

SASKATCHEWAN YOUNG READERS'  
CHOICE AWARDS



THE WILLOW AWARDS  
ANNUAL GENERAL REPORT  
2012 - 2013



*Curl up with the Willow Awards*





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## BOARD MEMEBERS 2012 - 2013

President: Ruth Garnett, Saskatoon

Directors at Large:

Vice-President A: Ann Atchison, Saskatoon

Elsbeth Dormuth, Saskatoon

Vice-President B: Tammie Latimer, Yorkton

Val Gerrard, Regina

Treasurer: Donna Koch, Regina

Margaret Lipp, Regina

Secretary: Amanda Hassen, Moose Jaw

Margot Mack, Regina

Fundraising Officer: Naomi Kral, Regina

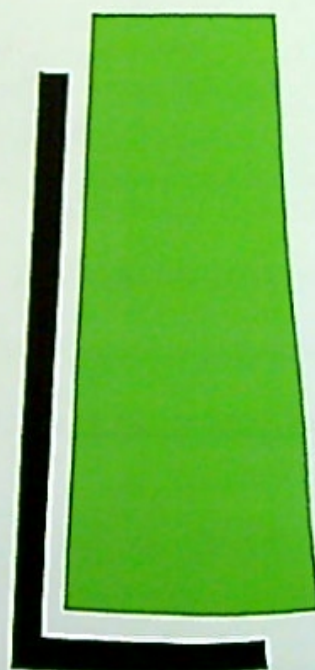
Jocelyn Mark Provost, La Ronge

Past President: Florence Barton, Saskatoon

Melody Wood, Yorkton

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.willowawards.ca/about-syrca>.

### Organizational Structure

- Task and 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. 2012 - 2013

The Saskatchewan Young Readers' Choice Awards, "The Willow Awards" Inc. met five times during the 2012 – 2013 year. We welcomed new board members Margot Mack from Regina, Pam Foy from Moosomin who represents the Saskatchewan Reading Council (SRC), and Cassandra Mireau from Saskatoon who represents the Saskatchewan Library Association (SLA). The Saskatchewan School Library Association (SSLA) requested to be removed from the Board, and has been replaced by the Saskatchewan Reading Council (SRC). We are pleased that all 15 positions on the Board were filled this year.

### Organizational Structure

We acknowledge the provincial nature of our board and try to recruit board members from across Saskatchewan. As well as meeting face-to-face, we hold meetings by conference call and SKYPE. We continue to work toward a practical and equitable division of board related tasks. During the 2012 – 2013 fiscal year, the Board conducted a review and updating of our Policy Manual, which will be available from our website. We have reached the end of our five-year plan and together we will develop a new plan in the fall.

### 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 Naomi Kral provided funds to provide programming and further improve the Willow website. The Board continues to promote SYRCA membership through local fundraisers held in Saskatoon and Regina each year. 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 Val Gerrard for her knowledgeable leadership. We also print posters and bookmarks and distribute them by mail to every school division for distribution to every school in the province. This year we also distributed temporary tattoos in our mail outs, which were very favourably received. SYRCA news continues to be posted regularly on the website.

### Sustainability

SYRCA continues to promote The Willow Awards across the province and continues to have voter numbers increase each year. This would indicate 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.

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 second 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 2012 – 2013 operating year.

Minutes of the 2012 Annual General Meeting will be available at the May 25, 2013 Annual General Meeting.

Respectfully submitted,  
Ruth Garnett  
President



## FUNDRAISING REPORT 2012 - 2013

This year, our committee decided to divide the fundraising into two different parts and tried to focus on two different aspects. The first part of the fundraising campaign involved writing our annual, fundraising letter to about 30 major patrons from various target sectors in the province: agricultural, mining, financial institutions and the media. Elsbeth Dormuth, Margot Mack and I met at Margot's house on October 11 to fine-tune our asking package.

The second part of our fundraising campaign was to initiate a campaign which involved reaching out to the business world to increase the profile of SYRCA and the overall need to support literacy across the province. Although a direct "ask" for funding was not included, in this second letter campaign, the companies were encouraged to discover SYRCA, and like Evraz, use the Willow Awards (lists and activities) to initiate a Literacy Relationship within their own business or with a segment of their community. A membership with SYRCA was suggested as the all-important first step in building that relationship.

