

# The Pen & Pencil

An Interactive Monthly Newsletter About Books & More  
For Readers and Writers Ages 6 - 11

January 2012



## Spotlight on Brenda Woods



Once upon a time in Cincinnati, a happy girl was born. When she was six years old the family moved to Los Angeles. The girl was adventurous, sometimes shy, and always inquisitive. She

liked reading, walking in the rain, gazing at the stars, and studying found objects with the microscope, wanting to know what things really looked like. Some said she was hard to figure out. Others made fun of her and called her weird. She often felt sad, different, and misunderstood. After high school, she dabbled in painting, photography, and graphic art but none of those really seemed to fit. Then one day an English Professor suggested that the girl had a way with words and might want to consider writing. Writing? It had never crossed the young lady's mind. The girl shook her head no and walked away but the wise teacher smiled, knowing a seed had been planted. The girl went on to graduate from college. She married, two lovely sons were born, and many years passed. Then one day as she sat outside in her car, waiting



for her younger son to finish gymnastics practice, she picked up a notebook and pen and began to write. She hasn't stopped since. And the moral of the story is this . . . sometimes kids who feel different, weird, and misunderstood grow up to write books and such.

Source: <http://brendawoods.net/about.html>

## Colorado Children's Book Award

The Colorado Children's Book Award was established by Dr. Bill Curtis in 1975 to encourage children's active involvement with books and reading. The 2012 CCBA winners will be announced in April. Each child must have read, or heard, a minimum of three books in order to vote. Voting deadline is March 1.

Ballots are now available at either College Hill or Irving Street Library. Here is a list of the 2012 nominees:

- *Big Nate Strikes Again*, by Lincoln Peirce
- *Clockwork Three*, by Matthew Kirby
- *Dork Diaries: Tales From a Not-so-fabulous Life*, by Rachel Renee Russell
- *Finally*, by Wendy Mass
- *Framed*, by Gordon Korman
- *Guinea Dog*, by Patrick Jennings
- *I Survived the Shark Attacks of 1916*, by Lauren Tarshis
- *NERDS: National Espionage, Rescue, And Defense Society*, by Michael Buckley
- *Savvy*, by Ingrid Law
- *Strange Case of Origami Yoda*, by Tom Angleberger

## The Big Dumb Joke Book

by Rylie, age 9

What do vegetarian zombies say?

Answer: Grains!



What did one snowman say to the other?

Answer: Ah, smells like carrots!



What did one wall say to the other?

Answer: Yeah, let's meet up in the corner.

What's red and smells like blue paint?

Answer Red paint.

How come seagulls live by the sea?

Answer: 'Cause if they lived by the bay they'd be baygulls.

Why did the gum cross the road?

Answer: To get to the other stride.



How come cows wear bells?

Answer: Because their horns don't work.

What do you call a nosy pepper?

Answer: Jalepeño business.

How come the man driving the train got struck by lightning?

Answer: He was a good conductor.

How does Luke Skywalker get through the forest?

Answer: He walks.

Time flies like an arrow and fruit flies like a banana.



What did one tomato say to the other?

Answer: You go, I'll ketchup.

What do you get when you put a sheep on a trampoline?

Answer: A wooly jumper.

What's brown and sounds like a bell?

Answer: Dung.

Why did the algae and the fungus get married?

Answer: They took a like into each other.



How do you get five Charizards on to a bus?

Answer: You Pokemon.

Darth Vader and Luke are locked into combat when Darth Vader says, "I know what you're getting for Christmas."

Luke says, "No how—that's impossible."

And Darth Vader says, "I felt your presents."

—by Rylie, age 9

## Calling All Writers Ages 6-11

Send your book reviews, musings, jokes, drawings, recipes, poems, for the next newsletter. Drop off your entries at either College Hill or Irving Street Library, or email to [mwickins@cityofwestminster.us](mailto:mwickins@cityofwestminster.us)

▼ Drawing by Jasmine Lee,  
age 6, Birch Elementary



▼ Drawing by Hanbi Kim,  
age 6, Mountain View Elementary



▼ Drawing by Jasmine Lee



## Langston Hughes, 1902 - 1967



Langston Hughes is a famous African-American poet. He lived in a time of political injustice. In this poem, he expresses his feelings on freedom and liberty.

### Words Like Freedom

by Langston Hughes

There are words like *Freedom*  
Sweet and wonderful to say.  
On my heartstrings freedom sings  
All day everyday.

There are words like *Liberty*  
That almost make me cry.  
If you had known what I know  
You would know why.

\*If you would like to read more of Langston Hughes poems, check out **The Dream Keeper and Other Poems** (J811.52 Hug). It is illustrated with wonderful woodcuts by award-winning artist Brian Pinkney.

"Once you learn to read, you will be forever free."

— Frederick Douglass



## Books for a New Year

***Breadcrumbs***, by Anne Ursu – Hazel and Jack are best friends until an accident with a magical mirror and a run-in with a villainous Ice Queen find Hazel on her own, entering an enchanted wood in the hopes of saving Jack's life.

***Funeral Director's Son***, by Coleen M. Paratore - The last thing twelve-year-old Christopher "Kip" Campbell wants is to take over the family's funeral business, but he is the only Campbell heir and seems to have a calling to help the dead and their survivors in a most unusual way.

***Liberation of Gabriel King***, by K. L. Going – In Georgia during the summer of 1976, Gabriel, a white boy who is being bullied, and Frita, an African American girl who is facing prejudice, decide to overcome their fears together.

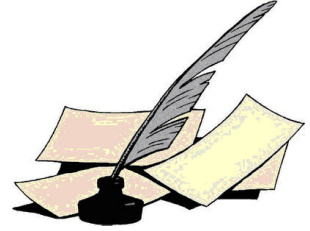
***The Red Rose Box***, by Brenda Woods – In 1953, Leah Hopper dreams of leaving the poverty and segregation of her home in Louisiana. When her aunt sends train tickets to Los Angeles as part of her tenth birthday present, Leah gets her first taste of freedom.

***The Star Maker***, by Laurence Yep – With the help of his popular Uncle Chester, a young Chinese American boy tries hard to fulfill a promise to have firecrackers for everyone on the Chinese New Year in 1954.

***Wishworks, Inc.***, by Stephanie S. Tolan – When he is granted his wish for a dog from Wishworks, Inc., third-grader Max is disappointed to find that his new pet is nothing like the dog of his imagination.

## Join the Club!

If you like to fool around with words, and you are between the ages of 6 – 11, you might want to become a member of the *Pen & Pencil Club*. Come to our next meeting at College Hill Library. (The cookies are always sweet and the punch is not half bad.) Bring something you have written, or read a passage from your favorite book.



Next Meeting –  
Saturday, January 14, 2012  
2 – 3 p.m., Room L 107

Upcoming 2012 meetings  
Feb 25, March 24, April 21, May 19



Questions? Comments? Contact Mary Wickins,  
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