

SASKATCHEWAN YOUNG READERS' CHOICE AWARDS



THE WILLOW AWARDS ANNUAL REPORT 2014-2015

Curl up with a good book:



a Willow book, of course!

TABLE OF CONTENTS

BOARD MEMBERS 2014 – 2015	4
MISSION STATEMENT	5
OBJECTIVES	5
SYRCA – THE WILLOW AWARDS STRATEGIC PLAN	5
REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT, SYRCA INC. 2014– 2015	6
FUNDRAISING REPORT 2014 – 2015	8
AN EVENING OF JAZZ	8
STICKER REPORT FOR 2014 - 2015	9
FINANCIAL STATEMENT 2014	10
LAUNCHING OF THE 2014 WILLOW NOMINEES	11
COMMUNICATION: WILLOW AWARDS WEBSITE REPORT	13
2014 WILLOW NOMINEE VOTING REPORT	13
2014 WILLOW AWARDS WINNERS	14
PROGRAM: SHINING WILLOW SELECTION COMMITTEE REPORT	15
PROGRAM: DIAMOND WILLOW SELECTION COMMITTEE REPORT	16
PROGRAM: SNOW WILLOW SELECTION COMMITTEE REPORT	17
THE ANNUAL SASKENERGY WILLOW AWARDS GALA	18
SYRCA WILLOW AWARDS PATRONS, SPONSORS & FRIENDS	23

BOARD MEMBERS 2014 – 2015

President: Ruth Garnett, Saskatoon

Vice-President A: Ann Atchison, Saskatoon

Vice-President B: Cassandra Mireau, Saskatoon

Treasurer: Donna Koch, Regina

Secretary: Melody Wood, Yorkton

Fundraising Officer: Amy Korver, Saskatoon

Past President: Florence Barton, Saskatoon

Directors at Large:

Sherry Chase, Regina

Yvonne Denomy, Saskatoon

Leanne Forrest, Regina

Erin Walton, Regina

Director SLA Rep: Cassandra Mireau, Saskatoon

Director SRC Rep: Pam Foy, Moosomin

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of SYRCA –Saskatchewan Young Readers’ Choice –The Willow Awards, Inc. is to promote reading by granting a Willow Award to the Canadian and/or Saskatchewan book(s) voted by students to be the best of those nominated in designated categories for a specific year.

OBJECTIVES

In order to achieve its Mission, the Corporation will:

- develop an annual list of Canadian and Saskatchewan books nominated to receive a Willow Award;
- maintain a website to inform the public of the list of nominated books, and to conduct the voting electronically;
- present Willow Award(s) to the author(s) of the winning book(s);
- promote reading of Saskatchewan and/or Canadian books by conducting the award, and by developing incentives for young readers to participate;
- develop and ensure implementation of SYRCA – Saskatchewan Young Readers’ Choice – The Willow Awards, Inc. policies;
- encourage community involvement in all levels of SYRCA- Saskatchewan Young Readers’ Choice – The Willow Awards, Inc. activity;
- cooperate with other organizations and groups in order to maximize the use of limited resources;
- ensure that SYRCA – Saskatchewan Young Readers’ Choice – The Willow Awards, Inc. is managed in a financially responsible, prudent and ethical manner.

SYRCA – THE WILLOW AWARDS STRATEGIC PLAN

Effective strategic planning requires us to focus on a few key priorities, while at the same time continuing to attend to all the important areas that relate to our mandate as outlined in our mission statement. A priority is often carried out over more than one year. SYRCA’s complete planning document is found on the website at <http://www.willowards.ca/about-syrca>.

Organizational Structure

- Task & Responsibilities
- Board Meetings

Fiscal Responsibility

- Budget
- Fund Development

Communications

- Website
- Posters, Bookmarks
- Internal Communications
- External Communications
- Conferences

Sustainability

- Membership
- Board Memberships, Human Resources, Volunteers
- Executive Director ---paid position

Program

- Book Selection
- Gala – winning authors’ attendance, reading at host Schools
- Launch
- Educational Activities

REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT, SYRCA INC. 2014 - 2015

The Saskatchewan Young Readers' Choice Awards, "The Willow Awards" Inc. Board of Directors met four times during the 2014 – 2015 year. Thirteen Board positions were filled this year, by twelve Board members (Cassandra Mireau filled two positions, one being Vice-President and one being appointed as SLA representative

Organizational Structure

We acknowledge the provincial nature of our board and make every effort to recruit board members from across Saskatchewan. To facilitate our geographical distance, we hold meetings by SKYPE conference calls if we are not able to meet face to face. We continue to work toward a practical and equitable division of board related tasks. During the 2014 – 2015 fiscal year, the Board continued to review and update our Policy Manual. We now have separate sections for Bylaws and Procedures, with a final draft ready to present for approval at the 2015 AGM.

