



SOCIETY OF CHILDREN'S BOOK
WRITERS AND ILLUSTRATORS

New York: West/Central Upstate Region

April 2026

Thank you for your interest in our region!

Award-winning author London Ladd joined us in March for an informative and inspiring discussion about his books and creative process, focusing on research and emotional connections. Over 100 people from around the world registered for this event! Writers and illustrators were treated to his extensive research process, which includes visiting locations where the stories take place and the kinds of questions he asks the authors who wrote those stories. If you missed **A Conversation with London Ladd: Bringing Depth to Your Work**, you can still register and view the recording until April 11 [here](#).

Spring promises an awakening in nature. This renewal and growth can inspire us to create, dive deep into revision, and craft our best work. Join us for **Revise and Strengthen Your Picture Book Manuscript with Intention with Heidi E.Y. Stemple** on April 21!

On behalf of our SCBWI members, I'd like to thank the following outgoing volunteers: Co-ARA, **Cait Darfler**, Co-PAL Coordinators, **Dee Romito** and **Sue Heavenrich**, who also served as a Co-ARA, for their volunteer service and time supporting writers and illustrators. We are grateful for the contributions they have made to your region.

Have a great month of writing and illustrating!

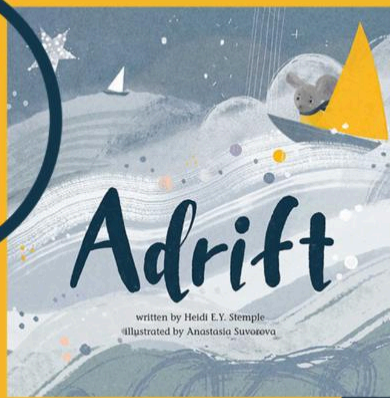
Patty Wurster: Regional Advisor

Annisa Glover: Illustrator Coordinator

Kathi Gunio: Newsletter Editor

Deb Blowers: Newsletter Proofreading Editor

Upcoming Events:



HEIDI E.Y. STEMPLE



Revise and Strengthen Your Picture Book Manuscript with Intention with Heidi E.Y. Stemple

Okay, you've written a picture book! Now, how do you make it better? **Award-winning author Heidi E.Y. Stemple** will pull apart one of her published picture books to look deeply at what makes it successful. She will discuss intentionality, arc, word choices, and heart. You will leave with new eyes for looking at your own manuscript and new skills for revision.

There will be a Q&A session afterwards.
Tuesday, April 21, 7 PM - 8 PM EDT on Zoom
This event will be recorded and made available until May 23, 2026.

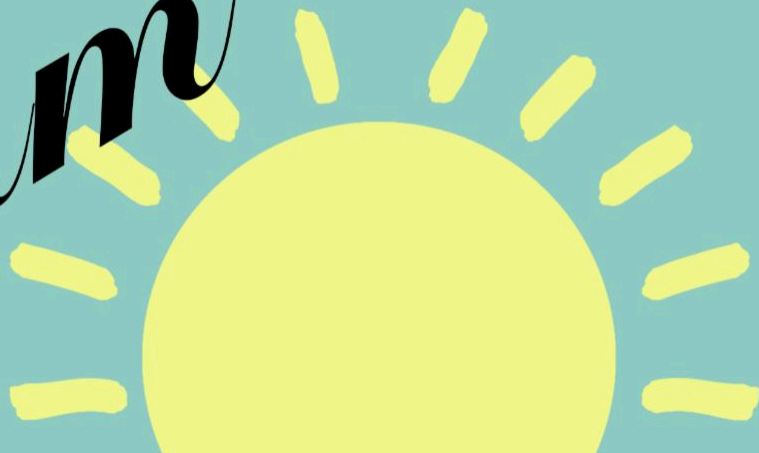
PICTURE BOOK MANUSCRIPT OR PICTURE BOOK DUMMY CRITIQUES ARE ALL SOLD OUT!

Critiques will take place on Wednesday, April 22, from 9 AM to 12:40 PM EDT on Zoom.

[Register for Heidi E.Y. Stemple](#)

a.m.

jam



Join us for an SCBWI New York West/Central Upstate a.m. JAM craft session.

Kick-start your week with a full hour of dedicated writing or illustrating. This is a quiet session. Welcome-5 mins. Write/Illustrate-20 mins. Break-5 mins. Write/Illustrate-20 mins. Break-5 mins. Goal Reflection-5 mins. Goal Sharing-10 mins.

Hosted by [Patty Wurster](#), SCBWI NY: West/Central Upstate Regional Advisor @ [SCBWI Member Profile](#).

Register for a.m.JAMs

A Tribute to Andrea Page



We are saddened to share the news that long-time SCBWI member, **Andrea Page**, has lost her battle with breast cancer and passed away on March 5, 2026.

