

**AUTHOR PROFILES**  
**2004 ILLINOIS AUTHORS BOOK FAIR**

**James W. Bennett** of Normal is the author of a number of uncompromising, challenging novels for teens. The books have earned him recognition as one of the nation's leading novelists for young adults. Bennett's fiction, often revolving around sports themes, has been used successfully as a curriculum choice in schools. His newest book is *Faith Wish*. Other titles include *Plunking Reggie Jackson*, *Old Hoss*, *Blue Star Rapture*, *I Can Hear the Morning Dove* and *The Squared Circle*, the latter considered by many to be the finest basketball novel ever written.

**Elizabeth Berg** of Oak Park is one of this year's Featured Authors. She is a popular author of books about women's lives in transition. Berg's works include *Durable Goods*, *Never Change* and *Open House*, the latter being selected by television personality Oprah Winfrey for her popular Book Club. Her latest work is *Say When*, which has been called "refreshing and well written" and "a thoughtful novel about a marriage in disarray".

**Steven Burgauer** of Peoria is a prolific writer of science fiction. Of his latest book, *The Slaves of Aphrodite*, E.B. Stevens writes, "Unlike anything Burgauer has written before, a first person account of life four hundred years into the future." Burgauer's book *Newhuman* was nominated for the 2003 Tiptree Award, and his book *In the Shadow of Omen*, was a Barnes and Noble online Book of the Week. In addition to writing science fiction, Burgauer has written extensively on business topics, and published an investment primer entitled *The Wealth Builders Guide*.

**Barbara Croft** of Oak Park is the author of *Moon's Crossing*, set at the 1893 Chicago World's Fair. Her work has been called "breathtaking" (Tim O'Brien) and "magnificent" (Bharati Mukherjee). Croft has a writing style that is highly visual, poetic and spare. She won the Drue Heinz Literature Prize in 1998 for *Necessary Fictions*. A novella-length version of *Moon's Crossing* won a gold medal from the Pirate's Alley Faulkner Society in 2000.

**James T. Durkin** of Woodridge is the author of *In My Dreams*, a fictional story about a young man, Robert Hamlin, who gets elected President at the age of 29. The first in an anticipated series of three stories, *In My Dreams* helps to inform citizens about the political process. Hamlin lives his life in a manner to demonstrate how elected officials can help the citizens they represent. *In My Dreams* tries to serve as a symbol of hope for a better future in our political system.

**Ray Elliott** of Urbana is an editor, publisher and author of numerous works of non-fiction. His first novel is *Wild Hands Toward the Sky*, a coming of age work that tells the story of John Walter, and is set on the small farms and villages of Southern Illinois near the Wabash Valley during and shortly after World War II. One reviewer called the book, “the timeless universal story of all boys groping and fighting their way to manhood, a book from the heart as well as the guts.”

**Catherine Gourley**, award-winning author and editor of books for both young adults and adults, is another Featured Author of the 2004 Illinois Authors Book Fair. Gourley's newest releases are *Society's Sisters*, about women social reformers in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, and *Who is Maria Tallchief?*, a biography of America's first prima ballerina. A former *Weekly Reader* editor, Gourley has also written three books that are part of the hugely popular *American Girl* nonfiction series—*Welcome to Felicity's World*, *Welcome to Samantha's World*, and *Welcome to Molly's World*.

Featured author **Robert E. Hartley** is the author of *Lewis & Clark in the Illinois Country: The Little-Told Story*. The book focuses on the prelude to the historic expedition, from the American Revolution to 1803, and the crucial six months in the winter of 1803-04 that the explorers spent in the Illinois country, recruiting and gathering supplies and information. The expedition began 200 years ago with the creation of a camp near what is now known as Wood River in Madison County. Hartley has written about Illinois history and politics for more than 40 years. He lives in Westminster, Colorado.

**Esther Hershenhorn** of Chicago specializes in picture books and middle grade fiction. She is a 2004-2005 Crown Award Nominee for her book *The Confession\$ and Secret\$ of Howard J. Fingerhut*. She won the 2003 Sidney Taylor Book Award for Young Readers for her work *Chicken Soup by Heart*. Other titles include *Fancy That* and *There Goes Lowell's Party!*

**Sam Hill** of Winnetka published his first novel, *Buzz Monkey*, in the fall of 2003, and his second, *Buzz Riff*, will be published later this year. He has also written or co-written three non-fiction books. *Radical Marketing*, co-authored with Glenn Rifkin, is now in its sixth printing and has been translated into seven languages. CNNfn called his book *The Infinite Asset: Managing Brands to Build New Value* “one of the best business books of the last two decades”. Hill's latest business book is *Sixty Trends in Sixty Minutes*.

