

# KITE TALES



*The Wandering Queen* by [Jo Salazar](#), [@josalazardraws](#)

## A NOTE FROM YOUR REGIONAL TEAM

October is my favorite time of year. Throughout most of the country, temperatures drop, autumn leaves kaleidoscope into their fiery hues, and even in Florida, goblins, giant spiders, and skeletons adorn front lawns. It's a perfect time to curl up with a good book. But the spooky season is also the perfect season for creating.

We've all experienced that spine-tingling sensation that sends a thrill through the senses. That jolt of adrenaline is why I write. Creating can be a scary venture, especially when the ghostly blank page stares back at us. I think that's what stops a lot of people from creating. But I don't think it's the fear of creating itself that terrifies us. It's the fear of creating something bad.

It takes bravery to create. What would happen to our most beloved stories if the main characters never faced their fears? There wouldn't be much of a story! The same is true of our own creative journeys. We must continue pushing forward, honing our craft, editing one page at a time. And eventually, our creative fears will be vanquished like any other monster.

In this issue of KITE TALES, you'll find some inspiration and information to help you create more bravely and confidently. We reflect on the amazing Boot Camps, and we have more information about our upcoming free meetings—both virtual and face-to-face. We also have some announcements about our upcoming Annual Conference in May.

We might not know what shadows lurk around our October corners, but may we all have the courage to create boldly and defeat those menacing monsters.

Becky Herzog, Co-Regional Advisor

### Call For Good News!

We would love to celebrate good news with you. If you have career milestones to share, please [use this form](#) to submit them for the next newsletter (examples: new books contracts, upcoming book releases, magazine covers or articles, signing with an agent, book signings, etc.).

### Call for Illustrations!

If you would like one of your illustrations in our regional newsletter, please submit jpegs or links to your portfolio [with this form](#).

### Call for Volunteers!

Many hands make light work. We are always looking for volunteers throughout our region. If you are interested in volunteering, please [use this form](#) to let us know!

### Looking for a Critique Group?

Email Mindy Alyse Weiss at [mindyaweiss@gmail.com](mailto:mindyaweiss@gmail.com) and she will help you!

### Your Regional Team



Rob Sanders, Co-RA



Becky Herzog, Co-RA



Angela Padron, ARA



Fred Koehler, IC

# UPCOMING EVENTS



## OUR NEXT FREE MEETINGS

### Drawing From Your Own Well: Creating Books from the Heart



[Website](#) [Facebook](#) [Twitter](#) [Instagram](#)

Featuring Danielle Joseph  
Saturday, October 16, 2021  
2:00-3:30 p.m.

In this workshop, Danielle will talk about generating ideas, developing concepts and amping up your story in order to write books that pop! This workshop is designed for anyone from beginner to advanced looking to tap into their own resources in order to create books that matter. Danielle is an expert at writing picture books, but the methods discussed can also be used for middle grade and young adult authors, so all are welcome! We will discuss everything from fiction to nonfiction to biographies. There will be time within the workshop for idea generation, discussion and reflection, and of course participant questions!

### Emotional Storytelling



[Website](#) [Facebook](#) [Twitter](#) [Instagram](#)

Featuring Lorin Oberweger  
Saturday, November 13, 2021  
2:00-3:30 p.m.

More than any other way to experience art, reading is a deeply empathetic experience. We read to FEEL, to experience an emotional journey on the part of a character who is able to right wrongs with which we also struggle or, at least, to which we can also relate. In this hands-on session, Lorin will take you through techniques to help you create a rich emotional experience for your reader. We'll explore ways to anchor your story in a strong, keenly felt premise; craft an immersive viewpoint; bring real personality to your narrative voice; stir reader emotions with simple descriptive details; create an emotionally powerful query; and much more.

## FREE MEETINGS IN 2022

Beginning in January 2022, we plan to offer a rotating schedule of face-to-face meetings and virtual meetings. Our Free Meeting Facilitators in each area of the state will be planning and hosting meetings at local libraries. Each meeting will follow the health protocols of the county and library where the meeting is held. In addition, we will be working to reserve the largest rooms possible, space out seating, provide hand sanitizer, and take other precautions to keep everyone healthy. If you are unable to attend a face-to-face meeting due to health concern, do not worry. We will also be offering virtual meetings at other times. However, the face-to-face meetings themselves will not be broadcast.