Fiscal Responsibility

The positive financial statement reflects the Board's serious attention to fiscal responsibility. The very successful fundraising campaign under the leadership of Board member Amy Korver provided funds to provide programming and further improve the Willow website. The Board continues to promote SYRCA membership through local fundraisers when possible. Board members and volunteers also set up displays and offer book talks at events such as conferences and meetings. A small reserve fund provides a measure of fiscal security for SYRCA.

Communication

The Willow Awards website is the major communication tools for the public, publishers and authors. It is continuously evaluated and updated to meet the increasing demands of an online world. Thank you to web chair Leanne Forrest for her knowledgeable leadership, and direction in the development of our new website. A new direction this year has been the creation of a Twitter account, which has proven to be very popular and useful for providing more current updates to our followers. We continue to distribute posters and bookmarks by mail to every school division, for distribution to every school in the province, in addition to all public libraries

Sustainability

SYRCA continues to promote The Willow Awards across the province and voter numbers increase each year, a measure that the program is growing. Attempts to recruit Board members from different areas of Saskatchewan have been successful and are ongoing. We continue to expand the membership and volunteer base.

Programming

The Willow Awards receives many positive comments about book selection, related activities found on the website, events like the launch and gala and prizes offered to classrooms and individual students. A great deal of attention is directed to activities and rewards that will encourage children to be lifelong readers.

Last year's survey prompted a change in the voting deadline. We now accept votes until the end of March annually, which allows readers an extra month to indulge in reading. Thanks to suggestions from several teachers, we hope to evolve our procedures to meet the ongoing needs of our readers.

SYRCA "The Willow Awards" Inc. appreciates the generous support of our patrons, sponsors, donors, friends and members. On behalf of the SYRCA Board of Directors, I would like to thank each of you for your commitment to literacy and the children of Saskatchewan. I would also like to thank the volunteer Board members who have devoted countless hours to ensure the success of the organization. They are a creative, hardworking group of people who cheerfully share their time, talents and endless enthusiasm for fulfilling the SYRCA mandate, to promote reading among Saskatchewan children and youth. This has been my fourth and final year as president and I would like to thank the Board members for their support and encouragement in allowing me to fill this role.

The SYRCA Annual Report reflects the success of the 2014 – 2015 operating year.

Minutes of the 2013 – 2014 Annual General Meeting will be available at the May 23, 2015 Annual General Meeting.

Respectfully submitted,
Ruth Garnett,
President



Board of Directors meet at Ecole Henry Kelsey for a meeting.

FUNDRAISING REPORT 2014 – 2015

As a non-profit organization, we are always fundraising and returning to our sponsors and patrons to help us be able to promote reading to all Saskatchewan children. All fundraising contributions help to directly support the expenditure of the production of posters and bookmarks, and all related mailing costs, to all schools and libraries in the province.

On behalf of the Board, I would like to acknowledge the support of our returning patrons: Potash Corp, Evraz, SaskEngery, MGM Communications, and Book and Brier; we would also like to recognize our new patrons: Cameco Corporation and SIGA. We are very grateful for their generous support this year.

This fall, we also held a Jazz evening at the Bassment in Saskatoon on November 18, 2014. We received direct support from SIGA and TCU Financial to host this evening.

Please continue to support the Willow Awards and children's literature in Saskatchewan!

Respectfully submitted,
Amy Korver
Fundraising Chair

AN EVENING OF JAZZ

An Evening of Jazz in support of the Willow Awards was held in Saskatoon on Nov. 18, 2014. Close to 80 people enjoyed the event, which was held at the Bassment. The silent auction consisted of original artworks by Sylvia Regnier, Kelly Goerzen, Arliss McNeill and June McDonald. Guests enjoyed the smooth jazz sounds of The Lost Keys, while munching on appetizers. We appreciate the generous sponsorship of SIGA and TCU Financial, for without their support this event would not have been possible. Thanks also to Chapters Indigo for providing door prizes, and the Saskatoon committee members who made it all possible!