Eldorado native **Marilyn Irvin Holt** is the author of four books and the editor of one volume of letters and diaries. Her book *Indian Orphanages* received the Oklahoma Historical Society's Book of the Year award in 2001, and was a finalist for Oklahoma Center for the Book's award for best non-fiction. *Indian Orphanages* is one of the first book length studies of the evolution of the orphanage system in Native American culture. Other titles are *Linoleum*, *Better Babies* and *The Modern Farm Woman, 1890-1930*; *The Orphan Trans*; and *Model T's, Pep Chapels and a Wolf at the Door: Kansas Teenagers of the Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century*.

Popular *Chicago Tribune* journalist and WGN Radio personality **Rick Kogan** is the author of *America's Mom: The Life, Lessons and Legacy of Ann Landers*. Kogan was a longtime friend and editor of Ann Landers for the last five years of her life. With fellow *Tribune* writer Maurice Possley (see below) Kogan wrote *Everybody Pays: Two Men, One Murder and the Price of Truth*.

**Erik Larson**, whose recent book *The Devil in the White City* spent a number of weeks on the New York Times bestseller list and was a finalist for the 2003 National Book Awards, is a featured author for the Book Fair. In *The Devil in the White City*, Larson details the lost history of the 1893 Chicago World's Fair. He tells the stories of two men: Daniel H. Burnham, the architect responsible for the fair's construction, and H.H. Holmes, a serial killer masquerading as a doctor. While the fair ushered in a new era in American history, Holmes marked the emergence of the serial killer. Many reviewers have praised the non-fiction book for its drama and for reading like a mystery thriller. The movie rights for *The Devil in the White City* have been sold, and film production is expected to begin soon. Larson is also the author of the acclaimed nonfiction bestseller *Isaac's Storm*, the story of a devastating hurricane that hit Galveston, Texas in 1900. His other works include *Lethal Passage* and *The Naked Consumer*. His work has appeared in a number of national magazines, including *Harper's*, *The New Yorker*, *Time* and *Atlantic Monthly*.

**Laurie Lawlor** of Evanston has written more than 30 books of fiction and nonfiction for children and young adults. Her books have received numerous nominations for awards. She has authored six books in the *Addie Across the Prairie* series and nine books in the *American Sisters* series based on diaries and letters of American journeys. Recent works include *Magnificent Voyage: An American Adventurer on Captain Cook's Last Expedition* and *Old Crump: The True Story of a Trip West*.

Life integration expert **Leslie Levine** of Chicago is the author of *Will This Place Ever Feel Like Home? Simple Advice for Settling in After You Move*, which was named one of the best work/family books by the Wall Street Journal. She is also the author of *Ice Cream for Breakfast: If You Follow All the Rules, You Miss Half the Fun*. Her newest release is *Wish It, Dream It, Do It: Turn the Life You're Living Into the Life You Want*. She specializes in stress management, self-care and life integration.

**James Conroyd Martin** of Chicago is the author of *Push Not the River*, a work of historical fiction based on the actual diary of a countess who lived through the rise and fall of Poland's Third of May Constitution in the 1790's. One reviewer said *Push Not the River* contains "all the sweep and romance of *Gone with the Wind* and *Doctor Zhivago*". Martin has been signed by St. Martin's Press to write a sequel.

**Lee Martin** is the award-winning author of the acclaimed memoir *From Our House* and the short story collection *The Least You Need to Know*. *From Our House* was a Barnes and Noble Discover Great New Writers selection in 2000 and was nominated for both the Pulitzer Prize and the National Book Awards. Lee's latest book *Turning Bones* is the story of his family's migration from Kentucky to Illinois.

**Drew and Trevor Orsinger** are authors of *The Firefighter's Best Friend: Lives and Legends of Chicago Firehouse Dogs*. It is the first book to document the role and tradition of the unique breed of dogs that have dwelled in Chicago firehouses through real life stories, history and photography. The history and lore of Chicago firedogs is as rich as the city's cultural heritage. The authors take readers on a unique tour of Chicago firehouses in their quest to document the lives and legends of every known Chicago firedog, past and present.

**Taylor Pensoneau** of New Berlin is a well-known Central Illinois author whose latest work, *The Summer of '50*, is a mystery novel and Pensoneau's first work of fiction. He is the author of the widely selling *Brothers Notorious: The Sheltons*, an account of the rise and fall of the best-known gangster brothers to come out of southern Illinois. Pensoneau also authored critically acclaimed biographies of former Illinois Governors Richard Ogilvie and Dan Walker.

**Janice Petterchak** of Rochester is the author of *Lone Scout*, a new biography of W.D. Boyce, founder of the Boy Scouts of America. She has also authored *Out to Sea Again: A Naval Armed Guard in World War II*. She has authored or co-authored biographies of former Chicago Cubs broadcaster Jack Brickhouse, Andrew McNally III, chairman emeritus of Rand McNally, and Nathan Cummings, founder of the Sara Lee Corporation. She is a former director of the Illinois State Historical Society.