The purposes of free meetings (whether virtual or face-to-face) are two-fold. Free meetings bring learning closer to our members and provide opportunities for them to grow their knowledge and craft on a regular basis. In addition, free meetings allow our PAL members to have opportunities to present in front of an audience. Many of those who have spoken at our meetings have gone on to teach online, at conferences, and to share their skills and knowledge in other ways. If you are a PAL member who is interested in being considered to speak at a meeting, please complete [this form](#).

We'll be sharing more about face-to-face meetings in future newsletters. For now, join us in thanking our Free Meeting Facilitators who will continue to help us learn and grow:

### Free Meeting Facilitator Team

**Free Meeting Coordinator/  
Virtual and Orlando Facilitator**  
Jan Eldredge

**Jacksonville Area Facilitator**  
Eileen Meyer

**South Florida Facilitator**  
Mindy Weiss

**Tampa Bay Area Facilitator**  
JC Kato

## FAMOUS FACES FROM THE 70'S

The people below all grooved to “Reunited and It Feels So Good” when it was released in 1979. Do you recognize any of these faces? Answers on the last page of “Kite Tales.”



A



B



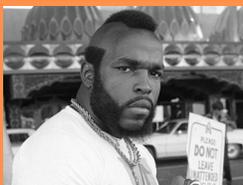
C



D



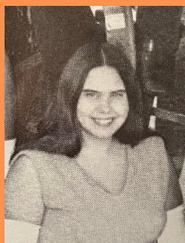
E



F



G



H



I

## UPCOMING EVENTS



### SCBWI FLORIDA REGIONAL CONFERENCE 2022

Mark your calendar NOW!

Intensives, Friday, May 13, 2022

9:00 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

Conference, Friday, May 13, 2022, 4:30 p.m. -  
Sunday, May 15, 2022, 1:00 p.m.

#### WHY CONFERENCES ARE IMPORTANT TO ME

By Rob Sanders

Why do I think conferences are important? Because they've made all the difference in the world in my writing career. Of course, what I learn at conferences and through critiques always makes my writing better, stronger, and more focused. But those events have also led to acquisitions. At my first SCBWI conference in LA, I was critiqued by Diane Muldrow who was then the editor of Golden Books at Random House. That critique turned into my first published book. A year later at an SCBWI conference in Orlando, Rubin Pfeffer critiqued one of my manuscripts. He didn't like it, but I pitched other things to him. That began a conversation that resulted in Rubin becoming my agent—and we're still working together ten years later.

At another SCBWI conference my notes and doodles from a picture book intensive with editor Maria Modugno became a manuscript that she bought a few months later. Subsequently, editors she supervised acquired three other manuscripts from me—including my first nonfiction and my best seller. A similar thing happened when I heard Justin Chanda speak at a conference. When I went home, I thought I had the perfect piece to send him based on what I'd learned from him. Sure enough, he bought that book and two others.

I could tell you story after story like this. When you hear an editor or agent speak, when you learn what they like, what they're looking for, and what they're not looking for, you have a better idea who to send your creations to and you up your chances for acquisition. It's happened to me through virtual critiques and conferences and in face-to-face ones, too.

Conferences make a difference. That's why no matter how many books I have in print, I'm going to keep renewing my SCBWI membership, keep going to conferences, and keep paying for critiques.

---

***We asked SCBWI Florida PAL member and successful picture book author Lynne Marie how she turned what she learned from conferences into action. Here's what she had to say.***

#### Putting Aha Moments into Motion

By Lynne Marie

Attending conferences is a great step in your publication journey. But to forge ahead, you'll need to take those AHA! moments and put them in motion. How might you do this?

#### ***Collect the treasures!***

Take notes, whether in-person, live, or while watching replays. Words, phrases, sentences—a just get the valuable essence caught on a page. According to LifeSavvy, “...if you write something by hand, all that complex sensory information increases the chances the knowledge will be stored for later...writing by hand forces your brain to process information in a more detailed way, which helps you successfully load that information into your memory.”

### ***Mine your treasure!***

After the event, rather than just experiencing conference withdrawal (yes, that's a real thing!), (1) write down your most important recollections and/or highlight your notes to cull the most valuable tips and inspirations. (2) Make a checklist of points to consider while writing / rewriting stories in the future. Refer to it often. (3) Decorate a piece of paper with the quote that inspired you the most and hang in over your computer. (4) Read the recommended craft books and mentor texts. Just keep reading! It's an essential step to becoming published and continuing to publish.

### ***Listen and learn, then DO!***

When a great author like Richard Peck tells you to "read 100 books in your genre before you try your hand at writing one," do it! I did! Consider what you've learned, then, drawing on that information, write a new story.

