



# PENN & INK

EASTERN PA SCBWI CHAPTER

## SUMMER 2008

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## RA'S MESSAGE

*By Marilyn Hershey, RA*

Eastern Pa SCBWI had two events in May and early June. The 2<sup>nd</sup> annual Illustrator's Day, organized by Linda Rodgers was held May 31 in Philadelphia. On June 3<sup>rd</sup>, Paul Acampora hosted the Meet the Editor's Day and an afternoon of reading of the first pages as well as question and answer time.

Each one of our events take a tremendous amount of organization, time, and energy so this is a special thank you to Paul, Linda, Cathy Giordiano, and Mary Ann Scott for the extra efforts they are putting into our Eastern Pa SCBWI programs. Cathy is organizing the 2008 Fall Philly Conference (Sept. 27) and Mary Ann will take care of the 2009 Pocono Retreat.

Since we are on the subject of the Retreat, first off, a special thank you to the faculty, volunteers, and great conferees for making the weekend a special time in the Poconos. Second, I am offering a sincere apology to many attendees who did not have acceptable

accommodations at the Sterling Inn. For the past 16 years the Eastern Pa SCBWI held the spring retreat at the Sterling Inn. Over those years, we were privileged to experience bumbleberry pie, guided walks to the falls, and wonderful chats around the fireplace. The exquisite atmosphere brought us back year after year without hesitation.

However, many businesses are making changes and this year we experienced that The Sterling Inn was not exempt from changes. Through the 2008 Pocono Retreat evaluations, the overwhelming encouragement to change locations became clear. Mary Ann Scott jumped right into her role as 2009 Retreat director and over the past weeks, she looked into several recommended retreat centers in the Pocono area.

I am happy to say that after hours of negotiating and discussion, a new location has been found. The 2009 Pocono Retreat will be held at the Shawnee Inn and Golf Resort the first weekend in April. In the research, it was evident there are many beautiful resorts that could host our event. To narrow it down to a reasonable decision we considered: atmosphere, affordability, and accommodations. We wanted a retreat center that had a good cross of technology (wireless internet service, business center, and cell phone service) along with the beauty of nature (mountains, hiking trails, and quiet places to escape). We trust that you will find Shawnee meets each of those issues.



As expected, all the retreat centers were much higher in price than the Sterling, therefore, next year's cost will be higher. In planning the retreat we have been conscious of cost and we are trying to maintain a balance between elegance and efficiency. We will post new information on the chapter website as it becomes available.

In closing, the Eastern PA SCBWI chapter is a healthy, active, and thriving chapter of illustrators and writers, largely to the credit of recently retired Regional Advisor, Laurie Krauss Kiernan. Laurie's organizational skills have kept this chapter moving in a positive direction for six years and she deserves many thanks for her countless hours of dedication to our chapter's events.



*Thank you Laurie, for everything you have done for the good of the Eastern PA SCBWI chapter. May your future be blessed with contracts, contracts, and more contracts.* To send Laurie a personal thank you, send your encouraging email to [lkiernan@tacsolutions.com](mailto:lkiernan@tacsolutions.com)

Best wishes,  
*Marilyn*

## 2008 POCONOS RETREAT SUMMARY

*By Cheri Widzowski with contributions by Lisa Ponczek and Roxanne Werner.*

Writers and illustrators, editors and agents converged upon the Sterling Inn in mid-April for the Eastern Pennsylvania Chapter of the SCBWI annual 3-day Poconos Retreat. A number of first timers attended the retreat as well as many returning for their annual get-away to write, connect, schmooze, learn, and relax. The retreat got started Friday afternoon with the popular peer critiques coordinated by Janet Lord. The seeds of many new friendships were planted as writers, both new to the craft and more experienced, exchanged comments on each other's manuscripts.

The conference was officially opened Friday evening with a delightful presentation by fantasy and nature author and environmental activist **Tom (TA) Barron**.



