

Children's Book Guild News



CHILDREN'S
BOOK GUILD
of WASHINGTON, DC

Monthly News

Authors • Illustrators • Children's Literature Specialists

[Printer-Friendly Version \(pdf\)](#)

Pages

[Home](#)

[Guild Member Blogs](#)

[Busboys and Poets](#)

[Monthly Luncheon Schedule](#)

About Me



Monthly News

The Children's Book Guild of Washington, DC is a professional organization of authors, illustrators and children's literature specialists promoting high standards in children's literature since 1945. Visit us at <https://childrensbookguild.org/>

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Wednesday, March 24, 2021

April 2021

YOUNG ADULT AUTHOR DARCIE LITTLE BADGER IN CONVERSATION WITH HER EDITOR



Darcie Little Badger is an earth scientist (with a PhD in oceanography) and short fiction writer turned novelist. Her debut novel, *Elatsoe*, was named one of *Time* magazine's 100 Best Fantasy Books of All Time. Lipan Apache beliefs are central to the novel, as 17-year-old Elatsoe, aka Ellie, solves the suspicious death of her cousin after his ghost asks her to protect his wife and child. *Elatsoe* is

speculative fiction at its best, combining the familiar with elements of the supernatural.

On Thursday, April 15, at 1 p.m., Little Badger will be in conversation with her Levine Querido editor, Nick Thomas. Before joining Levine Querido as senior editor, Thomas worked as senior editor at Arthur A. Levine Books. He has also held positions with Bloomsbury, Chicken House and David Fickling Books.

Guild member Monica Valentine, program specialist with the Library of Congress's Young Readers Center, will moderate the discussion, which will be conducted via Zoom.

Also, the Guild is providing the opportunity each month for making a donation to an organization working for racial justice in children's literacy and education. There is an option on the Guild website to donate after registering. April's chosen organization is MIGIZI. To learn more about MIGIZI and their important work, check out their website: <https://www.migizi.org>.

[Register Now!](#)**IN THIS ISSUE:**

1. President's Letter
2. The Incoming Leadership Team
3. Youth Literacy Grants Progress Report
4. Membership Application: Rocky Callen
5. Frostburg's Spring Festival of Children's Literature
6. Update on the Look at My Books Campaign
7. Member News
8. "Quick Links"
9. Readings on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

LETTER FROM GUILD PRESIDENT KAREN DEANS

Happy spring, everyone! We did it. We made it through the winter that we were told in advance was going to be so difficult: staying separate from one another amid reports of surging COVID cases and, for some of us, enduring our own experience with the virus or watching our friends and family go through it. Some of us had additional family crises that were compounded by distance. It was, at times, a stressful, scary and downright exhausting winter. But we, survivors all, found our own ways to get through it. We had our creative outlets, and within the

Guild membership there are many. We had good books and Netflix and live performance art streamed online. We had the *New York Times* cooking app, home projects and walks. And, of course, we Zoomed, and we learned to cope with our lack of proximity with those we love. We made it work. Because that, my friends, is what we do.

It was wonderful to see the Guild friends who attended our March business meeting. We took care of some Guild business and then had the pleasure of watching presentations by some of our fabulously talented members. The virtual studio tours given by Lulu Delacre, Rosalyn Schanzer, Zara Gonzalez Hoang, Susan Stockdale, Gareth Hinds and Paige Billin-Frye were so much fun. We learned about process and were inspired by their creativity. Thank you to all who shared your time and expertise with us, and to the Program Committee, who made it happen.

We also voted in the Executive Leadership for next year, which will be led by incoming president Erica Perl (see "Guild Leadership for 2021-2022," below). Thank you to all who are serving next year. We look forward to supporting you.

This month promises to be a full one for the Guild. We have our April 15 program, at 1 p.m., featuring YA author Darcie Little Badger in

conversation with her editor at Levine Querido, Nick Thomas. I invite you to register [here](#). Our April program donation will go to **MIGIZI**. MIGIZI's mission is to provide "a strong circle of support that nurtures the educational, social, economic and cultural development of American Indian youth."

April is also the month for membership updates and dues renewal, so be on the lookout for an email that will arrive soon.

