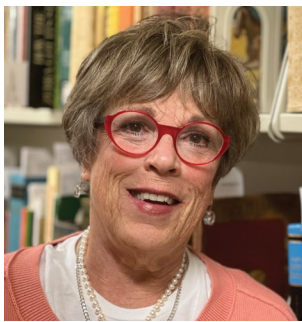


# JUVENILE MISCELLANY



SUMMER 2023 • KARLIE HERNDON, EDITOR

## Ellen Ruffin, Curator, Announces Retirement



*Ellen Ruffin*

**D**ear Friends,

I began at the de Grummond Children's Literature Collection in January 2006, a mid-life career move. I knew it would be something entirely different from the other "careers" I had, but never did I expect the fulfilling, thrilling, growth-

filled experiences I encountered.

When I look back on these years, I think of the many relationships I have been privileged to develop. I also think of colleagues who encouraged and supported my vision. Work at the de Grummond Collection has never been boring. There is always something to discover in the amazing stacks. My work in the archive has connected me to the depth of passion of authors and illustrators. There are always people to meet and stories to hear. I can't choose what moments have been my favorites; there are far too many.

The de Grummond Collection, as you are aware, holds the original manuscripts and illustrations of more than 1,400 authors and illustrators and more than 200,000 published books dating from 1530 to the present. Researchers from across the United States, around the world, and from all disciplines study its fables, fairy tales, folklore, alphabet books, nursery rhymes, textbooks, religious books, moral stories, fantasy, fiction, primers and children's magazines. Yet, it is not a library of children's books or even one for children. It is

a window to the process of book creation. It reflects both the personal narratives of its authors and the societies in which they have lived. More importantly, it serves as a research mega-center where materials are used to better understand societies across the centuries.

I now announce my retirement as of June 2023. I've been considering this over the last year and feel it is the right time for me to explore new experiences. It has been an honor to work with and for the de Grummond Collection. I am excited that a new light shines on it from inside the University, and that its future will benefit from the University's new initiative to raise a \$2 million endowment to enhance its holdings. This is my dream come true! The initiative will make a huge difference. It will elevate its visibility and accessibility and will exist in perpetuity to provide security and stability as needs change over time.

I will be retiring, but not leaving! I look forward to many more adventures. A heartfelt thank you for all the contributions you have made to the de Grummond Children's Literature Collection. Your support has made it what it is today.

Sincerely,  
Ellen H. Ruffin, *Associate Professor*  
*Curator, de Grummond Collection*

To get in touch with the de Grummond, please email the interim curator, Karlie Herndon, at [karlie.herndon@usm.edu](mailto:karlie.herndon@usm.edu), or call 601.266.4086. Marge Sauls, collections specialist, is also available at [margaret.sauls@usm.edu](mailto:margaret.sauls@usm.edu) or 601.266.4349.



# EZRA JACK KEATS AWARD 2023



By Claire Thompson

The annual EJK Award ceremony was held on Thursday, April 13, 2023, during the Fay B. Kaigler Children's Book Festival at USM in Hattiesburg, Mississippi, marking the first in-person award ceremony since 2019. The Award celebrates exceptional early career authors and illustrators for portraying the multicultural nature of our world in the spirit of Ezra Jack Keats.

"Children will see themselves in the 2023 EJK Award and Honor books, delight in the illustrations, and enjoy reading them over and over again," said **Deborah Pope**, executive director of the EJK Foundation. "These books include characters from many walks of life, who discover imaginative ways of coping, triumphing and sharing. I'm grateful to our illustrious committee for choosing these books to display the EJK Award and Honor medallions."

Added **Ellen Ruffin**, curator of the de Grummond Children's Literature Collection and the Keats archive at The University of Southern Mississippi, "Since 1986, we've seen the winners and honorees of the EJK Award blossom into the Ezras of today and tomorrow. We see that same spirit and talent in this year's winners and honorees. It will be a joy to watch their careers flourish, writing and illustrating delightful children's books that make a difference."