Tom, a very successful writer, spoke on the humbling nature of the writing craft, sharing several humorous letters from his young admirers (and some non-admirers, too). TA pointed out that no matter how far you progress in the craft, there is always more to learn. Tom described 3 metaphors which approach truth in a story: 1) music – telling a good story is like the wind blowing through an aolean harp 2) weaving - individual strands are important – need to pay attention to detail and 3) gardening – a big tree starts from a tiny seed; likewise we writers are gardeners who coax a seed of a story into life (and, importantly, you have to give the seed time to grow). Tom also shared two sources of inspiration in all of his writings – 1) the power of one person to make a difference (see his website [www.barronprize.org](http://www.barronprize.org) for how Tom was inspired by heroic kids) and 2) the power and inspiration of nature.

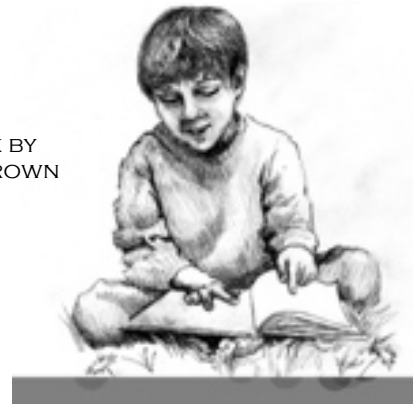
Tom described nature as his greatest teacher and the greatest healer in his times of difficulty.

Tom also spoke on the importance of place to storytelling. Place has to be more than just a backdrop – it has to feel true and have the quality of a character (be sure to include sensuous details). TA reminded us that we are all creative artists, not products, and exhorted us to make our work 'true' – "tell the story that you really want to tell" and don't try to fit market demographics. As Tom concluded, the best stories are true!



Author/illustrator **Gene Barretta** (above with RA **Marilyn Hershey**) led our Saturday morning program with his presentation, "Hiking, Jogging, then Sprinting." Gene, an Eastern PA SCBWI Chapter success story, shared his journey from his childhood exploration of the arts to his current career as fulltime writer and illustrator. Gene shared that his main passion is telling stories whether through art, film, animation, or writing. Along the way, Gene, a mostly self-taught artist, attended NYU film school, worked with *Sesame Street* (where he learned not to be shy about taking on any kind of job in the field even things he wasn't passionate about) and *Between the Lions* (where he learned diplomacy), and even designing characters for the Jim Henson studios. His perseverance led to mass market work, then work as a picture book illustrator. Gene advised aspiring illustrators to create a distinctive style with which publishers

ARTWORK BY  
LAURA BROWN



can identify you. Gene shared the history behind the making of his successful picture book, *Now and Ben*, featuring Gene's hero the American Renaissance man, Benjamin Franklin.

Success didn't come easily – Gene spent years rewriting and revising and working with his editor from Henry Holt before he was offered a contract. And then as a further challenge, Gene was injured and had to complete his paintings with a broken hand. Gene commented that every job he's done feeds into another - his split-screen approach to illustrating *Now and Ben* came from his experience in film. When asked where he gets his story ideas, Gene replied – "from living life." Learn more about Gene at his website [www.genebarretta.com](http://www.genebarretta.com).

Editor **Jill Santopolo** from Laura Geringer Books led two well-attended workshops on adding emotion to your writing. In addition to being an editor, Jill is also an author (through Scholastic Books) and an MFA student at Vermont College. Jill shared that as an editor, she comes across many perfectly publishable manuscripts but wondered why they didn't excite her. She discovered that many of them lacked an emotional element and didn't connect her as a reader. See the workshop summary for more details.

Another workshop, *Shaking Leaves from Your Family Tree*, was led by **Michelle Poploff**, VP and Editorial Director at Random House Children's Books and Executive Editor for the Delacorte Press imprint. See the workshop summary for more info. Other workshops were led by Simon and Schuster editor **Alexandra Penfold** (*The Art of Character-Driven Writing*); Putnam editor **Stacey Barney** (*Choosing Subject Matter in a World Ruled by Gossip Girl*); **Patrick Collins** (creative director at Henry Holt BFYR - *Illustrating Middle Grade Fiction/Chapter Books*); and **Rebecca Sherman** (literary agent at Writers House LLC – *A Guide to Your Literary Agent: How to Choose, Care For, and Maintain Representation*).

