to my workstation so I know what needs to be included in my piece. Watch for size restrictions and any special considerations, such as the need for the piece to convey a certain emotion or portray specific characters.

2. Concept first

You can create a beautiful work of art for a contest, but miss the concept completely, which will not earn you the win. Back when the Society of Visual Storytelling (www.svslearn.com) did their monthly "3rd Thursday" contests, I entered as often as possible. Sometimes I made the honorable mentions, sometimes I didn't, but the one that stands out the most to me is the one that taught me how important concept is. The prompt was a sentence about a character named Willy who was stranded and needed to be rescued somehow. What kind of character he was and how he was rescued was up to us.

I came up with what I thought was a great idea, my Willy was a fish and he was going to be rescued from his fish tank by his ocean buddies. I challenged myself with the perspective, and I liked my characters, so I was surprised that it didn't place. Fortunately, my piece was mentioned by one of the judges during the

live critique when they announced the winners, and I learned why. Simply put, my Willy didn't need to be rescued. That fish tank looks pretty comfortable, and the sleeping cat is hardly threatening, so what does he need to be rescued from? I may not have won, but I learned a valuable lesson that was worth far more.



3. Put your best work out there

Know when the deadline is, and give yourself enough time to construct a solid illustration. You can nearly always tell when someone did a rush job, it shows in the finished piece. Don't let that be you. >>

4. Have another project that you're working on.

Once you've finished your piece and submitted it, move on. Get started doing something else; maybe design your next mailer, or work on that new portfolio piece you've been meaning to get to. Have something else in the works so if you don't win, you can move past the sting of disappointment and be able to focus on your next illustration project.

5. If you lose

Fail forward. Ask yourself why you think it didn't work – maybe you missed the concept, maybe you played it too safe. Look at what won, and if the judges posted their reasoning, try to look through their eyes and see how you can apply those lessons to your own work. Then give your bruised ego a hug and go enter another contest.

6. Sometimes, you win

And, of course, that's a great deal of fun and beyond satisfying. One of my favorite contest "wins" was placing Second Runner Up in the 2017 SCBWI Tomie dePaola Award. It was the last one he judged, and I was delighted that he liked my work.

The award has been renamed the Narrative Art Award, and I highly recommend entering. You'll have people in the business looking at your work.



© Rebecca Hirsch

I also won the Illustrator award at our own SCBWI-WI Fall Conference last year, and if you saw me that day, you didn't have to guess how I felt about that. I think it took me several days to come down from Cloud 9, but then it was back to work. The next portfolio piece, the next mailer, the next challenge.

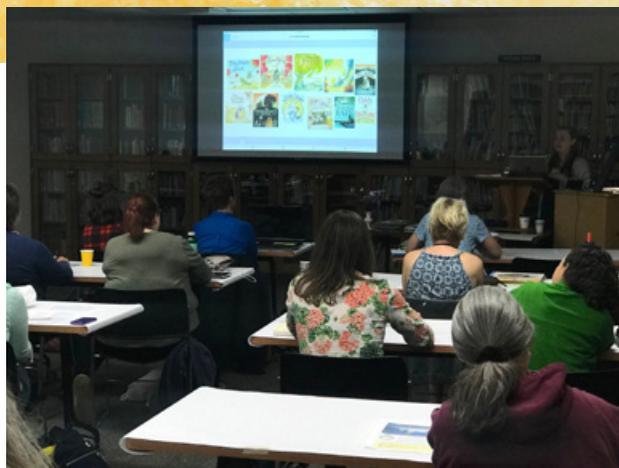
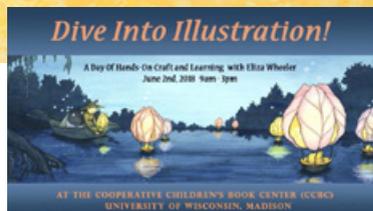
One of the best parts of entering contests is you get to practice courage. It takes a lot to put yourself out there and get back up if you fail and try again. It gets easier the more you do it. So keep getting up, keep trying, keep failing forward so that when you do win, you'll know you earned it. ■

See more of Rebecca's work at rhirschillustration.com

For permission to reprint this article, contact Rebecca Hirsch at rh@rhirschillustration.com

Illustrator Event

Thirty Wisconsin Illustrators met at the Cooperative Children's Book Center (CCBC) in Madison on June 2nd for a day of learning and working with the multitalented and all-around joyful creator author/illustrator Eliza Wheeler. The day was full of helpful tips, active drawing, and of course playing, because we followed Eliza's advice when she said, *"If it's worth painting than it's worth playing!"*



Mark Your Calendars!