### ***Take it to heart!***

When you hear the phrase "a story needs to have heart" over and over again (those of you at the September SCBWI Florida Bootcamps will have heard this from Reycraft Editor Wiley Blevins), realize how important heartbeats are to creating a living story. Perform whatever CPR necessary to do this.

### ***Find Your KidLit Family***

Create a critique group comprised of conference friends you have made that show similar enthusiasm and dedication to their craft, as well as write in a similar genre.

The road to publication is a long and winding road. Gather your information, inspiration, and ideas and start walking the path. Keep facing forward and don't give up. Good luck to you!

---

## LOOKING BACK

---



## BOOT CAMPS SNAPPED US TO ATTENTION

Our second year of virtual Boot Camps exceeded our enrollment from 2020. We were thrilled to have participants from Florida and 16 other states and the US and four other countries! We had such great response from participants (and people saying they wished their critique group members had been there), that we briefly reopened registration for those who wanted to view the recordings.

Here are some take insights to remember . . .

### **PICTURE BOOK BOOT CAMP**

#### **LISA WHEELER**

- "To add tension, think about page turns."
- "Trust your instincts and your voice."
- "Remember and hold onto all the small, memorable milestones."
- "Just because it isn't 'right now' doesn't mean it isn't right."
- "Follow the muse even when you'd rather wrestle with it."
- "The difference between an unpublished author and a published author is one day."

#### **WILEY BLEVINS**

- "Are you leaving the reader behind, tugging the reader along, or causing the reader to race ahead of you?"
- "It's the emotional arc that sells the story. If we feel nothing it won't get to acquisitions . . . Your emotional arc is as important as your story arc . . . Make us feel something. Make us sit up."
- "Trust your reader! Don't show then tell them (or tell then show) to make sure. Don't be a micromanager of your readers."
- "When you write for younger children you must inhabit their minds and hearts through the entire story."
- "Sometimes you have to ignore all the advice and break the rules."

## NOVEL BOOT CAMP

### KAYLAN ADAIR

- “What does your character really want? And why can’t they have that on the first page?”
- “There is no formula for success, no particular topic or type of style that gets the attention of editors. As a new editor, I was told to resist all but the irresistible. You must make your main characters and stories irresistible.”
- “Think of all five senses when writing every scene—but only include those sensory aspects which will actually contribute to the reader’s understanding and experience.”

### ALEX FLINN

- “What your character thinks they need at the beginning of the novel is the plot. What they actually need is the emotional core.”
- “Each scene in your book should either develop character or push the plot forward—if it doesn’t, then you probably don’t need it in the story.”
- “Don’t think only about what a character does, but also what they don’t do. That can be just a revealing to who they are as a character.”

## PAL MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Jason Pratt, Membership Coordinator, reached out to PAL member Taryn Souders about her most recent middle grade novel, *COOP KNOWS THE SCOOP*. The book was published by Sourcebooks Young Readers in summer 2020.



[Website](#), [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#)

**JASON:** Hi, Taryn! Congratulations on the warm reception your latest book, [COOP KNOWS THE SCOOP](#), has received! For those who have not yet had a chance to read it, could you tell us what the book is about?

**TARYN:** *COOP KNOWS THE SCOOP* is a small-town murder mystery set in Windy Bottom, Georgia. When the old, dilapidated playground is removed to make way for a new one, a skeleton is discovered buried underneath the slide. Once the ID is made, the whole town is in shock because this person left on their own forty years ago. They packed their bags and wrote a note and everything...but obviously that’s not what really happened! When Coop’s grandfather becomes the main suspect, Coop decides it’s up to him to clear his grandfather’s name. But during the process, Coop discovers there’s more than just skeletons buried in Windy Bottom.

**JASON:** Ooh, I love a good mystery. That sounds like it was a lot of fun to write. I’m curious: what is the best piece of writing advice you ever received?

**TARYN:** Someone once said to read 10,000 books in the genre I want to write. I think that’s great advice because it allows a writer to familiarize themselves with what works and what doesn’t, and to study how other writers tackle story structure.

**JASON:** That is excellent advice, no matter the genre. What are you currently working on that you are most excited about?

**TARYN:** I’m about to submit a new manuscript—another mystery! At the moment it’s called *THE RADCLIFFE RIDDLE*, but who knows if it will keep its title. It’s a treasure hunt based on an antique sampler sewed back in the mid-1700’s. I loved researching this one and working through the riddles. My SCBWI critique group, the Inkstigators, have been instrumental in sprucing and polishing this story up. They are AMAZING!