Writer **Jordan Sonnenblick** shared a humorous and insightful presentation, *Getting Published Is Not the End: My Journey Beyond the Book Deal* - an amusing account of his journey to becoming a published author. Jordan feels he broke just about every rule but still got there. He's a good speaker and you could just tell he was the class clown when he was growing up.

One of the highlights of the conference was the surprise Marilyn Hershey, conference director and

upcoming chapter regional advisor (RA), sprung on outgoing RA, **Laurie Krauss Kiernan**, who is stepping down after successfully leading this chapter for 7 years. To show appreciation to Laurie for all her hard work, Marilyn presented Laurie with a huge specially designed cake representing the three novels Laurie has written (in her spare time when she wasn't planning conferences and managing the chapter's finances). Everyone who knows Laurie was moved and Laurie herself was teary-eyed – a warm tribute to a warm and caring person.

As the retreat closed, the five editors discussed eight first pages that were read before the group. Many of the comments the editors made were similar:

1. Try not to use flashbacks in first pages as it takes the reader out of the immediate scene.
2. In picture books, although the rule of three obstacles is well known it seems to be used incorrectly. The editors complained of 'episodic' picture books. Editors want the obstacles to be stacked creating tension, which builds through the story arc. Too often they get three individual challenges that begin and end without building on each other creating tension and one overall story.
3. Let the reader get to know the character before bombarding him with obstacles. Although you do not want a 'dull' opening a reader needs to 'know' and 'care' about a character before everything starts to happen. Otherwise the reader doesn't really care about the outcome of the obstacle.
4. Try not to overload the opening with backstory and information known as an info dump. The reader may need this as the story goes on but first the reader wants to meet the main character and become attached to him or her.

ARTWORK BY  
CHERI WIDZOWSKI



## POCONOS WORKSHOP SUMMARY: EDITOR JILL SANTOPOLO (Laura Geringer Books)

*By Roxanne Werner, Ellen Losano Ramsey, Lisa Ponczek, and Cheri Widzowski*

The problem with a lot of novels, Ms. Santopolo says, is that the author names the emotion but the reader doesn't feel it – there's a 'skin' of emotion but the story lacks emotional muscle, ligaments, bones. To add emotion to a story, Jill says, a writer has 4 tools available to them: 1) action 2) syntax/word choice 3) objective correlative 4) dialogue. These 4 tools can all help the writer to show emotion rather than tell it. To illustrate how each of these tools can be used, Jill took a sample scene and dissected why it didn't convey emotion. Then she reworked the same scene, adding each of the 4 elements. Jill also gave examples of writing that shows emotion very well – these included Jack Gantos, Tim Wynne-Jones, and Sarah Weeks.

**Actions:** Have characters express their emotion by their actions. If your character is angry you might have him break a pencil, throw something, punch a wall or pillow - 'actions speak louder than words'.

**Word choice and syntax:** A writer can control the tone of a scene by the choice and description of objects in it. For example, what's the difference between saying 'hug' instead of 'embrace'? Embrace often has romantic overtones while hug is comforting or friendly. They both are the same action but color our perceptions of the scene differently. Syntax and sentence rhythm also affect the mood. One example Jill discussed was the *Joey Pigza* stories. Joey is a classic hyperactive ADHD boy. The stories are told from his POV and the sentence structure reflects his hyperactivity. The sentences are long and almost stream of consciousness with thoughts running into each other. The occasional short sentence brings the reader up short as though Joey just slammed on the brakes or switched gears. You truly feel you are in this hyper boy's mind because of the sentence structure.

