Photos from NESCBIWI events. Above: At Agent/Editor Day on November 4. One of the critique tables celebrated their leader, Feiwal & Friends/Swoon editor Holly West (see article inside). Kelly Carey, Megan Howe, Annie Cronin Romano, Holly West (editor), Pamela Quattrocchi, Rae Chalmers, Dawn Metcalf, D’Ann Burrow.

Right: Omar Bah, Founder & Executive Director of the Refugee Dream Center, Lin Oliver, SCBWI Executive Director, Mary Wagley Copp, NESCBIWI member who wrote the winning application to bring donated books to the center. (See article inside)

# The Society of Children’s Book Writers & Illustrators New England

## Your Regional Team

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The NEWS is available to all SCBWI members through [www.newengland.scbwi.org](http://www.newengland.scbwi.org)

The New England Society of Children’s Book Writers & Illustrators is a chapter of the international Society of Children’s Book Writers & Illustrators, 8221 Beverly Boulevard, Los Angeles, CA 90048. See [www.scbwi.org](http://www.scbwi.org) for more information. Articles and events listed in the NEWS are for your information only and, except for SCBWI sponsored events, should not be considered an endorsement. The New England region is an all-volunteer organization. To volunteer, please email your regional advisor. Original artwork and articles are property of their creators and may be reproduced only with their written permission.
NESCBWI Resources
Kathy Quimby Johnson

Where to Find…..
The web, the net, the interwebz—whatever you call it, it’s vast. That means it’s hard to know where to start when you want to find information (“What’s the theme for the next New England SCBWI conference?” or get the word out (“I’m doing a signing at…”). New England SCBWI offers multiple resources, but some of them have been around long enough that it’s worth a brief review.

Social Media:
Facebook: “Like” https://www.facebook.com/nescbwi to keep up with official New England SCBWI events, from the annual conference (and the call for proposals) and Crystal Kite voting to retreats, workshops, Encores, etc. Newsletter availability is also posted here.

Check out the NESCBWI events page for up-to-the-minute listings
https://www.facebook.com/nescbwi/events?key=events

Twitter: @nescbwi and #nescbwi also offers information about events.

The listserv: The New England listserv is one of the most interactive places for members. This is where you can post your writing events—signings, bookstore appearances—and make announcements such as agents acquired or books sold. It’s also the place to look for a roommate for or a ride to the New England conference or encore or a New England SCBWI workshop.

To join the listserv you will need to have a Yahoo account or a gmail address. Sign into Yahoo (yahoo.com) and go to: https://groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/nescbwi/info. The listserv is available in digest form, which minimizes the number of daily emails you receive.

**If you are looking for a critique group, either email Critique Group Coordinator Stacy Mozer at critiquegroups@nescbwi.org or visit nescbwicritiques.blogspot.com.

To assure that you receive email announcements of the bimonthly newsletter and other occasional communications, make sure your name is included on our regional email list. The link for that is available on our website’s resource page: http://newengland.scbwi.org/resources/

That brings me to the most important point of all: Visit us on the web. Nescbwi.org is available when you log in to scbwi.org. While you are at scbwi.org, please also take the opportunity to update your member profile, especially your email address. That way you’ll stay informed about what’s going on in our very busy region.

You’ll find your region on your member profile page. One click and you’ll find yourself at the New England home page. Useful links are on the right, including one to “Resources,” where you’ll find more detailed information about many of the resources listed here.
What’s Going On

Please check out the NESCBWI Facebook Events Page. You will find an up-to-date listing of events there. https://www.facebook.com/nescbwi/events?key=events

Also see the Regional Meet & Greets Facebook Page. These are small informal events organized locally (contact PALARA@nesscbwi.org).


We’re so excited for our upcoming NESCBWI Spring Conference, which will be held on April 20 - 22, 2018 at the Sheraton Hotel in Springfield, MA.

A sneak peak highlights on page 5

Laura Cooper, Kirstine Call, Kris Asselin, Katey Howes enjoying SCBWI NYC in 2017.
We’re so excited for our upcoming NESCBWI Spring Conference, which will be held on April 20-22, 2018 at the Sheraton Hotel in Springfield, MA. Here’s a sneak peak of some of our highlights:

Keynote Speakers

Amy Reed is the author of the contemporary young adult novels BEAUTIFUL (a 2011 YALSA Quick Pick), CLEAN (a 2012 YALSA Quick Pick, Junior Library Guild Selection, Northern California Book Award Nominee, and YALSA Best Fiction for Young Adults nominee), CRAZY (Bank Street College Best Book of the Year), OVER YOU (2014 YALSA Best Fiction for Young Adults nominee), DAMAGED, INVINCIBLE and UNFORGIVABLE. Her most recent novel, THE NOWHERE GIRLS, received starred reviews from Kirkus, School Library Journal, and Booklist. She also edited OUR STORIES, OUR VOICES, an anthology of personal essays by YA authors to be released Summer 2018. You can find her online at www.amyreedfiction.com.

Rita Williams-Garcia is the celebrated author of a dozen acclaimed books for children and teens. She was named a three-time finalist for the Coretta Scott King Author Award, as well as a three-time finalist for the National Book Award Prize for Young People. She is most known for her Gaither Sisters Trilogy (ONE CRAZY SUMMER, P.S. BE ELEVEN, and GONE CRAZY IN ALABAMA). Her most recent novel, CLAYTON BYRD GOES UNDERGROUND was named a National Book Award Finalist and an NAACP Image Award Nominee. You can find her online at https://rita-williamsgarcia.squarespace.com.

Workshop Highlights

You asked, we listened! Based on attendee feedback, we’ve made sure to include workshops on digital illustration, technology and tools for writers, the business of publishing, and diversity in children’s literature. We’re also bringing back some workshop favorites, as well as bringing in “brand new to NESCBWI Annual Conference” authors, illustrators, and critique faculty.

New This Year

Matthew Winner, cofounder of All the Wonders and host of All the Wonders: The Children’s Book Podcast, will be offering social media critiques (for an additional conference fee). The format of these critiques will be
similar to manuscript critiques. Interested participants will sign up ahead of time and complete a brief survey that includes their website (if available) and the name of/link to any social media accounts (including but not limited to Facebook, Facebook author page, Twitter, Snapchat, YouTube), as well as an indication of their target audience (picture book readers, MG, YA, etc.). Matthew will analyze these social media accounts ahead of time and create written feedback that includes an analysis of social media presence, suggestions on how to expand reach, and some other helpful tips applicable to the individual. You can find Matthew online at www.matthewcwinner.com.

Registration will open sometime in February (Date TBD). In the meantime, Check out our Facebook Page NESCBWI Spring Conference to stay up-to-date on conference announcements Spring Conference Page at www.nescbwi.org near the end of January (TBD) for a full schedule of conference events

We can’t wait to see you there!

Mark Your Calendars and

Stay Tuned!

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From the RA DESK
Sally Riley
Southern New England Co-RA

I wish you all could have been in Providence, RI on Monday December 11th, when the Refugee Dream Center was presented with hundreds of books from the SCBWI Books for Readers donations. I’m sure you’ll see reports from HQ, but I had to let you know what a wonderful event it was and how proud I was once again to belong to the SCBWI. In a world when many organizations such as this focus only on helping members get ahead, it was so gratifying to watch the focus shift to introducing needy children to the joy of reading.

