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Children's Book Guild News



CHILDREN'S
BOOK GUILD
OF WASHINGTON, DC

Monthly News

Authors • Illustrators • Children's Literature Specialists

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Monday, April 23, 2018

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Monthly News

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May 2018

A VISIT WITH WRITER AND ILLUSTRATOR EMILY ARNOLD MCCULLY



The Guild's May 17 luncheon speaker will be author-illustrator Emily Arnold McCully. Raised on Long Island, McCully graduated from Brown University and earned a masters degree in art history from Columbia University. Her career in children's books dates back to the 1960s, when she did a series of subway ads for a radio station about "children at play." The ads caught the eye of a children's book editor who then hired McCully to illustrate George Panetta's book *Sea Beach Express*. One assignment led to another, and soon she was creating her own books as well as illustrating for others.

In 1993 MCCully won the Caldecott Medal for her picture book *Mirette on the High Wire*. This spring a movie version will premiere at the Tribeca Film Festival.

Her beautiful picture books often focus on true stories. *Clara* is about an 18th-century rhino that toured Europe, and *Queen of the Diamond* is about Lizzie Murphy, the first woman to play in a major-league baseball exhibition game. Other starred titles include *Caroline's Comets*, about Caroline Herschel, a musician and astronomer, *Dare of the Wind*, about sailor Eleanor Prentiss, and *Strongheart*, about the world's first movie-star dog. *Dare of the Wind* and *Strongheart* were both named Bank Street Best Books. McCully's background in fine art and history helps her in researching subjects and finding an authentic look from the past.

McCully has also written several early readers for Holiday House, among them *Pete Won't Eat*, *Late Nate in the Race* and *Little Ducks Go*. Her young adult biography *Ida M. Tarbell: The Woman Who Challenged Big Business*—

and Won! was a finalist for the YALSA Best Nonfiction Book of the Year. A second YA title, *A Promising Life*, fictionalizes the story of Jean Baptiste Charbonneau, who traveled with his mother, Sakakawea*, and his father, Toussaint, on Lewis and Clark's expedition and was then raised by Captain Clark.

An upcoming nonfiction book for middle grade readers, *She Did It! 21 Women Who Changed the Way We Think*, will be out in the fall from Disney Press. On May 17, McCully will be discussing the American women whose lives she has written about.

Date: Thursday, May 17

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

Place: [Busboys and Poets](#)

1025 Fifth Street NW (at K Street)

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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PHILLIP HOOSE: CELEBRATING THE POWER OF YOUTH

by Catherine Reef

In her remarks at the April 7 luncheon honoring the 2018 Children's Book Guild Nonfiction Award winner, Phillip Hoose, Award Committee Chair Karen Leggett spoke briefly about timeliness. In recent months American teens have been increasingly politically active, demonstrating for gun control and preparing to exercise their right to vote. It was therefore timely and fitting, Leggett said, that her committee chose to honor Hoose, who has long celebrated young people's power to bring about change.

Phillip Hoose's first book for young readers, *It's Our World, Too!* (1993), introduced children and teens to kids like themselves whose activism has had a positive impact in their communities and beyond. Some took a stand against societal wrongs such as racism, sexism and gang violence; some helped people in need; and others worked to protect the environment or make the world safer.

Among the girls and boys Hoose profiled was Sarah Rosen of South Bend, IN, who at 13 successfully challenged her principal's decision to exclude girls from the school's reenactment of the Constitutional Convention. When Hoose interviewed Sarah, she surprised him by saying, "The real problem here is not 'no girls allowed.' The real problem is that there are no people our age in the history books." Her words sent Hoose on a search of available textbooks that turned up just two teens: Sacagawea* and Pocahontas. "What a gaping hole in history!" Hoose lamented. The result of this new awareness was *We Were There, Too!* (2001), Hoose's collective biography of young people who played roles in American history, from the era of European exploration through the environmental movement in the 1990s. *We Were There, Too!* was a finalist for the National Book Award.



Phillip Hoose admires his etched crystal award as Nonfiction Award Committee Chair Karen Leggett and Guild President Katy Kelly look on.