**Objective correlative:** This is how the objects and setting described in your manuscript reflect the emotions of your characters. Obviously if you describe a field of grass as emerald green or puke green or pea soup green you are making a

statement. If your character is happy he or she may notice flowers, shiny bright objects etc. If your character is depressed he or she may be surrounded by shadows, dirty laundry, unwashed cups or anything else to reflect their mood. If they're angry they may eat angrily cutting up meat, skewering vegetables, chewing and crushing food to little bits. Whatever scene you're depicting you can make the surroundings fit the mood. This will intensify the emotions for the reader.

**Dialogue:** Jill described this as the most important thing – dialogue can convey emotion and gives character voice. Writers must be careful to be subtle – don't state the obvious – and to use realistic words. How would these characters really talk? Even if your character isn't talking about the specific topic that has him mad, happy, sad etc., their mood will be shown in their dialogue.

Jill read a short passage about a kid in Latin class who has just received yet another D on yet another test. In the first version, none of the four techniques were used. The kid said he was pissed. He said he hated his teacher. But the reader doesn't really connect with the main character and his feelings.

In the final version of the passage, Jill incorporated all four techniques--he scowled, he crumbled his paper, he chucked it away. Instead of just looking out the window, the narrator describes seeing a bird pecking on the window and he feels the bird is mocking him--the bird is free but he's a prisoner in Latin class. In the final version, the dialogue between the teacher and the student is more convincing and more interesting. In the final version, the reader connects with the character and understands how he feels.

Jill concluded her workshop with a writing exercise in which she asked participants to write a scene of a young woman coming home from a date using the 4 tools to show how the date went (but without describing the actual date). After the allotted 10 minutes, Jill and other writers shared their different versions – a great learning experience!

By using actions, word choice and syntax, objects and settings, and dialogue in scenes you can add four layers of emotion. When you combine all four techniques the emotional connection between your character and the reader will be intensified. Your work will truly come alive.

## POCONOS WORKSHOP SUMMARY: EDITOR MICHELLE POPLOFF

(Delacorte Press)

*By Roxanne Werner, Lisa Ponczek, and Cheri Widzowski*

Michelle talked about query letters and novels they acquired from query letters. She also discussed how authors shaped stories from their family experiences or heritage. Michelle likes historical fiction with a southern voice. Sources included interviews, newspaper archives, land-ownership and use records, old diaries, family stories and records. She said that first and foremost the character has to be believable and gave an example of *Hattie Big Sky* – a Newbery Honor book written by Kirby Larson. Kirby based her character on a snippet of a story she'd heard of her great-grandmother. According to Michelle, Kirby wove her years of research seamlessly into the story. Michelle urged writers to know what is going on in the world at the time their stories are set and to make their stories historically accurate even if they are writing fiction. You can find story seeds within your racial heritage, religion, family heirlooms, old letters, ancestry.... Some tips from Michelle:

1. Target your publisher. Look at editors at house and what genre of books they publish. Research similar themed books. Be content specific in query.
2. Tell editor what is driving your book. How is it different from others? Is it for mainstream, religious, retail or library markets?
3. Know your reader and age group.
4. Check for updates on Publisher websites or SCBWI.

ARTWORK BY  
LAURA BROWN



## MEET THE EDITORS

*By Paul Acampora*

The 2008 Meet the Editor's Day welcomed three outstanding editors to eastern Pennsylvania this year. Erica Sussman, Associate Editor at HarperCollins, Shannon Penney, Editor at Scholastic, and Julia Maguire, Editorial Assistant from Simon & Schuster, offered advice, encouragement and more than a dozen outstanding first page critiques as part of the event. Held at Northampton Community College (Bethlehem, PA) for the first time, the new venue attracted a large number of first-time attendees and several new SCBWI members. Shannon, Julia and Erica were enthusiastic, constructive and encouraging as a panel. They were also gracious and generous with their time and advice following the program. Congratulations and thanks to this year's Meet the Editors committee for putting together a great event.