Upcoming Events



Illustration © Michael Greer



September 21 – 23, 2018

SCBWI Wisconsin Fall Conference

Theme: Reality Check: Exploring Truth

This year's conference aims to please with an amazing line-up of 23 speakers, some new contests for both illustrators and writers, an intensive, and some creative socials!

Green Lake Conference Center, Green Lake, WI

Early-bird Registration NOW OPEN! - Visit wisconsin.scbwi.org



May 3-5, 2019

Wild Wild Midwest Conference

Let's Go to the Fair! More details to come.

Naperville, IL

June 30, 2018, 10:00 – 11:00 (with mingling & snacks to follow)

The First Steps to Finding an Agent

Don't have an agent and looking for that perfect match? Or perhaps you'd like tips for working with your current agent? Marcie Colleen (author of the Super Happy Party Bears series and Love, Triangle) will give us tools and tricks in a one-hour presentation.

Mystery to Me Bookstore

1862 Monroe St.

Madison, WI

To RSVP: Please e-mail Kerry at kerryhansen@outlook.com or Deb at mbschman@wi.rr.com

July 21, 2018, 10:00 – 12:00

Meet and Critique

The fall conference is coming up, so you may want fresh eyes to look at your manuscript before you submit it. Even if you're not attending the conference, bring at least 5 copies of your first 600 words (any genre) so we can give each other feedback. Feel free to also bring a snack to share.

L.D. Fargo Library in Lake Mills

120 E. Madison Street

Lake Mills, WI

August 18, 2018, 10:00 – 12:00

Pretty Little Pitches

To avoid the stumble-and-mumble moments when we meet an agent or editor at a conference, let's practice those pitches and give each other feedback and encouragement. Bring your pitch to read aloud, and if you're an illustrator, let's see those postcards or sketches. Feel free to bring a snack to share.

SW Region, Location TBD

Non-SCBWI Events

October 3, 2018

Charlotte Zolotow Symposium: Illuminating Experience!

Angie Thomas, Benjamin Alire Sáenz, Candace Fleming, Crescent Dragonwagon, Eric Rohmann, Javaka Steptoe, and editors Anne Hoppe and Neal Porter.

Pyle Center, UW-Madison

Further info: <http://ccbc.education.wisc.edu/symposium.asp>

Early bird registration: \$75

Non-SCBWI Events

October 11-14, 2018

Wisconsin Book Festival

Share Your Work!

Madison Public Library's Wisconsin Book Festival is accepting proposals for this year's event. The Wisconsin Book Festival takes place from October 11-14.

The Wisconsin Book Festival is Wisconsin's premier literary event. Every Fall we draw a local and regional audience of 12,000-15,000 people for four days of author events. Our year-round series of events has drawn more than 20,000 people to an additional 100 events over the past four years. Madison's proximity to Chicago, Minneapolis, Milwaukee, and Iowa City makes it an easy addition to any tour through the Midwest. As the State Capitol and home to the University of Wisconsin, Madison boasts an engaged and active literary community who have shown a dedication to supporting great author programming.

Proposal period runs from April 1- June 30, 2018.

Full proposals should include:

- Author's name
- Book title
- ISBN
- Publisher name
- Publication date of the book for which you are proposing an event
- An outline of the proposed event
- Any review/supporting materials that could aid in the decision-making

Contact: If you are interested in proposing an event for this year's Wisconsin Book Festival, email your proposal to bookfest@mplfoundation.org.

July 9 – August 8, 2018, Mon/Wed 6:00 – 9:00 PM

Children's Book Illustration (Laboratory)

This course is designed to introduce students to the illustration process, from ideation and freehand sketching to the development of a finished product. Students are encouraged to experiment with a variety of materials and styles, from traditional to digital and including their hybrid. Classes are supplemented with a series of presentations on contemporary illustrators and discussion of their methods.

