

### **CAITLIN ALIFIRENKA**

As a Pennsylvania schoolgirl, Caitlin was offered a pen pal in a foreign country, and she chose Zimbabwe because she liked the sound of it. But as she began to correspond with Martin Ganda, who lived in Zimbabwe with his family, she had no idea the extent to which that correspondence would change both of their lives. Fast-forward nearly 10 years of correspondence and friendship, and Caitlin and Martin have written, "I Will Always Write Back: How One Letter Changed Two Lives." Meet Caitlin—author, emergency room nurse, and mom—at the WNY Children's Book Expo.

### **DIANNA HUTTS ASTON**

Dianna has authored many award-winning books that librarians and reviewers have referred to as “lyrical science,” including *An Egg Is Quiet*, recipient of the American Academy for the Advancement of Science/Subaru award. *A Seed Is Sleepy*, an IRA top ten pick is part of the series, illustrated by Sylvia Long. President Barack Obama and NASA astronaut Melvin Leland selected *The Moon Over Star* to read to charter schoolchildren in Washington, D.C., a book that inspires children to reach beyond the stars. Illustrated by Jerry Pinkney, it received a Coretta Scott King honor and is often read during African-American History Month.

### **JIM AVERBECK**

Jim returns to the WNYCBE, and we are SO excited to have him back. His award-winning book, "One Word from Sophia," tells the story of a little girl named Sophia, who has one true desire for her birthday... BUT she has Four Big Problems in the way: Mom, Dad, Uncle Conrad...and Grand-mama! Jim will visit six WNY schools this year. Last year, he had this to say about his experience, "I feel so lucky to have been able to visit the kids and to marvel at the answers they gave in our discussions. Smart kids read! Thanks to all involved. I felt like a superstar!"

### **SANDY BARTON**

Sandy's children's books "Discovery in the Woods" and "Room for One More" focus on the mystical world of Leprechauns! With detailed illustrations by Mark Leiser, your child can take a peek into a magical world filled with fun, friendship and adventure. Are you excited to meet Sandy at the WNYCBE on November 6? We are!

### **JUDY BRADBURY**

Judy has a BS in Elementary Education with an extension in English; NYS permanent certification in N-6 and 7-9 English; MEd and permanent certification in Reading Specialization. She returns to the WNY Children's Book Expo and teams up with author Susan Busch to provide a FREE CTLE Workshop, “Empowering Families: An Introduction to Providing Dynamic Family Literacy Programming.” 11/6. 1 - 2 pm. Educators: spread the word & REGISTER NOW for their FREE workshop: <https://fs12.formsite.com/msmdbooks/form6/index.html>

### **SUSAN BUSCH**

Susan BA in Elementary Education/NYS permanent certification; MEd Reading Teacher / permanent certification. She returns to the WNY Children's Book Expo and teams up with author Judy Bradbury to provide a FREE CTLE Workshop, “Empowering Families: An Introduction to Providing Dynamic Family Literacy Programming.” 11/6. 1 - 2 pm. Educators: spread the word & REGISTER NOW for their FREE workshop: <https://fs12.formsite.com/msmdbooks/form6/index.html>

### **MARILYN CAPPELLINO**

The WNYCBE welcomes Marilyn Cappellino for her 2<sup>nd</sup> year. She has been writing professionally for over 20 years. First a journalist. then a public relations professional. *Mangia! Macaroni* was her first attempt at writing for children, and it was her first cookbook. She has since published three more delicious *Mangia!* cookbooks. Marilyn is a good friend of the bookstore and a wonderful teacher of cooking and recipes to children.

### **MARY ANNE CAPPELLINO**

Mary Anne is the author of the EEEK (Enlighten, Empower, Energize Kids) series of books, in addition to being a wellness consultant and speaker. With more than 20 years' experience designing fitness programs, she has helped thousands of people change their bodies and direct their minds in new and positive ways. Children are taken on a journey with her books' rhyming verses to learn a valuable life lesson, one that we all need to hear to maintain a healthy, active lifestyle.

### **CARMELA COYLE**

Carmela has one of the most charming stories of her first book's genesis: her then-four-year-old daughter, Annie, wearing a tutu over her denim overalls, mismatched socks, a sparkly crown askew on her head asked... "Mommy, do princesses have to wear hiking shoes?" Quickly followed by "Do princesses brush their teeth?" Then, "Do princesses have to go potty?" She scrambled for the correct replies—answers that had to be poignant and powerful. It didn't occur to her in that moment that her daughter had just handed her the title of what would later become her first published book. BONUS BUFFALO Connection! Carmela, who spent her early years in Buffalo, has her wonderful book, "Do Super Heroes Have Teddy Bears?" featured in a Cheerios commercial. #MyCitySmellsLikeCheerios.

