

Children's Book Guild News



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Thursday, January 24, 2019

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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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February 2019

PASSING THE MIC: ELIZABETH ACEVEDO ENCOURAGES YOUNG PEOPLE TO FIND THEIR VOICE



On February 21, through storytelling and poetry, Elizabeth Acevedo will share her journey to becoming a National Poetry Slam champion and National Book Award winner. This intimate talk will allow for a behind-the-scenes look into what inspired her writing and how she uses her writing to inspire young people to speak up and take up space. We all know the saying "children are the future," but Acevedo asks, what if we empowered them by remembering that they are the right now?

Acevedo won the 2018 National Book Award and the 2019 Walter Award in the Teen Category for her debut novel, *The Poet X*. A *Kirkus* reviewer had this to say:

Poetry helps first-generation Dominican-American teen Xiomara Batista come into her own.... Themes as diverse as growing up first-generation American, Latinx culture, sizeism, music, burgeoning sexuality, and the power of the written and spoken word are all explored with nuance. Poignant and real, beautiful and intense, this story of a girl struggling to define herself is as powerful as Xiomara's name: "one who is ready for war."

Justina Ireland, author of *Dread Nation*, wrote that the book "crackles with energy and snaps with authenticity and voice."

Ibi Zoboi, author of *American Street*, added, "Acevedo has amplified the voices of girls en el barrio who are equal parts goddess, saint, warrior, and hero."

Join us for what is sure to be a stimulating lecture. Books will be

available for purchase and signing following the program.



Date: Thursday, February 21

Time: 11:30 a.m. "social hour"; noon luncheon

Place: Busboys and Poets, 450 K Street NW

Menu: All choices \$25 (\$26 when paid online via PayPal)

:: CHOICE OF SANDWICH (served with a salad of baby greens and house-made kettle chips) ::

- Falafel sandwich (vegetarian/vegan) with house-made hummus, cucumbers, lettuce, tomato and onion on whole-wheat pita, served with tahini sauce (vegan without tahini sauce)
- Honey-roasted turkey sandwich with Havarti cheese, Dijonnaise, lettuce, tomato and onion on wheat bread
- Grilled-chicken panini with chipotle mayo, caramelized onions, pepper jack, lettuce and tomato on ciabatta
- Avocado panini with roasted red peppers and melted cheese on multi-grain bread

RSVP Now!

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THE CHILDREN'S BOOK GUILD CONGRATULATES...

ERICA S. PERL, WINNER OF THE 2018 NATIONAL JEWISH BOOK AWARD FOR CHILDREN'S LITERATURE FOR HER NOVEL *ALL THREE STOOGES*



The Jewish Book Council presents the National Jewish Books Awards in several categories. Erica and the other winners will be honored at a dinner and award ceremony in New York City on March 5.

AND...

MARY AMATO, RECIPIENT OF THE 2019 WILLIAM G. WILSON MARYLAND AUTHOR AWARD FROM THE MARYLAND LIBRARY ASSOCIATION



Each year a committee of MLA members grants the award in one of four rotating genres: adult fiction, youth literature, poetry and nonfiction.

AND...

MARIA SALVADORE, WHO HAS BEEN HONORED WITH THE 2019 ASSOCIATION OF LIBRARY SERVICES DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD



The award recognizes an individual member of the Association for Library Service to Children (ALSC) who has made significant contributions to, and an impact on, library service to children and/or ALSC.

**THE NONFICTION AWARD LUNCHEON
WILL BE HELD MAY 11. WE HOPE TO SEE
YOU THERE!**

by Katy Kelly, chair, 2019 Nonfiction Award luncheon

The Nonfiction Award luncheon is the Guild's most important event of the year. It's also the most fun. Unfortunately, many members have never attended. We need to change that.

This year we are asking every member to buy a minimum of one ticket.

The \$35 cost--\$10 more than the price of our monthly lunches--is money well spent. The winners bring their A games. Their presentations are always inspiring, sometimes hilarious (recall Phillip Hoose singing his marvelous story *Hey, Little Ant*, with his wife accompanying him on the uke) often moving (such as Ann Bausum singing gospel and protest verses acapella) and usually seasoned with a dash of the unexpected. (Sneed Collard, for

example, had told his grandmother that if he ever won a big award, he would bring her to the event. While the audience waited for her to stand and be recognized, Collard reached into a bag and brought out a large urn containing her ashes.) The afternoon is also an opportunity to network with folks in the industry and representatives from KPMG and other organizations that bring authors and donate dozens of their books to local schools. And the meal is quite good.