Prerequisite(s): Introduction to Drawing or equivalent experience.

School of the Art Institute of Chicago
Department of Continuing Studies
Sharp Building, Room 310
37 W. Wabash, Suite 711,
Chicago, Illinois 60603

Further info: Phone: 312-629-6170. office M-F
8:30 am to 4:30 pm cs@saic.edu

Contact: www.lauranymanmontenegro.com

Instructor: Laura Nyman Montenegro, Author/Illustrator

November 9 – 11, 2018

Weekend With Your Novel

Annual retreat for novelists and aspiring novelists

The novel-writing retreat in the Midwest, providing professional instruction for all novelists, from aspiring to experienced. This affordable retreat is small, intensive, supportive, and all about the novel. Meet other writers and return home with a weekend's worth of valuable tips, techniques, and inspiration. Our goal is to help you begin, finish, revise, and publish your novel.

With a Friday Master Class, 13 sessions, and 8 optional manuscript critique workshops, this intensive and fun weekend is a thorough, hands-on boost for any writer.

Get revision tips and techniques from professionals on starting, completing, revising, and marketing your novel. Our workshop leaders are experienced published writers, teachers, and editors with a wealth of experience.

Pyle Center
702 Langdon St
Madison, WI

Cost: \$225-300

Further info: <https://continuingstudies.wisc.edu/conferences/weekend-with-your-novel/event-details/>

Contact: Christopher Chambers at christopher.chambers@wisc.edu or 608-262-5095

Share your Events!

Send info on upcoming fall author/illustrator events taking place between October 2018 and April 2019. Contact Sandra at nicholssandra5@gmail.com.

Together we grow!



Illustrator
Spotlight

Michael
Greer

See more of Michael's work at mwgreer.com

Odds & Ends

Noteworthy Info



Illustration © Maria Koch

Meet our SCBWI-WI Volunteers

We all know why we love SCBWI: community, expertise, and inspiration. Take a few moments to get to know your hardworking volunteers who make this happen and the type of work they do. Our commitment to each other's growth and success is what makes our Wisconsin chapter the great organization it is. And in the future, keep in mind the words of the immortal bard, William Shakespeare, "*The meaning of life is to find your gift. The purpose of life is to give it away.*"

Regional Advisors

Andrea Skyberg



A former curator, now artist educator, Andrea loves anything with texture and patterns (must be that fiber arts degree). She believes the best art supplies are those found around the house in junk drawers or in the aisle of home repair shops.

When she's not teaching, illustrating, or writing, she's biking the trails with her husband and two daughters, hanging out in bookstores, or riding around the streets of Milwaukee on her Springer Softail. Her favorite part of being the co-Regional Advisor for Wisconsin is working with and for a group of people she considers her tribe, and also planning the conference socials—karaoke and dancing anyone? If you'd like more of her story, please visit andreakyberg.com. For inquiries about SCBWI-Wisconsin and its regional events and activities, email Andrea at: wisconsin-ra@scbwi.org.

Rochelle Groskreutz



Rochelle has been a self-employed copywriter (Words For Sale) since 1997, and started her children's writing journey in 2009. The enthusiasm, talent and dedication of fellow members have inspired her since she joined SCBWI in 2012. She lives

on a 6-acre farmette with her husband and three young daughters in Genesee, Wisconsin. For event ideas or information, contact her at rochellegroskreutz@gmail.com.

Illustrator Coordinator

Ingrid Kallick



I. S. Kallick is an artist and writer. Her artwork has appeared in *Cricket Magazine*, *Communication Arts*, the *Spectrum Fantastic Arts Annual 20*, *Scientific American*, the cover of *Science*, in textbooks, advertising and print design. Her cover illustration for *Cricket* received the 2012 first place Magazine Merit

Award from the Society for Children's Book Writers and Illustrators. Two of her works were featured in the 2013 Society of Illustrators Los Angeles show. Her selection for the 2014 SCBWI Bologna Book Fair received an honorable mention. She exhibits her work regularly at WisCon and Illuxcon. Her nonfiction has appeared in *Leonardo* magazine and the *SCBWI Bulletin*. Her fiction was selected in annual fiction competition of the *Wisconsin Academy Journal* and published in *Wisconsin People and Ideas*. It went on to receive the 2008 Eleanor Sternig Award for best short story from the Council for Wisconsin Writers. To learn more visit ikallick.com. For inquiries about SCBWI-Wisconsin illustrator events and activities, email her at: wisconsin-ic@scbwi.org.