We appreciated the NE-SCBWI volunteers who were able to help that evening:
Julia Boyce and Betsy Devany (Photo Station)
Kara LaReau (Story Time Station)
Anika and Chris Dennis (Illustration Station)
Gaia Cornwall and Marlo Garnsworthy (Book Plate Station)
Linda Crotta Brennan, Jannie Ho, Margo Lemieux, Marilyn Salerno, and Pegi Deitz Shea (Assistance where needed passing out books, serving food, and helping at the stations)

We couldn’t have done it without you all!

Kara Skalling, Refugee Dream Center Programs Coordinator, Omar Bah, the co-founder and executive director of the Refugee Dream Center, Tammy Brown, SCBWI Director of Community Marketing & Engagement
Imagine a room filled with over 100 refugees, from very young to the elderly. Picture children at one of the stations, creating book plates for the very first book many of them will ever own ... or see others sitting at another station enthralled as they hear stories being read to them. Picture a young girl leaving the Photo Station cradling her picture, having told Betsy that she’d never had anyone give her a picture taken of her before. And picture a young preteen girl who tells Chris at the Illustration Station she likes his drawing, but that she can’t draw. He sits with her and shows her how circles and triangles can become the very drawing he created. She beams as I tell her she will never again be able to tell anyone else she doesn’t know how to draw. And perhaps most poignant of all are heartfelt comments made by Omar Bah, the co-founder and executive director of the Refugee Dream Center, especially his statement to the audience of refugees: “America is not what we see in the news and the political spheres or discussions out there ... THIS is America.”

You could not all be there, of course, to hear the happy laughter and the joyful noise of celebration ... to share the food, most of which had been proudly prepared by the refugees themselves ... and to see the smiles and feel the warmth of grateful hugs. But you can still join with me in being thankful to the SCBWI for creating this amazing program. Once again we owe our gratitude to Lin Oliver and Steve Mooser for having the vision and for building the dream that has become the caring, enriching, life-changing SCBWI.

Sally Riley

Refugee Dream Center Report from Lin Oliver, SCBWI Executive Director

“Participating in the Books for Readers event for the Refugee Dream Center was a highlight of my year. Working side by side with the regional team members from New England and the many volunteers they gathered gave us all a glowing sense of community. The joy of giving books to newly arrived refugee kids is a memory I will treasure forever.”

From NESCBWI member Mary Wagley Copp who wrote the winning application.

Wow - I was so excited when I heard that the Refugee Dream Center had won the Books for Readers award. I now know there was quite a lot of competition so we are even more honored to be chosen. The work that resettlement and post-resettlement agencies do is so critical, not just for folks resettling, but also for the larger community, as we work for a deeper understanding and support of each other. So much of RDC’s work, on an individual and collective level, will be greatly enhanced by the SCBWI books. A child being gifted a book is special - especially if that child has never had one of his/her own. So many of these children need stories that entertain, reassure, and help to heal. What a gift. And now, for the adults in the ESL classes, who are learning...
to read for the first time or again in a new language, there are books to borrow from the new lending library. Imagine!

I remember one day last year when I was visiting the Refugee Dream Center, a newly resettled Syrian family was there too, being helped by Omar. The small office was jammed packed and the youngest boy of the family looked lost and afraid. I remember thinking how wonderful it would be if I could sit with him and share a picture book - pointing to pictures and saying words - a fun distraction that might have been comforting and reassuring. I might have even learned a few Arabic words from him! Now, when a similar situation occurs, there will be a book to share!

The SCBWI celebration for RDC was amazing. Of course, none of us on the planning end really knew who would show up, how many kids could come, if the space would work, would there be enough food, etc!! We did expect a degree of chaos and we vowed to stay flexible. WOW - it was better than any of us had imagined. First of all, to have numerous long tables displayed with children’s books is a thing of beauty and to know that all those books were donated by SCBWI members was overwhelming. How generous. It was also incredible that so many local authors and illustrators came to share their skills and be with the children and to celebrate. Many of them said that they felt they were the ‘lucky’ ones that evening. Local SCBWI leaders and RDC volunteers, Brown U students - they all came to help and support the endeavor. It was an example of real community - a celebration of each other and what can happen when we come together to learn from and celebrate each other.

The RDC worked all evening to transport so many people from the office to the celebration site - along with food cooked by resettled families. The room quickly swelled with joy and excitement and children. There was a reading corner, illustration booths, ‘create a bookplate’ table, a photo booth, etc. Parents were eating at long tables and admiring books, Yves Knight Jean from Congo and Mohammed Al Shawafa from Syria read their poems, Omar and Lin Oliver spoke. Generally, it was an evening of celebrating children, books and community. As Omar said...“This is America”. At least, the best of it.

And how grateful I felt to be amidst that kind of spirit, generosity and love.
On November 4, 2017, New England SCBWI hosted our third annual Agent/Editor Day—this year in a new location: The Devens Commons Center in Devens, Massachusetts. For the first time, we invited art directors as well, allowing us to be able to accommodate illustrators as well as writers. Over 100 members attended and enjoyed the critique talents of fifteen professionals from New England and New York City.

For authors of middle grade or young adult fiction, as well as authors and illustrators of picture books, there is nothing better than getting professional feedback on your manuscript, book dummy, or portfolio. This program is an opportunity for a first look critique on written or illustrated work.

- Julie Bliven, editor, Charlesbridge
- Kate Fletcher, editor, Candlewick
- Ashley Hearn, editor, Page Street Publishing
- Tricia Lin, editor, Simon & Schuster/Aladdin
- Tracey Marchini, agent, Bookends
- Rebecca Podos, agent, Rees Literary Agency
- Holly West, editor, MacMillan
- Karen Boss, editor, Charlesbridge
- Diane Earley, art director, Charlesbridge
- Christy Ewers, agent, CATugeau Artist Agency
- Melissa Kim, editor, Islandport Press
- Kristen Nobles, publisher, Page Street Publishing
- Ann Stott, art director, Candlewick
- Sarah Taylor, designer, Charlesbridge
- Chris Tugeau, agent, CATugeau
Kris Asselin opening the Agent/Editor Day festivities before a full house.

The day was informal, with four opportunities for networking.
9:00 a.m. – Networking and breakfast in the Devens Commons Center.
9:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m. – First break out session. Author or illustrators were assigned to a table with 7 other authors or illustrators and either an agent, an editor or an art director and each had a chance to share their work aloud with their tables.
11:30 a.m.-12:15 p.m. – Lunch and networking,
12:30 p.m. -2:45 p.m. – Second break out session. Author or illustrators were assigned to a table with 7 other authors or illustrators and either an agent, an editor or an art director.
2:30 p.m.-3:15 p.m. – Panel discussion w/ faculty on what they are acquiring.
3:15 p.m. – Farewell and evaluations

Evaluations were exceptional. People love the format and all fifteen of our faculty were rated highly. We have found this to be a nice way to do a first pages/first look—in small groups, the participants get to interact with the faculty, and also get some peer feedback and make connections.
We are planning to continue this event in the future—stay tuned for dates and locations for 2018.

For specific questions about the event or faculty, feel free to contact the organizers:
Kris Asselin, ARA, New England, palara@nescbwi.org
Francine Puckly, ARA, New England, eventsara@nescbwi.org
Denise Ortakales, IC, New England, northic@nescbwi.org
Milanka Reardon, IC, New England, SouthIC@nescbwi.org
In the past year, the field of publishing for young readers has seen the rise of “sensitivity readers.” That term may not have even existed a few years ago. Specialized freelance editors, these advance readers advise authors on how their manuscripts portray the experiences of people who have been marginalized because of ethnicity, queerness, disability, or other factors.