## CONFESSIONS OF A FIRST-TIME ATTENDEE

By Joanne Rossmassler Fritz

I went to the Pocono Mountains Retreat for the first time and came away with so much more than a t-shirt. And I'm not talking about that bright red "First-Time Attendee" flag on my name tag. What did I acquire? What inspired and stayed with me? Here's a partial list:

- At least a dozen new friends.
- Books autographed by well-known children's authors.
- Raffle prizes!
- A sense of belonging to a wonderful group of like-minded women (and men)
- Inspiration from T. A. Barron, author of many YA fantasy novels (and some of my favorite picture books). He told us about his journey, from that first, still-unpublished novel (24 rejections) to a new trilogy about Merlin's dragon. He wished for us all to find "just the right word."
- Entertainment from Jordan Sonnenblick, the stand-up comic, er, author of *Drums, Girls and Dangerous Pie, Notes From the Midnight Driver, Dodger and Me*, and my personal favorite, *Zen and the Art of Faking It*. We heard hilarious stories about everything Jordan did wrong on his journey.
- A treat from author/illustrator Gene Barretta, whose childhood hero (Gene London) was the same as mine. We learned that Gene sweated through numerous revisions of the first book he both wrote and illustrated, until *Now and Ben* reached its final form after many years. It seems patience is the one thing we all need most.
- A fun workshop with Alexandra Penfold (Paula Wiseman Books/Simon & Schuster) about getting to know your character. As an example, she used Harry Potter, my all-time favorite fantasy character.
- A fascinating workshop with Michelle Poploff (Delacorte Press) about historical fiction. I was thrilled to learn that Michelle edited my favorite YA historical fiction novel, *Hattie Big Sky*.

- There was more, much more. But, for me, the best part of the weekend was the critique-a-thon on Friday. Laurie Wallmark, Angela Calabrese, Julie Gonzalez and I laughed so hard while giving each other some great advice, that the group meeting next door wondered how we could possibly be having so much fun. I learned a great deal and I'm extremely thankful to all three of them for their help. Special thanks to Angie for helping me find my car keys!

Marilyn Hershey did a fantastic job of organizing the entire retreat. I couldn't believe she could pack so much into such a short weekend and still find time to have a farewell cake custom-made for Laurie Krauss Kiernan.

I had a blast.

And I'll be back.



ARTWORK BY  
KATE WIDZOWSKI

**MARK YOUR CALENDARS!**

### FALL PHILLY CONFERENCE

Sept. 27, 2008  
Whitford CC, Exton PA Contact  
Cathy Giordiano  
([cathygio@epix.net](mailto:cathygio@epix.net))

See website for details!  
([www.scbwiepa.org](http://www.scbwiepa.org))

## SO YOU WERE NOT DISCOVERED, WHAT NOW? MUSINGS FROM A THIRD TIME ATTENDEE AT THE POCONO MOUNTAINS RETREAT

By Carmen Ferreiro-Esteban

We've come to the retreat to meet people who share our passion, to discuss with them the books we love, maybe to fall in love with new ones. We've come to be inspired, to be transported, even validated in our obsession for writing. But deep down, in that secret place where dreams dwell, we know we've also come for another reason just as strong. We've come in the hope of being discovered, in the hope of finding an agent/editor who'd realize our potential and ask to see our manuscript. The complete version.

But our One on One critique session has come and gone, and we were not asked to submit our manuscript again, and when we approach the other editors in the hall they smile politely and excuse themselves. So by the end of the second day of the workshop, our hopes have been crushed and all we want is to crawl under the bed with the ladybugs that share our room and don't come out until everyone is gone.

We don't do that, of course, we're professionals, or maybe just a little bit hungry. Instead we dress up in our best clothes and join our fellow writers in the dining hall. We did the right thing, we soon realize, because as the night wears on, and conversations flare around us, we find out we're not the only ones whose work has been critiqued and found lacking. By the time the after dinner raffle is over, and we walk back to our rooms, our hands busy with books and other gifts we're not sure will fit in our suitcase, our ego has already started to heal.