Membership Coordinator

Kristine Wrucke



Kristine is a picture book writer and thinks there's no better sound than children laughing. When she's not writing she's keeping busy with her husband, three sons and three dogs. She also loves cooking and crafting. Her latest obsession is weaving!

Joining SCBWI is the smartest thing Kris has ever done and she owes Jan Brett a huge thank you for her suggestion to join! Kris now has the opportunity to pay it forward as the New Membership Coordinator of SCBWI Wisconsin.

Listserv Administrator

Lora Hyler



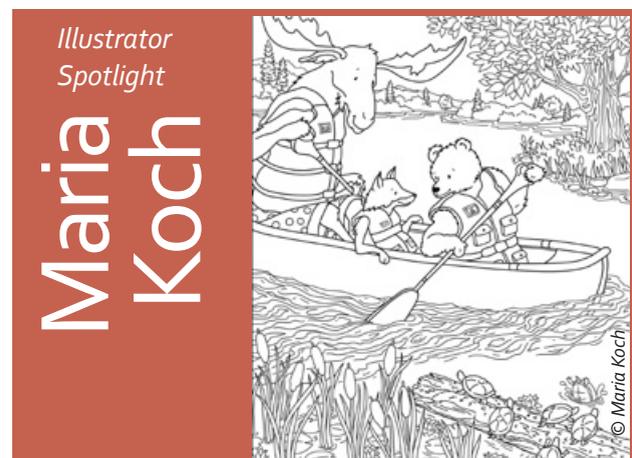
Lora Hyler is a former journalist, and executive speechwriter & manager at media and utility companies. She currently serves as CEO of her 15-year-old public relations and marketing company, Hyler Communications, based in Glendale, WI. She provides strategic communication plans, media outreach campaigns, media interview & public speaking training, and marketing programs to corporations, and non-profit organizations. Lora is a popular speaker at the Harvard Business School Dynamic Women in Business conference. She's worked with such companies as Northwestern Mutual, Time Inc., Milliman, Quad Graphics, University of Wisconsin, and Marquette University. She has written hundreds of articles, several screenplays and an adult novel. She began her career as a journalist, working for NPR and ABC radio affiliates. Lora also appeared weekly for two years on Milwaukee NBC television affiliate, Today's TMJ4 as a guest panelist. She is currently seeking an agent and publisher for her first middle grade novel and is pursuing non-fiction book authoring opportunities.

Critique Group Coordinator

Susan Twigg



Susan is the Critique Group Coordinator for SCBWI-WI. She is a published poet and on the journey to publishing for children. She practices yoga and has taught for many years. She believes in the power of mentoring and sharing what we know with each other. Her critique group offers continued encouragement and constructive criticism. She co-founded a high school mentoring program, Pathway Partners that continues to support teens in finding their careers. As the CGC-WI she will facilitate members in finding and creating their own support system so they can be the best writers possible.



See more of Maria's work at MariaKoch-Illustration.com

PAL Co-Coordinators

PAL is the SCBWI designation for "Published And Listed" members, those who have been published by SCBWI recognized organizations. AKA: publicity committee. PAL Coordinator (n.) Cheerleader, town crier, reminder. Utilizing social media and other outlets to share information and resources about organization activities and accomplishments with membership and the greater community. Prepares and distributes spring and fall release announcements.