Also, the Nonfiction Award Event Committee continues to plan for the May 22 celebration at 1 p.m. honoring Catherine Reef. If you haven't yet registered, I invite you to do so [here](#). You can also check out the wonderful promotional video created for the event [here](#), featuring actor Esther Williamson portraying the subject of Catherine's book *Mary Shelley: The Strange True Tale of Frankenstein's Creator*.

I look forward to meeting with you again soon. Until then, I'm wishing all of you a productive and healthy month, and lots of time out in the sunshine!

Best,

Karen

GUILD LEADERSHIP FOR 2021-2022

The Executive Committee for 2021-2022 was announced and voted on at the Guild's annual business meeting on March 18. Next year's team will be:

Erica Perl, President

Erica is the author of more than 30 books for young readers, including *All Three Stooges*, *The Ninth Night of Hanukkah*, the *Truth or Lie* series and, of course, *Chicken Butt!*

Jason Wells, Vice President

Jason is books marketing director at the American Psychological Association, where he works on the children's imprint Magination Press. He previously held roles at Rodale, Simon & Schuster and Abrams, where he architected marketing of the *Diary of a Wimpy Kid* series for more than a decade.

Terry Jennings, Treasurer

Terry is an author of children's nonfiction and fact-based fiction, including her new series, *Definitely Dominguita*.

Amy Hansen, Co-Treasurer

Amy writes about the science of every day life. Her 30 published books include *Fire Bird: The Kirtland's Warbler Story*, *Bugs and Bugsicles: Insects in the Winter*, *Curious About Sharks*, *Curious About Pandas* and *Curious About Sloths*.

Joyce Schwartz, Co-Chair, Membership Committee

Joyce is the coauthor of children's and young adult books, including biographies of May Chinn, Fidel Castro and Carl Sagan, and *Eugenie Clark: Adventures of a Shark Scientist*.

Winifred Conkling, Co-Chair, Membership Committee

Winifred is the author of six books for children and young adults, including *Ms. Gloria Steinem* and *Votes for Women!*

Fred Bowen, Recording Secretary

Fred is the author of 25 kids' sports books and, since 2000, he has written the weekly *KidsPost* sports column.

Sue Fliess, Recording Secretary

Sue is the author of more than 35 picture books, five of which are publishing this year. She lives in Ashburn with her family, which has had a little too much "together time" this past year.

Katherine Marsh, Recording Secretary

Katherine is the author of books for children and young adults, including *Nowhere Boy*, *The Door by the Staircase*, *Jepp*, *Who Defied the Stars* and *The Night Tourist* books.

Laura Melmed, Member at Large

Laura's many picture books, often written in whimsical verse, feature lullabies, magic and famous places. Among her titles are *The Rainbabies*, *I Love You as Much, Capitol!* and *New York, New York!*

Rhoda Trooboff, Member at Large

Rhoda is a writer and the founder of a small children's book publishing company, Tenley Circle Press, which has published nine children's books and one adult novel.

Eddie Ching, Chair, Program Committee

A former children's librarian, Eddie continues to educate and be educated. She has served on many children's book award committees, including the Newbery and Caldecott committees.

Monica Valentine, Program Committee

Monica assists children and families at the Young Readers Center at the Library of Congress in using the library's diverse collection of books. She also coordinates special events such as children's author talks.

Debbie Cohen, Program Committee

Debbie is the author of eight picture books and a young adult novel, and is the owner of the Story House, a small bookstore in Rockville, MD.

YOUTH LITERACY GRANTS

by Kem Knapp Sawyer

For the past five years, the Guild has awarded grants to needy schools in the DC area to purchase books for their libraries or classrooms. This year, given the pandemic and school closings, we wanted to do something different. We wanted to put books into children's hands.

The Guild allotted \$3,000 to purchase books for children at risk—\$1,000 for Northern Virginia, \$1,000 for Maryland and \$1,000 for DC.

- Jennifer Sauter-Price, founder of Read Early and Daily (R.E.A.D.) agreed to distribute books to children in Arlington Public Schools. She chose Carlin Springs Elementary and Randolph Elementary, two schools with the highest percentage of children on free and reduced-price meals.
- Guild member Karen Leggett worked to help distribute books to children from New Hampshire Estates Elementary School in Silver Spring. Rhonda Gladden, assistant principal at Columbia Park Elementary School in Prince George's County, will assist in distributing books to children at her school.
- Children at three schools in Congress Heights, Southeast DC, will also receive books. The schools are Martin Luther King Elementary School, Eagle Academy Public Charter School and Southeast Elementary Academy. Many thanks to Brenda Nishimura, school psychologist at King Elementary School, and Alicia and David Kiyvyra, founders of the nonprofit To Be Well Fed, for distributing the books to the DC children.