The next day, as we listen to the editors comment on the first page of eight different stories, we've moved beyond our morose mood of the previous evening and even agree with them. For one, it's easier to see the mistakes in somebody else's work. But there's more. There's a pattern in their critiques, we notice, a pattern in what they're looking for. They're looking for action, the editors explain, for a strong sense of place, for a balance between dialogue and exposition, for engaging characters children can relate to. And as we listen, we start to realize

what didn't work in our piece, and even further to see a way to make it work. And like the phoenix of legend, we emerge from the ashes of our dejection ready to write again, and resubmit.

Of course we're still disappointed. It'd have been nice to skip the time-consuming, frustrating circle of submission/rejection that's usually the fate of an unpublished writer, to skip the dreaded slush pile and find our manuscript neatly placed on the desk of an enthusiastic editor. It has happened. We all know of the author/illustrator discovered at one conference or another and now happily published. But, more often than not, the path to publication takes a longer route.

At least, that's how it was for me.

The first time I came to the Pocono Mountains retreat, I'd just finished my first novel, a fantasy for middle graders. For my One to One session, I was paired with a now famous author whose first book had come out the previous year. I'd read and loved her novel. Her story, like mine, was a fantasy with a strong female protagonist, and I had high hopes that she'd like mine. She didn't.

It was by her own admission, the first time she'd critiqued someone's writing, and wasted no time with trivialities, such as commenting on some of the strengths of my piece, maybe she just didn't find any, maybe she thought praise was a waste of our scarce fifteen minutes. Wherever the reason she started by pointing out what didn't work for her: her lack of empathy for my heroine, her misunderstanding of her motives. By the end of the critique, she had deconstructed my story along with my self esteem. The fact that I admired her writing only made her harsh critique the harder to take.

Yet, I didn't give up. I rewrote the first chapter following her suggestions and brought my first page to the Children's Writing Conference at Hofstra University the following year. This time, it was chosen by Tim Travaglini, then an editor at Walker, as an example of a first page that works. When I asked him if he'd like to see my manuscript and he said yes, my hopes soared.

But the match was not to be. When months later he called it was to say that although he loved my story, Walker had a moratorium on Fantasy and thus, couldn't publish it.

The following year, I returned to the Pocono Mountains retreat and brought my favorite chapter to be critiqued at the One on One session. Again, I was assigned a newly published author. Unlike the previous one, this author liked my story, and urged me to submit it as it was.

Which I did. I submitted repeatedly, until my persistence paid off and my novel was accepted for publication by Tanglewood Press under the title, *Two Moon Princess*. Interestingly enough, my editor liked the first version of my first chapter, the version the famous author had rejected years ago.

But getting your book published is not the end of a writer's struggles, but the beginning of new, unforeseen ones. And so lured by the title of Jordan Sonnenblick's presentation "Getting Published Is Not the End: My Journey Beyond the Book Deal," Rebecca Sherman's talk on "A guide to Your Literary Agent," and the good memories of the passionate writers I had met on my previous stays, I signed once more for the Pocono Mountains retreat this year.

Having followed the long road to publication had its advantages. It had given me the time to finish the second book, a sequel, by the time *Two Moon Princess* was published. And also the freedom to make small changes in the first book as the events developed in the second, so that the story now flows swiftly without contradictions from beginning to end.

By the time, I went to the Pocono Mountains retreat, Tanglewood Press had already accepted my sequel. This fact didn't spare my first chapter from receiving a heavy dose of criticism at the One on One session. But it did spare me the worse bite of the rejection for I wasn't looking in the words of the agent critiquing my story for validation of my worth as a writer. This gave me the emotional distance necessary to evaluate her criticism on its own merits, and use it constructively.

My first chapter, the agent pointed out, introduced too many characters, gave up too much back story way too quickly. "It reads," she said "like a sequel." Which it was, I said. But even if it's a sequel, the agent told me, it wouldn't work because I couldn't assume the reader had read the first book.