From the podium at Clyde's of Gallery Place, Hoose spoke to an audience of book lovers about his work and his life. He recalled being a child in Indiana and having his mother read to him. He mentioned two favorite books from boyhood: *Half Magic*, by Edward Eager, and *The Story of Ferdinand*, by Munro Leaf (a book that remains important to him). Hoose spoke about the moment when he first thought

he might have something to offer as a writer. It happened when he was a self-described skinny, nerdy tenth grader and his English teacher, Grace Hine—a small woman from Texas capable of evoking fear in her students—selected his composition to read aloud. "It astonishes me to this day," Hoose said. Another proud moment occurred years later, after Hoose was married and the father of two girls, when Mrs. Hine spotted a book of his in a rack beside the cash register at her local Kroger's supermarket. That book, *Hoosiers* (1986), recounted for adult readers the history of basketball in Indiana.

His 37-year career with the Nature Conservancy contributed to Hoose's awareness of issues surrounding species survival, which in turn gave rise to two of his books. *The Race to Save the Lord God Bird* (2004) tells the sad story of the ivory-billed woodpecker, a beautiful animal that flourished in the southern United States until hunting and habitat destruction led to its extinction. For this book Hoose received the Boston Globe-Horn Book Award.

Hoose and the world remain cautiously optimistic about the rufa red knot, the subspecies of Eastern shorebird that is the subject of *Moonbird* (2012). Twice a year this small creature completes a 9,500-mile migration, flying from Argentina to coastal North America when it is spring in the Northern Hemisphere, and back to South America come fall. Human activity and now, scientists say, global warming threaten the food supply that fuels this amazing journey. Although the moonbird has so far avoided extinction, its numbers have declined alarmingly. While researching his book Hoose traveled often to New Jersey's Reed's Beach, on Delaware Bay, which he said is the best place to observe the migrating rufa red knots. For *Moonbird*, Hoose received the Robert F. Sibert Medal and the Green Earth Book Award.

Even while Hoose wrote about endangered birds, young human heroes were never far from his thoughts. "I believe that kids are powerful. I believe they have made this enormous contribution to history," he said. "I believe that you can tell their stories." After completing *The Race to Save the Lord God Bird* he wanted to write about the Civil Rights Movement, which, he said, was "so much about kids." Rather than write a collective work about several youngsters who took part in the struggle, though, "I wanted to write a book with one voice," he said. As he considered potential subjects, "one

name kept coming back: Claudette Colvin." Colvin had refused to give up her seat on a Montgomery, AL, bus in March 1955, nine months before Rosa Parks made her historic stand against segregation.

Hoose tracked Colvin down in New York, but she hesitated to speak, fearing that the publicity of a book might jeopardize her job as a hospital worker. So Hoose waited patiently for Colvin to retire, at which time author and subject did the hard work that led to *Claudette Colvin: Twice toward Justice* (2009), which became the first nonfiction book to win the National Book Award for Young People's Literature. More important, said Hoose, was the fact that without this book, "no one would have known of this story."

Connecting with Knud Pedersen, another youthful hero, also took time. As a teenager in Denmark in 1942, Pedersen formed the Churchill Club with several friends, to commit acts of sabotage against the Nazis. Hoose learned Pedersen's story while on a biking trip in Denmark around 2000 and contacted him, but 11 years passed before Pedersen agreed to share his recollections. Pedersen died in December 2014, just months before *The Boys Who Challenged Hitler: Knud Pedersen and the Churchill Club* was published.

Hoose's newest book will be released in October 2018. *Attucks! Oscar Robertson and the Basketball Team that Awakened a City* delves into the inspiring story of the basketball team from all-black Crispus Attucks High School in Indianapolis, which won the state championship in 1955.

