

**"This is Our Daughter Deborah"**



Before she was the author of *Freedom Summer* and *Love, Ruby Lavender* and a National Book Award finalist for *Each Little Bird that Sings*, **Deborah Wiles** was an abandoned daughter and indigent teenaged mother in

Washington, D.C. How did she find her way out of that labyrinth, and how did she find her voice? How do her books reflect the heart of that long-ago experience?

What about your life stories? What stories do you choose to tell? How -- and to whom -- do you choose to tell them? How do your choices -- as parents, teachers, writers, librarians, booksellers, human beings -- define the ways in which you create a sense of safety in the world for children and help them find their voices? We are all at-risk. Come share a survival story -- and discover your own. An intimate evening for Guild members and their guests.

**Because this is a dinner meeting, be sure to ask your favorite teacher or librarian to join you.**

DINNER MEETING

Thursday, May 17, 2007

**Time:** 6:00 p.m.—Social 6:30 p.m.—Dinner  
**Place:** Room A-5 at the Martin Luther King, Jr. branch of the D.C. Public Library on the corner of 9th and G Streets, N.W.

**Menu:** All choices \$20.00  
**Choice 1:** Smoked Chicken and Avocado on Whole Wheat Bread  
**Choice 2:** Roast Beef and Swiss with Arugula on a Roll  
**Choice 3:** Mediterranean Wrap (vegetarian) : salad greens, tomato, carrot, cucumber, roasted peppers, hummus, couscous, and olives

Dinner will be catered by Balducci's/High Noon and will include a sandwich, two side salads, dessert, and a beverage. Please indicate your choice of sandwich in your RSVP.

The nearest Metro stop is Gallery Place on the Red Green, and Yellow Lines. There is on-street parking after 6:30 P.M., and free parking in the garage under the library--enter from 10th Street, N.W. between G and H Streets.

Please clip and send this reservation form and your check to :  
The Children's Book Guild of Washington, D.C.  
c/o Pam Smallcomb  
22700 Blue Banner Place  
Germantown, MD 20876

Members bringing a guest to the luncheon should contact Pam Smallcomb (providing the guest's meal selection and a few biographical sentences). Please don't have your guest make his or her own reservation.

Or e-mail your reservation to [pam@pamsmallcomb.com](mailto:pam@pamsmallcomb.com) and include your **full name** in your reservation. Full payment is required unless your reservation is cancelled before 6 pm on the Sunday before the luncheon.

RESERVATIONS ACCEPTED BY POSTAL MAIL OR E-MAIL ONLY.

Reservations must be placed by 6 p.m. the Monday before the luncheon.

Members Name \_\_\_\_\_

Guest's Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Tell us about your guest(s) in 15 words or fewer: \_\_\_\_\_

Menu Selection (indicate number)

Choice 1 \_\_\_\_\_ Choice 2 \_\_\_\_\_ Choice 3 \_\_\_\_\_

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**The Children's Book Guild of Washington, D.C.  
2006-2007**

<b>Officer/Committee Chair</b>	<b>Name</b>
President	Catherine Reef
Past President	Maria Salvadore
Treasurer	Patricia Steelman
Recording Secretary	Lara Zeises
Program Chairs	Sheilah Egan Karen Huff
Membership Chair	Betsy Kuhn
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Book Week Luncheon Chairs	Susan Stockdale Edie Ching
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Nonfiction Committee	Deborah Taylor (chair) Carolyn Reeder (emeritus) Mary Bowman-Kruhm Abby Nolan
Roster	Kathie Meizner
Web Site	Susan Hepler Karen Leggett
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Member Pages	Jacki Vawter
MD, DC, & VA Books	Laura Melmed
Guild Historian	Annette Curtis Klause
Holiday Party Chair	Jennifer O'Connell
Members at Large	Marty Figley Katy Kelly
Newsletter Committee	Jacqueline Jules Abby Nolan Karen Leggett Barbara Ann Porte

**LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT:**

I never knew Langston Hughes wrote a novel until I found it among the miles of used volumes at Strand Books in Manhattan. *Not Without Laughter* tells the story of Sandy Rodgers, an African-

American boy growing up in small-town Kansas in the early 20th century, and the people he knows and loves.