The concept of a sensitivity reading arose from three circumstances. First, from authors through booksellers the publishing industry is generally more white (and economically secure) than American society as a whole; for much of its history that industry has also served a customer base with the same traits. Second, the reading public has become more diverse and, through social media, more able to publicly express their reactions to books. Third, authors increasingly recognize the value of including characters from groups other than their own in their stories, yet the marginalization of certain groups means that those storytellers may not fully grasp what their characters’ real-world counterparts experience.

Readers and reviewers seem particularly interested in how fiction for children and teens represents marginalized groups. The reason is likely the same as why children’s books attract complaints about other content some readers deem “inappropriate”: fear that the way those stories present life will harm impressionable young people. In this regard, the standards for children’s books are probably higher than for books for adults, and the controversies sharper.

Here is a sampling of news coverage and discussion of sensitivity readers in 2017:
- Ryan Douglass, “What Sensitivity Readers Actually Do” at the Huffington Post: [www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/what-sensitivity-readers-actually-do_us_5a427f36e4b0b0e5a7a3642c/](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/what-sensitivity-readers-actually-do_us_5a427f36e4b0b0e5a7a3642c/).

It’s striking that many of the titles that have recently attracted sharp criticism for how they portrayed marginalized characters or groups were apparently created with the idea of increasing representation. The authors and editors probably reassured themselves that their work was inclusive. They didn’t foresee how readers would perceive or react to problematic stereotypes or tropes. Engaging sensitivity readers well before publication is supposed to prevent such surprises.

Some children’s publishers now have a policy of bringing on sensitivity readers if their in-house editors don’t have relevant personal experience. Others do so on an ad-hoc basis. Authors working on projects that portray marginalized characters or prod at our society’s fault lines might wish to pay for a sensitivity reading themselves before submitting their work to an agent or publisher. Novelist Justina Ireland created an online directory of sensitivity readers which now lists over 150 people who offer their expertise on different aspects
of life and literature: writeinthemargins.org/sensitivity-readers/.

Just as a critique group of fellow writers can offer many of the benefits of a freelance editor, so it might be possible for authors to gain the benefits of sensitivity reading from their colleagues. Of course, that depends on storytellers being willing to give and accept criticism on thorny issues. More challenging, it requires our circles of advance readers to include people with backgrounds and outlooks different from our own—bringing us back to the problem of marginalization in the first place.

AGENTS

**Literary Agents of Color:** This is a new directory of literary agents created “for any writer/illustrator who has struggled to find the agents of color in publishing.” Agents create their own listings, and the site makes no endorsements. See: www.litagentsofcolor.com/agents/.

**Bent Agency:** Rachel Horowitz arrived as an agent specializing in “commercial and accessible literary children’s fiction” as well as commercial women’s fiction. She was previously a scout at Maria Campbell Associates specializing in children’s books, and before that in the Rights Department at Scholastic. The agency website describes her wish list as “well-crafted middle-grade stories that have heart, humor and adventure,” and for teens “romance with an authentic voice, and stories that reflect what teens are grappling with today—girl power, body image, family dynamics, race relations.” Another interest is “memoirs and fiction that feature a teen protagonist and can even be read by adults.” Agency guidelines: www.thebentagency.com/submission.php/. (PW)

**Curtis Brown Ltd.:** Author-illustrator Debbie Ridpath Ohi interviewed agent Tess Callero, who said: “I am only looking for young adult submissions. As far as what I’m looking for – I would LOVE a YA about a girl with dreams to make it to the MLB/NHL/etc. I’m also interested in a friendship story involving mental health. I’m not the best agent for high fantasy, but love a touch of magical realism. . . . Lastly, I’m a total sucker for a good psychological suspense novel that will keep me guessing!” Authors querying her should always include a bio in their cover note. “An agent/author relationship is a partnership, and even a short introduction is key so I know who I could potentially be partnering with.” Full discussion: inkygirl.com/inkygirl-main/2017/11/6/interview-with-curtis-brown-literary-agent-tess-callero.html/. Guidelines: www.curtisbrown.com/agents/tess-callero/. (Inky Girl)

**Folio, Jr.:** Robert Kent interviewed agent Emily Van Beek, who has previously worked at Hyperion and Pippin
Properties. She told him, “I’m dying to find a funny young adult or middle-grade novel. . . . I’d be on cloud nine to receive a manuscript big on laughs while also serving up a story full of heart. I’m noticing a lot of dark, anxious, dire stories in my inbox and am eager for more humor, light, and hope.” She added, “I’d also jump at the chance to represent a clever middle-grade mystery—one that has the hallmarks of a contemporary classic or one that plays with puzzles, clues, and codes in a fresh way.” On her agency webpage Van Beek says, “I’m probably not the best choice for super edgy, ‘message’, or hard science-fiction books.” For picture books, she is interested only in author-illustrators and illustrators. Interview: [www.middlegradeninja.com/2017/12/7-questions-for-literary-agent-emily.html/](http://www.middlegradeninja.com/2017/12/7-questions-for-literary-agent-emily.html/). Submission email and instructions: [www.foliojr.com/emily-van-beek/](http://www.foliojr.com/emily-van-beek/). (Middle Grade Ninja)

**Gallt and Zacker Literary Agency:** Linda Camacho joined the firm as an agent, coming from the Prospect Agency. In the past she worked at Penguin Random House, Dorchester, Simon and Schuster, and Writers House. • Beth Phelan joined the firm as an agent. She was the founder of the #DVpit event on Twitter, providing a channel for “marginalized authors & illustrators” to pitch projects to agents; that hashtag event is now on hiatus. The agency will reopen to submissions on January 15. Guidelines: [www.galltzacker.com/submissions.html/](http://www.galltzacker.com/submissions.html/).

**Liza Dawson Associates:** Jennifer Johnson-Blalock left the firm and became a freelance editor and coach. (Publishers Lunch)

**New Leaf Literary & Media:** Jordan Hamessley joined the firm as an agent focusing on picture books, middle-grade, young adult, and adult genre fiction. She has been an editor at Penguin’s Grosset & Dunlap division, Egmont, and Adaptive Studios, and now lives in the San Francisco Bay area. The agency website says Hamessley “earned a reputation as an editor for being the ‘horror girl’ and edited horror and ghost stories for all ages.” Other items on her wish list are “contemporary middle grade with heart and humor,” “stories that bring the queer experience to the children’s space,” and “quirky, non-fiction picture books with a STEM focus.” Submissions: [www.newleafliterary.com/submissions/](http://www.newleafliterary.com/submissions/). (Publishers Lunch)

**EDITORIAL SERVICES**

Periodically we share news of experienced children’s-book professionals offering editorial services direct to writers. In passing on this information, SCBWI does not endorse these services.

**Alli Brydon Creative:** Brydon has been both an editor and an agent and worked in both the US and Britain. She now provides coaching, editing, and writing services to authors and publishers in the children’s book field. Website: [www.allibrydon.com/](http://www.allibrydon.com/).


**Hyphen:** Jennifer Johnson-Blalock, formerly with the agency Liza Dawson Associates, launched this editorial
and coaching operation in November. Website: www.hyphencraft.com/.

