



# Laura Ingalls Wilder

## CHILDREN'S LITERATURE FESTIVAL 2021

### MEET THE AUTHORS



#### GINA CRAWFORD

Gina Crawford has authored works in a variety of genres, including a thesis, journalistic articles, and poetry. However, her specialty is in children's literature. She has written many picture books since college, mostly in rhyme. She enjoys reading her books to children and giving presentations regarding the joys of writing. Crawford holds Bachelor and Master of Arts degrees in English and teaches composition and literature on the college level. She resides in North Alabama.



#### DONNA KEITH

Donna Keith is a wife, mother, and grandmother of seven grandchildren. She graduated from Missouri Western State University in 2000 with a BS in English Education and taught junior high and high school English for a few years. She then taught English to internationals in her community as a volunteer for several more years. Donna is an avid reader of mystery books. She began writing children's books after the birth of her fourth grandson and has four published books with more hopefully to come. Her published works include three board books—*I Love You All the Same*, *I Love You Even When* and *I Love You Just Because*, and a picture book she titled *Peter Porcupine and the Peanut Butter Lies*. Donna loves to spend time with her family, play golf, walk, travel with her husband Lee and serve others through ministry opportunities in her local church and community. And write stories for children, of course! Becoming a published author has afforded her the opportunity to give her royalties and profits to charitable organizations that serve orphans, help women in crisis pregnancy situations, and provide humanitarian aid to refugees and others in need in the country of Jordan.



#### ANNETTE WHIPPLE

Annette Whipple celebrates curiosity and inspires a sense of wonder in young readers while exciting them about science and history. She's the author of several fact-filled children's books including topics like flowers, insects, and Africa. *The Laura Ingalls Wilder Companion: A Chapter-by-Chapter Guide* (Chicago Review Press), *Whoop Knew? The Truth about Owls* (Reycraft Books), and *The Story of the Wright Brothers* (Rockridge Press) releases in 2020. Annette is a fact-loving, chocolate chip cookie-baking children's nonfiction author from Pennsylvania. Get to know her at [AnnetteWhipple.com](http://AnnetteWhipple.com).



#### RANDY PLUMMER

Randy Plummer is a singer, songwriter and bass player in Branson, Missouri. He, along with his parents, Darrell & Rosie Plummer and sister Melody started the 3rd family theatre in Branson in 1973 until 1990, called, The Plummer Family Country Music Show. SNOWDEER is his first book and is also being performed as a Production in Branson.



#### SUZANNA LYNN

Author Suzanna Lynn is a happily married, full-time mother of three beautiful, energetic children, and lives in a small town nestled in the deep rolling hills of Missouri. When she's not busy writing or spending time with her family, Suzanna loves to draw and paint, as well as scrapbooking. She also has been known to volunteer with her children's school, the Ladies Auxiliary, and even the local zoo!



### **MICHELLE UNDERWOOD**

Michelle Underwood lives in Seymour, Missouri, with her husband Richard. She has three grown children, and three granddaughters.

Michelle grew up in Mansfield, Missouri, home of the famous children's book author, Laura Ingalls Wilder. She works at the Wilder home and museum in Mansfield, where she gives tours of Laura's home. Michelle is the author of *Ten, A story of Miraculous Healing and Journey*. She is excited to realize her dream of having her first children's book published and has already begun writing more.



### **KYLE SCHEELE**

Kyle Scheele is an artist, author, and professional speaker who travels across the country using storytelling to inspire and motivate people of all ages. He lives in Springfield, Missouri with his family. Learn more at [www.KyleScheele.com](http://www.KyleScheele.com)



### **DORINDA NICHOLSON**

Dorinda has been published in numerous newspapers, writing general stories about Hawaii as well as her experiences during and after the Pearl Harbor attack. Recently, she was featured in a PEOPLE magazine article about Pearl Harbor survivors, and has been interviewed numerous times on radio and television, describing her WWII experience. She originated the concept for a woman's organizational calendar, which was published by Hallmark for many years. She also has written scripts for award-winning educational films about Hawaii. *PEARL HARBOR CHILD* is her first book.



### **DAVID L. HARRISON**

David L. Harrison's work has inspired plays and been set to music. He has been featured at hundreds of conferences, workshops, literature festivals, schools, and colleges. David holds two science degrees and two honorary doctorates of letters. He is Drury University's poet laureate. David Harrison Elementary School is named for him.