If you're unable to be with us on May 11, please buy a ticket and pass it on. The luncheon makes a great Valentine, birthday or thank-you present for a loved one, friend, mentor, editor, teacher, librarian or literacy volunteer. The gift of a ticket is a thoughtful way to support an aspiring writer or student. Here's another option: donate a ticket to the Guild pool. It will be given to a nonmember involved in children's literature or to a Guild member in need. (Members can make a confidential request to annbonwill@gmail.com).

Along with your money, we need 15 minutes of your time.

We've found that the old ways of advertising don't work well. Social media and email deliver so many buying opportunities that it appears most people delete ads without reading them. This year we are taking a pre-tech approach.

Postcards featuring this year's winner, Carole Boston Weatherford, will be handed out at the January, February and March meetings. We hope that every member will take a minimum of three cards and add a personal, handwritten note inviting close friends and people interested in children's literature to join you at this year's luncheon. (The committee is happy to reserve table space for you and your guests.) For everyone's convenience, Karen Leggett will have postcard stamps available at cost. Members who are unable to pick up postcards at a meeting can email Karen at leggett@comcast.net and receive their postcards in the mail.

The committee thanks all members in advance for their participation. Having the support of the whole Guild will make life and planning much less stressful for the committee. Like child rearing, the Nonfiction Award luncheon is more successful when the village is involved.

Press and buy: https://www.childrensbookguild.org/rsvp-payments#nonfiction_payment.

BOOK DONATIONS NEEDED FOR GIFT BASKETS

It's that time of year again—please help fill the book baskets that will be given to designated local schools (TBA) at the annual Nonfiction Award luncheon, on Saturday, May 11. Erica Perl has graciously agreed to assemble the baskets this year and is ready to accept your donations! Members can bring donated books to Guild luncheon meetings on February 21, March 21 and April 11 (the final meeting at which books can be accepted). Or, if you prefer, you may bring the books to Erica at 4438 Ellicott Street NW, Washington, DC 20016, or mail them to her there. However you choose to get your books to Erica, please make sure that all donated books are in her hands by April 30, so that she has time to put together the baskets.

THE GUILD TO CONTINUE ITS TRADITION OF PURCHASING AND DONATING BOOKS

The Children's Book Guild is continuing its tradition of purchasing books for schools or children's centers that lack large or well-stocked libraries and is especially interested in schools where members have a relationship. Perhaps you may know a teacher or librarian in need of books. Or you may tutor at a school where there is a need. If so, please let the Guild know!

In the past few years the Guild has contributed to the following schools: Kimball Elementary, Ketcham Elementary, Whittier Elementary, Anne Beers Elementary, Garfield Elementary, Langdon Elementary, Dunbar High School, Anacostia High School, Brookland Middle School, Kramer Middle School, Thomson Elementary and Brightwood Elementary.

Please send suggestions of other schools that would benefit from our donations to Kem Sawyer at kemsawyer AT gmail.com. Your ideas are welcome!

Books for each school will be chosen by a librarian or a teacher contact at the school, and they will be purchased through [First Book](#). Thank you to Guild members Kyle Zimmer, First Book president, and Alison Morris, senior director for collection development.

MEMBER NOMINATION: BARBARA GOWAN



Catherine Reef nominates Barbara Gowan for membership in the Children's Book Guild in the author category. Winifred Conkling seconds the nomination.



For more than 30 years, Gowan shared her Arizona desert home with a covey of quail, wandering javelinas and even a Gila monster. As she visited ghost towns, cliff dwellings and canyonlands, the unique natural history and culture of the Southwest offered inspiration for her writing. Gowan's nonfiction books about Arizona and deserts

of the world, published by Sleeping Bear Press, have been named Outstanding Science Trade Books, Grand Canyon Reader Award (Arizona state book) nominees and Best Children's Books of the Southwest. As a member of the Authors for Earth Day coalition, Gowan was named a Green Author for 2018.

Barbara Gowan is the author of eight books, among them *D Is for Desert*, *R Is for Rosary*, *G Is for Grand Canyon* and *Desert Digits*. She shares her love of writing as an artist in residence in classrooms and after-school programs. She inspires children to appreciate, understand and conserve our natural world, and to keep alive their sense of wonder through unique nature experiences that serve as a springboard to literacy activities. Her

Build-a-Book program encourages elementary students to write and illustrate class books following the writing process she uses in creating her nonfiction books. More than 50 classes, ranging from second to sixth grade, have participated in the Build-a-Book experience.



Gowan's school visits bring together children, nature and literacy.

