

Biographies

Ken Baker

Ken Baker, had his first children's book, *Brave Little Monster*, published in 2001 by HarperCollins Publishers. His children's story, *Whoa, Blaze*, was published in "The Friend Magazine" in July 2002. In addition to being a children's author, Ken is a professional business writer as President and Executive Editor of K.J. Baker Writing Agency, Inc.

Adrienne Cachelin

Adrienne Cachelin has been working in the field of conservation education for the past fourteen years. Currently, she is the Director of Environmental Education at Red Butte Garden and adjunct faculty for the department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism. Adrienne works with a team of staff and naturalists to educate the public about regional ecology and biodiversity.

Randy Christensen

Randy Christensen has been an instructor in the Southern Utah University Library Media Minor and Endorsement program for several years.

Chris Crowe

Chris Crowe is a professor of English and associate department chairman in the English department at Brigham Young University where he teaches courses in adolescent literature, creative writing, and English education. His young adult novel, *Mississippi Trial, 1955*, won several awards, including the 2003 Children's Book Award from the International Reading Association. His nonfiction companion book to that novel, *Getting Away with Murder: The True Story of the Emmett Till Case*, published in 2003, was named a *School Library Journal* Best Book of the Year and a Jane Addams Book Award Honor Book. His newest book, *More than a Game: Sports Literature for Young Adults*, was released in January 2004.

In addition to his books, he has published 11 short stories, 13 chapters in academic books, more than 60 academic articles, and 60 magazine articles. He's now at work on another young adult novel, *Life without Lips*. Chris, a father of four, grandfather of one, lives in Provo with his wife, Elizabeth, and their two youngest children. His website is www.chriscrowe.com

Cynthia Decker

A soon-to-be grandmother, Cynthia Decker recently gave birth to twins of her own, *Everybody Makes Mistakes* (Dutton) and *Alley Oops* (Flashlight Press), which she illustrated from her studio in California. Both picture books are due out in Spring of 2005.

Colleen Eggett

Colleen Eggett is a medical librarian at Primary Children's Medical Center. Part of her job is helping parents and their children find information that helps them cope with the illnesses and trials they face. Colleen has worked in libraries since 1989 and has spent much of that time doing reference work for children and adults who face illness or disabilities.

Sharlee Glenn

Sharlee Glenn is the author of several books for young readers, her most recent being a picture book, *Keeping Up with Roo*, from G.P. Putnam's Sons. Sharlee has also published extensively in magazines and literary journals. She lives in Pleasant Grove, Utah with her husband and five children.

Brenda Haight

Brenda Haight is married to Robin Haight. She has four children and two grandchildren. She is currently in her 11th year of teaching and is currently teaching 2nd grade for the Iron County School District in Cedar City, Utah. She has also taught preschool, 1st and 3rd grades. She loves using books to enrich instruction in all subject areas.

Shannon Hale

Shannon Hale received an MFA in Creative Writing from the University of Montana. Her first novel, *The Goose Girl* (Bloomsbury 2003), was an ALA Teen's Top Ten and Utah's Children's Book Award recipient. *Enna Burning*, a companion book to *Goose Girl*, was published in 2004. *Princess Academy* is Bloomsbury's lead title for Spring 2005.

Jennifer Heldenbrand

Inspired by a love for children's literature, Jennifer Heldenbrand began a quest that has returned her to elementary education from the world of bits and bytes. She currently teaches sixth grade at Canyon Crest Elementary in Provo where she enjoys sharing books with her students and anyone who cares to listen.

Sherry Meidell

Sherry Meidell and her husband have raised five sons in West Bountiful, Utah. She keeps her paint brushes busy illustrating picture books and painting watercolors. She is a member of the Utah Watercolor Society of Children's Books Writers and Illustrators. Her latest book published by Boyds Mill Press is *Dr. Welch and the Great Grape Story*, written by Mary Lou Carney.

Carla Morris

Carla Morris received her MLS at Brigham Young University. She has worked for the Provo City Library since 1979, where she is the Manager of Children's Services. She was recently on the 2004 Caldecott Award Committee. Carla was born and raised in Spokane, Washington.

Anne Nabaum

Anne Nabaum is a Youth Services Librarian for the Salt Lake County Library System.

Gene Nelson

Holding an MLS, Gene is currently Director of the Provo City Library. Gene was on the Caldecott Committee in 2000 and has been an adjunct instructor of children's literature at Brigham Young University.

