

Children's Book Guild News



the
children's
Book Guild

of Washington, D.C.
Since 1945

Monthly News

Authors • Illustrators • Children's Literature Specialists

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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 <http://www.childrensbookguild.org/>

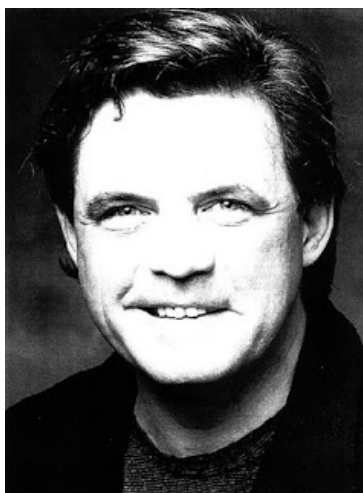
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Saturday, March 24, 2012

April 2012

THE CHILDREN'S BOOK GUILD HONORS PETER SIS



On Saturday, April 21, the Children's Book Guild of Washington, D.C., will honor [Peter Sis](#), winner of the Guild's 2012 Nonfiction Award. Sis was born in Czechoslovakia and began his career as a filmmaker. Sent to Los Angeles to produce a film for the 1984 Winter Olympics, he was ordered to come home by the Czech government when the Soviet Union and Eastern bloc countries boycotted the Olympics. Sis chose to stay in the United States, however, and was granted asylum. He began a correspondence with Maurice Sendak and ultimately embarked on a new career illustrating and writing children's books.

Recently honored with the 2012 Hans Christian Andersen Award for Illustration, Sis has won the the New York Times Book Review Best Illustrated Book of the Year six times. *Starry Messenger: Galileo Galilei* was a 1997 Caldecott Honor Book, and in 2003, Sis was named a MacArthur Fellow. His recent book *The Wall: Growing Up Behind the Iron Curtain* won the 2008 Robert F. Sibert Medal

and was also named a Caldecott Honor Book. Václav Havel, first president of the Czech Republic, said of this work, "Peter Sis's book is most of all about the will to live one's life in freedom and should be required reading for all those who take their freedom for granted."

Date: Saturday, April 21

Time: Noon to 3 p.m.

Place: [Pier 7 Restaurant at the Channel Inn](#)

650 Water Street, SW, Washington, DC

Cost: \$35 per person

A buffet luncheon will be served.

Visit the Children's Book Guild website ([Award Event Reservation Form](#)) to download a flyer, and RSVP today!

CATHERINE REEF'S BIOGRAPHICAL PORTRAIT OF JANE AUSTEN

by *Karen Leggett*

Catherine Reef the biographer and Jane Austen the novelist bear some similarities: they both wrote since childhood, and their books are all about people. But Catherine's books are all nonfiction—she loves to share what she has learned about real people, particularly creative people.

At the Guild's March meeting, Catherine shared a bit of her own story and the story behind her

biographical portrait of Jane Austen, *Jane Austen: A Life Revealed*. One of five children growing up on Long Island, Catherine realized at Washington State University, in Pullman, Wash., that writing mattered to her—but it was only when she took her 10-year-old son to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial that she knew she wanted to write nonfiction for young readers. She has written award-winning biographies of Walt Whitman, Sigmund Freud and Ernest Hemingway, as well as life stories of E. E. Cummings, George Gershwin, John Steinbeck, Leonard Bernstein and now Jane Austen.

“A biography is a portrait in words,” says Catherine. “I want to give a sense of a living, breathing person.” She appreciates a challenge—whether it is describing a piece of music, translating poetry or deciding how to present Hemingway’s suicide to young people. The challenge of Jane Austen was simply the paucity of source material. Austen died of an unknown illness at age 41 and left no diary. Her family destroyed thousands of her letters, preferring to present her as they wanted her to be remembered.

Jane Austen was faultless, “as nearly as human nature can be,” wrote her brother, and he added that she always sought to forgive others’ offenses. Yet the letters that do remain show Austen’s sharp and even acerbic wit. She wrote to her sister after seeing a mutual acquaintance, “Mrs. Blount appeared exactly as she did in September, with the same broad face, diamond bandeau, white shoes, pink husband, & fat neck.”



In *Jane Austen: A Life Revealed*, Catherine raises these historical ambiguities and presents history as a dynamic art. She creates a sense of Austen’s personality gleaned from the novelist’s work. At a time when novels, as a new genre, were primarily adventure stories set in far off lands, Austen wrote about social customs, courtship, family life and friendship. Coming of age was her great theme, noted Catherine. Jane Austen conveys a genuine respect for the young—and that, concludes Catherine, is one reason she remains more popular than ever with youthful readers almost 200 years after her death.

