

KITE TALES



Illustration by [Brittany Trivelli](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#)

A NOTE FROM YOUR REGIONAL TEAM

I've read that gratitude, above all other practices, is a top indicator of personal happiness. The more thankful we are, the easier it is to let joy overflow in our words and actions.

SCBWI Florida was recently contacted by the Make-A-Wish Foundation about a girl named Quinn who loves spooky stories and is battling leukemia. Her wish, rather than toys or vacations, was for someone to write and illustrate a story about her. I volunteered to see what could be done. The project managers at Make-A-Wish asked what it would take to make Quinn her very own picture book. In my mind, the answer was six months and tens of thousands of dollars. But then I remembered how lucky my family has been. How few trips to the hospital we've had over the years. The evenings and weekends we've enjoyed together instead of endless doctor visits.

My gratitude lit a fire and I realized that all I needed to do was find some other grateful artists. A few dozen emails and social media posts later, I had 70 illustrators sign up to submit a story and an illustration for Quinn that was curated into an anthology of spooky stories called Quinn's Monsters. I'm proud to say that SCBWI Florida writers and illustrators feature prominently in this book, and Quinn received the digital copy just in time for Halloween storytime. Thus, gratitude leads to joy. :-)

Fred Koehler, Regional Illustrator Coordinator

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 mindyalyseweiss@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

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



OUR NEXT FREE MEETINGS

Creating Characters with Depth and Staying Power



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

Featuring Donna Gephart
Saturday, November 13, 2021
2:00-3:30 p.m.

This fun virtual workshop will be packed with tips, techniques, ideas, and inspiration to help you create memorable characters that will linger in readers' heads and hearts. No more cardboard or stereotyped characters! Learn the three places from which characters are created; how to put the quirk in your character while keeping them grounded with universal struggles; and multiple techniques for diving deeper to craft unique, compelling characters who will grab readers from page one and never let go. A helpful handout with additional resources will be included for all attendees.

Donna Gephart's eight middle grade novels include: *Abby*, *Tried and True* (set in South Florida), *The Paris Project* (set in Central Florida), *In Your Shoes*, *Lily and Dunkin* (set in South Florida), *Death by Toilet Paper*, and more. *Go Be Wonderful* is her first picture book from Holiday House with a dust jacket that doubles as a colorful growth chart. After 21 years in South Florida, Donna now lives in a cozy home in South Jersey with her family, including her canine office assistant, Benji, a sweet retriever mix. Visit her online at www.donnagephart.com and purchase autographed books for the holidays at <https://shop.inkwoodnj.com/donna-gepharts-books>.

Holiday Roundtables
Saturday, December 11, 2021
2:00-3:30 p.m.

PAYING IT FORWARD

We asked SCBWI Florida's Free Meetings coordinator and successful novel author Jan Eldredge about the benefits of presenting at a Free Meeting and how to submit a proposal.

Dear SCBWI Florida PAL published friends, feast your eyes on this opportunity!

We're on the hunt for presenters for our free monthly meetings, and we're looking to harvest them from our bounty of PAL published authors and illustrators.

Sharing your writing or illustrating knowledge in the form of a meeting presentation is a fun way to help others learn the craft while honing your presentation skills and bringing awareness to your books. It's also a great way to get to know some of your fellow SCBWI Florida members.

Our free monthly meetings are served up as statewide virtual Zoom meetings or as in-person gatherings located in South Florida (coordinated by Mindy Weiss), Tampa Bay (coordinated by JC Kato), Orlando (coordinated by Jan Eldredge), and North Florida (coordinated by Eileen Meyer).

Meeting speakers are asked to present a tasty writing or illustrating topic targeted to creators of picture books, middle grade books, and young adult books, perhaps along with a short writing or illustrating exercise, then followed up by a question-and-answer session.

Submitting a presentation proposal is easy as pumpkin pie. Simply click this link to include your brief bio and a summary of your proposed presentation:

<https://itg2u4d8.paperform.co/>

Sign up today! You'll be glad you did, and thankful SCBWI members will gobble up your words of wisdom!

(For members who might be new to the SCBWI table, PAL stands for "Published and Listed." Books are considered PAL when they are published by traditional publishing houses that do not charge money to authors or illustrators.)



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.

Our conference theme is a throwback to the 1979 hit by Peaches and Herb—"Reunited and It Feels So Good"—and a throw back to not-so long ago when we actually were able to hold face-to-face conferences. Now it's time to immerse yourself into the magic year of 1979!

Watch for next month's issue of "Kite Tales" for our BIG Conference Faculty reveal!

WHAT IT COST IN 1979

Postage stamp	.13 cents
Loaf of bread	.30 cents
Gallon of milk	\$1.42
Gallon of gas	.59 cents

TOP 5 SONGS OF 1979

1. "My Sharona" by The Knack
2. "Bad Girls" by Donna Summer
3. "Le Freak" by Chic
4. "Da Ya Think I'm Sexy?" by Rod Stewart
5. "Reunited" by Peaches & Herb

AND THE WINNERS WERE

Oscars/Best Picture—The Deer Hunter
 Emmys/Best TV Drama—Lou Grant
 Emmys/Best TV Comedy—Taxi
 Emmys/Best TV Variety Show—Steve & Eydie Celebrate Irving Berlin
 Tonys/Best Musical—Sweeney Todd
 Tonys/Best Play—The Elephant Man

TWO AWARD-WINNING BOOKS

Caldecott Winner—*The Girl Who Loved Wild Horses* by Paul Goble
 Newbery Award—*The Westing Game* by Ellen Raskin

LOOKING BACK



DANIELLE JOSEPH'S PRESENTATION INSPIRED US TO CREATE BOOKS FROM THE HEART

"You are the adult, and you can guide your character but don't be a helicopter parent."