We are purchasing the books through First Book, the DC nonprofit that distributes books and resources at low cost to educators. Thank you to the First Book team (who are also Guild members) for facilitating this effort, to Guild member Deb Taylor for her advice in selecting many of the books, and to all the Guild members for making this possible.

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP: ROCKY CALLEN



Author Rocky Callen has applied for membership in the Children's Book Guild. She writes:

"I remember one terrible day when I was 11 years old. I hid under my bed with a flashlight and wrote a story. I had always read books constantly, but then I started to dream up my own. I wanted to write a world where girls like me could win. And then I wanted to create a life in which I could too. This shift was a miraculous one, especially when my struggle with depression had just taken hold, and my life was full of turbulence and secrets.

"In the next few years, my own depression still simmering under the surface, I threw myself into academics and projects that made me feel like I had a voice, or that I could amplify the voices of others. By the time I graduated high school at 16, I had interned at NPR, extensively advocated for undocumented immigrant rights at both the state and national levels and worked on leadership councils. I went on to graduate summa cum laude with a degree in political science and communications from Trinity University in DC. I was trained in behavioral coaching and pursued a career in that field for more than a decade.

"Throughout all of this, I still secretly dreamed of becoming an author. I simply had shoved that desire aside and buried it deep. But one day, when I was pregnant, I was sitting on a blue shag carpet with a clutter of old boxes around me, and I found character sketches I had written as a kid. I looked at those pages and felt the rush of exhilaration that I did when I was little, all words and hope. The dream bloomed bright and beautiful before me in my hands. I decided that day that if I was going to ask my daughter to live her dreams, then it was time for me to start living mine. I started to write again.

"It took years before I had a full manuscript. But then, with time, I realized there was another story I had to write. I wrote about a girl who had no hope left, a girl who had a home with secrets. I wanted to write that girl into a book so that she could feel seen. Because somehow I knew that then I would feel seen too. I wrote that first draft in just over a week, at night in the dark, sobbing with every page. Several years later, while enrolled in the VCFA Writing for Children and Young Adults MFA program, I turned in my critical thesis to my advisor, my final revision of that novel to my agent, gave birth to my son and got a book deal--all within five weeks. That book was my debut novel, *A Breath Too Late*, which launched last year, during the pandemic.

"But even as I felt saddened by the loss of the traditional debut experience, I felt it was so appropriate that it came into the world when so many people had to close their doors. Domestic violence and mental health issues have been so impacted by quarantine, and so it has been my focus to speak as often as possible about both these issues with compassion and honesty while offering resources for those who may be struggling. The novel was named a *Kirkus* Best Book of the Year and has gotten on wonderful lists like the *Mujerista's* Best YA Books by a Latinx Author, but it has been the letters I have gotten every week from readers that make me grateful to the girl who hid under her bed all those years ago, who believed that her writing, her stories and her life mattered. That no matter what, she deserved to be seen.

"I want my writing to remind readers that they deserve to feel seen too.

"I live in Maryland with my husband, daughter and son. I am currently co-editing a YA mental health anthology for Candlewick. My next YA novel is also underway. I have attended events at the Children's Book Guild in the past as a guest, and I have felt so impacted by the heart of its membership and mission. I would feel very grateful to be counted as part of it."

THE 38th SPRING FESTIVAL OF CHILDREN'S LITERATURE IS GOING VIRTUAL!

April 23 and 24, 2021

The Children's Literature Centre at Frostburg State University is putting the final touches on its 2021 Spring Festival of Children's Literature. For 37 years, the festival has welcomed hundreds of educators, librarians, parents, students and literature advocates to the FSU campus, to share their love of children's literature and learn more about successful ways to share that love with children. In the "share and learn" atmosphere of the festival, adults who direct children's learning have been able to interact with authors and illustrators who bring characters to life and inspire children to read.