The Lost Keys Trio performing



Ruth Garnett, Ann Atchison preparing the appetizers.

STICKER REPORT FOR 2014 – 2015

Stickers are one-inch square circles with the Willow logo imprint, available on black background for nominated books and on gold foil background for the winners. They can be ordered by downloading a copy of the order form from our website. Since April 2014, we have sold a total of \$742.00 worth of stickers. Compared to the \$922 sold the previous year, the annual sticker sales are down by \$180.00 or by 19.4%.

Fiscal Year April 1, 2014 - March 31, 2015

Date	Invoice/Receipt	Amount	Paid	Difference/ Outstanding
04/04/2014	Conference	\$ 76.00	\$ 76.00	
27/04/2014	201314-32	\$ 72.00	\$ 72.00	
28/04/2014	2014-01	\$ 12.00	\$ 12.00	
06/05/2014	2014-02	\$ 12.00	\$ 12.00	
09/05/2014	2014-03	\$ 24.00	\$ 24.00	
21/05/2014	2014-04	\$ 16.00	\$ 16.00	
04/06/2014	2014-05	\$ 22.00	\$ 22.00	
04/06/2014	2014-06	\$ 24.00	\$ 24.00	
04/06/2014	2014-07	\$ 12.00	\$ 12.00	
04/06/2014	2014-08	\$ 12.00	\$ 12.00	
13/06/2014	2014-09	\$ 24.00	\$ 24.00	
17/06/2014	2014-10	\$ 12.00	\$ 12.00	
24/06/2014	2014-11	\$ 24.00	\$ 24.00	
15/07/2014	2014-12	\$ 24.00	\$ 24.00	
04/09/2014	2014-13	\$ 12.00		\$ 12.00
18/09/2014	2014-14	\$ 28.00	\$ 28.00	
18/09/2014	2014-15	\$ 12.00	\$ 12.00	
18/09/2014	2014-16	\$ 24.00	\$ 24.00	
18/09/2014	2014-17	\$ 24.00	\$ 24.00	
18/09/2014	2014-18	\$ 36.00	\$ 36.00	
18/09/2014	2014-19	\$ 24.00	\$ 24.00	
18/09/2014	2014-20	\$ 12.00	\$ 12.00	
29/09/2014	2014-21	\$ 12.00	\$ 12.00	
29/09/2014	2014-22	\$ 12.00	\$ 12.00	
29/09/2014	2014-23	\$ 12.00	\$ 12.00	
07/10/2014	2014-24	\$ 48.00	\$ 48.00	
14/10/2014	2014-25	\$ 24.00	\$ 24.00	
24/10/2014	2014-26	\$ 12.00	\$ 12.00	
20/11/2014	2014-27	\$ 12.00	\$ 12.00	
23/03/2015	2015-01	\$ 60.00		\$ 60.00
12/03/2015	2015-02	\$ 12.00	\$ 12.00	
TOTALS		\$ 742.00	\$646.00	\$ 96.00

Respectfully submitted by
Pam Foy, Sticker Chair

FINANCIAL STATEMENT 2014 – 2015



SYRCA - SASKATCHEWAN YOUNG READERS' CHOICE - THE WILLOW AWARDS INC. FINANCIAL STATEMENT YEAR ENDING MARCH 31, 2015

Bank Balance at March 31, 2014 \$28,293.08

INCOME

Memberships	\$1,805.00
Sponsorships	\$19,957.24
Fundraising	\$7,906.85
Stickers	\$736.00
GST Rebate	\$265.74
Insurance Refund	\$225.00

Total Income \$30,895.83

DISBURSEMENTS

Sponsorships/Grants	\$136.57
Fundraising	\$3,226.06
Marketing	\$14.00
Posters/Bookmarks	\$4,281.90
Stickers	\$19.16
Awards	\$1,362.00
Lunch/Gala	\$4,573.43
Office Expenses	\$310.47
Meeting Expenses	\$3,128.93
Author Expenses	\$1,240.52
Website Expenses	\$5,500.00
Insurance	\$1,060.00
Review of Books	\$150.00
Sask Culture Membership	\$75.00
Non-Profit Registration	\$20.00

Total Disbursements \$25,098.04

Bank Balance at March 31, 2015 \$34,090.87

Term Deposit

Balance at Mar. 31/14	\$15,717.68
Interest	\$172.89
Total Balance at Mar. 31/15	\$15,890.57

TOTAL ASSETS **\$49,981.44**

Checked and verified by:

S. Dishington, DAA

April 11, 2015

LAUNCHING OF THE 2014 WILLOW NOMINEES

Each year, every school in the province is encouraged to launch the new Willow Award nominees! We are very interested in sharing the great work you have done to promote this quality literature. During October and November participants can enter a competition to win a complete set of 30 nominated books by submitting a photo (photos) and/or a description of their local launch. Winners are randomly drawn.