"Your character's age should come through in their voice."

"Begin with a one-page summary of what you know so far about your character and plot. Consider it condensing your notes rather than an actual synopsis."

"Sometimes we keep on going and look back and say, that's not as bad as I thought."

CRAFT BOOK RECOMMENDATIONS BY DANIELLE

- *On Writing: A Memoir of the Craft* by Stephen King
- *Screenplay: The Foundations of Screenwriting* by Syd Fields
- *Save the Cat!* By Blake Snyder
- *The Magic Words: Writing Great Books for Children and Young Adults* by Cheryl Klein
- *The Emotional Craft of Fiction* by Donald Maas

QUOTABLE QUOTES

We don't need more to be thankful for, we just need to be more thankful.

—Carlos Castaneda

Cultivate the habit of being grateful for every good thing that comes to you, and to give thanks continuously. And because all things have contributed to your advancement, you should include all things in your gratitude.

—Ralph Waldo Emerson

PAL MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Cristin Bishara is a longtime member of SCBWI-Florida and is the author of the YA novel RELATIVITY. She has previously worked as a freelance copywriter and has taught composition and fiction writing at the university level. These days she lives and writes in Tampa with her husband, two girls, and two dogs. She "stopped by" to share with us a little bit about her newest YA novel, VIAL OF TEARS.



[Website](#), [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#), [Vimeo](#)

JASON: Hi, Cristin! Congratulations on receiving a Kirkus starred review for your new book, VIAL OF TEARS! Would you mind taking a moment to tell us what the book is about?

CRISTIN: VIAL OF TEARS is about two sisters who become trapped in an ancient, lush, and dangerous underworld—and in the machinations of deities, shapeshifters, and ghouls. It was inspired by family stories (I'm half Lebanese), along with Phoenician mythology.

JASON: Wow, that sounds captivating. I love that your family's stories inspired you to write this novel. What is the best piece of writing advice you ever received?

CRISTIN: Put that WIP away for a while. Work on something else. There's nothing like coming back to a project with some fresh perspective, which only time can give.

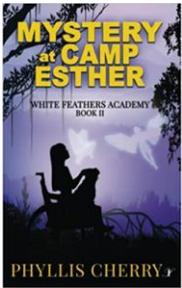
JASON: That's great advice. I have found that to be true as well. What are you currently working on that you are most excited about?

CRISTIN: A Florida wilderness survival story set in the near future. It's got a Black Mirror vibe, and it's dual POV, which is new for me.

JASON: Wow, I look forward to reading that one day. Thanks so much for taking the time to speak with us, Cristin. Best wishes on VIAL OF TEARS!

KUDOS CORNER

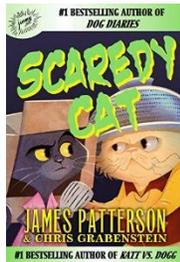
Marta Magellan's picture book biography of a Brazilian composer, *THE SOUND COLLECTOR*, won the SCBWI 2021 Work-in-Progress Grant in the Nonfiction category—congrats!



Phyllis Cherry's new young teen book, *MYSTER AT CAMP ESTHER*, came out last month—hooray!

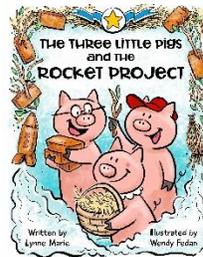
Humpty Dumpty Magazine recently published **Anita Amin's** build-a-story, *NO MORE PHOTOS!* and her short story, *A BRAND NEW BEAR*.

John Herzog held a spooky drawing and signing event at Fable Books last month for the middle grade book, *SCAREDY CAT*, which he illustrated.



Good News! **Jill Kassandra's** article about John Zweifel and the miniature White House he created was in last month's issue of *Dollhouse Miniatures Magazine*.

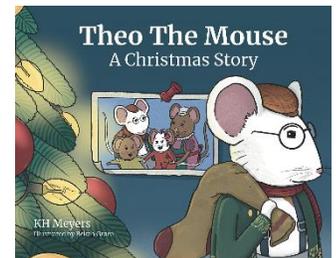
Good news—**Peggy Wirgau's** debut YA novel, *THE STARS IN APRIL*, is a longlist finalist in the Page Turner awards! The book is based on the true story of a 12-year-old Titanic survivor.



Lynne Marie's new picture book, *THE THREE LITTLE PIGS AND THE ROCKET PROJECT*, will be released soon—congratulations!

A little birdie told us that **Rob Sanders** won the SCBWI RAM Award for his middle grade novel, *BLOOD BROTHERS*, which comes out next year.

Congrats to **Ken Meyers** who just published his first book, *THEO THE MOUSE: A CHRISTMAS STORY*.



DO YOU HAVE GOOD NEWS TO SHARE?

HAVE YOU RENEWED YOUR MEMBERSHIP?

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.).

Visit www.scbwi.org to renew your membership and update your email and mailing address!

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