



# FOCAL Points ~ ~



VOL. XXXIV No. 3

Summer 2012

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FRIENDS OF CHILDREN AND LITERATURE -- CENTRAL LIBRARY

## **A SPECIAL DAY FOR THE FOCAL AWARD COMMITTEE**

by Nancy Reich, Chairperson

On a beautiful and sunny mid-June afternoon, the FOCAL Award Committee convened at the lovely, Spanish-style John C. Fremont Branch of LAPL. Our hostess, Children's Librarian Lisa Schloss, provided the branch's Community Room for the committee meeting.

Past Chair Carol Raby and FOCAL President Caroline Gill joined committee members Lesley Alexander-Roxas, Caroline Arnold, Hillary George, Marcia Melkonian, Lisa Schloss, Barbara Stone and Chair Nancy Reich as we enjoyed a potluck repast provided by the attendees during which we had a chance to chitchat with each other before addressing the task at hand.

At our first meeting, the committee discussed eleven nominations and chose four finalists. A lively discussion of the merits of the four finalists was enlightening, as each member shared her viewpoints and opinions with her colleagues. When discussion ceased, the group was ready to vote.

Four ballots were distributed to each member and we reviewed the numerical rating of 4 for excellent, to 1 for poor, and the five qualities to be considered: high standards of excellence in literature for young people, literary and/or artistic merit, interest and readability, universality, and California enrichment content.

The room suddenly quieted and the tension built as each voting member deliberated on the rating she would assign to each quality for each of the four finalists. Carol Raby collected the completed anonymous ballots and she sequestered herself in a corner of the room. Anticipation grew as Carol tabulated the scores for each of the four titles and validated the results on her calculator.

Finally, she rejoined us to announce the winning title. Prefacing her announcement, she stated that the vote of the top two titles was very close, but the 2012 winner was **ONE DAY AND ONE AMAZING MORNING ON ORANGE STREET** by California author Joanne Rocklin.

Set on a very short street in an unnamed Southern California neighborhood, the lone surviving orange tree of a once-huge orchard plays the role of being a focal point for a close-knit, diverse, multi-cultural, and multigenerational group of neighbors.

Our winning author, Joanne Rocklin, is excited and honored that her book has been chosen for this year's FOCAL award. She is looking forward to joining the FOCAL members at the Award luncheon on January 12, 2013. Do plan on attending this joyful event!

## EDITORS' NOTES

Whenever this editor comes into Children's Literature, especially during Summer Reading, the atmosphere sparkles with life, with children reading, kids at the computers, librarians doing programs, working on programs, planning programs, wonderful signage lighting up the walls of the historical building, children and parents blossoming, happy faces everywhere.

I think of the words to an old song that starts: "When you're down and out, lift up your head and shout ..." KIDS READ !!! DREAM BIG !!! This year's Summer Reading has been incredibly successful. Programs are filled more than ever before. Staff is doing amazing things, as always!! You will read all about it in the next issue. In the "Fun for Kids" page in this issue, although some of the programs will be over by the time you receive it, we wanted to show our readers the activities that happened every day to increasing enthusiastic audiences.

Mara Alpert is becoming a regular on Madeleine Brand's program on KPCC, 89.3 FM. Her last broadcast was on June 11th, with ideas for fun books for kids' summer reading. Podcasts are available on their website. What a wonderful way to promote what we do and how we do it.

On July 5th, Jason Chin, author and illustrator of our FOCAL award-winning "Redwoods", presented a program in the KLOS Theatre to a most appreciative audience of 60+ parents and children. There was standing room only as he talked about his newest book "Coral Reefs", and told us about writing, illustrating, and bringing to the world those characters who really "Dream Big."

### NEW CITY LIBRARIAN: JOHN SZABO

On August 20th, John Szabo will join LAPL as City Librarian. He comes to us from Atlanta, Georgia, where he served as Director of the Atlanta-Fulton Public Library System. A quote from Mr. Szabo: "Angelenos love their libraries. At a time when public libraries are busier than ever, it is extremely exciting to provide services that address critical needs and that are so essential to the diverse communities we serve." Another quote, from Mayor Villaraigosa: "We conducted a national search for the right leader, and John Szabo exceeded all the criteria. With his experience, leadership and vision, we will develop the 21st century's premiere public library system to benefit all Angelenos."

### SAVE THE DATE :

As we noted earlier on, this year's FOCAL Award winner will be feted on January 12, 2013. We have the winner, we have the date. Details will be in the next issue !!

On Saturday, August 18th, the monthly FOCAL book sale will feature, just in time for the upcoming new school year, a repeat of our outstanding Penny Sale. Buy a nonfiction book from our assortment, and the next one will cost only a penny. What a bargain !!!

Our newly-formed sister Central Library Friends Group, Bruckman Rare Book Friends, will be hosting its first event on Saturday, October 6th. Featured will be J. Michael Walker, author-illustrator of the award-winning "**All the Saints of the City of the Angels: Seeking the Soul of L. A. on its Streets.**" Details will be forthcoming.