In spring 2020, plans were being finalized for the annual festival when the pandemic forced the cancellation of the two-day conference. After a year of anticipation, preparation and adherence to COVID guidelines, the 38th Spring Festival is going virtual!*

Award-winning authors and illustrators headline this year's virtual event. Each of these presenters has created stories that motivate children to become lifelong readers. In addition to their virtual presentations, each featured speaker will be available for a live Q & A session, allowing registrants a chance to interact with the presenters. Participants may also virtually attend up to seven professional development workshops that focus on a wide range of literacy and literature topics for the pre-K through 8 classrooms. An extensive selection of books will be available online for purchase. Each will include an autographed bookplate.

This year's featured speakers are:



Jerry Craft

~ Author and illustrator of *New Kid*, the first graphic novel to receive the Newbery Award. Additionally, *New Kid* earned the Coretta Scott King Award, becoming the first book to win both awards in the same year.

~ Author-illustrator of *Class Act*, the companion book to *New Kid*. Published in 2020, it was one of *School Library Journal's* Best Graphic Novels of 2020 as well as a *Kirkus* Best Middle Grade Book of the Year.

~ Creator of *Mama's Boyz*, a syndicated comic strip, which has received the African American Literary Award five times.

~ Cofounder and co-producer of the Schomburg Center's annual Black Comic Book Festival.

~ Coauthor with his sons, Jaylen and Aren, of the middle grade prose novel *The Offenders: Surviving the World While Serving Detention!*



Ryan T. Higgins

~ Author and illustrator of the *New York Times* bestseller *We Don't Eat Our Classmates* and the *Mother Bruce* series, which includes *Mother Bruce*, *Hotel Bruce*, *Bruce's Big Moves*, *Santa Bruce* and *Bruce's Big Storm*.

~ Recipient of an Ezra Jack Keats New Illustrator Honor and the E. B. White Read Aloud Award.



Andrea Warren

~ Author of numerous nonfiction chapter books, including *Surviving Hitler: A Boy in the Nazi Death Camps*; *Enemy Child: The Story of Norman Mineta, a Boy Imprisoned in a Japanese American Internment Camp During World War II*; *Orphan Train Rider: One Boy's True Story*; and *We Rode the Orphan Trains*.

~ Winner of the Boston Globe Horn Book Award for *Orphan Train Rider: One Boy's True Story* and the Midland Author's Award for *Pioneer Girl*.



Salina Yoon

~ Author, illustrator and format designer of nearly 200 novelty books for young children, including *Rock & Roll Colors*, *Opposnake*, *Pinwheel* and *Kaleidoscope*, as well as *The Penguin*, *The Bear* and the *Duck, Duck, Porcupine* series. Specializes in formats that are unique and interactive.

~ Recipient of numerous awards, including the 2018 Geisel Honor for *My Kite Is Stuck! and Other Stories*.

Admission to the festival is by registration only, limited in number and available online (<https://forms.frostburg.edu/207>). For more information, contact the Children's Literature Centre at 301-687-3133 or clc@frostburg.edu. Full details of the conference can be found at www.frostburg.edu/clc/festivalinfo.

*Due to COVID restrictions, The R. Margaret Hamilton Children's Literature Outreach presentations throughout the region are postponed until the 2022 Spring Festival of Children's Literature.

Look at My Books Campaign

"I can't believe she liked all of them" - Nassara

"We got a book about a cook so we made dinner together, it was fun." - Lisa

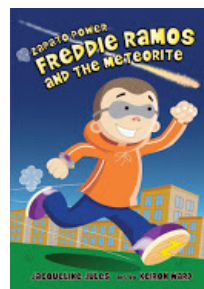
"My son has already read all of his Darius Daniels books! Would be so cool to see a movie about him" - LaRonda

"We could read Red Shoes every day!" - Karolyn

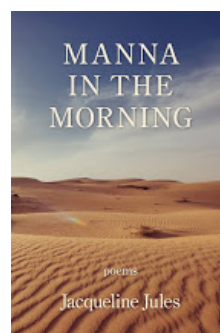
Turning the Page

To date the Guild has delivered more than 300 books for at-home libraries to families in Wards 7 and 8, and has already received \$240 for April deliveries.

