

SOCIETY OF CHILDREN'S BOOK  
WRITERS AND ILLUSTRATORS

## NEW YORK: West/Central Upstate June 2025

*"The stories we read in books are ones we can experience  
over and over again.*

*They serve as anchors, wings, compasses, road maps,  
magnifying glasses."*

**Jason Reynolds**

### **Welcome Friends of SCBWI New York: West/Central Upstate!**

Signing up for the Summer Reading Challenges at my local library are joyful moments in my childhood. Those long summer days I spent reading, immersing myself in stories, experiencing that odd feeling of loss when you finish a book, and racing back to the library to report my success and grab another book. I love reading Middle Grade books and here are three titles that I'll be reading this summer that I'm excited to share with you:

**GHOST by Jason Reynolds**

**EGG MARKS THE SPOT; A Skunk and Badger Story by Amy Timberlake**

**QUAGMIRE TIARELLO COULDN'T BE BETTER by Mylisa Larsen**

Find **JOY** in your Writing and Illustrating,  
**Patty Wurster, Regional Advisor**



**SCBWI CRYSTAL KITE AWARDS 2025**

Each year we recognize great books from around the world. The Crystal Kite Awards are chosen by other children's book writers and illustrators, making them the only peer-given awards in publishing for young readers. Books published in 2024 are from fifteen SCBWI regional divisions around the world.

First round voting for your favorite books from each of the 15 Crystal Kite divisions has begun. You can vote for EACH division. First round voting is open till: June 17, 2025, 2:59 AM (UTC-7)

**VOTE NOW!**

## **PAL News:**

**From PAL coordinators, Dee Romito & Sue Heavenrich**

Thank you to all the **PAL** members who filled out the survey. Look for an email in the next week with a link for a **PAL** Zoom gathering this month. **Dee** and **Sue** are developing some upcoming programs based on your survey feedback. Also, a reminder to review your member status on your member profile. If your membership has lapsed, renew to maintain your **PAL** membership level.

**Happy Book Birthdays to:**

**Dee Romito** for her picture book, **KISSES ARE INVISIBLE** which releases on June 17 from Tilbury House.

**Sandra Athans** for her middle grade book, **GIGGLE-WORTHY POEM PROMPTS FOR KIDS** which came out this past March from Red Wolf Press.

**What are PALs up to this month?**

**Sue Heavenrich** is sharing a pumpkin science and kid's gardening program at **Sayre Public Library** on **Saturday, June 7th**.

**Dee Romito** will be reading her new book, **THE AIR WE SHARE**, for a special "**Every Day is Earth Day: Storytime with Dee Romito**" event on **Monday, June 9th** from 6:30pm-7:30pm (EDT). Register for the event on the **Mothers Out Front website**.

**Marla Coppolino** is leading her annual **Snail Walk for the Finger Lakes Land Trust** on **Saturday, June 7th** at **Ellis Hollow Nature Preserve**. Find out more at **FLLT website**.

**Sandra Athans** is on the faculty for the **Highlights** online summer workshop, "**Writing for the Educational Market**", that goes from **July 9th - August 12th**.

**NY State Reading Association Conference Panel Proposal DEADLINE:**

The NY State Reading Association's annual statewide conference is being held in Buffalo in November. **Judy Bradbury** is leading a panel with a group of local children's authors. If

you have ideas for a panel, the deadline for proposal submissions is **Monday, June 30th**. More info [here](#).

## PAL on SCBWI Website

# Illustrator News:



If you'd like to get together with **SCBWI New York: West/Central Upstate Illustrators** to share concepts, work, portfolios, and get feedback; join us for this **FREE CONNECT for SCBWI Premium Members**. We are meeting on **Tuesday evenings at 7:00 PM EST** every **6 weeks on ZOOM**. The vibe is casual, supportive and **FUN!** We will be screen sharing and time will be divided based on the number attending.  
**Summer Schedule: June 24th and August 5th!**

## Register for Illustrator Connect

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### Draw This!

#### June Prompt: OOPS!

Post your work to **Bluesky**, **Instagram**, and in your **SCBWI Illustrator Gallery** with the hashtag **#SCBWIDrawThis**. Deadline is the last day of each month. More [here](#).

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### Website Illustrator/Author Illustrator Page!