Sandy Brehl



Reader, writer, retired (but still engaged) educator. Passionate about picture books and children's literature. Author of *ODIN'S PROMISE* (2014), MG Historical Fiction, (Crispin, an imprint of Crickhollow Books) Contact: sbrehlhce@yahoo.com

Judy Dodge Cummings



Judy has written 20 nonfiction books for children and teens. After teaching high school history for many years, Judy earned an MFA in Creative Writing for Children and began to write the history she so loved to teach. Her goal is to write books that transport young readers back in time. Her most recent titles include *Tomb Raiders: Real Tales of Grave Robberies* and *The Civil War: The Struggle that Divided America*.

Self Pub/Indie Coordinator

Silvia Acevedo



Silvia is a journalist turned novelist. During her 20 years in news, she's interviewed presidential candidates, covered national and international stories, and given breaking news reports for CNN and local TV and radio stations around the country. She also occasionally guest hosts a morning talk show for the Milwaukee NBC station. Roman gods, however, were curiously absent during this time, so Silvia decided to bring mythology back into her life with her novels *God Awful Loser*, *God Awful Thief*, and the upcoming *God Awful Rebel*, set for release in 2018.

Area Representatives

In Wisconsin, we are divided into four areas: Northwest, Northeast, Southwest, and Southeast. Our Area Representatives work to connect members all over the state by offering smaller events – such as mingles/schmoozes, and workshops that are closer to members in those areas who may have trouble attending our larger events.

Southeast Area

Becki Kidd, Area Rep



Becki is active in the Wisconsin Chapter, often volunteering for the Fall Conferences and Spring Luncheons. Not a native of Wisconsin, her southern Texas drawl is often detected amongst the Midwestern dialect. A Graduate of the Institute of Children's Literature, Storyteller Academy, and recently participated in Jill Esbaum & Linda Skeer's Whispering Woods Workshop. Becki loves the creative challenge of writing both picture books and middle grade novels.

Rebecca Hirsch, Illustrator Area Rep



Rebecca has been an active member of SCBWI-WI, attending conferences since 2012. She received "Honorable Mention" for the piece she entered in the Fall Conference 2016 Illustrator competition. She was also awarded "Second Runner Up" with her piece for the 2017 Tomie dePaola Illustrator Award. She won the Illustrator competition at the Wisconsin Fall Conference in 2017. Rebecca lives in Waukesha, Wisconsin with her husband and two daughters. She has a BFA from the University of Wisconsin, Madison.

Northwest Area

Kate Lindsay, Area Rep



Kate has been a member of SCBWI since 2013 and enjoys working with children in many capacities. She has worked as a child welfare attorney, a therapist for autistic children, and recently became a certified special education teacher. In her spare time, she co-manages the Facebook page for SCBWI-WI and enjoys writing MG novels. She lives on a farm in Jim Falls, WI with her fiancé and two dogs. For event ideas or information, contact her at kjlindsay12@gmail.com.

Jeanne Styczinski, Illustrator Area Rep



During Jeanne's 30 year career as a kindergarten teacher, Jeanne read countless picture books and wrote/illustrated many stories in her classrooms. She could see the important role that children's picture books play in students' literacy development and how early connection with picture books help students develop a love for reading. In 2013, Jeanne felt an urgency to pursue a life-long dream, to write and illustrate picture books for children beyond her classroom. She created a small publishing company, JeanneKay Publishing (jeannekaypublishing.com), a website (mrsjeanne.com), promotes writing and illustrating by presenting to elementary schools/libraries and has self-published three picture books, that have all won a Moonbeam Children's Book Award (2014 *Mama, How Does The Wind Start To Blow?* and 2015 *Papa Why Does The Sun Shine?* and 2017 *Who Will Be My Friend?*)

Northeast Area

Terrie G. Seiler, Area Rep



Terri writes picture books, fiction and nonfiction, and chapter books. She completed her post graduate studies at UW-Milwaukee before moving to Illinois to work as a Youth Services librarian for over a decade. Terrie returned to Wisconsin to work in education as a teacher and school counselor. When she isn't writing, she loves spending time with family and fellow creative authors, artists and educators. Her greatest joy in life is in the creative process and sharing her love of writing and children's books to children of all ages.

Illustrator Area Rep - OPEN!

The Northeast Illustrator Area Rep position is open. (Contact wisconsin-ra@scbwi.org if interested!)