Robert Neubecker

Robert Neubecker grew up in Oshkosh, Wisconsin and moved to New York City at the age of nineteen. He received his BFA from Parsons School of Design in 1975. In the eighties he did freelance work for Newsweek, Time, Wall Street Journal, and Sport's Illustrated, as well as other major publications. His first children's book, *Wow City*, came out in September 2004. His second book, *Beasty Bath*, will be coming out from Scholastic next year. He currently lives in Park City, Utah.

Janell Pearce-Mattheus

Janell Pearce-Mattheus is a Youth Services Librarian for the Salt Lake County Library System.

Kristin Pierce

Kristin Pierce is a 10th grade Honors English Teacher and Reading Teacher at Provo High School. She has been teaching for fifteen years and has presented multiple seminars on reading selections for teen readers.

Scott Russell

Scott Russell holds a BFA degree from the University of Utah in Graphic Design with a minor in Marketing. He has been employed with the Salt Lake County Library as a graphic designer and marketing/community relations manager for 25 years.

Susan Spicer

Susan Spicer is a Youth Services Librarian for the Salt Lake County Library System at the West Jordan Library. She loves her job!

Rick Walton

Rick Walton is the author of over forty books for kids. He publishes with numerous publishers and his books have sold almost a million copies. Some of his most popular books include: *So Many Bunnies*, *One More Bunny*, and *Bunny Day*.

Ron Woods

Ron Woods is a native of Idaho. He has also lived in Germany, Western Samoa, and Utah. He is the author of eight published books, including the Young Adult novel, *The Hero*.

Anna Zanmarini

Anna Zanmarini is a Youth Services Librarian for the Salt Lake County Library System at the East Millcreek Branch. She loves her job!

Melanie Cecka (keynote)

Melanie Cecka is the Executive Editor at Bloomsbury Children's Book USA, where she acquires, edits, and helps manage a list of approximately fifty titles a year. Before coming to Bloomsbury, Melanie was an editor at Viking Children's Books and Knopf Books for Young Readers, and has worked with such award-winning authors and illustrators as M.T. Anderson, Betsy Byars, Rosemary Wells, LeUyen Pham, E.B. Lewis, and Petra Mathers. Bloomsbury, (the originating publisher of *Harry Potter* in the UK among other wonderful books), launched its first US children's list in 2002, and Melanie is looking to build the US-author list with fresh and

innovative titles ranging from picture books to original fiction for teens. Melanie holds an MFA in creative writing and is also a frequent speaker at children's conferences.

Wendell Minor (keynote)

Wendell Minor was born and raised in the town of Aurora, Illinois. Drawing and painting have always been an integral part of his life, and after completing his studies at the Ringling School of Art and Design in Sarasota, Florida. Wendell began creating original designs for books publishers in New York City.

His children's books have always exhibited his love for the land and environment. Illustrating books for naturalist authors Jean Craighead George and Diane Siebert, among others, he approaches his art by researching and experiencing each environment he illustrates. His travels have taken him from the tropical Everglades of Florida to Barrow, Alaska in the Arctic Circle, from the Midwest to the Grand Canyon in the Southwest, and throughout the United States. In addition to picture books, Minor has created cover art and interior illustrations for novels for young people, including Jean Craighead George's *Julie* and *Julie's Wolf Pack*, and redesigned the cover for the twenty-fifth anniversary edition of the Newbery award-winning *Julie of the Wolves*. He has authored several of his own books, and in 2005, "*Christmas Tree!*" his first collaboration with his wife, Florence, will be published.

His books have consistently been named on the annual lists for Notable Trade Books in the field of Social Studies, Outstanding Science Trade Books and IRA Teachers' Choices. His books have also received the Oppenheim Toy Portfolio and Parent's Choice Awards and been featured on PBS's "The Reading Rainbow."

Wendell Minor and his wife and business partner, Florence, live and work in Washington, Connecticut.

Jean Craighead George (keynote)

Jean Craighead George was born in a family of naturalists. Her father, mother, brothers, aunts and uncles were students of nature. On weekends they camped in the woods near their Washington DC home, climbed trees to study owls, gathered edible plants and made fish hooks from twigs. Her first pet was a turkey vulture. In third grade she began writing and hasn't stopped yet. She has written over 100 books,

Her book, *Julie of the Wolves*, won the prestigious Newbery Medal, the American Library Association's award for the most distinguished contribution to literature for children, 1973. *My Side of the Mountain*, the story of a boy and a falcon surviving on a mountain together, was a 1960 Newbery Honor Book. She has also received 20 other awards.

She attended Penn State University graduating with a degree in Science and Literature. In the 1940s she was a reporter for The Washington Post and a member of the White House Press Corps. After her children were born she returned to her love of nature.

She is still traveling and coming home to write. She currently resides in New York City.