

SOCIETY OF CHILDREN'S BOOK
WRITERS AND ILLUSTRATORS

New York: West/Central Upstate Region

October 2026

Thank you for your interest in our region!

As we begin the Fall season, we experience an abundance of inspiration from the world around us. The vibrant cool greens of summer give way to the bright warm orange/reds of autumn. With shortened days, find moments to journal or sketch outdoors.

Poetic Prose Practice with Quartez Harris, last week's interactive workshop, gave us opportunities to see our words in creative ways. Quartez was energetic and thoughtful in his presentation and with his responses to our words. If you missed this opportunity, you can still register for the recording [here](#).

Emily Daluga, Editor at Chronicle Books, will be presenting **Middle Grade Monsters and Mysteries** next week. She will give us insights into this market and help us craft our pages.

Have a great month writing, illustrating, and translating!

Patty Wurster: Regional Advisor

Carolyn Osborne: Assistant Regional Advisor

Annisa Glover: Illustrator Coordinator

Kathi Gunio and Deb Blowers: Newsletter Team

Spring Conference May 22-23, 2027: Save the Date!



We're planning two days filled with keynotes, panel discussions, and breakout sessions. Learn from industry professionals offering submission opportunities and individual critiques, be inspired by award-winning authors and illustrators and build meaningful connections with writers and illustrators in our region.

Join us on **May 22-23, 2027**, at Daemen University in Buffalo/Amherst, NY! Located minutes from I-90 and the Buffalo International Airport, the beautiful Daemen University campus offers state-of-the-art venue services and spaces, free parking and 24/7 security.

Illustration by **Andrea Wickert**

Upcoming Events:

Middle Grade Monsters and Mysteries

with
Emily Daluga
Editor at Chronicle Books



Middle Grade Monsters and Mysteries with Emily Daluga

Whether it's a classic whodunit or a new spine-chilling tale, kids can't get enough of horror and mystery stories! Even though many young readers are struggling with reading right now, these two genres remain some of the most popular categories in middle grade. They continue to sell year after year and are getting more critical acclaim in awards and reviews.

Kids are clamoring for their next great read—and publishers are eager to help them find it! In this presentation, we'll discuss recent killer trends, investigate how to craft a satisfying story, and crack the case on how to help your project stand out in the market!

Emily Daluga is an editor at Chronicle Books.

Monday, October 12, 2026, 7 PM - 8:30 PM on Zoom

This event will be recorded and made available until November 15, 2026.

Register for Monsters and Mysteries

Connect Series:



Join us for an SCBWI NY: West/Central Upstate Illustrator Connect: Focus on Composition

Whether you are creating an illustration for your portfolio, or working on a picture book page spread, we'll explore the qualities needed to make your composition excel! Participants will have the option to share one or two illustrations with the audience for feedback.

Even if you're not sharing, please join us and meet Illustrators in our global community!

Hosted by **Kate Woodle**, PAL member and **Illustrator Connect Facilitator**.

Tuesday, October 20, 2026, 7 PM - 8:30 PM EDT on Zoom.
This **Illustrator Connect** is **FREE** for **SCBWI Premium members**.

Above illustration by **Michelle Cavigliano**

Register for Illustrator Connect



Join us for an SCBWI NY: West/Central Upstate Sequential Art Connect: Focus on Page Turns

Let's take a look at the picture book page spread and explore the qualities needed to make your compositions dynamic, so that readers will want to turn that page for more. Participants will have the option to share one picture book dummy with the audience for feedback.

Even if you're not sharing, please join us and meet Sequential Art Illustrators in our global community!

Hosted by **Annisa Glover**, published picture book illustrator, Illustrator Coordinator, and Sequential Art Connect Facilitator.

Tuesday, November 3, 2026, 7 PM - 8:30 PM on Zoom
This **Sequential Art Connect** is **FREE** for **SCBWI Premium members**.

Above Illustration by **Jonathan Schnapp**

Register for Sequential Art Connect

Featured SCBWI Member!

Íci Vanwesenbeeck

Tell us a little about yourself:

My name is Íci Vanwesenbeeck.

I live in Amherst, New York, with my partner, son, and German Shepherd, Shelby.

I am an aspiring naturalist, a college professor, and a writer.



What are you most passionate about in your craft:

I am most passionate about the aesthetics of sound. In addition to structure, characters, and plot, what makes a picture book story touch my heart is the words, tone, and musicality. I think I am partly drawn to the genre because it allows poetry and art to coexist.

What do you love most about the children's book industry:

The industry encourages writers to work with critique groups and beta readers, conduct research for their books, and prepare their manuscripts as thoroughly as possible. These are industry standards, but they are also valued in academia, and for good reason. Yes, there are finance-driven marketing considerations, as well as the volatility of trends, but the standards for what constitutes an authentic, meticulously prepared manuscript are high, and I appreciate that.

How has the SCBWI helped your career:

It's a welcoming, respectful, and structured community, and, more importantly, it empowers writers. I frequently participate in SCBWI talks, seminars, and critique opportunities, and I find them both inspirational and beneficial.

And a few words about my fellow writers and illustrators in the SCBWI NY: West/Central Upstate Region chapter: they are some of the most talented, down-to-earth, and relentlessly kind people I have ever known. That type of network is precious and especially critical early in a career.

PAL Community:

Erica Sirotich is our new PAL Coordinator. Congratulations and thank you for stepping into this role!

The **NYSRA Conference Playful Literacies** is Saturday, November 7th and Sunday, November 8th at Hunter College, 695 Park Avenue, New York, NY 10065.