**Jevon Bolden:** She is now focusing on contract editing and ghostwriting after working at publishing companies for fourteen years, most recently as a Senior Editor at Scholastic. Most of Bolden’s past freelance projects are adult books, but she has a lot of experience with children’s nonfiction. Her website is: www.jevonbolden.com/.

**MAGAZINES AND ANTHOLOGIES**

**Cricket Magazine Group:** The firm is now using Submittable webpages to receive submissions for its literary magazines, such as *Cricket* and *Spider*. Its nonfiction magazines continue to invite email queries on specific topics for upcoming issues; some of those magazines, such as *Dig*, have kept their topic lists up to date while others (as of this writing) have not. The starting point for all the company’s magazines is: cricketmedia.com/submission-guidelines/.

**ForeshadowYA:** Emily X.R. Pan and Nova Ren Suma are launching this site as “a unique new online venue for young adult short stories.” There will be a fundraising campaign in the summer of 2018, and the first installment is scheduled for January 2019. Each issue will feature a “new voice.” For more on submissions and other big plans, see: foreshadowya.com/#post-25/.

**Guardian Angel Kids:** This free online magazine publishes short stories and poems. Its editors have some particular tastes, such as preferring fiction not to be written in the first person (though poems can be). Each issue is organized around a theme, and upcoming themes include “Feathered Friends,” “Hot Summer Nights,” “All About Grammar,” and “Do You Haiku?” For more details, see: www.guardian-angel-kids.com/submissions.html/. (ICL)

**Spirit:** This is a “weekly periodical for high school students used with Catholic religious education” published by the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet out of Minnesota. The editors have called for stories and nonfiction articles averaging about 1,100 words that “focus on small, specific events or conflicts in young people’s lives… told from teens’ point of view.” For more detail: goodgroundpress.com/guidelines-for-writers/.

**World Weaver Press:** This small speculative-fiction press issues periodic calls for anthology submissions. The next is for long short stories (7,000–25,000 words) featuring “Baba Yaga, the terrifying witch of the forest in Slavic folklore.” That submissions window will be open until March 1. For more details on that project and to keep an eye on future anthologies, go to: www.worldweaverpress.com/submit-anthologies.html/. (ICL)

**BOOK PUBLISHERS**

**Amazon:** Adrienne Procaccini was promoted to Senior Editor of Skyscape, the YA speculative-fiction imprint. (PW)

**Annick Press:** Claire Caldwell came to the Canadian company as an Associate Editor, having been an editor at Harlequin. She is also a published poet. Company guidelines: www.annickpress.com/submission-guides/. (PW)

**Candlewick:** Editor Nicole Raymond left the company. (Underdown)

**Disney Press:** Erinn Pascal came on as an Associate Editor, moving from Simon & Schuster. (PW)
HarperCollins: The company “created an new internal editorial team” to focus on teen and middle-grade fiction under the leadership of Editorial Director Erica Sussman. Members of the team are Executive Editor Kristen Pettit, Editor Emilia Rhodes, Associate Editor Alice Jerman, Assistant Editor Elizabeth Lynch, and Editor Stephanie Stein. Most have posted wish lists at mswishlist.com or manuscriptwishlist.com. However, HarperCollins usually looks at submissions only from agents. (Publishers Lunch)

Highlights: Julie Temple Stan joined the Highlights Learning division in the new position of Vice President and Editorial Director. She was formerly at Bluum and EarlyMoments, services that offer subscriptions of gift boxes and books for families with young children. (PW)

Holiday House: Elizabeth Law, formerly at Penguin, Simon & Schuster, and Egmont, joined the firm as Backlist Editor, not acquiring books. She will continue to offer private editorial services. (Underdown)

Lerner: Andy Cummings was promoted to Executive Vice President from Vice President; he retains the title of Editor-in-Chief. (PW)

Macmillan: At Flatiron Books, Sarah Dotts Barley was promoted to Executive Editor and Editorial Director of the imprint’s YA line. • Mekisha Telfer joined Roaring Brook Press as an Associate Editor, coming from Glasstown Entertainment. (Publishers Lunch)

Nomad Press: This independent press in White River Junction, Vermont, plans to focus on “nonfiction books for young adults ages 14 to 18.” In particular, editor Andi Diehn lists topics of interest as “stories of scientific discovery; stories of people (esp. minorities) making strides in different disciplines such as science, social justice, or economics; stories of historical episodes that have not yet been written for this age group” — though fine projects on other topics are welcome. The firm doesn’t want “self-help, motivational, spiritual texts, or similar” manuscripts. Specifications for a proposal and the submission address are at: info.nomadpress.net/call-for-proposals/. (ICL)

Penguin Random House: Jennifer Klonsky will become Vice President and Publisher of the Putnam Books for Young Readers division in January. She was Editorial Director at HarperCollins, and before that at Simon Pulse. (PW) • One of the few imprints of this huge book company that accepts submissions directly from authors is Schwartz & Wade, a five-person operation founded in 2005 by Anne Schwartz and Lee Wade. The staff will look at manuscripts for picture books, which comprise most of the list, and at proposals for longer books. All submissions must be sent by mail. Prospective authors should study the current list first: www.randomhouse.com/kids/catalog/results.pperl?keyword=schwartz+%26+Wade/. Company profile: http://www.cbcbooks.org/acc/2013/03/schwartz-wade/. Submissions instructions: www.penguinrandomhouse.com/faqs/#manuscripts-how-do-i-submit-my-manuscript-or-abstract-to-penguin-random-house-for-publication-2/. (ICL)

Piñata Books: This is the children’s imprint of Arte Publico Press, affiliated with the University of Houston. Its mission is to publish fiction, poetry, and nonfiction that “authentically and realistically portray themes, characters, and customs unique to U.S. Hispanic culture.” Most of its publications are in English, but some are in Spanish. For more details and a link to a manuscript submissions form, see: artepublicopress.com/submissions/. (ICL)

Simon & Schuster: At the Atheneum imprint, Emma Ledbetter was promoted to Senior Editor. • At Saga Press, Navah Wolfe is now Senior Editor. • In the Simon & Schuster Children’s division, Liz Kossnar was promoted to Editor. • Alexa Pastor is now an Associate Editor. • Alex Borbolla became an Assistant Editor. • Laura DiSiena was promoted to Art Director at Aladdin. • Hannah Carroll was promoted to Designer
for Simon Spotlight and Little Simon. (Publishers Lunch) • Simon Spotlight Assistant Editor Erinn Pascal departed for Disney Press. (PW)

**Sparkhouse Family:** This religious press based in Minnesota seeks “stories that help parents instill an open-hearted, transformational, lifelong Christian faith in their children at every age and stage.” Up to age 10, that is. The line includes board books, picture books, activity books, early readers, middle-grade novels, nonfiction, and devotionals. All submissions are taken in through Submittable: sparkhousefamily.submittable.com/submit/65108/sparkhouse-family-submissions/. Company website: www.sparkhouse.org/. (ICL)

**Tilbury House:** This Camden, Maine, publisher updated its website on its children’s books since we last reported on it. The site now states, “Our primary emphasis is on nonfiction picture books that appeal to children (ages 5–10) and their parents. We want these books to offer solid learning content for the education market and strong popular appeal for the national and international bookstore trade. We are always interested in picture books that explore cultural diversity and nature and the environment, and we are also looking for history, biography, and science and engineering picture books.” Though it does publish “nonfiction chapter books and graphic nonfiction for early readers (ages 8–13), and nonfiction for young adult readers (YA, age 12+),” those are a smaller part of its output. The firm hardly ever publishes fiction. Submissions may be made via online submissions form or through postal mail. Guidelines: tilburyhouse.com/submissions/.