### **DOREEN CRONIN**

Doreen joins us from Brooklyn. She says her first-grade teacher, Mrs. Cooper, who first told her that she was a writer. Mrs. Cooper may have told all the students that – one has no idea! But the moment Doreen was told she was a writer she became one. And we're glad she did because we now have Bloom; Click, Clack, Moo; and The Chicken Squad series to enjoy again and again.

### **MICHAEL DAHL**

Michael, a 3-time winner of the AEP Distinguished Achievement Award, is the prolific author of more than 100 books for children and young adults including The Everything Kid's Joke Book and Gotcha Covered! nonfiction books that get kids excited about reading. His Finnegan Zwake mystery series won raves. AND, he lives in a haunted house!

### **SARAH DILLARD**

Sarah is the author and illustrator of several books for children including the Mouse Scouts series and Extraordinary Warren. She lives in Vermont and loves school visits to share her books with kids of all ages. Her presentations give an overview of how a book is created, from the initial idea through publication. Sarah shares images of her own work; how doodles can evolve into memorable characters and how ideas can be turned into stories.

### **MARIA DIVENCENZO**

Author and founder of Winterlake Press, Maria is an award-winning author and publisher of books for children including The Scariest Dream Ever and The Star of Christmas. She also wrote three Little House novels depicting the childhood of Laura Ingalls Wilder's mother, Caroline. An independent publisher, Winterlake Press uses proceeds from book sales to support children's programs in schools and libraries. In 2010, Winterlake Press became a founding sponsor of HeroConnect.org, a storybook support program that connects deployed US service men and women with their families back home. She also works with teachers and librarians to provide seminars and enrichment programs for classrooms.

## **MARILYN FOOTE**

Author and educator, Marilyn Foote, was born, raised, educated, and educates in Buffalo. She also lived for 12 years in the Cote d'Ivoire, West Africa. There, she became fluent in French. She taught at the International Community School of Abidjan as a teacher in the K – 3 grades. Her children's realistic fiction novels feature Miriam Foote, fondly known as Puddinhead, and her siblings who are taught by their parents to love learning and imagination. These books all feature a feel-good, inspirational message.

## **SHANNON GILLIGAN**

Choose Your Own Adventure?!?! How awesome is that? Shannon is the publisher and one of the authors of several Choose Your Own Adventure interactive books for older—and now younger—readers. These action adventure books are exceptional for even the most reluctant Kindergarten to middle school readers.

## **NIKKI GRIMES**

ABSOLUTELY DON'T MISS! NY Times Best-Selling author, Nikki Grimes. Her distinguished works include several Coretta Scott King award winners and honor books. A bestselling author and a prolific artist, Nikki does not consider herself a bona fide storyteller, but, as she told an audience at the Library of Congress, she is happy to own the title Poet. Born and raised in New York City, Nikki began composing verse at the age of six and has been writing ever since that time. A resident of California, she has conducted poetry readings and lectures at international schools in Russia, China, Sweden and Tanzania, while short-term mission projects have taken her to such trouble spots as Haiti.

## **NATHAN HALE**

Nathan is the #1 New York Times bestselling author and illustrator of Nathan Hale's Hazardous Tales, which now features six titles. Nathan has worked in natural history museum display, painting scientific murals for museums around the U.S. He divides his time between picture books, natural history/educational illustration and graphic novels. He lives in Provo, Utah and tells us he is NOT the legendary American Revolution soldier and spy Nathan Hale.

## **MARTHA HAMILTON & MITCH WEISS**

Martha & Mitch are the husband and wife team behind Beauty and the Beast Storytellers. They have been winning audiences and critical acclaim throughout the United States, Canada, Europe, and Asia since 1980. Renowned for their work in teaching the art of storytelling, they are also award winning authors and recording artists. As all readers begin as listeners, we're thrilled to have these enchanting storytellers at the WNYCBE.