All PALs are invited to donate one published book for our **SCBWI NY Regions'** tables.

An email with the mailing address of the organizer of this year's PAL tables will be sent this week.

NYSRA 26 Playful Literacies Information



PAL on SCBWI Region Website

School and Library Visits on SCBWI Region Website

Illustrator Community:

Let's Finish Strong!

Happy Fall, Illustrators!

As we start to close out the year, let's finish strong and celebrate a phenomenal year full of creativity, success and growth! We've got some exciting upcoming events, and even a grant opportunity to look out for!

For the month of October, submissions will be open for the Narrative Art Award. Enter for a chance to win an all-expense paid trip to the upcoming **SCBWI** New York Winter Conference in 2027.

The winning illustrations will also be displayed during the New York Portfolio Showcase (in tandem with the conference). Take a chance, and apply starting October 1, 2026!

More information about the award criteria can be found [here](#).

Annisa Glover: Illustrator Coordinator

REGIONAL Website Illustrator Gallery

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

Around the Region:



Whose Tree is This, Illustrated by Julian Plum (written by Marilyn Singer)

Julian's love of poetry, leaf litter, textures and bugs inspired their selection of this original gouache painting to be displayed in the Society of Illustrators **The Original Art 46th Annual Exhibition** at the Museum of Illustration in NYC, October 31, 2026 through January 30, 2027.

Find more about [Julian](#)



Rochester Children and Teens Book Festival 2026

PALs featured are Kathleen Blasi, Deb Blowers (Pen name: DJ Brandon), Judy Bradbury, Susannah Buhrman-Deever, Rachel DiNunzio, Keely Hutton, Will Hubbell, Rose O'Keefe, Dee Romito, Erica Sirotich, Vivian Vande Velde, and Brian Yanish on Saturday, November 7, 2026 from 10 AM - 4 PM at Monroe Community College.

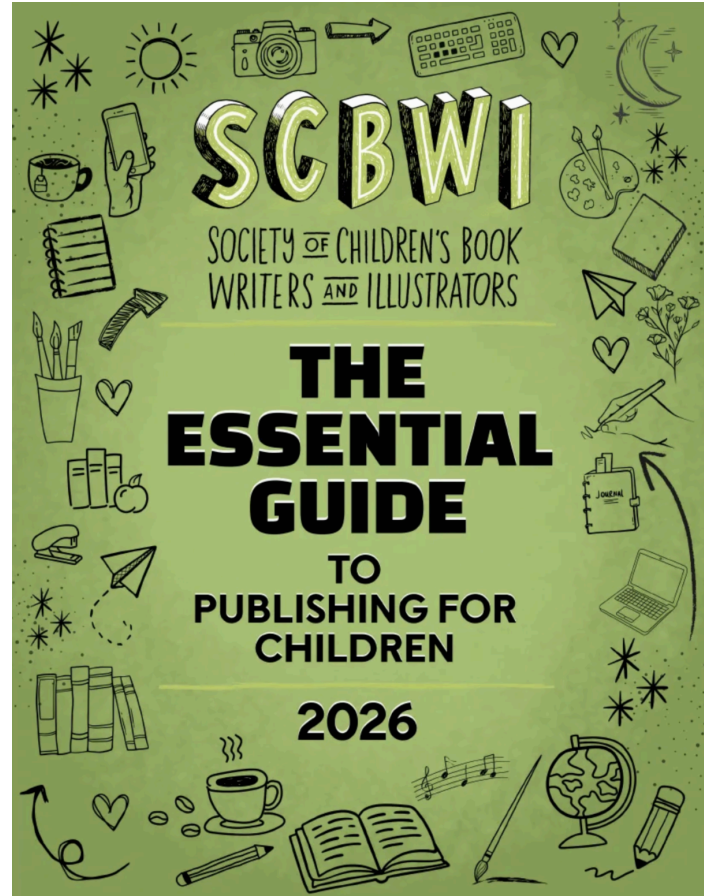
[RCTBF26 Information](#)

We want to celebrate and share your accomplishments and good news!
All Traditionally Published Books, and Self-Published Books are welcome here!
Send your **Good News** by Wednesday, October 28, 2026, to Regional Advisor [Patty Wurster](#), subject line: **Newsletter**

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!

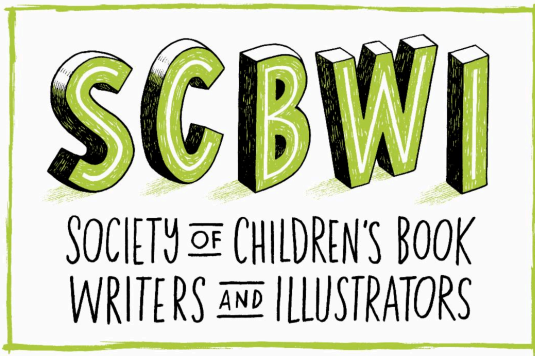
Dive into a treasure trove of insider tips and expert advice designed to help you make the most of your membership! Whether you're a writer or illustrator, these exclusive videos will show you how to unlock powerful **SCBWI** resources, elevate your craft, and take your creative career to exciting new 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 **SCBWI** website page 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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Your copy should address 3 key questions: Who am I writing for (audience)? Why should they care (benefit)? What do I want them to do (call-to-action)?

Create a great offer by adding words like "free," "personalized," "complimentary," or "customized." A sense of urgency often helps readers take action, so consider inserting phrases like "for a limited time only" or "only 7 remaining!"

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