In this slender book, Hughes captures the everyday conversation of ordinary people, and he shows his characters bearing up against poverty and racism. He conveys Sandy's shame when wearing his mother's old shoes, for example, and his disappointment upon not receiving a coveted sled for Christmas. Hughes makes readers understand how a youngster feels when barred from an amusement park because of his race, yet he also captures the dreams and exuberance of childhood and early adolescence.

*Not Without Laughter* is beautifully written, yet for a work by a major American writer, it remains oddly obscure. It was published in 1930, but 65 years passed before a second edition appeared. The reason, I suspect, is Hughes's frequent use of the "N word," which his characters employed in casual speech to describe themselves.

This loaded word has caused enormous pain, but should we try to erase the fact that in some settings it was part of the general vocabulary? Can we have confidence in young people to understand this and appreciate a book that has much to offer? In a time when some people want to ban books because the names of body parts make them uneasy, we may never know.

**Catherine Reef**

## Meet a Member Organization:

### Turning the Page

by Kathleen Rice,  
Development Coordinator, Turning the Page

Turning the Page (TTP; [www.turningthepage.org](http://www.turningthepage.org)), a local nonprofit organization that brings educational resources to the city's lowest-income schools, was pleased to welcome seven different children's authors and illustrators to its Community Nights last fall, including four Children's Book Guild members. Community Nights offer parents, children and volunteers from the community the opportunity to come together for a healthy meal and a night of parent workshops, child mentoring and reading. TTP hosts four Community Nights each semester at each of its seven partner schools.

Each semester students at TTP partner schools count down the days until the much-anticipated Author Visit—decorating the school and preparing presentations and skits to welcome the authors into their communities. The visiting authors and illustrators enliven our Community Nights by reading excerpts from their work aloud and discussing their creative process with families. This past semester, **Catherine Reef** visited Gibbs Elementary, **Phyllis Reynolds Naylor** spoke to families at Aiton, **Paige Billin-Frye** discussed the secret to good illustrating at River Terrace, and **Fred Bowen** wowed the crowd with his exciting sports stories at M.C. Terrell Elementary. TTP is extremely grateful to these individuals for donating their time. More than 150 families came to listen to their inspiring stories, each taking home an autographed book as well as the motivation to continue encouraging a love of reading in their homes.

Community Nights also included informative workshops for the parents. Each session covers such topics as reading at home with your children, understanding ones' rights and responsibilities under No Child Left Behind, and mediating and resolving conflict. For those parents who are interested in becoming more involved in their school and community, TTP offers leadership training seminars that give parents the skills they need to form functioning parent-teacher organizations and encourage other parents to participate. TTP also partners with the teachers,

bringing them professional development opportunities that correspond with their classroom lessons and link them to the many resources that Washington, D.C., has to offer. Through partnerships with the Phillips Collection and the National Air and Space Museum, teachers supplement their lesson plans while exposing their students to the wonders of this city.

2007 marks nine years since Turning the Page was founded. As its 10th anniversary approaches, staff members are proud of all they have accomplished. But they also recognize that theirs is an ongoing effort on behalf of the communities in which they work. With the cooperation of the Children's Book Guild of Washington, D.C., and other local supporters, they will continue to seek new and creative ways to inspire teachers and families.



Phyllis Reynolds Naylor participates in a Turning the Page Community Night at Aiton Elementary School.

### 2007-08 Guild Officers

At the March meeting, the slate of officers was read and approved.

**President -- Edie Ching**

**Program Co-Chairs --**

**Wendy Lukehart and Deborah Taylor**

**Secretary -- Katy Kelly**

**Treasurer -- Joyce Schwartz**

The new officers were warmly applauded. **Mary Quattlebaum**, Nominating Committee chair, thanked fellow members **Marty Figley** and **Betsy Kraft**, and Guild president **Cathy Reef** for their insights and help in choosing the slate.