Southwest Area

Deb Buschman, Co-area Rep



Deb has been a member of SCBWI for seven years. Her and her husband live in Pewaukee and have four grown sons and a crazy Saint Bernard who has no idea she weighs 140 pounds. When she's not writing she's a wine tasting hostess for a New Zealand Winery and she gets to hand out samples at grocery and liquor stores in her area. SO fun! Deb's the member of a fabulous critique group that has taken her from her first 2,000 word picture book to where she is today. She just joined a second critique group to up her game and keep her on my toes. The kind and generous support she's received from everyone she's have met through SCBWI has kept her pre-published butt moving forward and constantly learning. She loves doing this and look forward to giving back as a volunteer.

Kerry Hansen, Co-area Rep



Kerry is a teacher turned author. After earning her master's in English, she directed a high school writing center for six years and wrote for big people. Then she had kids and discovered the magic of children's literature. She now teaches preschool and writes for little people. Her picture book, *Don't Say Winter!*, will be released in Fall, 2019. She lives in Oconomowoc, Wisconsin with her husband, two kids, and absurdly large dog.

Blog Editor

Jane Kelley



Jane grew up by a woods in Mequon, Wisconsin, a perfect place for her imagination to roam. After graduating from Northwestern University, she performed street theater throughout the Midwest. She moved to Brooklyn, New York, with her husband, and was inspired by their daughter, to write for kids. In 2010, she published her first middle grade novel, *Nature Girl*. She was the 2013 Thurber House Children's Writer in Residence. She has written many more novels, including *The Desperate Adventures of Zeno and Alya*, which was honored by the CCBC in 2014. Her most recent work is the chapter book series, *The Escapades of Clint McCool*.

Newsletter Coordinator

Sandra Nichols



Sandra is a writer, educator, and editor who has a keen interest in helping others find joy in creative expression. Sandra has a passion for history and learning. As an educator, she teaches both developmental writing and civics. She has been an active member in Wisconsin State Reading Association for the past ten years and is a regular contributor to their state journal. She has a BA in History from UW Milwaukee and an MA in English from UW Oshkosh. Currently, she teaches at Mid-State Technical College.

Newsletter Designer

Leah Danz



Ever since Leah could hold a crayon... she liked to eat them. She has since outgrown the phase of eating her drawing utensils, and today, she puts them to use as an Illustrator and Designer. She has been an SCBWI member since 2013 and has worked on illustration projects for *BabyBug* magazine, has created illustrations for the books *Patsy Bea*, and *Even Lions Wear Pajamas*, and is working on illustrations for the upcoming book, *Easter Elf vs. Christmas Elf* written by Wisconsin author Rochelle Groskreutz (KWIL Publishing, 2019). Leah lives in Madison, WI, where she works as a Graphic Designer.

Social Media Co-coordinators

Liza Wiemer, Twitter



Liza is an award-winning educator with over twenty-five years of teaching experience. *HELLO?*, her debut realistic contemporary YA novel, is set in Door County, Wisconsin and was published by Spencer Hill Press, NY. It was named a Goodreads Best Young Adult Novel. In addition, Liza has had two adult non-fiction books published through Random House and Gefen Publishing. Several of her short stories were included in the New York Times bestselling Small Miracles series. A die-hard Packer fan and graduate of UW-Madison, she's married with two sons. Find her on Twitter: @lizawiemer, Instagram: lizawiemer, Goodreads: Liza M Wiemer and lizawiemer.com

Kate Lindsay, Facebook

(see Kate's Area Rep profile)

Website/Tech Coordinator

Michael Greer



During the day Michael develops training courses for a non-profit in Milwaukee. At night he writes, illustrates, and reads lots of books. He's currently writing a contemporary young adult novel and illustrating a one-word picture book.

Event Volunteers

A special thank you to all of our other Volunteers who help throughout the year. You know who you are! Your generous time spent behind the scenes, stuffing envelopes, setting up displays, providing transportation, and so much more, is invaluable.

Join Our Volunteers

"We make a living by what we get, we make a life by what we give."
- Winston Churchill

If you would like to volunteer, check our [volunteer descriptions](#) or contact wisconsin-ra@scbwi.org for more information.