# FOCAL Essay Contest

## Enter the FOCAL Essay Contest!

Sponsored by FOCAL (Friends of Children and Literature) Los Angeles Public Library, this contest gives you a chance to have lunch with a real live author/illustrator and receive a signed copy of the winning book.



The 2012 FOCAL Award winner is:

One Day and One Amazing Morning  
on Orange Street  
Written by Joanne Rocklin  
LAPL Call #x

### How to Enter

1. Read the book. (Copies are available at your school or public library.)
2. Think about what you read.
3. Write no more than 300 words to tell the judges—
  - a. your reactions to the book.
  - b. about a character or scene that stuck with you.
  - c. what it would mean for you to meet the author/illustrator.

### Hints—

- Start with a sentence that makes us want to read more.
- Describe any personal connections you have with the story and help us to learn more about you as well as the book.
- Make sure your words are typed and spelled correctly.
- Turn in your entry to FOCAL on time. Send by December 7, 2012, to:

**Caroline Gill, 4335 Marina City Drive #534, Marina del Rey, CA 90292**

**Contest Rules and Entry Form on next page**

[www.focalonline.org](http://www.focalonline.org)

FOCAL (Friends of Children and Literature)  
Support Group of the Los Angeles Public Library Children's Literature Department

# FOCAL Essay Contest



## CONTEST RULES

- The contest is open to kids grades 3-8.  
Three winners will be selected, one each from grades 3-4, 5-6, and 7-8.
- Entries are due December 7, 2012, and must be postmarked by then.  
*Late entries will not be accepted.*
- No more than 300 words (fewer than 300 is fine).
- Submit typed entries on clean, white 8.5"x11" paper only.
- Put the child's name on the back of the essay and on the entry form.
- Check spelling, punctuation and grammar CAREFULLY. Mistakes will disqualify the entry.
- No more than 3 entries per classroom.
- Winners will be notified by January 1, 2013, and will be asked to read their essays at the FOCAL Award luncheon on Saturday, January 12, 2013.

## ENTRY FORM

Student's First Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Middle Initial: \_\_\_\_\_

Student's Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_ Teacher's Name \_\_\_\_\_

School Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

WINNERS WILL BE NOTIFIED. Entry forms also available at [http://www.wapl.org/kidspath/focal\\_entry](http://www.wapl.org/kidspath/focal_entry)

[www.focalonline.org](http://www.focalonline.org)

## FUN FOR KIDS AUGUST 2012

### **Preschool Storytimes**

**Tuesdays, August 7, 14, 21 and 28.**

Stories, songs, finger plays and more for ages 0-5. Reservations required for groups of five or more. Call (213) 228-7250. (Children's Literature Department, 11 a.m.)

### **Babies Dream Big - Stories and Playtime**

**Wednesdays, August 1 and 8.**

Stories, songs, and rhymes, followed by playtime. For babies and toddlers (ages 0-2). (Children's Literature Department, 11 a.m.)

### **Dreamcraft Thursdays: Stories and Crafts**

**Thursdays, August 2 and 9.**

We'll dream big and create fabulous crafts, plus share stories, songs, and more. For ages 5-12. Reservations required for groups of five or more. Call 213-228-7250. (Children's Literature Department, 4 p.m.)

### **4 Sat Family Storytime**

"Knight Time Tales" Bring your knights, princesses, and dragons to storytime for magical tales, songs, and a brave and noble puppet show. (KLOS Theater, 2 p.m.)

### **11 Sat Family Storytime**

"Super-Sized Summer Reading Club Finale!" We're not dreaming big, we're dreaming ENORMOUS with GIGANTIC stories, HUMONGOUS songs, and a MONUMENTAL puppet show. (KLOS Theater, 2 p.m.)

### **18 Sat Used Book Sale**

Find bargain children's books for sale. Sponsored by FOCAL, Friends of Children and Literature. (Rotunda, 10 a.m. to 12 noon) **This is our famous Penny Sale for nonfiction, just in time for the new school year !**

### **18 Sat Family Storytime**

"What I Did on My Summer Vacation" We'll share stories, songs, poems, and a puppet show all about summertime fun. (KLOS Theater, 2 p.m.)

### **25 Sat Family Program**

"Marcus Miller Drums" In this lively, interactive program, we learn about the history and importance of drums and we get to do some drumming of our own! (Mark Taper Auditorium, 2 p.m.)

\*\*\*\*\* MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION \*\*\*\*\*

Please send renewals to: Renny Day / 15221 Via de las Olas / Pacific Palisades, CA 90272

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Membership is for calendar year, January through December.

New \_\_\_\_\_ Renewal \_\_\_\_\_ Basic \$20 \_\_\_\_\_ Associate \$30 \_\_\_\_\_ -

Contributing \$60 \_\_\_\_\_ Sustaining \$100 \_\_\_\_\_ Lifetime \$1,000 \_\_\_\_\_

(Free autographed book)

(Seat at Head Table)

(Book and Head Table)

Eva Mitnick, Youth Services

Madeline Bryant, Senior Librarian, Children's Literature

Helene Mochedlover, FOCAL Points Editor

FOCAL

Children's Literature Department

Los Angeles Public Library

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