## Washington's Children to Create a Book-- How You Can Help

by Cathy Reef

I invite Guild writers and illustrators to join me in an exciting new project that I am undertaking with our organizational member Turning the Page (TTP; see page 3). During the 2007-2008 school year, those of us who participate will assist in the creation of a book written and illustrated by children attending TTP's partner schools in Washington, D.C.

As it is now envisioned, this book will consist of four sections: Community, Family, Self-Portraits, and Dreams. It will bring into print voices that are too seldom heard, and assembling it will be a wonderful experience for the children. Guild members can participate by leading workshops in writing or illustrating on a one-time or ongoing basis. The project is just being developed, so if you have ideas to contribute or want to become involved in another way, I hope you will speak up. Please contact me by telephone or by email at [reefcreef2@aol.com](mailto:reefcreef2@aol.com). This promises to be a rewarding endeavor for everyone involved.

## The Top Ten Reasons to Go to ALA in Washington, D.C. this Year

by Wendie Old

10. Publishers, editors, books, books, books.

9. It only costs \$25 to get an Exhibits pass (pre-registration price at [www.ala.org](http://www.ala.org) -- \$35 for walk-in). This pass gets you into the Exhibits Area, but if you ask for an "author" ribbon at the walk-in registration booth, you can pretty much go into any lecture hall, too. (Feel free to attend any open meeting.) Ask one of your publishers if they'll give you an Exhibits pass for free.

8. Some of your favorite authors will be signing books at their publishers' booths. Their books are either being given out free for the signing, or you can buy them at a discount.

7. Do let your publisher(s) know that you live in the area and plan to attend. They may schedule YOU for a book signing (which guarantees you a free publisher's exhibit pass). After all, because you live here, they don't have to pay for your

transportation or hotel. If you let them know early (do it NOW), they can get your signing time published in the convention program, and your fans will find you.

6. You can pick up free advance copies of books, posters and bookmarks. *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows* will come out on July 21, so Scholastic may have lots of Harry Potter goodies. Try to get to the exhibits early in the morning, when the best goodies are handed out.

5. There are drawings for things like iPods or baskets of books. Get your name into as many as you can--you never can tell when you might be a winner. (Amazingly, I've won several times.)

4. Visiting the exhibits is a way to scope out the competition--or find just the right publisher for that manuscript you've worked so hard on. Don't carry that manuscript with you--just bring a notepad on which you can write down the types of books a publisher is offering, so that you can submit to them later. (Because you'll be wearing an author badge, editors may be open to casual conversations about what interests them.)

3. You could make appointments ahead of time with editors to pitch stories to them. A friend of mine sold five books this way at her first ALA.

2. Major Events: **The Sunday night Newbery/ Caldecott banquet!** Want to attend, but don't want to shell out for the price of a ticket? You have two choices. Go out to dinner with friends, then slip into the banquet hall before the speakers begin. Or--lucky authors will be invited by their publishers to sit with them.

**The Seibert Award for Best Nonfiction Book** is given out at the 10:30 a.m. Monday meeting of the Association for Library Service to Children.

**The Saturday evening Scholarship event.** This year it's a performance by the Capitol Steps.

1. And the most important reason you should go to ALA this summer is -- **It's right here in Washington, D.C., at the Convention Center!** The exhibits are open the weekend of June 23, 24 and 25. (A bargain book sale begins Tuesday, around noon.) Check the Web site [www.ala.org](http://www.ala.org) for exact times and the preliminary program to see what other events or meetings appeal to you.

## AROUND THE WORLD WITH BATCHELDER BOOKS

by Roz Beittler

Being a member of an ALA book award committee is always an enlightening experience, but traveling vicariously to settings such as the Dordogne region of France or Punta Arenas, Chile, will probably only occur on the Batchelder Award Committee. These settings were featured in two of the 2007 award-winning Batchelder books selected by the committee on which I just served. Their vividly rendered locales almost became characters in these superbly crafted stories. Although the third 2007 award book is set in the world of imagination, it highlights the absurdity of stereotypes about the unknown and sends a powerful message to us humans living in a global society.