THE GUILD BUSINESS MEETING: MARCH 15, 2012

by Karen Leggett

At the annual business meeting, the members of the Children's Book Guild of Washington, D.C., elected the following slate of officers for 2012-2013:

President: Jacqueline Jules
 Vice President/President-Elect: Fred Bowen
 Secretary: Rhoda Trooboff
 Treasurer: Ann McCallum
 Co-Treasurer: Debbie Levy
 Program Chairs: Lulu Delacre, Cynthia Pon and Rosalyn Schanzer

New Members

Guild president Paige Billin-Frye welcomed four new members with two organizations:

- Ellen Klein and Trish Brown with Hurray for Books in Alexandria (www.hooray4books.com/).
- Dara LaPorte and Heidi Powell with An Open Book Foundation

The Search for a New Venue

The Channel Inn is expected to close in 2013. Paige asked anyone with ideas about places to meet or opinions about the various times and places we have met during the current year to contact her, [Paige Billin-Frye](#), or president-elect [Jackie Jules](#).

The Need for Timely Payment of Dues

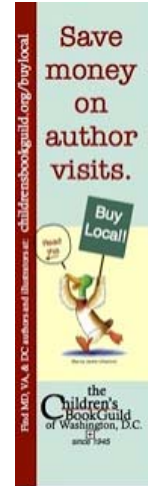
Membership dues are expected to be paid by June 30. The Leadership Committee decided there will be a \$5 surcharge for anyone paying dues *after* that date. Individual membership dues are \$55 before June 30 and \$60 after June 30. Members may pay dues online anytime (PayPal or credit card) or pay by mail to Joan Waites or Ann McCallum.

The “Buy Local” Campaign for Author Visits

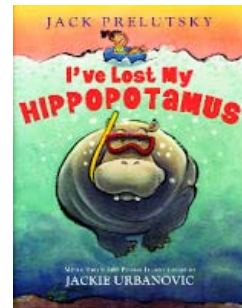
Peggy Jackson has created a bookmark and full web page/pdf brochure to promote the value of "buying local" and bringing Guild authors/illustrators to area schools or events. The brochure is highlighted with the words "Buy Local" on the Guild homepage:

www.childrensbookguild.org/buylocal. It may be viewed online or printed out as a pdf. The brochure and bookmark feature Jackie Urbanovic's famous duck, Max, and Peggy's ingenious design. Peggy and her husband, Fred Bowen, have already distributed the bookmarks at the State of Maryland International Reading Association Conference (SoMIRAC).

The bookmarks will be available at Guild meetings; members are encouraged to take enough to distribute at appropriate events and schools. They may even add a sticker with their own contact information on the back. Many thanks to Peggy! Buy Local!



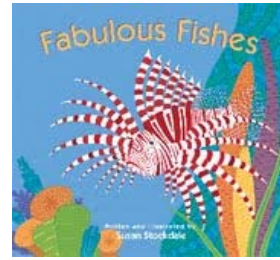
MEMBER NEWS



JACKIE URBANOVIC is happy to announce that a poetry book she illustrated, written by Jack Prelutsky, is being released in March. *I've Lost My Hippopotamus* has received starred reviews in both *Publishers Weekly* and *School Library Journal*. Even *Kirkus* had good things to say! Jackie commented, "It was an honor to work with Jack's poems and also a lot of fun. I haven't had many opportunities to do illustrations for older children, and it gave me lots of room to be even sillier than usual!"



UMA KRISHNASWAMI's picture book *Out of the Way! Out of the Way!*, published in India in 2010 by Tulika Books, will be released in Canada and the United States this month by Groundwood Books. Uma's chapter book in lineated prose, *Book Uncle and Me*, will be launched in May by Scholastic India at the Asian Festival of Children's Content in Singapore.



SUSAN STOCKDALE shares the news that Peachtree Publishers has produced a board book version of her picture book *Fabulous Fishes* that is perfectly sized for smaller hands.



MARC TYLER NOBLEMAN reports that the site for his next book, *Bill, the Boy Wonder: The Secret Co-Creator of Batman, is now live: http://www.charlesbridge.com/client/client_pages/BilltheBoyWonder/bill_home.html. In March Marc spent four days speaking at the international school in Santiago, Chile, and had a blast.*



JACQUELINE JULES is pleased to announce the publication of *Zapato Power: Freddie Ramos Makes a Splash*, the fourth title in the award-winning Zapato Power series.

Posted by Monthly News at 5:59 AM 0 comments

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