

STORYFAIRE 2011 – AUTHOR BIOGRAPHIES

1. **ALEXIS O'NEILL** is the author of *THE RECESS QUEEN* (Scholastic), *THE WORST BEST FRIEND* (Scholastic), *LOUD EMILY* (Simon & Schuster), and *ESTELA'S SWAP* (Lee & Low). She has also written for popular children's literary magazines including *Cricket*, *Spider*, *Cobblestone*, *Calliope*, *Faces*, and *Odyssey*. An instructor for the UCLA Extension Writers' Program, she is a Regional Advisor for the Society of Children's Book Writers & Illustrators (SCBWI) in the Ventura/Santa Barbara region. A popular presenter who visits schools all over the country, Alexis's highly interactive assemblies demonstrate the importance – and fun – of “reading and writing with your whole body.” The California Reading Association recently honored her with the Dr. Marcus Foster Memorial Award for making significant and outstanding contributions to reading throughout California. www.alexisoneill.com

2. **AMADA IRMA PEREZ** is a popular speaker at conferences, festivals, libraries and schools. She also lectures at UCSB. Her books for children – *MY VERY OWN ROOM / MI PROPIO CUARTITO* (2000), *MY DIARY FROM HERE TO THERE / MI DIARIO DE AQUI HASTA ALLA* (2002) and *NANA'S BIG SURPRISE / ¡QUE SORPRESA!* (2007) – were published by Children's Book Press. Her fourth book, *DESERT QUAILS HIT JUNGLE TRAILS / DEL DESIERTO A LA JUNGLA* (Pearson) was published in 2010. Amada's many awards for children's literature include the American Library Association's Pura Belpré Honor Award, Tomás Rivera Mexican-American Children's Book Award, and the International Latino Book Award. Her stories are beloved for their humorous details and universal themes of family support, love and friendship.

3. **ANN WHITFORD PAUL** became inspired to write after years of bedtime reading to her four children. Now she enjoys reading to her grandchildren and getting story ideas from them. She has published many award winning picture books—both fiction and non-fiction—poetry and early readers for children, including *TORTUGA IN TROUBLE*, *MANANA IGUANA*, *IF ANIMALS KISSED GOOD NIGHT*, and recently a book for adults titled *WRITING PICTURE BOOKS: A HANDS-ON GUIDE FROM STORY CREATION TO PUBLICATION*. When not writing, she can be found watching spiders spin their webs, snails paint their trails and cats play with yarn. Check out her web-site: www.annwhitfordpaul.net

4. **CAROLINE ARNOLD** has been writing for children since 1980 and is the author of more than 100 books. Recent titles include *A POLAR BEAR'S WORLD*, one of a series of twelve books illustrated with her own cut paper art; *WIGGLE AND WAGGLE*, five stories about two hardworking worms; and *THE TERRIBLE HODAG AND THE ANIMAL CATCHERS*, a tall tale which won the Parents' Choice Gold Award. In 2008 Caroline received the California Readers Leo Politi Award for her body of work. Her books are inspired by her travels and her love of animals and the out-of-doors. She lives in Los Angeles and loves visiting schools and libraries to share her books.

5. DAN HANNA is the illustrator of the New York Times Bestselling "THE POUT-POUT FISH and of its sea-quel "THE POUT-POUT FISH IN THE BIG-BIG DARK. He is also world renowned for writing incredibly short biographical blurbs such as this one.

6. ERICA SILVERMAN is an award-winning author of picture books and early readers, including the popular Halloween perennial, BIG PUMPKIN, the COWGIRL KATE AND COCOA series, the first of which is a Theodore (Suess) Geisel Honor Book, and DON'T FIDGET A FEATHER (California Young Reader Medal). She's excited to be presenting her newest book, LIBERTY'S VOICE: THE STORY OF EMMA LAZARUS, about the famous woman who wrote the poem that is engraved on the Statue of Liberty. Silverman speaks at schools, libraries and conferences about the joys of reading and the process of writing. Having loved libraries since she was four years old, she recently became a librarian with Los Angeles Public Library. You can learn more about her at: www.ericasilverman.com.

7. JAMES BUCKLEY, JR. is one of America's most prolific authors of nonfiction for young readers, with a specialty in sports. His more-than-100 books for kids have sold more than 1.5 million copies. Writing on topics ranging from baseball, football, and basketball to astronauts, wildlife, and cars, his most popular books include the Scholastic Book of Lists I and II and DK's Eyewitness Baseball. A former editor with *Sports Illustrated* and the National Football League, he is president of the Shoreline Publishing Group, a decade-old book producer, and the publisher of the brand-new children's book company Beach Ball Books, which is making its public debut at *StoryFaire*. A longtime youth baseball and soccer coach, he also serves on the boards of the Santa Barbara Foresters and Transition House.

8. JUNE SOBEL loves picture books for the way they awaken the wonder of words in children and keep the child alive in adults. After a career as an illustrator and graphic designer, she wrote her first book B IS FOR BULLDOZER when she couldn't find an ABC book on construction for her truck obsessed three year old. The rollicking SHIVER ME LETTERS – A Pirate ABC and the soothing bedtime verse of THE GOODNIGHT TRAIN also continue to be story time favorites. A graduate of Skidmore College and Stanford University, June lives in Westlake Village, California and continues to enjoy the challenge of creating pictures with words and writing for those very young pre-readers.

9. MARNI McGEE is the author of 19 books for children with two more in press. Her books, published in more than a dozen countries, include picture books, middle grade fiction, histories, and poetry. Best known are FOREST CHILD, WHILE ANGELS WATCH, and WINSTON THE BOOK WOLF. This spring she welcomes board books: SLEEPY ME and MESSY ME from Little Tiger (UK/Europe) and Good Books (US). For Marni, writing for children is a tremendous privilege: to touch the minds and spirits of children, while they are still pliable . . . like bread dough, rising. She founded *StoryFaire* in 2007, partnering with Storyteller Children's Center and now also with Child Abuse Listening Mediation (CALM). The *StoryFaire Literacy Program*, now in its 5th year, is a continuing challenge but also a source of great joy and satisfaction.

10. The tenth “author” is **WASHINGTON SCHOOL’S FIFTH GRADE CLASS**. Together, they have written **THE WRATH OF THE RAT**, with a chapter contributed by each student. With the assistance of their friend and publisher, Jim Buckley, the book has been printed and will be available for purchase at StoryFaire.

EMCEE MICHAEL KATZ has been telling stories professionally for over 20 years. He began with his radio storytelling program **Katz Pajamas**, which can still be heard on Saturday mornings on **KCBX FM**. Since then, Michael has performed at such illustrious locations as the openings of both the **L.A. Disney Concert Hall** and the **Getty Museum**. His greatest love is performing for children in the **Santa Barbara City Schools**, as well as teaching them the art of storytelling. In 1994 he co-founded the nationally known theatre Company **BOXTALES**. In 2005, his recording of stories "**Far Away and Close to Home**" received a **Parents' Choice Silver Honor Award**. In June of 2011, his DVD called "**Michael Katz Live at Freight and Salvage**" is expected to be released. www.storytellermichael.com