The Saskatchewan Young Readers' Choice Awards - Willow Inc, is very fortunate to have dedicated patrons who return each year and continue to support our mandate of trying to encourage and promote reading for all students in the province wherever they may live. Sincere thanks are extended to Potash Corp, SaskEnergy, Evraz, Conexus Credit Union, Leader-Post, the Star Phoenix, Book and Brier Patch, Garnett Industries Limited, Cameco and Areva and United Library Services. We are pleased to welcome two new patrons this year, SGI and Redhead Equipment. Because of the support of these patrons, we will be incorporating a new website to keep up with the ever-changing demands due to technological requirements. The students regularly visit our website and post comments about the books, and some have been quite excited when the authors reply and provide commentary about writing their books.

Additionally, two fundraising dinners were held with a guest "Willow" author speaking at the respective dinners in Saskatoon and Regina to promote awareness and encourage memberships to help promote reading.

Thank you to this year's committee of Elsbeth Dormuth, Margot Mack and Florence Barton for their dedications and contributions to the fundraising campaign this year. The Board welcomes new members and new ideas to help promote the reading of Canadian and Saskatchewan authors living in Saskatchewan.

Please visit our webpage and make a donation using "the donate now button." Your donations promote literacy in Saskatchewan.

Respectfully submitted,  
Naomi Kral  
Fundraising Officer

## STICKER REPORT FOR 2012 - 2013

Since April 1, 2012, we have sold a total of \$1152.45 worth of stickers. \$24.00 still owes. According to SYRCA FINANCIAL STATEMENT YEAR ENDING MARCH 31, 2012 sticker sales were \$1621.45. Therefore our annual sticker sales are down by \$469.00.

Respectfully submitted,  
Pam Foy



# FINANCIAL STATEMENT



SYRCA - SASKATCHEWAN YOUNG READERS' CHOICE -  
THE WILLOW AWARDS INC.  
FINANCIAL STATEMENT  
YEAR ENDING MARCH 31, 2013

Bank Balance at March 31, 2012

\$22,522.36

## INCOME

Memberships	\$2,575.00
Sponsorships	\$24,300.00
Fundraising	\$13,905.00
Stickers	\$1,143.45
GST Rebate	\$519.11

Total Income

\$42,442.56

## DISBURSEMENTS

Memberships	\$27.94
Sponsorships/Grants	\$170.45
Fundraising	\$8,273.77
Marketing	\$3,644.94
Posters/Bookmarks	\$6,217.69
Stickers	\$1,419.00
Awards	\$1,737.10
Lunch/Gala	\$3,945.50
Office Expenses	\$410.44
Meeting Expenses	\$3,825.45
Author Expenses	\$2,207.47
Website Expenses	\$5,548.92
Insurance	\$1,050.00
Review of Books	\$150.00
Sask Culture Membership	\$75.00
Non-Profit Registration	\$10.00

Total Disbursements

\$38,723.67

Bank Balance at March 31, 2013

\$26,241.25

## Term Deposit

Balance at Mar 31/12	\$15,316.99
Interest	\$153.17
Total	

\$15,470.16

## TOTAL ASSETS

\$41,711.41

Checked and verified by  
S. Dishington, DAA

*[Signature]*  
April 21, 2013



## LAUNCHING THE 2012 WILLOW NOMINEES



Annually, Saskatchewan schools and public libraries are encouraged to launch the Willow nominees. During October and November, participants can enter a competition to win a complete set of the 30 nominated books. The response was overwhelming this year with many, many entries being submitted. Darlene Ayers from Lucky Lake School, Lucky Lake was the lucky winner of the set of nominated books. Three boxes of a miscellaneous collection of books were received by: Kimberly Black from William Mason School, Choiceland; Shelly Thiessen from Fort Livingstone School, Pelly; and Lori Anne Stiglitz from St. Francis School, Prince Albert.