Andrea was a longtime member of SCBWI with PAL (Published and Listed) status. She was also a member of the Rochester Area Children's Writers and Illustrators (RACWI) where she held the position of co-president from 2018 through 2022. She was active with the Rochester Children's and Teens Book Festival both as an organizer and as an author participant.

In the fall of 2025, Andrea joined five WNY authors at the NYS Reading Association (NYSRA) Annual conference in Buffalo to discuss how social-emotional learning (SEL) threads through their fiction and nonfiction stories and how their stories connect to curriculum. While in Buffalo, Andrea donated two of her books to the Children's Clinic at Roswell Park Cancer Center.

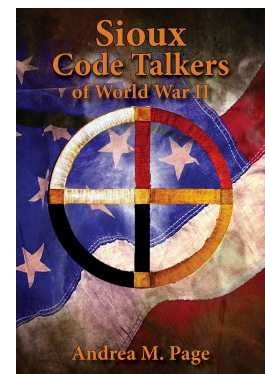
Andrea was a featured speaker at SCBWI regional events in Pennsylvania and Florida. She was a former board member of the Children's Literature Assembly (CLA) of the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) and also enjoyed her role as an instructor at the Highlights Foundation, where she mentored other children's authors.

She also joined four Indigenous creators to discuss their creative processes, inspirations, and the cultural significance of their latest and upcoming releases and you can watch her speak in the Penguin School and Library Team and Book-list webinar titled *Celebrate Native American and Indigenous Voices* [here](#):

She also had an impressive career as a Native American children's book author, highlighting Native American history, untold stories, and Lakota values.

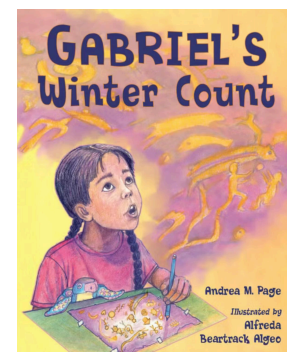
Her first book, *Sioux Code Talkers of World War II*, was published in March 2017 and quickly sold out of its first printing. As of 2024, it was on its fourth printing.

Andrea published her second book, *Who Was Wilma Mankiller?* in September 2025, and was the first Native American author to write for the Penguin Workshop Series.



While fighting cancer, she completed work on her third book, *Gabriel's Winter Count*, and proudly awaited its publication in October 2026.

Her legacy as an educator, author and advocate for Native American voices will surely live on. She will be sadly missed by the writing industry, and our condolences go out to all her loved ones.



PAL Community:

Connect with local PAL members!

The members on our PAL page have chosen "New York: West/Central Upstate" as their home region, designating our region as where they are geographically located.

[PAL on SCBWI Region Website](#)

[School and Library Visits on SCBWI Region Website](#)

Illustrator Community:

REGIONAL Website Illustrator Gallery:

Update or create your **SCBWI Illustrator Gallery** on your Profile.

[Illustrators on SCBWI Region Website](#)

Equity and Inclusion Community:

We hope to positively impact the lives of children, families, and storytellers, and strive to help lower the barriers in publishing.

Through education and skill sharing, we strive to support our members with their creation of books that improve the lives of readers. Children need to see themselves depicted in books to foster a sense of belonging and a healthy self-esteem.

Children also need to see diversity represented in books in order to develop empathy and understanding as they celebrate the communities in which they live. Books have the power to change lives! Books have the power to save lives!

Through these efforts, we hope that not only readers are impacted for the better, but our authors, illustrators, and storytellers are as well.

[Equity and Inclusion on SCBWI Region Website](#)

Let's Celebrate!!!

Kathi Gunio for being our newsletter editor!

Kate Woodle, Michelle Cavigliano, London Ladd, Erin O'Leary Brown, Kanchalee Deganis-Librera, Christopher Roberts, and Jacob Souva for their illustrations on our SCBWI NY: West/Central Upstate webpages.

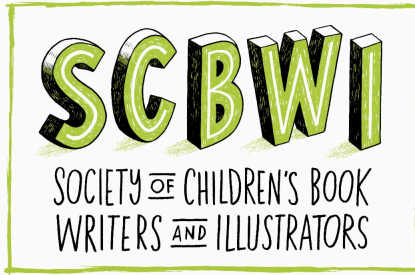
All Traditionally Published Books and Self-Published Books are welcome here!
Send your Good News by Friday, May 1, 2026 to Regional Advisor [Patty Wurster](#).

SCBWI Events and Information:

SCBWI Regional Virtual Events:

SCBWI regions offer affordable virtual events featuring industry professionals from all around the globe—and you can attend from the comfort of your own home! Check here often to find a webinar that fits your interests and your budget.

[SCBWI Regional Virtual Events](#)



SCBWI New York: West/Central Upstate

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