Congratulations to the following people, who submitted their launch ideas and are recipients of book prizes:

Grand prize winner, recipient of the entire set of 2014 Willow nominees (30 books):

Kerry Nakoneshny, grade three teacher at Dr. John G. Egnatoff School in Saskatoon.

Runner up winner, recipient of the set of 2014 Shining Willow nominees (10 books):

Kathy Russell, Eyebrow School in Eyebrow.

Runner up winner, recipient of the set of 2014 Diamond Willow nominees (10 books):

Pam Wenger, Teacher Librarian at Dr. Perry School in Regina.

Runner up winner, recipient of the set of 2014 Snow Willow nominees (10 books):

Joan Long, Librarian at Rosetown Central High School in Rosetown.

The following people each received assorted book prizes:

Josey Rink, Teacher Librarian at PJ Gillen School in Esterhazy

Carmella Hood, Carrot River School in Carrot River

Pamela Kellington, Gr. One teacher at Brunswick School in Melfort

Jennifer (Sparks) Berthelot, Teacher Librarian at Lakeridge School in Saskatoon

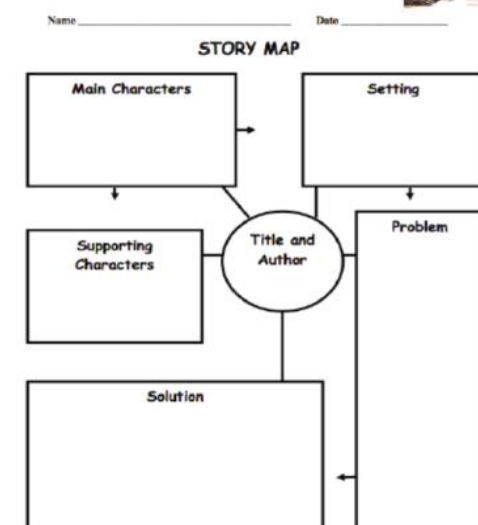
Sheila Tillman, Library Technician at Springside School in Springside

Kimberly Black, Librarian at William Mason School in Choiceland

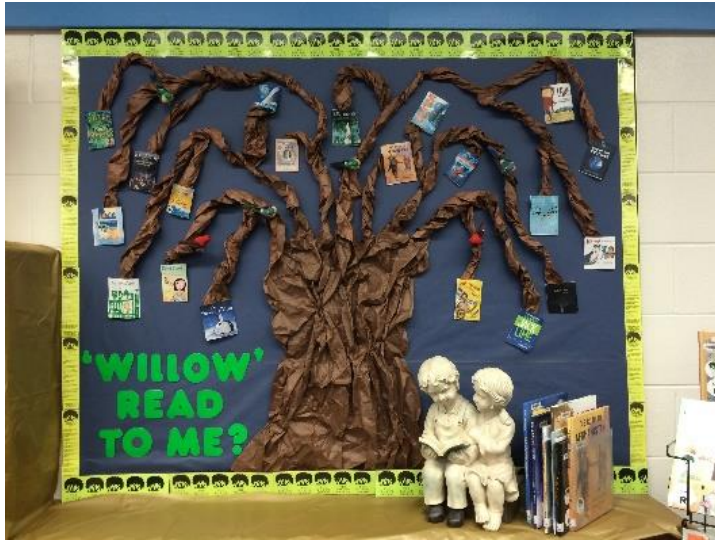
Yvonne Rogalski, Library Technician at Ecole St. Henry's Jr. Elementary School in Melville.

Curricular connections: Use visual aids to enhance written products (e.g., props, charts, illustrations, story map). Demonstrate understanding of the topic, problem, question, or issue in a variety of ways.

Title of Book: *Kamik on Inuit Puppy Story*
Adapted from the memories of Donald Uluathuk and illustrated by Qin Leng.