## **SEAN JENSEN**

Sean simply astounds us, and we can't wait for Buffalonians to meet him. He was born in South Korea, but he was raised in California, Massachusetts and Virginia, mostly on or near military bases. Given his unique background, he's always been drawn to storytelling, a skill he developed at Northwestern University and crafted for the last 16 years, almost exclusively covering the NFL. During his career, he's fostered strong relationships with athletes in multiple sports, and penned profiles on Jared Allen, Jason Brown, Jay Cutler, Brandon Marshall, Randy Moss, Derrick Rose and Adrian Peterson, among others. He's earned distinctions from the Illinois Associated Press, Minnesota Associated Press, Society of Professional Journalists, Pro Football Writers of America and Associated Press Sports Editors. His writing chops, love of sports, and desire to present positive role models for children make him a perfect match for the WNY Children's Book Expo. The Middle School Rules books series is perfect for readers in Grades 4 – 9.

### **KEVIN KURTZ**

Kevin is an award-winning children's author who writes nonfiction science and nature books. He's loved books and nature since he was a kid, holds degrees in English literature and elementary education and started his professional career assisting with lab and field work at a marine biology research center. Kevin has combined all of these experiences by working as an educator, program developer and curriculum writer for the South Carolina Aquarium and the Science Factory Children's Museum in Oregon. Kevin has twice been an Educator-at-Sea—in the South Pacific studying the chain of volcanoes that makes up the Louisville Seamount Trail and with the Chicxulub Impact Crater expedition as the scientists drilled into the crater from the asteroid impact that wiped out most of the dinosaurs.

### **ERIC LITWIN**

Eric is a song singing, guitar strumming, # 1 New York Times Best Selling author who brings early literacy and music together. Eric has been a hit in myriad WNY schools. He is the original author of the Pete the Cat series as well as the author of The Nuts and Groovy Joe. His books have sold over 8.5 million copies, been translated into 13 languages, and won 18 literacy awards including a Theodor Geisel Seuss Honor Award.

### **FRANZISKA MACUR**

Franziska was born in Germany, moved to the States for a job, and stayed for love. Feeling at home here, she and her husband raise their children bilingually. She has PhD in Communications and left her tenure track job in Higher Ed to stay at home with her kids then dove into the fascinating world of storytelling, to learn more about this delightful art and hope to one day call herself a 'real' storyteller without hesitation. You can meet Franziska—and get into the Christmas spirit with her first book, the delightful Charlie and Noel: An Advent Calendar Story—at the WNY Children's Book Expo.

### **ALINE NEWMAN**

Aline specializes in writing for children because "what we read when we're young stays with us forever." A life-long animal lover, wildlife writer, inspirational story teller and teacher, Aline stays current through her memberships in the Society of Children's Book Writers & Illustrators (SCBWI) and the American Society of Journalists & Authors (ASJA). Fun Fact: RASCALLY RABBITS, her 4<sup>th</sup> offering in the "National Geographic Kids Chapters" series, is especially dear to her heart. It includes personal, true stories about her family pets. Sniffles, the dwarf rabbit, and Moose, their rescue dog, Moose.

### **ZACH O'HORA**

Zach is a rock star in WNY schools and the illustrator of the New York Times best seller Wolfie the Bunny. His debut as an author, Stop Snoring Bernard! and follow up books, Not Fits Nilson! and My Cousin Momo! are multi-award winners. We're pleased to welcome him back to the 2<sup>nd</sup> annual WNYCBE with his just-released book The Not So Quiet Library.

### **LINDA SUE PARK**

Can a child's book change the world? YES! Newbery Medal winner, Linda Sue Park, believes books provide practice at responding to the unfairness in life, and how empathy for a book's characters can lead to engagement in ways that have significant impact in the real world.

### **DEE ROMITO**

Middle-grade author and former elementary school teacher, Dee is a good friend of our bookstore. We were thrilled to help her launch her inaugural book, THE BFF BUCKET LIST. Check out this cool video produced by the kids of Sweet Home Middle School, read her blog, Write for Apples, and get ready to meet Dee in person at the WNY Children's Book Expo.

### **CHARLES R SMITH, JR.**

Charles is an award-winning author, photographer and poet with over thirty books to his credit. His awards include a Coretta Scott King Award for Illustration (2010) for his photographs accompanying the Langston Hughes poem, My People and a Coretta Scott King Honor Author Award for his biography on Muhammad Ali, Twelve Rounds to Glory. Many of his books have also garnered reluctant reader awards, proving that kids that don't like to read, do like to read his books. "Reading books filled with stories and poems inspired me to write my own. And if I wasn't reading a book, I was playing a sport: I played everything, particularly basketball, and spent many afternoons on the court, perfecting my jump shot." Of the distinctive niche Charles fills with his books, he notes, "I want to show students, particularly boys, that there are many ways to pursue their interests, no matter what they may be."