Gowan also shares her literacy expertise in workshops for teachers on topics ranging from *The Power of the Picture Book* to *Strategies for Reading and Writing Nonfiction*. Her skills as a facilitator of professional development were recognized by her local reading council of the International Literacy Association when she received a Celebrate Literacy Award for Exemplary Service in the Promotion of Literacy. Gowan has presented programs at the Tucson Festival of Books, the Smithsonian's Natural History Museum and the International Reading Association's national conference. Her recent seminar on *Wondering and Writing about Nature* was well received at the National Association for the Education of Young Children conference in Washington, DC.



The Lake Titicaca Literacy Project brings the joy of reading to children on Amantani Island, Peru.

A literacy advocate, Gowan founded the Lake Titicaca Literacy Project after taking a trip to Lake Titicaca in Peru and listening to her guide's dream of bringing literacy to the people of the region's islands. The goal of this international service project was to build libraries in seven communities on Amantani Island.

Fundraising was Kickstarted through raffles, cash donations and a grant from the International Reading Association. Others joined the cause, and today the dream is a reality. Closer to home, Gowan served on the board of directors of her community library before moving to Washington, DC.

As a new resident of DC, Barbara Gowan would like to join the Children's Book Guild to meet others immersed in the world of children's literature, so she can continue to develop her skills and share her experiences.

THE TRUTH IS COMPLICATED, SAYS NONFICTION WRITER CYNTHIA LEVINSON

by Catherine Reef

What happened? It's a deceptively simple question, said writer Cynthia Levinson in her January 17 lunchtime lecture. Levinson explained to Guild members and their guests that as an author of nonfiction for children, she has learned that historical truth is anything but simple and straightforward.

Writing is a second career for Levinson, who worked in education and education policy before retiring. Her first published pieces for young readers were articles for such magazines as *Cobblestone* and *Appleseed*. Researching one of those articles, on music in the Civil Rights Movement, taught her something she had not known, that in Birmingham, AL, in 1963,

children marched for racial equality, were harassed by police and were jailed.

Inspired to write a book, Levinson delved into archives. She traveled to Birmingham and interviewed march participants and other city residents. More than once, to Levinson's surprise, the memories of marchers and other eyewitnesses were at odds with the written record. For example, James Stewart, who marched as a boy, insisted that the Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr., spoke words of encouragement to him inside Birmingham's Sixteenth Street Baptist Church shortly before the march, despite reliable evidence that King had been elsewhere. Then there were the white city residents who assured Levinson that children never marched.

What was an author to do? Levinson made peace with the reality that when it came to King's pep talk, she and Stewart accepted different truths. And the white denial--what Levinson called the "anti-truth"--became an aspect of the story that she told in the resulting book, *We've Got a Job* (Peachtree, 2012), which earned Levinson the Jane Addams Book Award, the Golden Kite Award and other honors.

Levinson encountered a different challenge during the creation of her picture book, *The Youngest Marcher* (Atheneum, 2017), when illustrator Vanessa Brantley-Newton depicted an incident from the life of Audrey Faye Hendricks, who marched in Birmingham at age nine, in a way that was not 100 percent historically accurate. Brantley-Newton's reworking of the scene resonated with child readers, however, leading Levinson to conclude, "There is truth, and there is emotional truth." In other words, the illustration conveyed fundamental truth in the way that the best fiction does. For *The Youngest Marcher*, Levinson received the Crystal Kite Award and the Julia Ward Howe Award.

When writing *Fault Lines in the Constitution* (Peachtree, 2017), which was co-authored with her husband, Sanford Levinson, a law professor, Cynthia Levinson encountered a new question: "Where do facts end, and where do opinions begin?" When it came to the Constitution, myths abounded. Perhaps most widespread was the notion that the U.S. Constitution is the best in the world. The Levinsons' book counters that assertion by delving into such problem areas as the Electoral College, the lack of congressional representation for Washington, DC, and the makeup of the Senate.

Levinson closed her presentation by asking, "What happened to my retirement?" Her writing career keeps her busier than she expected it would, yet she finds validation in words attributed to Gloria Steinem: "Writing is the only thing I do that when I do it, I don't think I should be doing something else."

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS LITERACY AWARDS: 2019 CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

The Library of Congress invites organizations committed to the advancement of literacy to apply for the 2019 Library of Congress Literacy Awards. Applications will be accepted from January 14 to March 8, 2019.

Created and supported by philanthropist David M. Rubenstein, the Literacy Awards Program is designed to broaden and stimulate public understanding of the essential role of literacy in all aspects of society.