Respectfully submitted  
Val Gerrard, Launch Committee



*The flute*

*by Rachana Gilmore*

*A parent came in and played the flute while the teacher read.*



# REGINA FUNDRAISER, BUFFET AND BOOKS

April 17, 2013

Born in a Book – Arthur Slade



Did you know "The Hobbit" lived in a hole in Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan? No, this was Art Slade's opening line as he spoke to the enthusiastic group at Buffet and Books on April 17 in Regina. Art shared his love of reading from Tolkien to Ray Bradbury, authors who influenced his writing style. It was interesting to travel down the road with Art through his formative years as a reader and developing writer.

I must admit I was rather surprised to hear that he was an avid Dungeons and Dragons player. This role-playing game helped to shape his imaginative storytelling which is evident in his writing.

An engaged young reader told Art the family dog was named "Modo" after the character in The Hunchback Assignments. Within minutes, Art tweeted a message to his followers on Twitter!

After the event, Art posed for pictures and autographed books for those in attendance.

Art has won many awards for writing; he has won The Saskatchewan Book Award for Children's Literature and the Governor General's Award for Dust in 2001.

In 2006, Art won the Saskatchewan Book Award: Best Book for Children for Megiddo's Shadow which was a story about his grandfather's life in the army.

Saskatchewan Young Readers' Choice Awards is proud to mention that he has won the following:

Diamond Willow Award 2003 – Return of the Grudstone Ghosts

Snow Willow Award 2006 - Megiddo's Shadow

Diamond Willow Award 2008 – Jolted

All Willow book readers look forward to his next book!

Respectfully submitted,  
Naomi Kral



## 8TH ANNUAL BUFFET AND BOOKS IN SASKATOON

The annual Saskatoon fundraiser was held on November 1, 2012. Once again, the Hilton Garden Inn provided an excellent venue for supporters to gather and enjoy an evening dedicated to promoting reading for Saskatchewan children.

Almost 100 people enjoyed a sumptuous buffet before listening to guest speaker, author and illustrator Ashley Spires, whose book *Small Saul* is one of the Shining Willow nominees for 2012. Ashley delighted the audience, outlining the process of illustration and sharing the inspirations she uses for her stories.



A large number of items were on display for silent auction, including original artwork and items donated from local merchants. We appreciate the work done by the Saskatoon Board members who organized this event, and other members and supporters who gave of their time to help. Special thanks to Ann Atclison, Florence Barton, and Elsbeth Dormuth.



Respectfully submitted,  
Ruth Garnett

## SYRCA WILLOW AWARDS: SPECIAL MOMENTS





## COMMUNICATION: WILLOW AWARDS WEBSITE REPORT

*Goal – Strategic Plan:* Maintain and enhance the current website.

The website is the key communication tool with the membership and participants in the Willow Awards. In the last year, a new website was started. It's under construction and will be launched in 2013. Following the annual cycle of the Willow Awards, new nominees, voting, activities notification and "What's New" articles were added the site. The commenting feature, nominee pages, "What's New" and student-created videos continue to be the most popular hits by both children and adults.

This year paper voting was discontinued and only online votes received. 12,618 Saskatchewan children voted for the 2012 Willow nominees.

Due to the continued dedication of our website developer, Trevor Cunningham; website volunteers Marion Perry and Kathy Stedwill; and graphic support from Rob Bredin, the website is maintained and continues to evolve. The volunteers' generous donation of time ensures the continuity of the Willow Awards website. The generous funding provided by our corporate sponsors is gratefully appreciated and ensures the existence and growth of the website.

Respectfully submitted,  
Val Gerrard  
Website Committee Chair





## 2013 WILLOW NOMINEE VOTING REPORT



Each year the Willow Awards gauges the success of its mission, to promote reading to Saskatchewan children, by the voting for the nominees. After the very successful 10 Year Celebration of the Willow Awards last year, a slight decline in voting was registered this year.

Even though there were slightly fewer votes this year, one year after our celebratory year, the numbers were higher than 2010. Reaching more children through the province, especially in rural areas, is a primary interest. With 12,618 votes being cast, this has been a successful year for the Willow Awards. Thank you to the patrons and sponsors who make the Willow Awards possible.