### **JACK SHOOP**

**In Jack's own words [on becoming an author]:**

"I could say what I wanted in writing class and not be judged. Perfect!"

"Both sides of my family had been farmers long before tractors or electricity, which has given me a feel for nature. In the late 1970's, I grew sunflower sprouts for market. Since my name is Jack, the story of Jack Sprout began to appear. Young and old have said they love the many lessons that are told in my book, *Jack Sprout in Beaver Creek Meadow*."



### TONJA DRECKER

After finishing her BA in International Studies, Tonja Drecker spent over twenty years in Europe devouring cheese and wine, while exploring the birthplaces of several myths and legends. Currently, she tends to chickens, cows and her family of six somewhere in the Ozarks. Her stories have appeared on various corners, including *Music Boxes* (Dancing Lemur Press). She's an award-winning children's book reviewer, outdoor addict, chocolate nibbler and adventure seeker (in reality, the imagination, or otherwise).



### REBECCA SEWELL (Nana B)

Nurse by day and children's author by night. Nana B has always given thought to writing a children's book so one day that is exactly what she did. Her intention wasn't to put it out there for the public, "I simply wanted to write a book with my granddaughters as a keepsake. I'm always looking for ways to share and make memories with them and how cool to write a book." So she made the book available to family but, by word of mouth, news about the book circulated and before she knew it she was approached to do book signings. It was then that she made the book available to the public. Now she has two books published with two granddaughters and owns her own publishing company. She is working on her third book and looks forward to writing many more.

Nana B grew up in Mexico, MO. and currently resides in Rogersville, MO. Her parents live in Mansfield, MO. where she likes to spend time on their farm. When not writing or working as a nurse, she likes to spend time doing outdoor activities and spending time with family. Being a true kid at heart she loves spending time with her granddaughters and plans on writing more books with them in the future.



### DARLA NOBLE

Darla Noble is a Missouri girl through and through. Born in Jefferson City, which is the state capital, she lived most of her life in Rolla, MO before moving to a small town just outside of Springfield, MO a few years ago. Darla has been writing inspirational nonfiction, historical nonfiction, memoirs, Bible studies, parenting/family resources, and curriculum for over twenty-eight years. Darla's popularity as an author, ghostwriter, and speaker come from her ability to entertain, encourage and educate through storytelling and practical advice. Her faith, wit, and wisdom are enjoyed by readers across the United States, Australia, Asia, and Europe.

Darla and her husband John have been married for forty 'plus' years, are the parents of four grown children, four children in-law, and eight adorable grandchildren. When Darla is not writing or speaking, she enjoys raising vegetables and flowers, camping, spending time with her family and friends, and hanging out with her miniature

dachshund, Charlotte. Darla loves to hear from her readers, so feel free to visit her website: [www.dnoblewrites.com](http://www.dnoblewrites.com) or contact her at [dnoblewrites@yahoo.com](mailto:dnoblewrites@yahoo.com) and 'like' her on Facebook (Darla Noble), on Twitter @dnoblewrites, or on LinkedIn Darla Noble.

*All my Love, George...Letters from a WWII Hero* – a collection of letters written by army medic and Missouri native, George Burks, paired with the thoughts and memories of Benny, the younger brother he was writing to, some sixty years after the fact. Together, George and Benny remind us that we should live with gratitude for the sacrifices made that make our life possible.



### LAURA INGALLS WILDER-- MARIE BRISTOL

Marie Bristol is a retired business teacher of 31 years. She is active in her Ava community by serving in Kiwanis, Douglas/Ozark Counties Retired School Personnel, Ava Alumni Association, and DOCO Sheltered Workshop Board. As a docent at the Wilder Homes and Museum she loves sharing the history of Laura, Almanzo, and Rose. Marie has a long history of playing "Mrs. Wilder" as a member of the local theater troupe the Ozark Mountain Players. She has been "Mrs. Wilder" in past seasons of "Laura's Memories."



### WILLIAM ANDERSON

William Anderson has written for over 100 magazine articles, for publications like TRAVEL & LEISURE, THE CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR, THE SATURDAY EVENING POST, and others. He is the author of over 25 books such as River Boy, The World of the Trapp family, Laura Ingalls Wilder Country and more. William Anderson was also a manuscript consultant for Harper Collins, he has written scripts, texts for CDs, and even put together the words for historical markers. (Those will always stay in print!).