Launching The Willow Books



Board Members readying winning boxes of books

COMMUNICATION: WILLOW AWARDS WEBSITE REPORT

www.willowawards.ca

The website is the key communication tool with the membership and participants in the Willow Awards. Thanks to the ongoing support of MGM Communications who develops, hosts and maintains it, our website has completed a full transition from our previous website.

The Willow Awards continue to see gains in our voting numbers indicating a growing popularity across the province. There were 700 more student votes for this year's Willow nominees making a total of 14,118 votes for 2014.

The Willow Board would like to recognize that the generous funding of all our corporate sponsors ensures that we can maintain our website which plays such a central role in our success. We have also included a Twitter and Facebook account and hope to grow these further in the next year to collect even more followers.

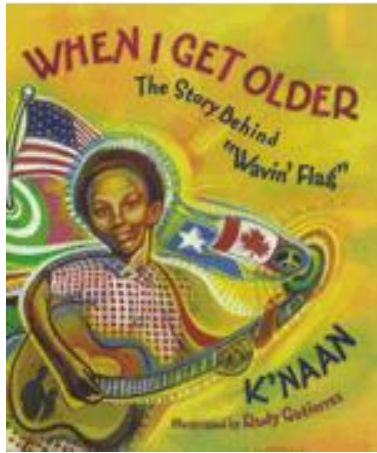
Respectfully submitted
Leanne Forrest
Web Committee Chair

2015 WILLOW NOMINEE VOTING REPORT

Each year the Willow Awards gauges the success of its main objective to promote reading to Saskatchewan children by the voting for the nominees. After a slight decline in voting last year, voting numbers showed an increase. The increase was such that the number was the highest over the past five years. Reaching more children throughout the province, particularly in rural areas is a primary interest. With 14,118 votes being cast, this has been a very successful year for the Willow Awards. Thank you to the patrons and sponsors who make the Willow Awards possible.

Votes by Category	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	CHANGE
SHINING	10,582	11,270	10,871	11,839	12,680	+7.1%
DIAMOND	1,252	1,400	1,145	1,092	866	-20.7%
SNOW	520	593	602	423	572	+35.2%
TOTAL VOTES	12,534	13,293	12,618	13,354	14,118	+5.72

2014 WILLOW AWARD WINNERS



SHINING WILLOW

WHEN I GET OLDER: THE STORY BEHIND “WAVING FLAG”

BY K'NAAN WITH SOL GUY
ILLUSTRATED BY RUDY GUTIERREZ



DIAMOND WILLOW

ULTRA

BY DAVID CARROLL



SNOW WILLOW

LIVE TO TELL

BY LISA HARRINGTON

PROGRAM: SHINING WILLOW SELECTION COMMITTEE

REPORT

This year 150 titles were received, of which three titles were sent onto the Diamond, and 7 titles were deemed unacceptable. The 140 entries were considered, with 10 chosen to be nominated for the 2015 and another 20 titles put forward for consideration for the following year.

This year the committee consisted of 9 very active and conscientious readers, 5 in Yorkton and 4 in Saskatoon. The members of the Committee consisted of: Melody Wood, Tammie Latimer, Tricia Reed, Darcie Krasowski, Coralee Danyluk, Florence Barton, Wilfred Burton, Tracy Woodward, and Laurie Hnatiuk. I would like to thank Florence Barton for her help with the Shining Willow Wiki and with getting the readers in Saskatoon. Due to very busy schedules, our Yorkton group only met 2 times. I was unable to set up a time with the Saskatoon group but I tried to keep them in the loop.

With considerations from both groups, I merged our top ten lists. Upon careful consideration of content, interest, reading level, and overall quality as well as variety, we are pleased to present the finalists for the Shining Willow Awards 2015.

Respectfully submitted by
Melody Wood
Shining Willow Chair.

THE SHINING WILLOW NOMINEES 2015



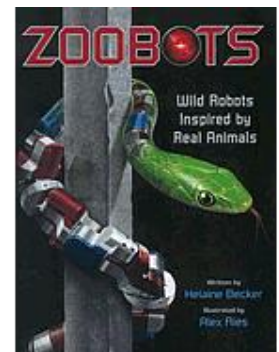
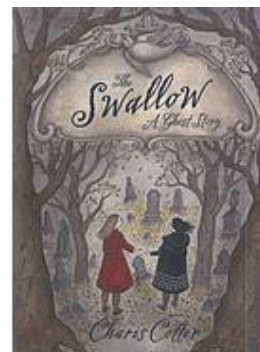
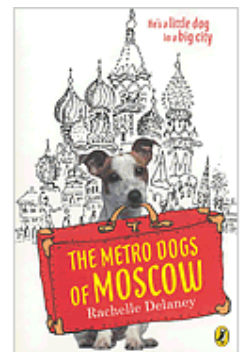
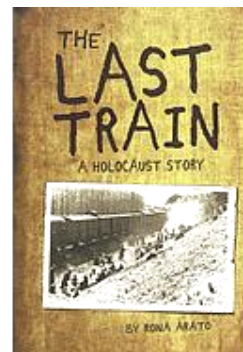
PROGRAM: DIAMOND WILLOW SELECTION COMMITTEE REPORT