Finally, music has occasionally and memorably graced the Guild's Nonfiction Award celebrations, from the youth choir that sang for Doreen Rappaport and reduced the audience to tears, to Ann Bausum's simple, stirring rendition of an African American spiritual. Phillip Hoose's presentation will be remembered in part for the two songs with which he treated his listeners. He first sang the text of his 1998 book, *Hey, Little Ant*. Written with his elder daughter, Hannah Hoose, this book presents a dialog between an ant on the ground and the child about to step on it. Later in the program, Hoose and his wife, Sandi Ste. George, picked up a guitar and mandolin to accompany Hoose's singing of "Delaware Bay Blues," an original song about the endangered red knot. The crowd took part in a joyful call-and-response, shouting out at just the right moment, "I need eggs!"

**Editor's Note: Emily Arnold McCully spells the name of the Native American woman who accompanied Lewis and Clark one way, and Phillip Hoose spells it another way. This newsletter respects both writers' preferences.*

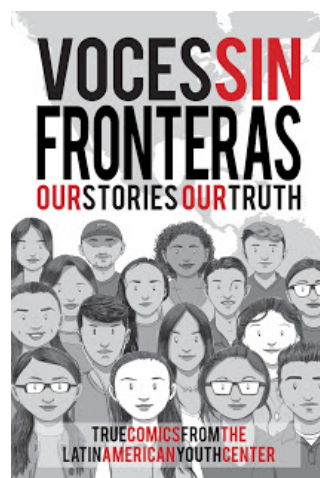
MEMBER NEWS

LAURA MURRAY has been invited to read one of her "Gingerbread Man Loose..." books during story time at the Library of Congress on April 27 at 10:30.

On May 20, from 9 to 11 a.m., WINIFRED CONKLING and CATHERINE REEF will lead a workshop on "Writing Biography for Young Readers" as part of the ninth annual conference of Biographers International Organization. This year's conference will be held in New York City, May 18 through 20: <http://biographersinternational.org/2018-bio-conference/>.

MOIRA ROSE DONOHUE moved permanently to Florida in January. She wants all her Guild buddies to know that she misses them, and she wishes all members the best of luck with their writing.

SHOUT MOUSE PRESS AND THE LATIN AMERICAN YOUTH CENTER CELEBRATE THE LAUNCH OF *VOCES SIN FRONTERAS*



On Wednesday, May 30, at 6 p.m., at Busboys & Poets (14th and V Streets location), Shout Mouse Press will celebrate the launch of *Voces sin Fronteras: Our Stories, Our Truth*, a graphic memoir collection written and illustrated by young adults from the Latin American Youth Center's Latino Youth Leadership Council.

Voces sin Fronteras is a bilingual collection of 16 self-illustrated graphic memoirs by teen immigrants from Central America and the Caribbean. These thought-provoking and powerfully honest stories address themes of poverty, family, grief, education and, of course, the pain and promise of immigration. This book is an opportunity to hear directly from youth who are often in the headlines but whose stories don't get told in full. This project is timely and ambitious, and it is a much-needed addition to current national discussions about who we are as a country. Visit www.shoutmousepress.org/layc for more information.

AN INVITATION TO GUILD MEMBERS FROM MARY AMATO

Mary Amato is experimenting with a new idea: a small facilitated brown-bag lunch at her home to discuss issues related to writing process. Please see her invitation to Guild members:

<https://www.maryamato.com/events/cbg-writers-brown-bag-lunch/>

AMENDMENT TO NEW-MEMBER QUALIFICATIONS IN THE BYLAWS

from Jacqueline Jules, Membership Chair

At the March 15 meeting, there was a productive discussion about amending the qualifications for the nomination of new members. These changes are being proposed to boost and maintain our membership numbers. An active membership is essential to a healthy organization.

The Guild bylaws currently state:

In the case of authors and/or illustrators, their works should include at least two books that have been issued by a reputable publisher, within the past five years.

Proposed change:

In the case of authors and/or illustrators, their works should include at least one published book issued by a traditional publisher* and a second book either published or under contract by a traditional publisher. Potential members must attend at least two Guild meetings before being nominated for membership.

A Doodle poll will be sent to the membership sometime in the next few weeks. Please respond to this Doodle poll so we can make a decision regarding this amendment. Thank you!

*Traditional publisher will be defined as a publisher that assumes the cost of publication and marketing. Self-published works do not meet the requirements.

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>. May's speakers include J. H. DIEHL and HENA KHAN.

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