**Workman:** Evan Griffith was promoted to Editor in the children’s division, coming from the company’s adult side. (PW)

**WEBSITES**

**Book Riot:** The website rounded up advice about writing picture books from ten successful authors and illustrators: bookriot.com/2017/11/17/picture-book-author-quotes/.


**Pub Crawl:** Novelist Julie C. Dao wrote about how to create a compelling antihero: www.publishingcrawl.com/2017/10/16/five-tips-for-writing-antiheroes/.

J. L. Bell is a freelance editor, author, and historian. He maintains a daily blog on Revolutionary New England (boston1775.net), wrote *The Road to Concord: How Four Stolen Cannon Ignited the Revolutionary War* (Westholme, 2015), and helped to create *Colonial Comics: New England* (Fulcrum, 2014–). His original story “Snow Quest,” set in an entirely fictional African monarchy, ended up published in a collection of folk tales.
Hi NESCBWI members! Welcome to my first edition of Member News. I’m Carol Munro, and I’m your new Member News Editor, doing my bit to help keep NESCBWI great and help shine some light on what you’ve been up to in your writing life. Please jot this e-address down — membernews@nescbwi.org — and send me your news whenever you have it. Signing with an agent, getting a book deal, book birthdays, launch parties — that’s all good — but don’t forget to share other things (along with photos), like going to write at a museum or mountaintop with your crit group partners, collecting books for a needy organization or school, bringing your dog to your library to be read to by children. Have you received an award? Organized a writing event? Been part of a reading marathon? Celebrated a new writer’s first submission, first champagne rejection, or other first? Paired up with another writer to (successfully!) keep each other motivated to write and submit? Tell us about it. And let us know how these things have inspired you (because many of us writers live vicariously, and we all need inspiration, right?). This is a place for us to get to know each other. This is your piece of the newsletter. So please, use it when you’ve got some news.

Author/illustrator Hazel Mitchell has been awarded Best Children’s Book 2017 by the Dog Writers Association of America for her book TOBY (published by Candlewick Press) and received a nomination for best series of illustrations from the same book. She will receive the Maxwell Medallion at an award ceremony, Saturday, February 10, at The New Yorker Hotel, NYC. More information about the society at https://dogwriters.org. Mitchell is represented by Ginger Knowlton, Curtis Brown Ltd.

Christina Uss revealed the cover for her debut middle-grade novel, THE ADVENTURES OF A GIRL CALLED BICYCLE, on December 7th at the KidLit TV offices in NYC with Rocco Staino. Jonathan Bean, a two-time winner of the Boston Globe-Horn Book Award, designed the cover. The book is expected to hit the shelves June 5, 2018. Want to view the broadcast? Go here: https://www.facebook.com/KidLitTV/videos/1774384005929096/

Photo credit: Author Hayley Barrett
Jamie Hogan is in the midst of celebrating the twelfth book she’s illustrated, ANA AND THE SEA STAR by R. Lynne Roelfs. On December 10, she did a book signing with a bounty of other Maine authors and illustrators at the Children’s Book Holiday Mingle at PRINT: A Bookstore in Portland, Maine. Other NESCBWI members at the event were Julie Falatko, Tamra Wight, Anne Sibley O’Brien, and Daniel Minter.

Jamie Hogan (second from left) with some fans.
Photo credit: Author Shannon Parker.

BEING FISHKILL by Ruth Lehrer was included in Entertainment Weekly’s “Best New Books” column, was listed in the first Fiction spot and graded A.

From EW: “In the year’s most heartwarming, heartbreaking teen novel, Carmel Fishkill – who’s been abused for years – decides to reinvent herself and change her name to Fishkill Carmel. After she finally finds some solace, her unstable mother reappears.”

Book Birthdays
November 7, 2017

ANA AND THE SEA STAR by R. Lynne Roelfs, illustrated by Jamie Hogan (Tilbury House)

A young girl finds a starfish on the beach and wants to show it to her mother at home, but doesn’t want to take it from its home. With encouragement from her dad and a little imagination, Ana is able to let the sea star go and yet keep it with her at the same time. This beautiful picture book celebrates the power of imagination and an appreciation of the natural world. Back matter invites children into the lives and experiences of a jellyfish, stingray, loggerhead turtle and other sea creatures.

About getting it done, Jamie says:
“This is my 12th book, but every one feels like the first. Delighted to work my own island habitat into the setting, I found neighbors to model for me, and took photos of low tides, seaweed, and birds on my daily island walks. Drawing sandy beaches during a blustery Maine winter kept me happily cozy in my studio. I’m grateful to Tilbury House for the opportunity to illustrate another SCBWI member’s first book. Congratulations to R. Lynne Roelfs!
November 14, 2017

BEING FISHKILL by Ruth Lehrer (Candlewick)

“Passing through, passing by,” Carmel Fishkill was born in the backseat of a moving car, unceremoniously pushed into an unfair world. After thirteen years of poverty, neglect, and verbal abuse, Carmel decides to fight back. The first step: a new name. Carmel Fishkill becomes Fishkill Carmel. Fish: cold and scaly. Kill: don’t-mess-with-me dangerous.

Fishkill’s fierce defenses falter upon meeting eccentric and logical optimist Duck-Duck Farina. The two girls form an intense bond, and Fishkill enjoys a glorious detour into a world of roasted chicken dinners, home-baked cookies, pink ruffled beds, and a mother-daughter code that speaks of love and forgiveness. When the dream tragically implodes, a fast retreat into anger, grief, and isolation is definitely the easiest, most logical route for someone named Fishkill to take.

Poet Ruth Lehrer’s young adult fiction debut is a stunning revelatory look at what defines and sustains “family.”

About getting it done, Ruth says:
“BEING FISHKILL wouldn’t have been written and brought out into the world without all my writer friends’ support. Find writer friends!”

December 26, 2017

I LOVE YOU FOR MILES AND MILES by Alison Goldberg, illustrated by Mike Yamada (Farrar, Straus and Giroux)

Love can be stronger than the strongest excavator, longer than the longest train, and taller than the tallest crane. And no matter where you go, love travels with you always. With exciting imagery and engaging, lyrical text, this I-love-you book is perfect for children who love vehicles that dig, carry, and lift.

About getting it done, Alison says:
“This is both my debut picture book and the story that helped me sign with my agent, Kathleen Rushall. During the querying process, I sent Kathleen several picture book manuscripts over many months. Each time I sent one, she’d ask for another. But when I sent her this manuscript — a love book for kids who love trucks and trains — she offered me representation the next day. So in addition to celebrating the release of my first picture book, I’m celebrating the book that helped launch this wonderful author-agent relationship.”

By the way, a portion of book proceeds will support the Campaign to End Childhood Hunger led by the Food Research and Action Center.
January 2, 2018

LOVE, MAMA by Jeanette Bradley (Roaring Brook Press)

When Mama goes on a trip, her baby penguin Kipling knows she’ll return home soon—yet he still can’t help but miss her. After all, Pillow Mama won’t read, Picture Mama won’t laugh, and Snow Mama is too cold to cuddle. But when Kipling receives a special delivery from Mama, he knows that no matter where she is, he is always loved.