**JASON:** Wow, it sounds like this new project is completely riddled with exciting scenes. Thank you so much for taking the time to chat with us, Taryn!

## QUOTABLE QUOTES

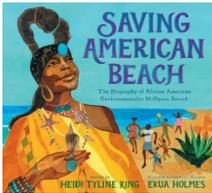
Be like a tree.  
Connect with your roots.  
Turn over a new leaf.  
Bend before you break.  
Enjoy your unique  
natural beauty.  
Keep growing.  
--Joanne Raptis

In every change, in every falling  
leaf there is some pain, some  
beauty. And that’s the way new  
leaves grow.  
--Amit Ray

# KUDOS CORNER

**Cindy Lescarbeau's** poem will be published in the December 2021 issue of *Clubhouse Jr. Magazine* from Focus on the Family—congrats!

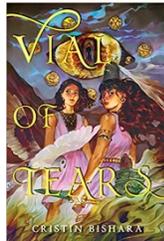
Sophia Jimenez at Atheneum has acquired **Alexandra Alessandri's** debut MG fantasy, *THE ENCHANTED LIFE OF VALENTINA MEJÍA*, featuring legends from Colombia.



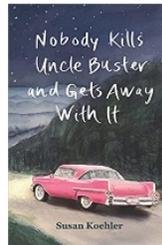
**SAVING AMERICAN BEACH: THE BIOGRAPHY OF AFRICAN AMERICAN ENVIRONMENTALIST MAVYNEE BETTSCH** by **Heidi King** was chosen as the Florida Humanities and Florida Center for the Book state featured selection for the National Endowment for the Humanities National Book Festival.

Congratulations to **Ana Siqueira** who has a new agent. Ana is now represented by Tricia Lawrence of the Erin Murphy Literary Agency.

Good news— **Cristin Bishara's** YA fantasy, *VIAL OF TEARS*, comes out this month and it received a starred review from Kirkus! She will be doing in-person signing events at Tombo Books in St. Petersburg and MacIntosh Books in Sanibel.



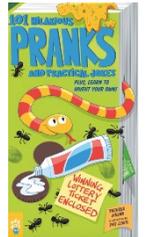
Albert Whitman & Company will be publishing **Marta Magellan's** new picture book biography, *JUST WILDE ENOUGH: MIREYA MAYOR PRIMATOLOGIST* and it will be released next year—hooray!



M.R. Street let us know that **Susan Koehler** held two book launches for her MG novel, *NOBODY KILLS UNCLE BUSTER AND GETS AWAY WITH IT*, at Midtown Reader in Tallahassee!

Congrats to **Anita Amin** whose 6-book physics series (POGO Jump!), *DIWALI* (Capstone), *IS IT A TURTLE OR TORTOISE?* (Capstone), *IS IT A DOLPHIN OR A PORPOISE?* (Capstone), *EVERY DROP COUNTS* (TCM) are out!

**Theresa Julian** wants everyone to check out her new MG book, *101 HILARIOUS PRANKS & PRACTICAL JOKES*, which teaches kids how to prank and explains how to use physical humor to kick their pranks up a notch!



## DO YOU HAVE GOOD NEWS TO SHARE?

We would love to celebrate good news with you. If you have career milestones to share, please [use this form](#) to submit them for the next newsletter (examples: new books contracts, upcoming book releases, magazine covers or articles, signing with an agent, book signings, etc.).

## HAVE YOU RENEWED YOUR MEMBERSHIP?

Visit [www.scbwi.org](http://www.scbwi.org) to renew your membership and update your email and mailing address!

# FAMOUS FACES FROM THE 70'S ANSWERS

**A** - Dorian Cirrone, former SCBWI FL Co-RA

**B** – Peaches and Herb, recorded “Reunited (and It Feels So Good)”

**C** – Angela Padron, SCBWI FL ARA

**D** – Mary Tyler Moore, star of *The Mary Tyler Moore Show*

**E** – Rob Sanders, SCBWI FL Co-RA

**F** – Mr. T, “I pity the fool” who missed this one!

**G** – Joyce Sweeney, agent at The Seymour Agency and SCBWI Florida member

**H** – Moira Donohue, former SCBWI FL Co-RA

**I** – Judy Blume, author of *Are You There God? It's Me, Margaret* and more

CLICK TO CONNECT WITH THE SCBWI FLORIDA REGION