Update or create your **SCBWI Illustrator Gallery** on your **Profile**. Make sure you select **New York: West/Central Upstate** as your region. If you are not included on this page or need assistance, let us know [here](#).

## Illustrators on SCBWI Website

# Query Corner:

## TIP #2: What does being ready to query mean?

### You have a polished manuscript (MS)

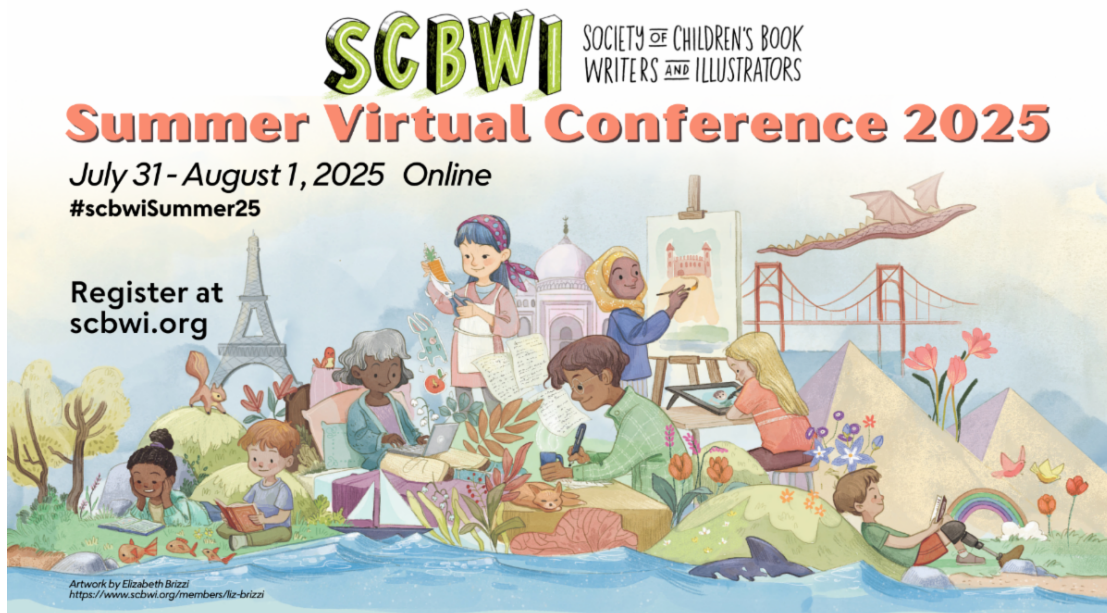
1. If doing picture books (PBs) have multiple polished MSs (3-5 in total).
2. Polished means run through critique groups/partners and/or paid critiques.
3. Having your friend/partner/family read it doesn't count (sorry).

### You have read lots of books in your genre to ensure you know the market

1. Within the last 3-5 years.
2. You have taken workshops, classes, or webinars, and read teaching books to understand the craft.
3. You WANT to query the traditional book market, at least at first.
4. Querying takes a lot of time; the traditional market is notoriously slow and getting worse. If you don't want to wait years, you might consider self publishing.

**Give yourself a HUGE high-five for getting to this point. It's a marathon, not a sprint. From Cait Darfler**

## SCBWI Events and Information:



**Register before June 25th to lock in early bird pricing!**

**More information at SCBWI**



# 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.

## Regional Virtual Events Listing

**Grab your BADGE:** click image below for link



## Translation in SCBWI:

SCBWI has a member category for **Translators**! Why? Children deserve to explore their whole planet through books. Translators bring them books written in many languages, in many places.

**More Information at SCBWI**

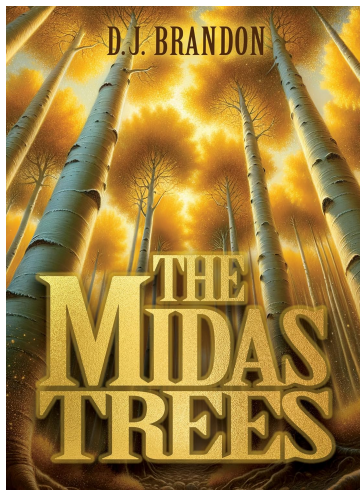
## Local Events Around the Region:

**Workshop: Finding the Right Voice: Writing for Young Readers** will be at the **Tompkins Center for History & Culture** on **June 18th**.