About getting it done, Jeanette says: “I want to thank everyone in NESCBWI for the help you have given me during my long road to publication. I have learned so much at the spring conferences and Whispering Pines, and I’ve benefited from connections I’ve made with other writers and illustrators. In particular, winning the viewers’ choice and R. Michelson Galleries Emerging Artist awards at spring conferences gave me the encouragement to keep going in the face of rejection, to keep improving my craft and submitting new work.”

Launch Parties

January 6
LOVE, MAMA by Jeanette Bradley — @ 11 a.m., Books on the Square, 471 Angell Street, Providence, RI (parking in rear or on street). Book reading and signing, crafts for kids, coffee for grown-ups, giveaways, door prizes, and fun!

January 10
I LOVE YOU FOR MILES AND MILES by Alison Goldberg — @ 6:30 p.m., O’Neill Branch of the Cambridge Public Library, 70 Rindge Avenue, Cambridge, MA. Story time, Cookies, Crafts. Books available for purchase by Porter Square Books.

More books from the Refugee Dream Center Books for Readers event. All these books were donated by SCBWI members. Bet there are books there by members you know! Maybe even yours!
Critique Groups
Stacy Mozer
Critique Group Coordinator

NESCBWI Critique Groups are held, usually on a monthly basis, in communities throughout all the New England states. Each group is unique, shaped by the talents of the volunteer Critique Group Leader and the participants.

To join a group, contact the listed critique group leader directly. Please give the leader a week to get back to you. If you don’t hear back after that time, contact Stacy Mozer at critiquegroupsara@nescbwi.org. Each state currently has additional groups, but those groups are closed to new members at this time. http://nescbwicritiques.blogspot.com is updated with new groups or reopened groups as they are formed.

If you have a group that is not listed or if you need a group open in your area, you can fill out our online request form at https://goo.gl/mJ9EeC and we will contact you if a new group opens.

If you are interested in starting a writer or writer/illustrator group, contact Stacy Mozer by emailing her at critiquegroupsara@nescbwi.org.

For illustrator groups, find or contact Denise Ortakales at denise@ortakales.com.

Open Groups

Connecticut

CT - Avon
The Avon/Farmington Group is for MG and YA authors. We meet at the library. Contact Meera at meer7777@yahoo.com for more details.

CT - Bethel
Sunday Scribes welcomes writers of Middle Grade and Young Adult fiction who are working toward publication and are willing to give/receive honest constructive critiques. For more information, contact Diane at sundayscribesgroup@gmail.com.

CT - Glastonbury
The Glastonbury children’s writer’s critique group (GCWCG) welcomes picture book, middle grade, and YA writers for the lively exchange of honest and thoughtful critique. Our members range from pre-published to multi-published, and we strive to create an atmosphere that fosters productivity and goal setting. We meet in Glastonbury, CT at the Welles-Turner Memorial Library (2407 Main St.) on the second Monday of the month from 6:30-8:30 in the Glastonbury Room. Contact Jill at jdailey101@gmail.com or Eileen at librarianchick@hotmail.com.

CT - Granby
This group is for picture book writers of all levels. We meet weekends, once a month at the Granby Public Library. In addition to critiques, we discuss children’s publishing, conferences, networking and the craft itself. Please respond only if you are writing or revising picture books routinely, or a published author looking to receive and give constructive feedback on manuscripts. Please contact: Mary at mmun22@yahoo.com for more details.

CT - Greenwich
Looking for Young Adult/Adult writers in Greenwich, CT. The group focus is staying productive and asking the right questions while providing meaningful feedback about a fellow writer’s work. Other manuscript formats - middle grade and picture book manuscripts - will be considered outside of the critique group space among writers and authors who fiddle around with multi-format work (I do!) and would like to exchange other works. The group will meet at the main Greenwich Library once per month. Please contact Kathryn Merrifield at kjmbny@gmail.com.
CT - Guilford/Shoreline Area
Once Upon a Shoreline Writer’s Group welcomes all and orally critiques any material (manuscript or portfolio) aimed at the children’s market. We draw from an area stretching from New Haven, CT east through Lyme and inland to Middletown and, in twenty-five years, our members have popped champagne corks 157 times for new contracts signed. The group currently meets at Guilford Community Center on the first Wednesday of every month from 7:00-10:00pm. Contact KathKud@aol.com

CT - Killingworth
Author/Illustrator John Himmelman is coordinating a critique group for writers and/or illustrators – focusing on picture books through middle grade. You don’t have to be published to join! We will discuss market news, submission success and failures, and everyone will have the opportunity to read his or her stories for constructive, honest feedback. Visit http://www.johnhimmelman.com and click “Children’s Book Critique Group” for more information or email me at jjimmel@comcast.net.

CT - Manchester
The Manchester Children’s Writers Critique Group welcomes authors writing for children in any type of genre with the goal of publication. We meet on the second Wednesday of the month from 6:30-9:00pm. Please contact D. Scott Stewart at the email address above with inquiries, including potential openings in the group and updates in meeting locations and times. Contact dsstewart@cox.net

CT - Mystic
A small critique group for picture books and middle grade novels will be meeting at the Mystic and Noank Library monthly in Mystic, CT one weekday morning each month. Please respond only if you are writing in the children’s genre routinely or a published author looking to receive and give constructive criticism for manuscripts. Please contact me at debadamson@comcast.net with interest.

CT - Stamford
Looking for picture book writers to start a critique group in Stamford, CT. This group is welcome to writers with the goal of becoming published and those who would like feedback and support along the way. Group will meet once a month at a time and place agreed upon by the group. Contact: porsino41@gmail.com

CT - Weston
The Weston Group is for MG/YA authors. We meet once a month on a Wednesday night. Contact Chris Friden at cfriden@optonline.net for more details.

Maine

ME - Portland
This Portland-area picture book writer and author/illustrator critique group will meet on the first Wednesday evening of each month from 6-8pm. We are a group of both published and hoping-to-be published members. We look forward to helping each other become the best writers and illustrators we can be. Please contact alli.harper13@gmail.com for more information.

ME - Portland
Portland area children’s picture book writers and illustrators, are you ready to do this? As a professional, the best thing that you can do for your writing career is get into a good critique group! Join us twice a month to share manuscripts and/or illustrations and shape works in progress. Our goal is to support each other with constructive, specific feedback that will help each of us present our best works for publication. We will also share experiences, knowledge, and information about the world of children’s publishing. Interested? Please email me at kgiard@tr-pub.com

ME - York/Kittery
This group meets on the first Saturday of the month from 9:30-11:30 at the Roast & Crumb coffee house on Route 1 off I-95. Members are primarily interested in picture book writing and illustrating, but are happy to discuss all aspects of Children’s literature and publishing. For more information, please email the group coordinator Melanie Kyer (fraudrk@gmail.com). We are currently accepting new members.

Massachusetts

MA – Amherst/North Hampton
Ongoing group that originally met at the Hatfield Library and Jones Library. They are now meeting at the Forbes Library in North Hampton on the 3rd Wednesday of the month from 6-8pm. Open to all writers and illustrators at every level of experience. Contact ameliamosley@gmail.com.

MA - Andover
The group meets the second or third Wednesday of the month from 7-9 PM at The Memorial Hall Library Activity Room in Andover.
Find out more about some of our members at our group blog, Writer’s Rumpus (http://writerumpus.com). Please contact Marianne Knowles to confirm meeting date and time, and to receive group guidelines. Contact mpknowles85@verizon.net.