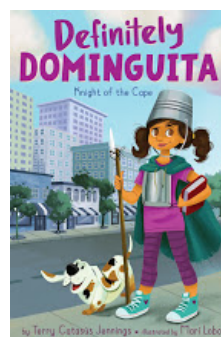
MEMBER NEWS



JACQUELINE JULES is pleased to announce book #11 in the award-winning Zapato Power series, *Freddie Ramos and the Meteorite* (Albert Whitman). In Freddie's newest adventure, he and his friend Mr. Vaslov see something fall from the sky. When Freddie learns it could be a meteorite, he's determined to find it. As Freddie uses his super speed to search, he stumbles upon the remains of an old school garden. Can Starwood Park get the garden functioning again? And will Freddie find the meteorite before someone else does?



JACQUELINE JULES is also very excited to announce the release of her first full-length poetry book, *Manna in the Morning* (Kelsay Books). The poems of *Manna in the Morning* examine biblical figures through the lens of modern times, extracting insights from the lives of people portrayed as more complex than their worst moment or their best. Katherine E. Young, author of *Day of the Border Guards*, poet laureate emerita, Arlington, VA, offered advance praise for *Manna in the Morning*: "Jules explores contemporary faith with nuance and sensitivity, braiding together the ancient world and twenty-first century. She's particularly interested in the roles women play in the Biblical texts and brings a lively feminist sensibility to her poems." For more information, please visit <https://metaphoricaltruths.blogspot.com/>.



TERRY CATASUS JENNINGS proudly announces publication of the first two titles in a chapter book series, *Definitely Dominguita*, about a Cuban American third grader who loves to read the classics and pretend. In the first book, Dominguta is challenged to become a knight. In the second book, Dom and her crew find a treasure map and have to figure out what the treasure is and then beat the meanies to find it.

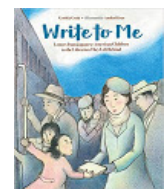


"Amorous Tales, a Quintet of Modern Ise Stories," excerpted from a "work in progress" by **BARBARA ANN PORTE**, appears online in *Another Chicago Magazine*, March 11, 2021 (<https://anotherchicagomagazine.net/>, click fiction). The original Ise tales, a collection of brief, episodic anecdotes and *waka* poems, date back to the Heian period in Japan (794-1185), and were likely edited, possibly written, by Lady Ise. Barbara's employ the ancient form with updated details.

"QUICK LINKS..."

CYNTHIA GRADY recently did a televised interview as part of the One Book One San Diego program, for which her book *Write to Me* was selected. The five-minute interview aired on CBS 8 *Morning Extra* in San Diego on March

11: <https://www.cbs8.com/video/news/local/morning-extra/childrens-conversations-darker-parts-of-history/509-ddf3e595-e614-404e-9b0f-69457df3285f>.



RHODA TROOBOFF and her husband, Peter, recently enjoyed an in-person visit with former Guild member **PHYLLIS SIDORSKY**, who was a librarian at the National Cathedral School from the 1970s through the 1990s, and who wrote frequently about children's literature. Their talk turned to the recent decision to end publication of several books by Dr. Seuss, and then to Nancy Larrick's influential 1965 essay, "The All-White World of Children's Books," which Rhoda suggests Guild members may want to revisit: <https://www.unz.com/print/SaturdayRev-1965sep11-00063>. Rhoda reports that Phyllis, now in her 90s, is as interested as ever in the evolving world of children's literature.



2018: Phyllis Sidorsky was photographed at the annual meeting of the Herb Society of America. In that year she received the Joanna McQuail Reed Award for the artistic use of herbs.

READINGS ON DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION

The Guild's list of Readings on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion has been updated. Check it out: <https://www.childrensbookguild.org/copy-of-readings-on-diversity-and-i>. This is an evolving list, so please send comments and recommendations to Jane Harrington (janeharrington@gmail.com) or to information.cbg@gmail.com.

Virtual Programs at Politics and Prose

During the pandemic, Politics and Prose continues to host free events for children and adults--virtually. These can be viewed live, in real time, or afterward, as recordings. You can view P&P's events calendar and register for events at: <https://www.politics-prose.com/events>. (Advance registration is required to receive a link.) Meg Medina will be one of April's speakers.

Posted by Monthly News at **8:23 AM** **0 comments** 

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