Organizations may submit applications for one of three major prizes: the David M. Rubenstein Prize (\$150,000), the American Prize (\$50,000) and the International Prize (\$50,000). Applications in all categories will

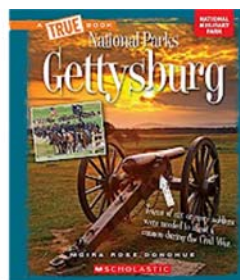
also be considered for Best Practice awards of \$5,000 each.

Why apply? In addition to receiving cash awards, winning organizations have opportunities to participate in:

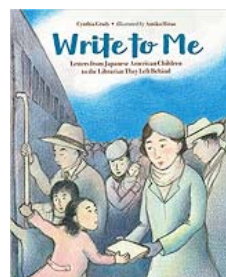
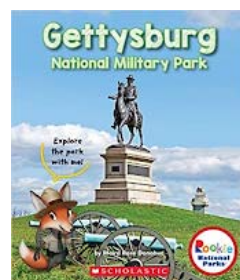
- A prestigious awards ceremony and reception at the Library of Congress in Washington, DC.
- An annual conference that encourages peer-to-peer learning, best practices promotion and collaboration.
- A robust network of literacy professionals working all over the world.

The application, rules and other information are available at <http://www.read.gov/literacyawards/>. The deadline for applications is midnight, EDT, March 8, 2019.

MEMBER NEWS

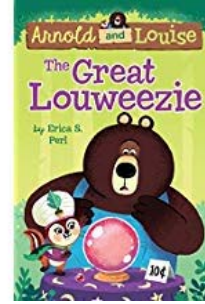


MOIRA ROSE DONOHUE is pleased to announce the February 2019 release by Scholastic of two books about Gettysburg National Military Park.

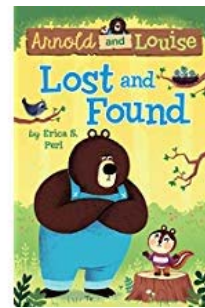


CYNTHIA GRADY's 2018 book, *Write to Me*, will be translated into Japanese and will appear in Japan in spring 2019. The paperback version (in English)

will be out in October 2019.



ERICA S. PERL has two new books out this month: *The Great Louweezie* and *Lost and Found*, which are, respectively, books one and two of the *Arnold and Louise* series, illustrated by Chris Chatterton (Penguin, 2019). Erica is happy to provide copies to Guild members for review purposes.



SUSAN STOCKDALE will present a family program for the [Whittle School Author Series](#) on Sunday, February 3, from 1 to 2:30 p.m., at 5300 Wisconsin Avenue NW (Mazza Gallerie), in Washington, DC.

THE ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING: SAVE THE DATE

Please mark your calendar: the annual business meeting of the Guild is scheduled for Thursday evening, March 21, 2019, at the Cleveland Park Library, 3310 Connecticut Ave. NW. The meeting, including election of 2019-2020 officers, will begin at 7 p.m. and be followed by a talk on mentoring young writers by Guild member Kathy Crutcher of Shout Mouse Press. Look for more details in the March newsletter.

THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE NEEDS YOU!

Nominating Committee Chair Katy Kelly (katykelly202@gmail.com) needs one more member to help nominate a vice president, recording secretary and program chair for presentation of the 2019-2020 slate of officers at the March 21 annual business meeting. (Terry Jennings has agreed to continue as our treasurer.) This short-term commitment requires only a telephone, a Guild roster--and, above all, enthusiasm for the Guild!

Next year's Guild president will be our current vice president, Jean Diehl, who will recruit additional Board members beyond the short list required by the bylaws for election at the March annual meeting. Members are welcome--and encouraged--to volunteer to serve in all Board positions. To offer, please contact Katy or her Nominating Committee assistant, current president Rhoda Trooboff (rtrooboff@gmail.com).

Descriptions of all Board positions can be found at <https://childrensbookguild.org/index.php/committee-positions>.

NOTE ABOUT THE CHILDREN'S BOOK GUILD NEWS: Would you rather print your newsletter than read it online? Current and past issues are now available for printing on the Guild's website at <http://www.childrensbookguild.org/guild-newsletters>. Look for the "Newsletter" tab on the left side of the Guild website. There is also a "Printer Friendly Version" link on the top left-hand side of this blog.

LITERARY EVENTS SPONSORED BY POLITICS AND PROSE: The literary calendar at Politics and Prose lists many upcoming programs that may be of interest to Children's Book Guild members: <http://www.politics-prose.com/events>. February's speakers include KAREN LEGGETT ABOURAYA and HENA KHAN.

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