For the 2015 Diamond Willow selection process there were 123 submissions. Twenty-two selections were moved on to the Snow Committee and 4 selections were transferred to the Shining committee. Twelve submissions were rejected due to ineligibility. This left the committee with 85 titles for consideration of which six have been rolled over to next year.

The committee was made up of 11 dedicated teachers, retired teachers, teacher librarians, and public librarians who gave of their time and expertise to nominate 10 titles for the 3015 Diamond Willows. Thank you to Susan Holmes, Rhonda Wills, Rhonda Bagwell, Donna Lindstrom, Kim McDonald, Alison Newman, Kerri McKay, Leanne Forrest, Ann Atchison, Elspeth Dormuth and Erin Walton for their careful consideration and dedication. We are pleased to nominate the finalists for the 2015 Diamond Willow Award.

Respectfully submitted by
Erin Walton
Diamond Willow Chair

THE DIAMOND WILLOW NOMINEES 2015



PROGRAM: SNOW WILLOW SELECTION COMMITTEE

REPORT

This year the Snow Committee read and considered 116 titles for the Snow Willow Award.

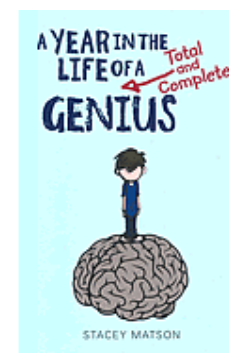
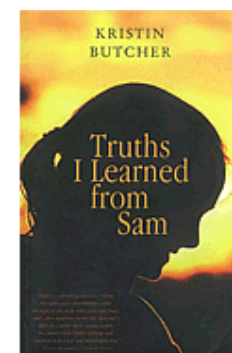
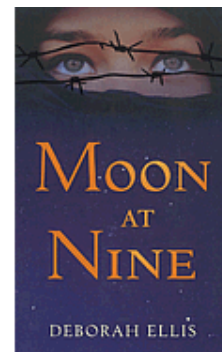
Our committee was comprised of 10 passionate readers including school librarians, principals, retired teachers, library technicians, and public librarians. Our excellent and knowledgeable readers were: Amy Korver, Cassandra Mireau, Danielle Bergen, Darrelle Downs, Florence Barton, Jessica Cammer, Ruth Elliot, Ruth Garnett, Sherry Chase, and Yvonne Denomy.

A huge thank you goes to each of these committee members for donating hundreds of hours reading submissions and selecting our top ten titles for nomination.

We proudly present the 2015 nominees for the Snow Willow.

Respectfully Submitted,
Cassandra Mireau
Snow Willow Chair

THE SNOW WILLOW NOMINEES 2015



THE ANNUAL SASKENERGY WILLOW AWARDS GALA

Celebrating and Making Connections



Martin Springett, Susin Nielsen

On May 7, 2014 we announced the Winners of the 2013 Willow Awards:

Martin Springett for Kate and Pippin: an Unlikely Love Story in the Shining Willow Category,

Jonathan Auxier for Peter Nimble and His Fantastic Eyes in the Diamond Willow Category, and

Susin Nielsen for The Reluctant Journal of Henry K. Larsen in the Snow Willow Category.



Lyric Theater, Swift Current

From: <http://www.historicplaces.ca/>



St. Patrick School, Swift Current

From: <http://www.swiftcurrentonline.com/>

St. Patrick School in Swift Current, under the outstanding leadership of Stephen Anderson and Michele Vallee, celebrated the winners of the 2013 Willow Awards by making many connections.

They made connections with history by hosting the SaskEnergy Willows Gala in Swift Current's Centenary year, and by using the marvelous, refurbished, heritage Lyric Theatre as a venue.