**MA - Belmont/Newton/Watertown Area**
Are you interested in getting published? Come join like-minded children’s authors and illustrators in our now established critique group. We are mostly picture book writers, a few illustrators, and some of us write up through middle grade. There is periodic turnover and I’m happy to bring you in as space becomes available. Contact Drew Dyer at andrewdyer@hotmail.com if interested.

**MA - Berkshires**
Do you live in the Berkshires and wonder where all the children’s writers are? We did too, so we have started a group that meets on the first Tuesday of the month. On snow days we critique via email. PB, chapter book, MG, or YA, we welcome you and your work. We provide critique and support and share information as we work towards publication. Please contact Barbara Sinopoli at blwebb33@gmail.com for details.

**MA - Boston**
We are starting a Boston area critique group for writers of middle-grade and YA fiction and non-fiction. Meetings the first and third Tuesday of each month from 6-8 pm, place to be determined. Serious writers at all stages, published and unpublished, welcome to come and learn from one another. We aim for supportive, specific feedback. If interested, please contact pendrednoyce@gmail.com.

**MA - Boston/GBIG (Greater Boston Illustrator’s Group)**
The Greater Boston Illustrators’ Group has limited availability for new members. Contact Priscilla@PriscillaAlpaugh.com for more information.

**MA - Cape Cod/Falmouth**
The Cape Cod Children’s Writers are a group of picture book, MG and YA writers dedicated to improving each other’s manuscripts and working toward publication. We are also associated with the Cape Cod Writer’s Center. For more information go to capecodchildrenswriters website and contact Joan Walsh at irishseaside2@aol.com.

**MA - Concord**
We are the Walden Writers, a children’s group that meets once a month in Concord, MA. We are looking for a new member to join our group. We are a mix of authors and author/illustrators tending to lean towards picture books, non-fiction, and poetry for children and adolescents. We meet on the first Saturday of the month at the Concord Public Library.

We are particularly interested in finding a new member who is already writing and submitting. If you are a published author—or if you have a drawer full of rejection notices—we welcome you. Please contact Linda Booth Sweeney lbsweeney@verizon.net or Eugene Pool ehpool@verizon.net.

**MA - Groton**
Our ongoing critique group meets on or around the third Wednesday of the month in Groton. We’re looking for serious authors with a focus on middle-grade and YA fiction, although occasional side trips may be made into nonfiction and picture book projects. Current members have projects in historical fiction, science fiction, and paranormal genres. Contact gfishbone@gmail.com for details.

**MA - Lexington**
Looking for picture books, especially those who focus on rhyming. I am looking for serious authors that are willing to give and receive good feedback for their manuscripts. We’ll meet in Lexington and also offer critiques online. Should you be interested, please email me at marit.menzin@gmail.com.

**MA - Martha’s Vineyard**
Martha’s Vineyard children’s writers unite! Join us twice a month to share manuscripts. Our primary goal will be to give and get feedback so we can help each other send off our best work for publication. We will also share knowledge about publishers, marketing, agents, and any other information we may have or find about children’s publishing. We are still looking for a few new members. Contact Deb at ddclimb@aol.com.

**MA – Montague/Greenfield Area**
Calling writers of all types of children’s books. We’re an established group still open to new members that meets in the Montague/Greenfield area, accessible to southern NH and VT. Contact Nell Wright at nellwright79@gmail.com for more information.

**MA - Newburyport**
We are a group of eager writers in children’s literature. We focus our writing in MG and YA fiction in various genres. We support each other through online critique exchange and monthly Saturday critique meetings, where we rotate responsibility to research and lead
discussion on aspects of writing important to the group. All members hope to bring our works to publication. We welcome contact by writers with similar goals. Contact Paulette Turco at pdturco@msn.com

MA – Newton
Critique group is seeking a few more members. We are a group of experienced published and pre-published writers focusing on Middle Grade and YA fiction. We meet monthly on the 4th Wednesday of the month at the Newton Free Library. We are looking for writers with good critique skills and dedication to coming to group regularly. For more information please contact Laya Steinberg at lasword@rcn.com.

MA – Orleans (Cape Cod)
We meet at the Chocolate Sparrow in Orleans, MA on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of the month from noon to 2 pm. There is a strong focus on picture books (several members are published) but some of us write chapter books and juvenile novels that are in various stages of composition and pitching. We would like to invite one or two new members available during the winter months for a tryout. Please email: siwanisziw@yahoo.com.

MA – Peabody
Small critique group meets in Peabody but is currently on hiatus for about a month. We will be seeking new members after April 1. We are open to, and eager to read, all children’s genres. Please contact Joan Williams at jmw414@comcast.net.

MA – Sharon
Looking for writers and illustrators of picture books. All levels welcome. Please contact Jessie Kravette at kravers@verizon.net for more details.

MA – Sherborn
The Middle Grade Critique Group at The Writer’s Loft is held on the 1st Tuesday of the month at 7pm and the 3rd Tuesday of the month at 10am. We will be alternating between spontaneous critique and presubmitted critique at every other meeting. For more information contact writersloftma@gmail.com and visit http://www.thewritersloft.org

MA – Sherborn
The YA Think Tank at The Writer’s Loft is designed to help YA writers at any stage of the writing process. Our goal is to help fully develop material from conception to the final draft. We’ll workshop problematic scenes, troubleshoot character development, work through big picture issues, assist in brainstorming for that new concept, and review your submission package. The group meets the 3rd Saturday of each month from 10am - 12pm. For more information contact writersloftma@gmail.com and visit http://www.thewritersloft.org

MA – Sherborn
The Picture Book Critique Group at The Writer’s Loft meets on the 2nd Tuesday of each month at 7pm. We read aloud each manuscript and offer feedback in a friendly discussion-based forum. Limit to 4 manuscripts per meeting to ensure they are all given the proper time and care. Open to all on a drop in basis with priority for critiques given to those who attend more frequently. For more information contact writersloftma@gmail.com and visit http://www.thewritersloft.org

MA – Sherborn
Have you ever wanted to write work-for-hire but don’t know how to get in the door? Are you writing a memoir or some other type of nonfiction project? Join us in the Nonfiction Think Tank at The Writer’s Loft. We meet the first Friday of each month at 10am. For more information contact writersloftma@gmail.com and visit http://www.thewritersloft.org

MA – Southeast (Kingston Area)
An established, eclectic, and dynamic author/author-illustrator critique group hopes to add a new member (or two). We seek someone serious about craft who is committed to receiving and contributing feedback and support. We enjoy the process and each other, and hope you will, too. Meetings are the second Wednesday of every month, morning through early afternoon. For details, please contact Carolyn at childrensauthor@comcast.net, and include “WG inquiry” in the subject line.