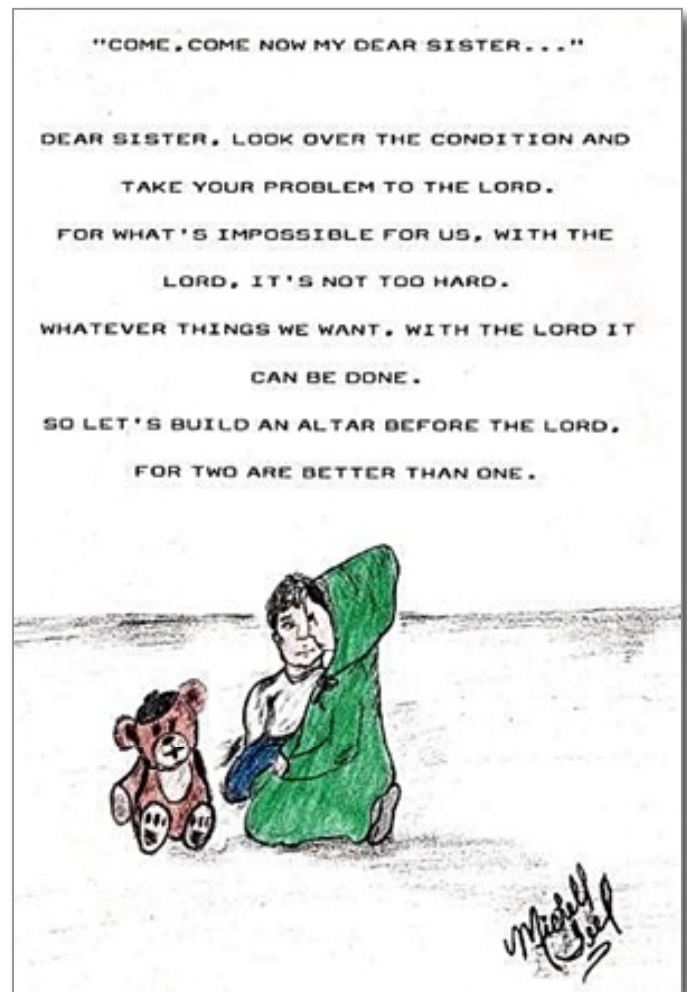
I wasn't happy with my beginning either. That was the reason I had submitted it in the first place but I was too close to it and knew my story too well to see why it didn't work. But now as I listened to the agent's comments I saw it in a different light and a new beginning started to take shape in my mind.

Since I came back from the Poconos, I've already rewritten the first chapter of my sequel. As this is my fourth attempt, I've decided to sign for the New Beginnings workshop organized by the NJ chapter of the SCBWI this summer and submit my four versions for a peer critique. I've also sent my

new first page to the SCBWI Eastern PA chapter's Meet the Editors session that will take place next June, in Bethlehem . . .

. . . Where I hope we'll meet again.

**Carmen Ferreiro-Esteban** is the author of the Middle Grade novel *Two Moon Princess* (Tanglewood Press, 2007), its sequel *The King in the Stone* (publication date to be determined) and four non-fiction books by Chelsea House, under the name Carmen Ferreiro. You can visit her at [www.carmenferreiroesteban.com](http://www.carmenferreiroesteban.com) and/or read her blog on books she loves at <http://carmenferreiroesteban.wordpress.com/>.



POEM & ART BY PAM TUCK

## SCBWI ILLUSTRATORS DAY 2008

By Linda Brewster Rodgers

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Eastern PA SCBWI Illustrators Day was held at the University of Pennsylvania, May 31. Tim Gillner, Art Director at Boyds Mills Press and Deborah Wolfe of Deborah Wolfe, LTD. artist agency were the speakers.

All fully-registered participants had been given a selection of manuscripts to choose from as a sketch assignment in February. They were to develop a sketch and send it to Tim for comments. This back and forth took place over a month until the sketches were approved. The illustrators brought the finished work to the workshop for a final critique.

It was impressive to see all the work and how different illustrators handled the same material. One participant said "it was like a semester of college." Tim was excellent and made people feel comfortable and put a whole new light on working with an art director. I am sure the publishers will see new work from these participants. It took the fear out of submitting. Tim gave tips and hints and stayed late to answer questions.