Votes by Category	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	% CHANGE
SHINING	9,057	9,326	10,582	11,270	10,871	-4%
DIAMOND	769	1,239	1,252	1,400	1,145	-18%
SNOW	262	526	520	593	602	1%
TOTAL VOTES	10,088	11,101	12,534	13,293	12,618	-5%

*Thank you to all the organizers for making this happen.  
It is such a great way to promote our local writers and illustrators.  
Great selection of books as always.  
We really enjoy participating.  
Rhonda Brinkman, Lake Lenore*





WILLOW AWARD WINNERS  
2012 - 2013



*SHINING WILLOW*  
SMALL SAUL  
BY ASHLEY SPIRES



*DIAMOND WILLOW*  
MISSING  
BY BECKY CITRA



*SNOW WILLOW*  
HELD  
BY EDEET RAVEL



## PROGRAM: SHINING WILLOW SELECTION COMMITTEE REPORT

Each year the task of selecting the ten nominees for the following year falls to a committee of teachers, retired teachers, booksellers, and others who are devoted to and knowledgeable about Canadian children's literature. This year the Shining committee met four times between October 29, 2012 and January 15, 2013 and read and evaluated 112 titles.

Using comments on the wiki, spirited discussion and thoughtful reflection about the audience, the committee arrived at the final selection of ten nominees listed below for the 2013 Shining Willows.

Thank you to the enthusiastic and knowledgeable committee members who brought their expertise and experience to the work of the committee: Wilfred Burton, Dr. Christine Fondse, Tamar Green, Amanda Hassen, Kandice Heinrichs, Laurie Hnatiuk, Alicia Klopoushak, Tammie Latimer, Susan Voitka-Seager, and Tracy Woodward.

Respectfully submitted,  
Florence Barton  
Shining Selection Committee Chair



### THE SHINING NOMINEES 2013





## PROGRAM: DIAMOND WILLOW SELECTION COMMITTEE REPORT

The Diamond Willow Selection Committee is a diverse group of women who come together to read children's books for the sheer joy of it. We have library technicians, teacher librarians, professional librarians, teachers, an investment specialist, an administrative assistant and an emergency community coordinator. We met each month at the newly expanded La Ronge Public Library. Two of our members joined in the discussions by Skype, which could be challenging but always fun. Thank you to Judy Angelstad, Nikki Beaudin, Kacy Callin, Erin Carter, Elsbeth Dormuth, Joan Herzog, Rosemary Loeffler, Crystal Peters, Harriet Roy, Kathie Tenold and Melody Wood for all the time spent reading and discussing books. Hopefully next year we can make the group more well-rounded by having men as part of the group.

We carried over 42 titles from last year, which allowed the readers to begin in March. This year we had 168 submissions between what was carried over from last year and what was submitted this year. We carried 21 titles over to next year. There were 68 titles for 2011 and 100 titles for 2012.

Respectfully submitted,  
Jocelyn Provost  
Chair, Diamond Willow



### THE DIAMOND NOMINEES 2013





## PROGRAM: SNOW WILLOW SELECTION COMMITTEE REPORT

The committee considered a total of 142 submitted titles: 34 titles published in 2011 and 108 published in 2012. We have carried over an additional 17 titles that were submitted too late for consideration.

Thanks to all committee members: Florence Barton, Yvonne Denomy, Ruth Elliott, Jane Glen, Bridget Osika, Naomi Kral, Tamzen Kulyk, and Carlene Walter for many hours of thoughtful reading, analyses and camaraderie.

We are happy to present the titles listed below as finalists for the 2013 Snow Willow Award.

Respectfully submitted,  
Ruth Garnett  
Chair, Snow Willow committee



### THE SNOW NOMINEES 2013





# THE 11<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL SASKENERGY WILLOW AWARDS GALA

April 24, 2013

Excitement is radiating from Davidson School...  
SaskEnergy Willow Awards Gala Day has arrived!

Davidson School was chosen to host the 2013 SaskEnergy Willow Awards Gala to announce the winners of the 2012 nominees. Months of thought and preparation went into the planning of this exciting celebration. The school was full of student work showcasing just how excited the students were about all thirty of the nominated books. It was also full of enthusiastic children and staff who were so proud to be hosting this wonderful party.

The Shining students were clad in green, the Diamond students sparkled in blue and the Snow was represented by middle years students dressed in white.