### MICHAEL NEWTON

In Michael Newton's own words:

"I was born and raised in SW Missouri where I continue to reside. I am married and have 2 sons. Family is a very important part of my life. I am a registered nurse graduating with my Bachelors of Science in Nursing degree from the University of Missouri-Columbia. I have worked in many areas of nursing and currently work in a veteran's home taking care of real-life American heroes. My first book Jeremiah Jambalaya was written after I had told my youngest son about these characters that I had in my head that I thought would make for a cool cartoon series. Not having any idea how to pitch the idea he recommended that I write a story using the characters. Writing is something that I am definitely new at and have come to enjoy. When not working or writing I enjoy traveling, photography, cooking, and hiking. I hope to continue writing and sharing different characters and stories with the world."



### VEDA BOYD JONES

Veda Boyd Jones credits her degrees in history for teaching her research skills for nonfiction and fiction alike. She researches fiction by going into the field-- taking the citizen's police academy classes for developing a policewoman character, observing at a TV station to make up a TV newscaster character, etc. Her publishing credits include over 600 articles and short stories in magazines and 47 books, romances and children's books, for traditional publishers (Barbour Books, Scholastic, McGraw-Hill, Lucent, Learner, etc.) plus ten original e-books on Amazon. She earned an MFA in creative writing and is a member of the Authors Guild, American Society of Journalists and Authors, and Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators.



**DAN AND CONNIE BURKHARDT** -- advocates for, and true friends of, the Missouri River valley -- have written a book for young readers, *Growing Up with the River: Nine Generations on the Missouri*. Illustrated with original paintings by one of Missouri's leading artists, Bryan Haynes, the book takes a brief look at each of the nine generations that have grown up in different communities since Lewis and Clark plied the river for their epic Voyage of Discovery. The last 100 miles of the longest river in America capture many stories of both the growth of our country and the accompanying changes in the river and environment.

The children in these stories experience these natural and cultural changes, as does another pivotal character, a mythical Bur Oak tree that stands near the river after an acorn was planted in 1806. The Bur Oak is one of the grandest of all Missouri oaks and one of the longest-lived trees in the state, living up to 350 years.

Dan Burkhardt has also created two coffee-table books on two very different watersheds -- *Missouri River Country: 100 Miles of Stories and Scenery from Hermann to the Confluence* (2013) and *Florida Bay Forever: The Story of Water from the Everglades to the Keys* (2013). The Burkhardts live in St. Louis and on their farm near the Missouri River with a herd of fifty cows and several flocks of chickens.



### CHUCK TODD

Chuck Todd is an award-winning illustrator and visual journalist in the San Francisco Bay Area. Over his 32-year career, hundreds of Chuck's illustrations have been published in newspapers, magazines, websites, journals, posters, and children's books. After working for more than two decades as a staff news artist and graphics editor, Chuck left to pursue freelance projects, and added a new focus to his broad range of interests: illustrating children's books.

His popular books with wildlife expert and author Gary Bogue include "The Raccoon Next Door: Getting Along with Urban Wildlife" (2003), and three storybooks, "There's an Opossum in My Backyard" (2007), "There's a Hummingbird in My Backyard" (2010) and "Is That a Skunk?" (2018), published by Hey Day Books. These nature-based books teach children and adults about the wild neighbors roaming in their backyards and how to get along with them.

Chuck grew up in the rural Missouri Ozarks where he developed his love of nature and art. His grandmother and mother were both teachers in Southern Missouri and instilled in Chuck a love for learning, creativity and storytelling. Chuck attended various small schools where his mother taught, including Skyline R2 in Douglas County; and Norwood Schools in Wright County; he graduated in 1985 from Willow Springs High School in Howell County.



### K.D. MCCRITE

Born and raised on a dairy farm in Mansfield, Missouri, K.D. McCrite is a multi-genre author, with work that includes children's books, mysteries, romance, paranormal, and domestic thrillers. She primarily writes books set in the Ozark Mountains of Missouri and Arkansas about the people we encounter daily; those ordinary folks who make us laugh and cry. It's easy for the reader to identify with the everyday characters in K.D.'s stories. Her first novel featuring April Grace Reilly, *In Front of God and Everybody*, was in the top twelve finalists for the 2013-14 Mark Twain Readers Award. With an unending love for books, K.D. worked for several years in two public libraries. She also worked in the field of mental health as a caseworker. She graduated from Drury University with a degree in psychology.