### **ELIZABETH ROSE STANTON**

Children's book author/illustrator, Elizabeth Rose Stanton, returns to her childhood home of WNY from her current home in Seattle. Multi-talented, she studied art history in college, earned a graduate degree in architecture at Columbia University, worked as an architect and designer, took a "time out" to raise her family, and has worked as a portrait and fine artist, designer, and scientific illustrator. Elizabeth now devotes herself full time to writing and illustrating picture books for children.

### **Dr. TERERAI TRENT**

"It. Is. Achievable." Dr. Trent's wonderful, oft-repeated quote. She returns to Buffalo and the WNYCBE after delighting students and parents last year. Her compelling personal story encapsulates the essence of every positive lesson: Hope; Gratitude; It doesn't matter where you come from; Keep reaching for your dreams: And above all... You have the power." Dr. Trent's picture book, *The Girl Who Buried Her Dreams in a Can*, is based on her story of perseverance. She is a global spokesperson who beautifully shows that intelligence is evenly distributed throughout the world, and that the poor work as hard, if not harder, than the rest of us. What is not evenly distributed, is opportunity. Do yourself and your family a great service and make plans to meet Dr. Trent at the WNY Children's Book Expo.

### **VIVIAN VANDE VELDE**

The WNYCBE is pleased to welcome back Vivian and all her awesome books for a 2<sup>nd</sup> year. Vivian became a writer because she loves stories—all kinds of stories, but especially fantasy. She says she can't remember a time before she wanted to be a writer, and her parents did a great job of convincing her she could do whatever she set my mind to. What a great message for all children to hear! She's a prolific author, very creative, always has her camera on hand and may take your picture, too!

### **AMY LUDWIG VanDERWATER**

Returning to the WNYCBE, Amy is an author, poet, and WNY resident. Her first book, *Forest Has a Song*, has received many praises, including the Lee Bennett Hopkins Poetry Award. Amy released her new book, *Every Day Birds*, this year. You can read new posts from her some Mondays and every Friday during the school year at her website *The Poem Farm*.

### **SUSAN VERDE**

Susan is an award-winning children's book author, elementary educator with a Master's in Reading Remediation and a RCYT and RYT200 certified yoga instructor. She is also a certified mindfulness teacher for the littlest ones through young adults. Susan's newest book, *The Water Princess*, goes on sale 9/13 and is the 4th collaboration with illustrator and her dear friend, the best-selling, award-winning author, Peter H. Reynolds.

**JIM WESTCOTT**

Jim taught for fifteen years in a district outside of Rochester, New York. His Master's is in Special Education, and he writes mostly books for boys between the ages of 8 and 12. However, based on his presence at our inaugural WNYCBE last year, we know most girls at this age find his writing just as entertaining. JACK'S TALES, is a series of relatively short, chapter book styled stories, written for boys who haven't quite latched onto fiction yet. Using his experience as a teacher, along with raising two boys, he engages his readers so their parents and teachers can stop performing headstands while feet juggling watermelons to get them to read on their own.

**KARI-LYNN WINTERS**

We're crossing the border to bring Kari-Lynn, a Canadian author to the WNYCBE. Dr. Kari-Lynn Winters is an award-winning children's author, playwright, performer, and academic scholar. Sixteen of her picture or poetry books have been published or are in press. An experienced teacher of writing, she has worked with students across Canada and the United States, including pre-school, special education, primary and intermediate, high school, and university teacher education. Kari-Lynn is an assistant professor at Brock University in St. Catharines, ON. Her research interests include drama in education, children's literature, literacy, and multimodal forms of learning.

**SALINA YOON**

Salina says "Beginning Readers enjoy a story with fun and humor." From board books, to picture books and early readers, Salina's adorable illustrations and rhythmic prose are sure to engage readers. Born in Korea, Ms. Yoon came to the U.S. at age 4 and was given her current name, "Salina." She is a prolific author, illustrator, and format designer of 200 books for young children, specializing in formats that are engaging and interactive with flaps, tabs, die-cuts, and wheels. Her Penguin and Pinecone book series bring to life an endearing story celebrating friendships lost and found, and overcoming the odds to be with the one you love.