The Batchelder Award is the only ALA children's book award that is presented to an American publisher for the most outstanding children's book translated from a foreign language and subsequently published in the United States. The award honors Mildred L. Batchelder, a former executive director of ALA's Association of Library Service to Children, who promoted translations of the world's best children's literature, "to eliminate barriers to understanding between people of different cultures, races, nations, and languages."

Delacorte Press won the 2007 Batchelder Award for *The Pull of the Ocean*, by Jean-Claude Mourlevat, translated from the French by Y. Maudet and set in Chile. Delacorte Press also won a Batchelder Honor for *The Killer's Tears*, by Anne-Laure Bondoux, translated from the French by Y. Maudet and set in France. Hyperion/Miramax received a Batchelder Honor for *The Last Dragon*, by Silvana De Mari, translated from the Italian by Shaun Whiteside. All three titles engage the reader with interesting literary devices that emphasize the power of story and language. They not only introduce American children to award-winning books that are being read by their contemporaries abroad, but they also pave the way for a sophisticated appreciation of quality literature. Mildred Batchelder would be proud!

## THE HOUSE OF SWEDEN

by Karen Leggett

The dramatic House of Sweden overlooking the Potomac River in Georgetown is the new home of the Swedish Embassy. The embassy has



planned a series of themed exhibits to share its shimmering, modern space with the public. Deputy chief of mission Caroline Vicini had tucked away a Guild luncheon advertisement from the *Washington Post*, and when the time came to organize an exhibit on children's literature, she invited the Guild to help generate ideas for events. As we talked about the place of children's literature in Sweden and the United States, we were joined by Joran Bjallerstedt, who had just returned from a year of parental leave to spend time with his eight-year-old son!

The children's literature events will be held from September through November 2007, with Guild participation. There will be an interactive science exhibit for kids as well as a large literature room with space to read, listen to authors and view an exhibit celebrating the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Astrid Lindgren's birth. There will be workshops and seminars – "flashes of genius," in Vicini's words – for adults. Guild members are encouraged to send ideas for such programs to Maria Salvadore at [mbsalvadore@yahoo.com](mailto:mbsalvadore@yahoo.com).

The goal of the children's theme is to honor children's creativity and children's rights as understood by the United Nations and to acknowledge, as Vicini said, "that children add to society by being children, not just as future adults."

The current program at the House of Sweden is "Water and Environment – Cool Swedish Ice Meets Warm Washington Spring." Presentations include ice sculptures, interactive research exhibits and nature photography as well as workshops on sustainable cities and global water development challenges. Future program themes include innovation and tourism. Visit [http://www.swedenabroad.se/Start\\_6989.aspx](http://www.swedenabroad.se/Start_6989.aspx).

## Books' Covers: Melding Art and Marketing

by Peggy Jackson

Jason Wells, director of publicity and marketing at Abrams Books for Young Readers, says, "Yes, you can judge a book by its cover." And with that twist of an old saw and a smile, he began his talk at the Guild's February luncheon. (It should be pointed out that he gamely navigated fierce wintry weather to get there.)

At Abrams, designing a cover is a dynamic process that takes about five to six months and includes collaboration between the editor and illustrator as well as feedback from in-house staff. Librarians and booksellers may also weigh in if they have had a chance to see a prepublication edition. Authors, he said, are rarely asked for their opinion.

To give us an idea of how a book cover might develop, Wells took us through the evolution of the cover for Lauren Myracle's book *Rhymes with Witches*. In that case, even the title was tweaked when a bookseller saw a pre-pub *Bitches* and said it would not do. An early cover had a tough, gritty look, with "bitches" scrawled graffiti-like across a school locker. Then there was a sassy version that had "bitches" tattooed onto the belly of hip teenage girl. That cover lost some of its punch when the title changed and *Rhymes with Witches* didn't fit on her belly. Eventually Abrams went with *Rhymes with Witches* written in cursive across an argyle-patterned backdrop adorned with a heart bracelet engraved with the letter B.

Changes are often made when a book is released in paperback, and that was the case with *Rhymes with Witches*, for which the argyle went from dark to pink. Wells showed hardback and paperback versions of other titles, too.

