



SOCIETY OF CHILDREN'S BOOK
WRITERS AND ILLUSTRATORS

New York: West/Central Upstate Region

July/August 2026

Thank you for your interest in our region!

I highly recommend watching the [State of the Children's Market with Deborah Halverson](#) video for current, on point information in children's publishing. (This resource is located at your Member Home, My resources, on the **SCBWI** website.) Many writers and illustrators are stymied by the restructuring of publishing houses, book banning, and AI. Deborah always tells it like it is, and leaves us hopeful within the children's market.

I am pleased to report that our new **SCBWI** region Premium members have doubled in the past year, as interest in our region has grown! We now have over 1,100 **SCBWI** members receiving our event information in their **SCBWI Member Home News Feed** and in our monthly newsletters, which are archived for historical purposes on our **SCBWI** website pages.

Our **Connect Series** has grown into four unique events: **Picture Book**, **Illustrator**, **Novel** and **Sequential Art**. These are attended globally!

During the past year, in partnership with **SCBWI NY Westchester**, we hosted a table at the **NYSRA** conference in Buffalo featuring our **PALs** who offer School and Library Visits. We also created the **PALs School and Library Visits** pages on our **SCBWI** website, and implemented the **PAL Speaker Series**.

Additionally, we developed two events with industry professionals who offered critique experiences and submission opportunities for our members. We also offered one FREE webinar, using a grant from the **SCBWI** and the **Authors Coalition of America**, where over 100 people registered!

As for next year, we are currently finalizing the details on four webinars for the Fall (some with critiques and submission opportunities) as well as planning our **Spring Conference**. The **Connect Series** will continue.

Don't miss the **SCBWI Summer Virtual Conference** with four breakout sessions and additional **Pitch Roundtables**, **Illustrator Intensive** and **Portfolio Showcase**, and more! Click on the image below for details!

Have a great summer of writing and illustrating!

[Patty Wurster](#), Regional Advisor

SCBWI SUMMER VIRTUAL CONFERENCE 2026!

Online July 30 - August 2



#scbwiSummer26

Artwork by Heegyum Kim

www.scbwi.org/members/heegyum-kim

REGISTER
scbwi.org

Annisa Glover: Illustrator Coordinator
Bill Irvine: Co-Assistant Regional Advisor
Carolyn Osborne: Co-Assistant Regional Advisor

Kathi Gunio: Newsletter Editor
Deb Blowers: Newsletter Proofreading Editor

Welcome to the SCBWI Regional Team!



William Irvine, Co-Regional Advisor

William (Bill) Irvine first started writing and illustrating comics for his school newspaper at the tender age of nine. While that never resulted in the syndication deal he had hoped for, his love of art and storytelling resulted in two published picture books some twenty years later. That, too, did not bring him fame or fortune, so he turned his love of art and the telling of tales into a career in marketing and advertising. He enjoyed telling the tales of conglomerates and their trinkets until his hair turned white and his heart fell somber. "Picture books," his heart told him, "It's

Find out more about William here:

picture books that you really love." Today, it's not fame or fortune he seeks; it's the telling of tales with art and heart with his wife of 44 years and two big chocolate labs.



Find out more about Carolyn here:

Carolyn Osborne, Co-Regional Advisor

Carolyn holds a Communications Degree with an emphasis in Creative Writing and Speech. She has 20 years as both puppet director and writer for teen teams that traveled from Massachusetts to Ohio for performances, clinics, and competitions. She is the author of 2/3 of a YA trilogy (both books currently being updated with a third started and outlined) and her MG book is in outline. Carolyn has 40 years in the print industry, mostly as owner of a woman-owned print shop. Questions about printing? She's your girl. She has created several picture books and adventure stories written for a pair of now seven-year-olds. Carolyn says, "I guess that makes me a doting Grammy; my favorite job title."

Upcoming Events:



Join us for an SCBWI New York West/Central Upstate Novel Connect: Let's Build Your Query Package

You've polished your manuscript, perfected your opening pages, and identified the agents you want to query. Now it's time to build your query package. We'll review everything you need to include in your query letter—pitch, metadata, comp titles, author bio—and tips for writing your synopsis. We'll even discuss ways to connect directly with agents to help you rise out of the slush pile and help you on your path to representation. Bring a sample of either your pitch, synopsis, or author bio to share for feedback.

Even if you're not sharing, please join us and meet Chapter Book, Middle Grade, and Young Adult writers in our global community!

Hosted by **David Neuner**, YA writer and Novel Connect Facilitator **@SCBWI Member Profile**.

Tuesday, July 7, 7 PM—8:30 PM EDT on Zoom.

This **Novel Connect** is **FREE** for **SCBWI Premium Members**!

Above Illustration by William Irvine.

[Register for Novel Connect](#)



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 and includes: Welcome-5 mins., Write/Illustrate-20 mins., Break-5 mins., Write/Illustrate-20 mins., Break-5 mins., Write/Illustrate-20 mins., Goal Reflection-5 mins., and Goal Sharing-10 mins.

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

Every Monday morning, 9 AM - 10:30 AM EDT on Zoom.

This **a.m.JAM** craft session is **FREE** for **SCBWI Premium members**.

[Register for a.m.JAMs](#)

Call for PAL Coordinator!

