

# Children's Book Guild News



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## 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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## December 2022

### From Guild President Jason Wells

This holiday season, I hope that you and your friends and loved ones will consider giving books. There is something for everyone! Book publishing has seen major headlines in the past few weeks, including the blocked merger of Penguin Random House and Simon & Schuster and looming strikes at HarperCollins. While those headlines may not leave us with good tidings and joy, we should be thankful of the wonderful things that books do for children. I am so proud that this guild comes together to celebrate the magic of making books and getting them out into the world. Here's to a terrific end to 2022 and to an exciting 2023 ahead. —Jason

### November Program Recap

*What Sparked Their Passion?* This is the Question That Drives Author Jeanne Walker Harvey

by Sue Fliess

On November 17, Guild members enjoyed hearing from Jeanne Walker Harvey, author of many books for young readers, including the picture book biographies *Dressing up the Stars: The Story of Movie Costume Designer Edith Head*, *Ablaze with Color: A Story of Painter Alma Thomas*, (both out in 2022), *Maya Lin: Artist-Architect of Light and Lines*, and *My Hands Sing the Blues: Romare Bearden's Childhood Journey*. In a conversation between CBG member Monica Valentine and Jeanne, we learned more about what makes Jeanne tick.

Jeanne had wanted to be a children's book author from the time she was very small. She would save up her allowance and buy writing magazines and enter writing contests. As an English major at Stanford University, she felt intimidated by what other students were writing, as all she wanted to do was write stories for children. She said she finally sold a piece to Green Tiger press, which gave her confidence that she was following the right path. For a living, however, Jeanne became a software licensing attorney, where each morning she arrived early so she could write children's fiction. She was thankful her position required her to do a lot of writing and research, but she continued to submit her children's fiction stories. She collected many rejections over time, and after attending classes, eventually realized she was best at nonfiction. She was also a docent for twenty years at the SF MOMA, and credits that experience to her writing her Romare Bearden book, *My Hands Sing the Blues*.

Harvey gravitates toward picture book biographies and specifically loves to write about creative people, what sparked their passions, and what obstacles they may have had to overcome to pursue them. She is inspired

by reading fiction but also by her mom who was a creative, renaissance chemist and artist. Jeanne believes it's the people in our lives that we connect with that inspire us to keep going.

As far as her research process goes, Jeanne likes to spend as much time as possible and gather as much information as possible on a subject. She has become an expert on finding out-of-print books and is a huge advocate for the Library of Congress as a source. What excites her most is finding first person accounts from the subject she's writing about. She aims to honor and respect that person's words and feelings as much as she can and wants to be true to the subject.

Jeanne shared her two new books with us, *Dressing up the Stars: The Story of Movie Costume Designer Edith Head* and *Ablaze with Color: A Story of Painter Alma Thomas*, which she read several pages from, and recommended we check out *Because of You, John Lewis*.

When asked what other genres she may explore, she told Guild members that she still has many more picture book biographies she'd like to write and hopes to one day write about artist Louise Nevelson. But stay tuned... she revealed that she is working on another picture book biography that will come out in 2024, about a female artist that paints in a very unusual place. You can learn more about Jeanne's books and read some of the reviews she's written [here](#).



## 2023 Non-Fiction Award

The Guild is proud to announce Don Brown as the winner of our 2023 Non-Fiction Award

The Children's Book Guild Nonfiction Award honors an author or author-illustrator whose total work of non-fiction subject matter has contributed significantly to the quality of nonfiction for children.

In his long and wide-ranging career, Don Brown has written and illustrated books about pioneers, explorers, and historical events, making them immediate and memorable to young readers. In many of his books, he has delved into difficult episodes of American history, such as the Dust Bowl, Hurricane Katrina's impact on New Orleans, and the 9/11 terrorist attacks. He has created distinctive, affecting images of damage and destruction, but he balances them with clear explanations of the world and of the people who made positive, often heroic, contributions under great stress.

He is respectful of his audience and his subject matter and produces engaging, well-researched illustrated non-fiction for children of all ages.

We are so pleased to honor his lifetime contribution to children's nonfiction!

## Help Nominate Schools for Grants to Purchase Books

It's that time of year! In 2023, the Guild will award \$500 grants to schools to purchase books for their libraries, media centers, or classrooms. Non-profit organizations that serve children are also eligible. Please email your nominations to Guild member [Kem Sawyer](#).

Simon Elementary and Truesdell Elementary in Washington, D.C., Springhill Lake Elementary in Greenbelt, and St. Francis International School in Silver Spring are the most recent recipients of the Guild's Youth Literacy Awards. In 2022, the Guild also provided funds to four non-profits to distribute to Afghan refugee families in the D.C. area.

Please help us identify recipients for the 2023 awards! Think about schools you've visited or where you've worked. Ask your friends and neighbors. We're looking for schools or communities in need — and staff members (librarians, media specialists, teachers, or principals) who could help facilitate the book selection. Send us the name of the school and the name of a contact there. All ideas and nominations are welcome.

## Member News

Fred Bowen is happy to announce his book *Hardcourt: Stories From 75 Years of the National Basketball Association* was named a California Reading Association 2022 Eureka Gold award winner. It was also named an Orbis Pictus Award (for excellence in non-fiction for children) Honor Book for 2023 by the National Council of Teachers of English. The book was published by Margaret K. McElderry Books (an imprint of Simon & Schuster) and illustrated by James E. Ransome.

EUREKA! 2022  
Excellence in Nonfiction  
California Reading Association



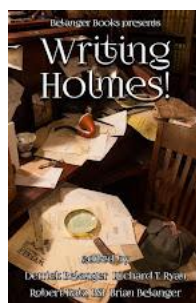
Terry Jennings is pleased to report that she will be working with the DC government and An Open Book Foundation to present her book *The Little House of Stars* to a group of immigrants brought to DC on buses from Texas.

Dionna L. Mann is delighted to share that her middle-grade, *Mama's Chicken & Dumplings*, has found a home with Margaret Ferguson at Holiday House! "I'm thrilled this story, with ten-plus years in the oven, will finally find its way into the hands of young readers," she says.

Ginger Park shares the book cover for her forthcoming picture book *Grandpa's Scroll* (March, 2023). The book explores the topic of grief. Young Lily is looking forward to meeting her pen-pal grandpa who will be visiting from Korea for the first time. Their playful letters reflect the contrasts and similarities of the worlds they live in. But when her grandpa unexpectedly dies before his trip, Lily will, instead, visit Korea and take her own journey where the pen-pals, in an artistic sense, will meet.



Brenda Randolph, Guild member and Howard University's Center for African Studies Outreach Director, has been selected to receive the 2022 Distinguished Africanist Award by the African Studies Association. Read more [here](#).



Why do they do it? Continue writing stories with the long-ago detective as the protagonist? Is it the atmosphere of the time: foggy Victorian London? The enduring cast of characters: the world's first consulting detective who takes cases from rich and poor alike? The doctor thwarted by his plan to serve as an army doctor who practices sporadically and records the cases? The ferret-like Inspector Gregory Lestrade? Mrs. Hudson who keeps them all going? To find out, read Brenda

Seabrooke's essay "The Game Is A-Paw" in *Writing Holmes*, published this month by Belanger Books.



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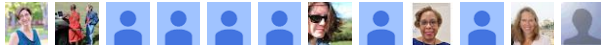
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