They made connections to the local community by having students from many local schools attend the Gala, by having Grade One students from St. Patrick School sing at the Gala, by displaying beautiful children's art on placemats on the tables, and by inviting Lorna Crozier, a poet who grew up in Swift Current, to deliver the Keynote Address.



Grade 1 students perform.



Lorna Crozier, poet delivers the Keynote Address.

They made connections to the Holy Trinity Catholic School Division by featuring colourful large book covers made by Moose Jaw students. And they made connections with students all over Saskatchewan by soliciting book trailers for the Shining Willow Nominated Books, and by choosing 10 of these book trailers to be shown at the Gala.



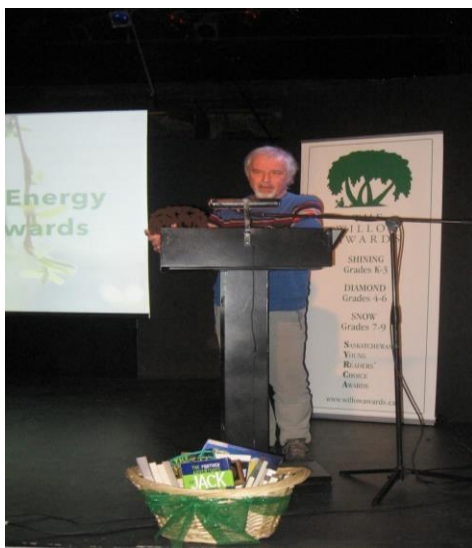
Poster art work displayed along the walls of the Lyric Theater.



Poster art work displayed along the walls of the Lyric Theater.

Connecting to stories was the theme of the Gala, and this theme was celebrated through students reading from the Beginning, Middle and End of stories using a flashlight underneath a blanket, something many of us can connect with. Speakers addressed this theme as well, emphasizing how stories can affect our lives and how they can live on for many years.

The three authors made humorous and entertaining connections with the readers. Martin Springett and Susin Nielsen attended the Gala to accept their awards in person, and Jonathan Auxier sent an acceptance speech via video link.



Martin Springett accepts Shining Willow Award.



Jonathan Auxier accepts Diamond Willow Award via video link.



Susin Nielsen accepts the Snow Willow Award.

And lastly, one more important connection made by the 2014 SaskEnergy Willow Awards Gala was an internet connection. For the first time in the Willow Awards' history, the Gala was live-streamed, using the excellent expertise of Wide Mouth Media of Swift Current, and the digital version of the Gala is now posted on our website, managed by HJ Linnen Associates of Regina.



Leslie Gosselin of SaskEnergy presents a Willow tree to St. Patrick School.



Ruth Garnett thanks Stephen Anderson and Michele Vallee with flowers.



St. Patrick School students receive a complete set of Willow Award books in back packs.



Winning Authors with Gala Co-chairs and Willow Board Members. (left to right) Michele Vallee, Donna Koch, Stephen Anderson, Martin Springett, Susin Nielsen, Ruth Garnett, Naomi Kral, and Melody Wood.

SYRCA – THE WILLOW AWARDS

Patrons, Sponsors, and Friends

Saskatchewan Young Readers' Choice Awards gratefully acknowledge our patrons, sponsors and friends for their financial support. The generous contributions made by those listed below have made the Willow Awards possible.

SYRCA Gold Patrons have generously contributed \$5,000 or more:



SYRCA Silver Patrons have generously contributed \$3,000 to \$4,999:



SYRCA Bronze Patrons have generously contributed \$1,000 to \$2999:



United Library Services



SYRCA – THE WILLOW AWARDS

Patrons, Sponsors, and Friends

SYRCA Sponsors have generously contributed \$500 - \$999.

Kelly Goerzen

TCU Financial

SYRCA Friends have generously contributed \$100 or more:

E. Ann Atchison

Margot Mack

Florence Barton

Arliss MacNeill

Colin O'Brian Man's Shoppe Ltd.

Photography by June McDonald

Elsbeth Dormuth

Sylvia Regnier

Garnett Industries

Sask. Reading Council

Ruth Garnett

Superannuated Teachers of

Val Gerrard

Saskatchewan, Regina Chapter

Lynn Gilbert

Kathie Tenold

Hi-Tec Profiles Inc.

The Bassment

Naomi Kral

Willow on Wascana Restaurant

Kramer's Hair Studio & Day Spa

Melody Wood

McNally Robinson Bookstore



THE WILLOW AWARDS