Deborah Wolfe, artist representative, is located in Philadelphia and has been in the business of representing artists for over thirty years. Her impressive list of artists and clients ranges from picture book publishers and artists to medical and technical illustrators working in the advertisement and journal industry. She spoke on how her agency worked and the high ethical standards



they hold. This has given her agency a strong professional reputation that is respected by artists and clients.

Deborah also gave portfolio reviews and by all accounts, she was more than helpful and encouraging. She gave portfolio tips and suggested directions for artists to try to develop their work.

Box lunches were served and illustrators shared their work and ideas. Illustrators rarely get a chance to socialize with other illustrators. It was a winning end to a day packed full of new information and insights. Illustrators Day 2009 was encouraged by all.



ARTWORK BY  
LAURA BROWN



ARTWORK BY  
LAURA BROWN

### EASTERN PA SCBWI NEWS!

- Congratulations to **Pamela Tuck**, Lee & Low Books 2007 New Voices Award winner. Pamela was offered \$1000 plus a standard publication contract for her story, *A Fly in a Bowl of Milk*, a picture book based on her father's experiences with desegregation in North Carolina in the 1960s. Pamela describes herself as a life-long writer, beginning with poetry at an early age. Influenced by southern storytellers and inspired by teachers, family, and friends, she branched out into short stories and plays. Pamela describes her supportive husband, Joel, as her invaluable writing partner. Good luck to you both!
- **Phillip Tietbohl** had a dragon poem, *Me and My Lunch*, published in *Spider Magazine* (November 2007). Congrats!
- **Gene Barretta's** book, *Now & Ben: The Modern Inventions of Benjamin Franklin* has been made into a DVD and was named as one of the "Notable Videos for 2008"; the DVD, produced by Spoken Arts, Inc. primarily for the library and school markets, features narration by Matthew Arkin and limited animation; another of Gene's books, *Dear Deer*, was also made into a DVD (both are available at <http://www.spokenartsmedia.com>)
- A local guardsman and mother, **Elisabeth Ann Matulewicz**, has published *Benny and Marshmallow: A Day of Mischief* (Ithaca Press, illustrated by Kim Sponaugle); autographed copies available at [www.lapcatdesigns.com](http://www.lapcatdesigns.com); also available at [elisabethmatulewicz.com](http://elisabethmatulewicz.com) and Amazon.com.
- **Susan Katz'** book *When the Shadbush Blooms* (Tricycle 2007) has been named a Children's Choice Award winner by the Children's Book Council; another book, *Oh, Theodore!* (Clarion 2007) has been named to the New York Public Library's 100 Titles for Reading and Sharing list as well as the Texas Library Association's 2 x 2 Awards list. Congratulations, Susan!
- **Jime Grabowski** wanted to share a website she calls "a fantastic website resource to spruce up your abilities and keep the mind" ([www.illustrationfriday.com](http://www.illustrationfriday.com)); Jime shares that she's got 1 year left towards her MFA in Illustration (Hartford) and that she looks forward to seeing folks at the Poconos retreat again.
- **Kelly Fineman** presented a workshop, *Taking Wing with Poetic Forms*, at the New England SCBWI conference back in April.
- **Karen E. M. Johnson** shares that her debut children's novel, *The Witness Tree and the Shadow of the Noose* (White Mane Publishing), a Civil War mystery, is coming out and can be pre-ordered online (amazon, barnes & noble etc). Way to go, Karen!





PHOTOS  
FROM  
THE  
POCONOS

### **New PENN & INK Editor Needed:**

*As much as I have enjoyed editing the chapter newsletter, I am stepping down. Anyone with an interest in taking on this position should contact Marilyn Hershey at:*

[drinkmilk@zoominternet.com](mailto:drinkmilk@zoominternet.com)

**BEST WISHES TO ALL EASTERN PA SCBWI WRITERS & ILLUSTRATORS!**

*Cheri Widzowski*