## Let's Celebrate!!!

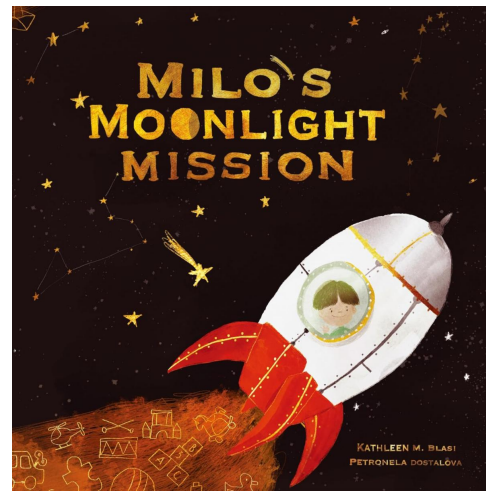
**DJ Brandon (aka Deb Blowers)** who has volunteered to join the NewsletterTeam as our **Proofreading Editor**!

**David Neuner** who has volunteered to be a **Facilitator** for an upcoming **Connect Series** for writers. Much more to come!



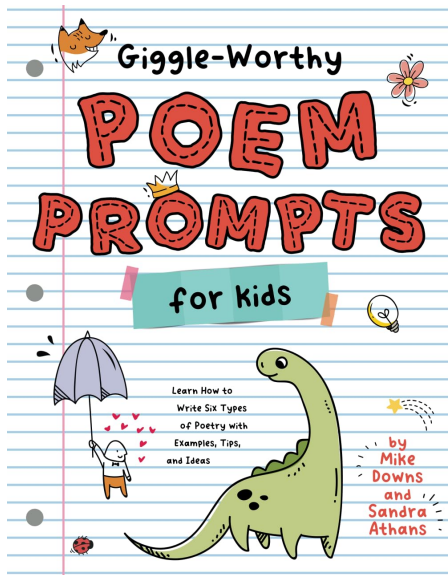
**DJ BRANDON**  
(aka **DEB BLOWERS**)  
**THE MIDAS TREES**

DJ's newest book is a MG NIV. Pearl must decide whether to keep her father's disappearance a secret or break a long-standing rule by reaching out for help. Released in February from West 44 Books. Find more about [DJ here](#).



**KATHLEEN BLASI**  
**MILO'S MOONLIGHT MISSION**

Captain Milo is ready for takeoff! But Second-in-Command-- also known as Mom--has yet to report for duty. Illustrated by Petronela Dostalova. Re-releasing August 12th from Picnic Heist Publishing. Find more about [Kathleen here](#).



**SANDRA ATHANS**  
**GIGGLE-WORTHY POEM PROMPTS FOR KIDS**

Co-authored with Mike Downs, this book is filled with easy-to-follow guidelines, how-tos, tips, advice, and poetry prompts for kids from 8-12. It highlights free verse, haiku, limericks and more from Red Wolf Press. Find out more about [Sandra here](#).



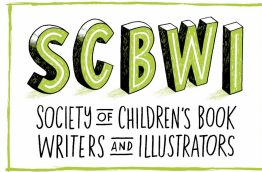
**DEE ROMITO**  
**KISSES ARE INVISIBLE**

In a world that is both full of wonder and sometimes scary, Theo learns that the things we can most count on in life are often invisible. Illustrated by Jen White. Releases June 17th from Tilbury House. Find more about [Dee here](#).

Send your Good News by 1 PM EST on the last Friday of the month to  
Regional Advisor; **Patty Wurster**  
PAL Members can send your Good News to  
Co-ARA/PAL Coordinator **Sue Heavenrich**

**NEWSLETTER CONTRIBUTING AND PROOFREADING EDITORS:**

**Patty Wurster:** Regional Advisor  
**Sue Heavenrich:** Co-ARA and PAL Coordinator  
**Cait Darfler:** Co-ARA  
**Dee Romito:** PAL Coordinator  
**Deb Blowers:** Proofreading Editor



## **SCBWI: West Cent NY**

### **CONTACT US!**

**WCNY Website**

**Bluesky**

**Instagram**

**Facebook**

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