



# Laura Ingalls Wilder

## CHILDREN'S LITERATURE FESTIVAL 2020

### 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), *Whooo 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.



### **JOHN P. NICHOLS**

John P. Nichols was born in Tulsa, Oklahoma. He lived in Cleveland, Oklahoma, until he was eight years old, at which time, he and his family moved to Mansfield, Missouri, to a dairy farm. The farm animals provided the inspiration for this book. Nichols is married and has two grown daughters and a granddaughter. John's fun children's book is titled *The Kittyfields and the Practical Joke*. A picture book for young children, it shares the whimsical story of what happens to one cat family when two impish raccoons play a practical joke.



### **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).



### KAREN DEMING

Karen Deming is an award-winning author and illustrator. Her co-authorship of “Zuzu’s Petals, A Dream of It’s a Wonderful Life” won first place from both Children’s Moonbeam Book Awards and Royal Dragonfly Book Awards for best holiday story. Her artwork won first place for best illustrations from Royal Dragonfly Book Awards. She is the author and illustrator of “Do you know God made you?” This book has traveled the globe to Africa and Asia through a ministry she founded with her husband. She has been interviewed for Guideposts and Story Monsters, Ink magazines.

Karen lives in Poulsbo, Washington with her husband and three children. Her passion for writing children’s books has led her to teach the craft of storytelling in the classroom. Her new workbook for independent study is set to be released this fall.



### HIGGINS BOND

Higgins Bond has been a freelance illustrator and fine artist for over forty years. She earned a BFA Degree in Advertising Design from The Memphis College of Art. She has received many honors such as a medal of honor from Governor Bill Clinton, the 2007 Green Earth Award for illustrating *A Place For Butterflies*, and the 2009 Ashley Bryan Award for outstanding contributions to children’s literature. Her book, *A Place For Turtles* by Melissa Stewart, was the winner of the 2014 Green Earth Award and the Sigurd F. Olson Nature writing award for children’s literature. She has exhibited work at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City, and the DuSable Museum of African-American Art in Chicago, Illinois. She is the illustrator of three Black Heritage stamps for the United States Postal Service and four stamps for the United Nations Postal Administration on endangered species. She is the first African-American woman ever to illustrate a stamp for the United States Postal Service\*

Many of her original images have been published by some of this country’s largest collectible plate companies. She also has illustrated over 40 books for both children and adults and created three paintings for the Great Kings and Queens of Africa poster series for Anheuser-Busch. She is a member of the Society of Illustrators and her clients include such notable names as: The Bradford Exchange, McGraw-Hill Publishers, Peachtree Publishers, The Franklin Mint, NBC Television, Hennessy Cognac, *Essence* and *Black Enterprise* magazines, Frito-Lay, and Columbia House.



### DONNA ROBERTS

Donna Roberts is a kindergarten teacher with nearly 30 years experience. She currently teaches kindergarten at Sherman Elementary School in Comfort, WV. Born and raised in Pineville, WV, Donna moved to Comfort in 1990 where she began her teaching career. She attended Bluefield State College where she received a BS in Elementary Education Multi-Subject grades K-8. She has always enjoyed writing. This is her first children’s book.



### WILLY ROBBINS

Willy Robbins lives in the beautiful Ozarks with her husband on her family farm. She fills her time with writing and reading. “I am enjoying our lake home on beautiful Pomme de Terre Lake, fishing and boating when we can. I have a fourth book in the illustration process now.”



### 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.



### **DREAMA DENVER**

Actress, writer, radio station owner and personality Dreama Denver met her husband of almost 30 years, television icon Bob Denver (Gilligan of Gilligan's Island, Maynard G. Krebs of Dobie Gillis), when she was cast as his love interest in the Woody Allen play, "Play It Again, Sam". After marrying the popular television personality, Dreama continued her acting career, appearing in a Gilligan's Island reunion movie with Bob, co-starring with him in a TV pilot titled "Scamps" and touring the U.S. and Canada successfully and happily with her husband for over a decade.

The birth of the Denver's son Colin, diagnosed with severe autism, changed everything for Bob and Dreama, who retired from show business and moved back to West Virginia to devote the next two decades to Colin's full time care. During this time, the pair also founded The Denver Foundation, which honors their son and is dedicated to assisting special needs children and their families.

Dreama's latest award winning children's book "Four Bears" story is based on an original concept and accompanying pencil sketches given to Dreama by her late husband, TV icon Bob Denver, star of "Gilligan's Island" and "Dobie Gillis."

Dreama's her brand new award-winning children's book "Four Bears In A Box ", is inspired by Bob many years ago. "Four Bears In A Box" is receiving the Hollywood treatment in the form of a homespun on-line reading of the story performed by award-winning Warner Brothers and Nickelodeon animation voice acting legend Charlie Adler, with music from Nashville singer-songwriter Delnora Reed. The video was written and produced by Los Angeles-based actor Kevin Sizemore (Woodlawn, Fear The Walking Dead, MINE 9) and his GKg Productions, a close friend of Dreama's who also grew up in Dreama's hometown of Princeton, West Virginia where she and Colin still live.



### **NORA MITSCHELE**

Nora Mitschele is a 12-year-old seventh-grader. She is a resident of Missouri where she has lived her entire life. She has many hobbies, which include STEAM projects, crafting with her mom, and driving her go-cart. She enjoys reading, playing softball, and learning all she can about space. She is a busy young lady, studying and doing her chores at home. She is a dreamer with big goals and aspirations for her future! She hopes to attend Missouri University of Science and Technology upon graduation from high school. She plans to receive a degree in Aeronautical Engineering and later work for NASA.



### **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!).