The students and guests from visiting schools and the community gathered in the gym to await the "Parade of Dignitaries". It was especially exciting to welcome Her Honour, Lieutenant Governor Vaughn Solomon Schofield to Davidson School and the SaskEnergy Willow Awards Gala. Other special guests included the Mayor of Davidson, Clayton Schneider, Dr. Guy Tetrault Director of Education, and Trish Watier who represented SaskEnergy.



Lieutenant Governor Vaughn Solomon Schofield



SaskEnergy Representative Trish Watier

Following the parade of nominees and greetings from the dignitaries, students highlighted the 2012 Willow nominees with a program that included skits, songs and PowerPoint presentations. Each of the 30 book titles was skillfully woven into the program.



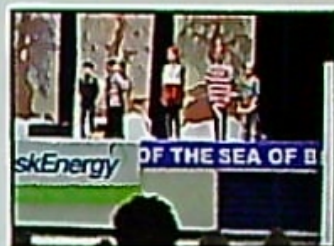
# THE 11<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL SASKENERGY WILLOW AWARDS GALA

## continued...

And the winners are...

### 2012 Shining Willow Award – *Small Saul* by Ashley Spires

Ashley accepted her award and thanked the students for choosing *Small Saul* as their favourite book from the 2012 nominated books.



### 2012 Diamond Willow Award – *Missing* by Becky Citra

Becky was also at the gala to accept her award and told the students how much a "children's choice" award means to authors.



### 2012 Snow Willow Award – *Held* by Edeet Ravel

Edeet was not able to attend the gala but sent a message that was read to the students "...This prize is particularly meaningful to me because so many young readers participated, read books, voted. I am truly thrilled to be part of this wonderful event, if from a distance. Enormous thanks to everyone who made all this possible, thank you for bringing books to readers and readers to books. May we continue to meet this way."

Following the gala, the students were treated to cupcakes and juice in their classrooms and the adult guests were treated to a lovely tea in the library.



The Board of Directors of SYRCA would like to extend a huge Thank You to the staff and students of Davidson School. Gala chairs Debbie Jestin and Arlene Lowe and their committees worked tirelessly to put together a wonderful celebration of the 2012 Willow Award nominees and winning books.



## Willow Nominated Authors Visit David School

The morning of Gala Day was made extra special by visits from Willow nominated authors.

Ashley Spires, author of nominated book *Small Saul*, met with the primary students to share her love of creating stories through art and text. She showed the students how her graphic novel character Binky came to life and had the students drawing too.



Becky Citra, author of nominated book *Missing*, spoke with the grades 4 – 6 students. She showed them pictures of her home in the interior of British Columbia and talked about how she gets ideas for her stories.





## **Willow Nominated Authors Visit David School continued...**

Edeet Ravel met with the middle years students via Skype. They used a "question and answer" format to learn more about Edeet and the process of writing books.



## **11<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL SASKENERGY WILLOW AWARDS GALA: SPECIAL MOMENTS**





# SYRCA-THE WILLOW AWARDS

## Patrons, Sponsors, and Friends

SYRCA Gold Patrons have generously contributed \$5000 or more



# PotashCorp

Helping Nature Provide

SYRCA Silver Patrons: have generously contributed \$3000 to \$4999

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SYRCA Bronze Patrons have generously contributed \$1000 to \$2999.

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# **SYRCA-THE WILLOW AWARDS**

## **Patrons, Sponsors, and Friends**

Saskatchewan Young Reader's 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 Sponsors have generously contributed \$500 to \$999**

Ministry of Education

---

### **SYRCA Sponsors have generously contributed \$100 or more**

Access Communications Cooperative, Ltd.

Ann Atchison

Chapters, Regina

Sharon Gabora

Ruth Garnett

Claire Isaac

Naomi Kral

McNallys

Photography by June McDonald

Saskatchewan Reading Council

Superannuated Teachers of Saskatchewan - Regina Chapter

Solvera Solutions

West Harvest Inn - Regina

Melody Wood

Allied Printers

Florence Barton

Janice Flaman

Linda Galenzoski

Val Gerrard

Hi-Tec Profiles Inc.

Kramers Hair Studio

Deborah Mervold

Sylvia Regnier

Saskatoon Symphony Orchestra

Mary Saso

Gaylene Spence

The Willow on Wascana

Joan Zylak





# THE WILLOW AWARDS