He ended his talk by raising the issue of digital books and what they would mean for the art of cover design. He didn't venture a guess. He just shrugged and smiled and took questions from the floor.

## Poetry Alive!®

by Karen Leggett



They pounced. They pranced. They shouted. They whispered. *And...* they recited poetry. At the Guild luncheon in April, not a single eyelid dared to droop as Poetry Alive!® actors Brad Waters and L'Tanya Van Hamersveld filled the room with the poetry of William Shakespeare, Maya Angelou, E. E. Cummings, Paul Laurence Dunbar and many more – often creatively intertwined, as in a point-counterpoint performance of two William Blake poems, *The Tiger* and *The Lamb*.

We laughed, we cried, we volunteered and we were volunteered. As the only male Guild member in attendance, **Mark Friedlander** was the volunteer *par excellence*, becoming a lover, a king and almost an opera singer. There were poems about history and war, math and old age. No subject and no poem was immune from the actors' energy and enthusiasm.

Five pairs of actors travel nationwide and around the world to perform Poetry Alive!® for school groups of all ages. Each team presents new and traditional poetry, involving students in every couplet and stanza. Poems are selected to meet the interests and curriculum objectives of each school or grade level, and professional development workshops are also offered to teachers.

As Guild member **Joyce Schwartz** commented, "It would be interesting to watch these actors in front of kids who didn't think they liked poetry." Find out more at [www.poetryalive.com](http://www.poetryalive.com).

## CLIPPINGS: Industry News

by Michael L. Cooper

The Authors' Guild's 2007 *Winter Bulletin* featured a symposium held last November in New York on trends in children's book publishing. Here are some highlights.

Susan Katz, president and publisher of HarperCollins Children Division: "in the middle grade and YA, I'd say everything is selling, with the exception of . . . historical fiction. We are having a very, very tough time with historical fiction [because of] TV, cable, cable, movies, video games . . . other media [are] definitely influencing [kids'] choices for reading."

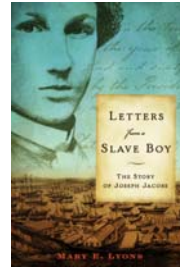
Rachel Vail, author: "I think the two hot things in the next year or two or three are going to be paranormal and supernatural."

Josalyn Moran, former vice president of Scholastic's Book Clubs Division: The market for nonfiction children's books is "very, very strong." What's selling are, "the most sophisticated books about current issues, true biographies and nature books and reference books." Responding to a question about the teen market for nonfiction, Moran said, "You're going to sell a lot of bios of hot characters. The *High School Musical* characters are selling very well right now. There's a lot of self-help that's selling very well right now." What else is selling? "Books that the magazines put out on health and beauty and friendship. Books on self-esteem; books on real life; some of the difficult things kids go through."

Jodi Reamer, author and agent at Writers House: "It's sort of an interesting time for picture books which . . . were very stagnant for awhile . . . the market was over saturated. Now once again editors are asking for them . . . witty, high concept, very strong text picture books . . . are the types of picture books that are selling . . . Funny picture books are definitely hot. Funny middle grade books are very hot, and funny teen books. Humor sells really well in all areas."

**Michael L. Cooper's** most recent book is *Jamestown, 1607* (Holiday House, 2007).

## MEMBER NEWS



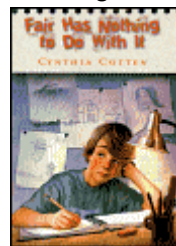
**Mary E. Lyons** announces Atheneum's publication of *Letters from a Slave Boy: The Story of Joseph Jacobs*, a companion book to *Letters from a Slave Girl: The Story of Harriet Jacobs*. Mary is especially pleased that Kendal Rautzhan reviewed the new book in her nationally syndicated column, *Books 4 Kids*, calling it a "thought-provoking novel."

"More than two million biracial kids live in our country," Mary notes. "The ones I've spoken with tell me that they often hear the rude question, 'what are you?' Joseph faced various forms of the same question. Although the stakes were brutally higher for him in antebellum America, his struggle for identity is the same that many youngsters face today."