If you are an **NYWCU (New York West-Central Upstate) PAL** member and would like to be the voice of our PALs, get involved with Regional Team event planning, and build our PAL community, consider becoming our **PAL Coordinator**. This position will include **FREE SCBWI MEMBERSHIP!**

Tasks include:

1. Liaison to Regional Team
2. Welcome and assist new PAL members
3. Voice for PAL members—two Zoom meetings per year
4. Annual **NYWCU** Conference—Liaison to Regional Team
5. PAL Speaker Series—inform and encourage PALs to participate
6. Annual **NYSRA** Conference—Liaison to New York Regional Teams
7. School Visits Page at the SCBWI Website—inform and encourage PALs to participate
8. Crystal Kite Awards—inform and encourage PALs to participate
9. Encourage PALs to share news and book deals in our monthly newsletter

Please send your inquiry to [Patty Wurster](#), Regional Advisor before **July 30**.

PAL on SCBWI Region Website

School and Library Visits on SCBWI Region Website

Illustrator Community:

EXPLORE & ENJOY!

As the upcoming **SCBWI** Summer Conference approaches, be sure to take time to relax and enjoy yourself! Sometimes we get so caught up in the hustle and grind, that we forget that the number one priority is to focus on **YOU**—your path, your journey and your development. Taking that step back to explore and enjoy is essential for your growth. It can also give us insight into what has been challenging and create a fresh perspective. What are some things you'll be doing to explore and enjoy this summer? Let us know!

Annisa Glover, Illustrator Coordinator

REGIONAL Website Illustrator Gallery

Update or create your **SCBWI** Illustrator Gallery on your **SCBWI** Profile page!

Illustrators on SCBWI Region Website

Upcoming in Our Community!

Ignite Your Writing *in the* Educational Market!

An In-Person Retreat for Children's Writers

Featuring



Sandra K. Athans



Mike Downs

Special Guest Editors



Katharine Hale
Senior Production Editor
Red Line Editorial



Katie Kawa
Publisher
Rosen Publishing Group



Kathy Furgang
Executive Editor and Team Lead
Six Red Marbles

August 20-23, 2026

Highlights/Boyd's Mills Retreat Campus
Milanville, PA

PAL member, **Sandra Athans**, with Mike Downs are faculty at **Boyd's Mills** in August.

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More information here:



Oneonta World of Learning is planning a **Literacy Festival** at Fortin Park in Oneonta. They are seeking authors and illustrators to share their books and work in October. Contact **Sarah Ulery** for more information.

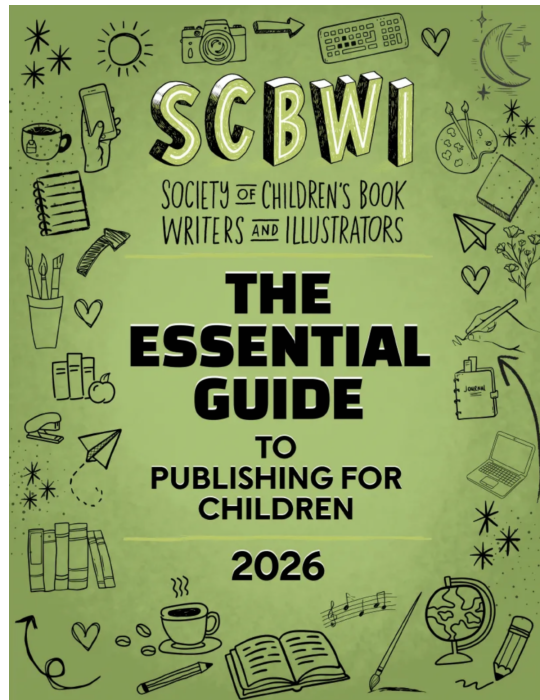
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More about OWL here:

SCBWI Events and Information:

The Essential Guide to Publishing for Children

This guide offers invaluable advice and resources for authors, illustrators, and translators of children's books. Inside you will find new and essential articles such as maximizing social media, creating book trailers, best practices in independent publishing, and grassroots promotion. Our up-to-the-minute Market Survey includes a comprehensive house-by-house listing of imprints, editors, art directors, and key personnel. Other directories include The International Market Survey, The Reviewers Directory, The Agents Directory, and unique features called Edited By and Agented By, in which editors and agents have been surveyed to provide a history of their recent acquisitions. Key resources include an annotated bibliography of reference books for aspiring children's book creators, as well as a current listing of bloggers, reviewers, grants, and awards opportunities.



[Download The Essential Guide 2026](#)

Connect, Create, and Critique: Lean In to Your Community!

For many children's book creators, the journey toward bringing a story to life, whether you're writing, illustrating, or translating, begins with finding the right people to grow alongside. A critique group offers something every creator needs: honest, thoughtful feedback that provides insight into the creator's work and helps develop their unique voice. We invite you to join our **SCBWI** critique group builder and become part of a global community united by a shared passion for children's literature.



[Critique Groups](#)

Supercharge your SCBWI membership with the Member Benefits Video Series!

Dive into a treasure trove of insider tips and expert advice designed to help you make the most of your membership! Whether you're a writer or illustrator, these exclusive videos will show you how to unlock powerful **SCBWI** resources, elevate your craft, and take your creative career to exciting new heights!

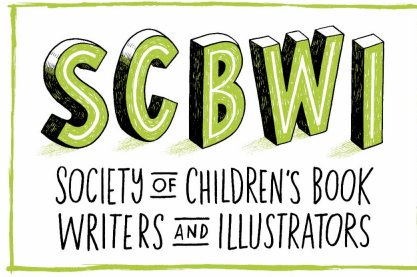
[SCBWI Member Video Digest](#)

SCBWI Regional Virtual Events

SCBWI Global 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 this

newsletter section 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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