**Maurice Possley** is an award winning, Pulitzer Prize nominated investigative criminal justice reporter for the *Chicago Tribune*. His book *The Brown's Chicken Massacre* pieces together the brutal slaying of seven people at an Illinois restaurant, and the breakthrough DNA evidence that helped solve the case. Possley and fellow *Tribune* reporter Rick Kogan (see above) co-authored *Everybody Pays: Two Men, One Murder and the Price of Truth*.

**Harriette Gillem Robinet** of Oak Park is the author of eleven children's books. The first two are about disabled children. The last nine are historical fiction for middle grade youngsters, with the last two books combining mystery and history. Titles include *Twelve Travelers*, *Twenty Horses*; *Walking to the Bus Rider Blues*; *Forty Acres and Maybe a Mule*; *Missing from Haymarket Square*; and *Children of the Fire*. She has won several awards for her work.

**Herbert K. Russell** of Carbondale is the author of various publications concerning Illinois subjects, including *Edgar Lee Masters: A Biography*. He has published numerous articles about Masters in scholarly journals and reference works. Russell's works have received various recognitions; research awards have come from the Newberry Library and National Endowment for the Humanities. He is currently writing a book about the southern Illinois region known as "Egypt".

**Cornelia Maude Spelman** is a licensed clinical social worker and writer. Spelman's series of picture books for young children, "*The Way I Feel*", aims to help children manage their emotions and relate to others successfully. Also a writer of creative nonfiction for adults, Spelman has won literary awards from the Illinois Arts Council. She is currently finishing a memoir, *My Mother's Heart*, about psychological legacies in her family, and is at work writing and illustrating a number of picture books.

**Stacy Thompson** of Wheeling has written a science fiction novel entitled *Pilgrims' Moon*, which tells the story of the unwitting passengers of a space freighter and their adventures when the ship veers off course and passes through a mysterious space-time anomaly and emerges 500 years in the future. *Pilgrims' Moon* is Mr. Thompson's first novel. He is at work on a second science fiction novel, *Endangered Species*.

**Rosemary Thornton** of Alton is the author of *The Houses that Sears Built: Everything You Ever Wanted to Know About Sears Catalog Homes*. More than 75,000 homes were built from kits supplied through mail order by Sears, Roebuck and Company in the first three decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The 30,000 piece kits contained everything from lumber and nails, paint, wood putty, window weights and sash cord. About 70,000 Sears homes are believed to remain.

**Karen Tintori** is the non-fiction pseudonym of Karen Katz, a multi-published author of both fiction and non-fiction. *Trapped: The 1909 Cherry Mine Disaster* is her first solo book. Under the pseudonym Jillian Karr, she coauthored *Something Borrowed*, *Something Blue*, which was turned into a two-hour movie of the week for CBS Television. A second Jillian Karr novel is entitled *Catch Me if You Can*. The author's first collaboration was *What Does Being Jewish Mean?* She is currently at work on *Unto the Daughters: Love, Honor and Death in a Sicilian Family*. The non-fiction book centers on a long-held secret in her mother's family.

**Rita Coburn Whack** of Flossmor is the author of *Meant to Be*, a coming of age novel about a young woman, infused with a spiritual awakening that leads her toward maturity and frees her from the uncertainties of childhood. Publisher's Weekly said of *Meant to Be*, "Whack's considerable narrative ability and the color and vigor of her prose add up to a highly readable tale." Upscale Magazine said, "Rita Coburn Whack scores a literary coup with her new novel."

**Rodd Whelpley** of Springfield is the author of *Capital Murder*, a political mystery/thriller set in the Capitol City. A Springfield police officer follows a complex trail through the dark side of state politics to solve a decades old crime. Whelpley dedicated his book to the late David Everson, who wrote a number of political murder mysteries involving Illinois government and politics prior to his death in 1999. The many fans of Everson's books will enjoy Whelpley's *Capital Murder* as well.

**Irene Zabytko** was born and raised in the Ukrainian village section of Chicago. Her first book, *The Sky Unwashed*, was highly acclaimed and was selected as a Barnes and Noble Discover Great New Writers Book Award. Her new book, *When Luba Leaves Home*, is based on the Ukrainian community in her Chicago neighborhood. One of the stories in her book, "Obligation", won the PEN Syndicated Fiction Award, and was read on National Public Radio's "The Sound of Writing". Many of Irene's other stories are published in anthologies and college literature textbooks.

**Sophia Zufa** of New Lenox is the author of *Why God Has Gray Hair*, a collection of short stories about attending Catholic parochial school in the pre-Vatican II era, when all the teachers were nuns and the pastor was held in only slightly lesser esteem than the Pope. Most of the pieces in the book are humorous, and some are some downright hilarious. Yet a few will touch you with a poignancy that aims straight for the heart. Reviewers have praised the book with comments such as "pure enjoyment", "charming stories that had me laughing out loud", and "a truly enjoyable read—don't pass this one up."

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