**Jennifer O'Connell** is happy to report that her new website: [www.jenniferoconnellart.com](http://www.jenniferoconnellart.com) is up and running! Stop by to see her books, portfolio, presentation information, bio and more.

**Jacqueline Jules** is excited to share that she won the 2007 Moving Words Poetry Competition. To see her winning poem, which will appear on posters on Arlington buses from April to September, visit <http://www.commuterpage.com/movingpoems/movingSp07a.htm>.

**Cynthia Cotten** announces her first novel, for middle graders, *Fair Has Nothing To Do with It* (Farrar, Straus & Giroux). It's about a twelve-year-old boy's struggle to work through grief and let people into his life again. *Booklist* calls it "an excellent book for discussion."



Also, Cynthia's picture book *Abbie in Stitches* (Farrar Straus & Giroux, 2006) has been included in Bank Street College's 2007 "Best Children's Books" list, and her picture book *This Is the Stable* (Henry Holt and Company, 2006) has been named to the 2007 Kansas State Reading Circle Recommended List.

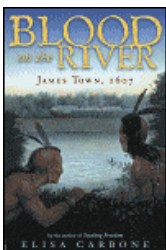
**Stephanie Tolan** writes: **Katherine Paterson** and I (and her husband, John, my son and daughter-in-law, RJ and Lisa, and Katherine's and my editors) had a lovely evening March 15 in New York at the presentation of the Christopher Awards—given to "writers, producers, directors and illustrators who have achieved artistic excellence in the publishing, film, broadcast television and cable industries. Through their work, they truly affirm the highest values of the human spirit." The awards "salute media that remind audiences and readers, of all faiths and of no particular faith, of their worth, individuality and power to make a difference and positively influence our world." Katherine won for *Bread and Roses, Too* and I won for *Listen!*

PS. I was just in Washington last weekend and was reminded of what a wonderful place guild members live in!



**Kathleen Karr** is delighted to announce the April publication of *Born for Adventure* (Marshall Cavendish), in which her plucky young hero cons his way onto the great journalist/explorer Henry Morton Stanley's ill-fated Relief of Emin Pasha Expedition through the Congo (1887-1889). Deepest, darkest Africa has never been as exotic, fever-ridden, brutal or fascinating. The early reviews have been excellent.

Also, Kathleen's Agatha Award winner, *The 7th Knot* (Marshall Cavendish, 2003), is making its paperback appearance this Spring. And coming in summer 2008 is *Fortune's Fool* (Alfred A. Knopf). *Fool* is the saga of Conrad the Good, fool of all trades in medieval Germany, who sets forth on a quest for a wise master through plague-stricken villages and wolf-filled forests with only his wit, his great warhorse, Blackspur, and Christa the Fair, his lady love.



**Elisa Carbone** reports: *Blood on the River: James Town 1607* won the 2007 Virginia Library Association Jefferson Cup Award.

**TEXAS BOUND!** **Nancy Patz** and **Susan L. Roth** are speaking together about their collaborative book, *Babies Can't Eat Kimchee!* (Bloomsbury, 2007), at the Texas Library Association meeting in San Antonio on April 12th.

Continuing the theme of collaboration, on April 14th Susan is speaking about her book *DO RE MI, If You Can Read Music, Thank Guido D'Arezzo* (Houghton Mifflin, 2006). Especially for the occasion, TLA has invited musicians to perform Victoria Bond's *Guido D'Arezzo Oratorio* as it was performed in Arezzo, Italy, last December. Bond is coming to Texas to conduct her piece, and, as designed, the illustrations from Susan's book will be projected as part of the performance.



During the course of **Colby Rodowsky's** new book, *Ben and the Sudden Too-Big Family*, ten-year-old Ben acquires a step-mother, a Chinese baby sister, and twenty-three assorted relatives. It's a way-too-big family, Ben is convinced, until he discovers that maybe it's just right after all. And in an amazing feat, the cover artist (Michael Wertz) managed to get all 27 family members onto the book jacket!

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