MA - South Shore/Hingham
Are you a serious children’s book writer? We meet the last Tuesday of the month. Please contact lisa@howlpress.com

MA - Springfield
Looking for Springfield area writers, picture books through YA authors. Meetings will be held twice a month to critique manuscripts and share knowledge about publishers, marketing, agents, and other information about children’s publishing. Meeting location/schedule will be determined by member consensus. Contact Cicily Corbett at cicily@cicilycorbett.com
MA - Western Mass
Do you dream in 32 page spreads? Do you rattle off daily routines in rhyme? Do you live and breathe to construct the perfect query letter? Do you dig writing picture books? If you answered yes to any of the above, this is the group for you. Take the plunge towards the golden ticket of publication and join our new group beginning in the Westfield/Southwick area (close ride for Northern CT). This is a strictly picture book group for all writers serious about their craft. Please be willing to share and read others’ work and provide/accept support and constructive criticism. All members hope to bring our works to publication. We welcome contact by writers with similar goals. Meeting location/schedule will be determined by member consensus. The potential for online critique will also be discussed.
Contact Nicole Markel at nicolemarkel@comcast.net

MA - Wakefield
Newly created critique group in Wakefield, MA.
Our first meeting will be Thursday, June 15th at 7:00pm in the space we are sharing with the Boys & Girls Club in the Civic Center on Main Street. David Goodberg is organizing the group. Please feel free to check out the site for information on the critique group: http://www.theroomtowrite.com/the-room/critique. We would love to have any local writers join us. In the future, the goal is to meet every 3rd Thursday of each.

MA - Westhampton
Illustrator Sunday - A critique group open to illustrators and author/illustrators. Meetings are held once a month on Sundays. New location in Westhampton. Contact Emily Wayne emilywayne@hotmail.com to get on mailing list for date and time. Co-leader Ruth Sanderson ruth@ruthsanderson.com.

MA - Western Worcester County
Looking for writers of YA and MG. The group will provide critiquing opportunities, writing prompts and exercises, information on how to get your work published, support when you are stuck and more. Please e-mail Jenn Grybowski at j_grybowski@yahoo.com for more information.

MA - Worcester Writers and Illustrators
Worcester group for writers and illustrators meets on scheduled Saturdays at the Worcester Public Library at 3pm. Open to PB, MG, and YA. Will meet monthly and email critiques in between. Contact Brook at brookg13@mac.com for more details.

New Hampshire

NH – Montague/Greenfield Area
Calling writers of all types of children’s books. Join us in the Montague/Greenfield area, accessible to southern NH and VT. We are meeting on the third Tuesday of the month at Carnegie Library in Turners Falls. Contact Nell Wright at nellwright79@gmail.com.

NH - Portsmouth
Looking for Writers of YA or MG genres who are willing to provide as well (as accept) support and constructive criticism are welcome. Please no picture books at this time as the focus is on novels. Please send an email to thewritejoyce@gmail.com with your interest and a brief bio that includes your current work in progress.

NH - Portsmouth
A Children's Book Writers and Illustrators Critique Group is starting up in Portsmouth NH for picture book creators. This group will meet once a month (at a yet-to-be-determined location) in Portsmouth on Thursday evenings from 6-8 pm. The group is open to all serious and aspiring writers and illustrators of children's picture books. The purpose will be to share a work in progress and receive constructive feedback in a safe and caring environment. Contact Cindy Matthews at cmatthews@lowell.k12.ma.us

NH - Souhegan Valley - Milford
SCBWI critique group meets the fourth Friday of the month at the Wadleigh Library in Milford, NH. (In the unnamed conference room on the right at the top of the stairs.) Open to all genres picture books, middle grade or ya (fiction or non-fiction) and all levels of experience. We are also hoping to set up an evening meeting for writers of older (16+) YA material. Contact Sally Wilkins at sally@sallywilkins.com for more information.

Rhode Island

RI – Providence
Looking to start a critique group for picture book writers and illustrators, though open to everyone. Manuscripts, illustrations, work-in-progress feedback. Anyone interested please email me and we can work out suitable location and time. I look forward to meeting you and sharing ideas! Kim Fleming, kim@foobox.com
RI - Smithfield
THE SATURDAY CLUB (inspired by the Saturday club of authors that used to meet at The Parker Hotel in Boston) is an all day intensive writing group and gathering. It is located at THE STORY EMPORIUM in The Hope Artiste Village, 1005 Main Street - Suite 8216, Pawtucket RI. It is open for all children’s writers for networking and critique. It is once a month. Contact LilyandCo@aol.com

Vermont

VT - Burlington
The Burlington YA/Middle Grade writer’s group is a small group focused on writing for ages 12 and up. We are currently looking for an additional member. Every Friday, we meet, share a short excerpt of our novel, and receive critique. Members come regularly to critique even if they don’t have work to share. Contact Kim at kimberlyannhunt@gmail.com if you are interested in joining the group.

VT - Burlington (South)
We are a small critique group that meets every three weeks to share MG-YA fiction. If you are interested, please send a sample of your writing to stephmiraglia@gmail.com

VT - Mid-state Vermont (near Hanover, NH & White River Junction, VT, in Fairlee, VT)
Writers and illustrators welcome to crit and discuss work (PB, other welcome) experience with the process preferred. Monthly meeting. Contact seano@seano.me

VT - Wilmington
Please join us for the Southern Vermont SCBWI critique group. The group will meet at 6:30 pm on the Third Thursday of each month in a tiny cottage on a beautiful parcel in picturesque Wilmington, Vermont. Organized by C.C Fogel a rogue poet turned children book author, the group will be open mic style. The primary focus of the critique group will be writing for children- all levels are welcome. E-Mail ccfogel@yahoo.com for more information.

VT - Winooski
Critique group starting in Winooski, VT. Open to PB, MG, and YA. Meeting times and frequency TBD by members. Contact Saragail Benjamin at saragail@saragailbenjamin.com.

Illustrators and Author-Illustrators

NESCBWI is looking to list illustrator and author illustrator groups in the New England area. If you have a group you would like to have listed, or if you would like to learn more about finding or forming a group in your area, please contact our illustrator coordinator Denise Ortakales at denise@ortakales.com.

CT – Hartford Area
A brand new critique group is forming for Illustrators and Writer/Illustrators for children in any type of genre with the goal of publication. Initial dates and structure to be determined by group consensus. Please contact Aileen Casey at aileen@aileendesigns.com for more details.

CT – Killingworth
Author/Illustrator John Himmelman is coordinating a new critique group for writers and/or illustrators – focusing on picture books through middle grade. You don’t have to be published to join! We will discuss market news, submission success and failures, and everyone will have the opportunity to read his or her stories for constructive, honest feedback. Visit http://www.johnhimmelman.com and click “Children’s Book Critique Group” for more information or email me at jhimmel@comcast.net.

MA - Boston/GBIG (Greater Boston Illustrator’s Group)
The Greater Boston Illustrators’ Group has limited ability for new members. Contact Priscilla@PriscillaAlpaugh.com for more information.

MA - Westhampton
ILLUSTRATOR SUNDAY- A critique group open to illustrators and author/illustators. Meetings are held once a month on Sundays. New location in Westhampton. Contact Emily Wayne emilyrwayne@hotmail to get on mailing list for date and time. Co-leader Ruth Sanderson ruth@ruthsanderson.com.
RI – Providence
Looking to start a critique group for picture book writers and illustrators, though open to everyone. Manuscripts, illustrations, work-in-progress feedback. Anyone interested please email me and we can work out suitable location and time. I look forward to meeting you and sharing ideas! Kim Fleming, kim@foobox.com

VT - Mid-state Vermont (near Hanover, NH & White River Junction, VT, in Fairlee, VT)
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Jannie Ho volunteering at the Refugee Dream Center Books for Readers event.

NESCBWI is an all-volunteer organization. Volunteering is a way to get the most out of your membership and helps to make our events possible. Watch for upcoming volunteer opportunibities, especially at NESCBWI18, our annual spring conference. For more information on volunteering, email one of the Regional Team members (see page 2).