The award was presented by EJK committee chair, Deborah Taylor, with the assistance of de Grummond lecturer, Loren Long. Also in attendance were five of the 2023 committee members: Rita Auerbach, Jennifer Brown, Melissa Iwai, Vaunda Nelson and Chris Raschka, as well as the new committee member and chair for 2024, Shannan Hicks, director of Library Services at North Little Rock Public Library System. EJK Foundation associate executive director, Diana Vozza, and director of media strategy, Jocelyn McCarthy, coordinated the award presentation program. The ceremony was also livestreamed on the festival's website.

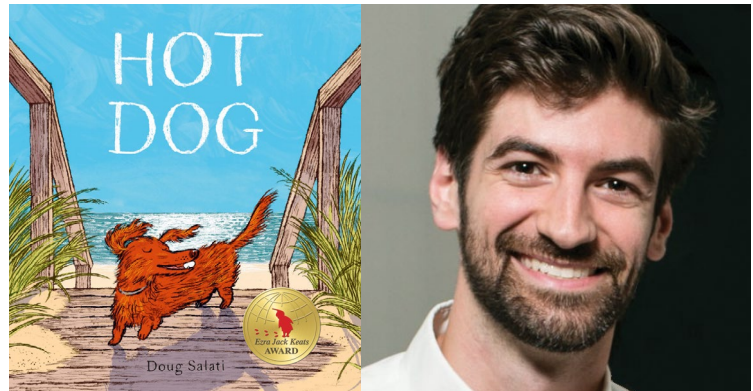


On winning the Writer Award for *How to Say Hello to a Worm*, **Kari Percival** said, "It is a great honor to win the Ezra Jack Keats Writer Award. As a tiny youngster, his books welcomed me with respect and sensitivity into a child's sense of being in a beautiful world. As an adult, I am inspired by how Keats broke with tradition and pervasive, harmful white supremacist ideology to tell more inclusive stories of our vibrant, diverse communities. The seeds for writing *How to Say Hello to a Worm* were planted during springtime meet-ups at a community garden with children and their grownups in my city neighborhood. The recognition of this Ezra Jack Keats Writer Award brings me hope that many more children and their grown-ups will be inspired to get their hands in the dirt, try to grow food, honor our observations and questions, and cultivate our relationships with our living community."



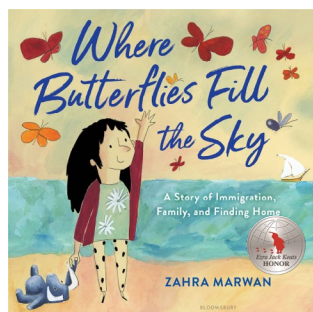
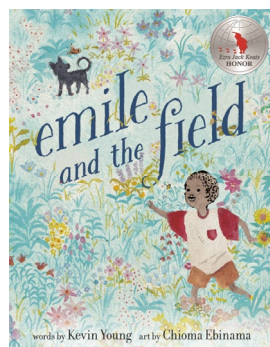
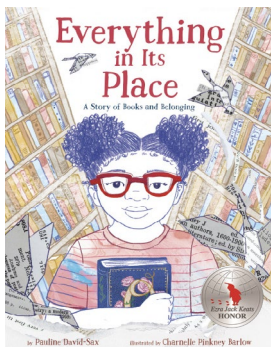


On winning the Illustrator Award, **Doug Salati** said, “*Hot Dog* came from reflecting on the common, everyday interactions that we navigate and the inner emotions that result from them. It is my hope that this full range of feelings will ring true to young readers who are so observant of the moment in which they are living. For *Hot Dog* to be recognized for portraying these universal experiences is a tremendous honor that I am deeply proud of. Thank you to all the members of the Ezra Jack Keats Award Committee for this distinction.” Salati also garnered the Caldecott Award earlier this year.



**Pauline David-Sax** accepted a Writer Honor for *Everything in Its Place*, and **Zahra Marwan** took an illustrator honor for *Where Butterflies Fill the Sky*. **Chioma Ebinama** and **Juliana Perdomo** were unable to attend but delivered their acceptances through a video presentation.

A community-wide reception for the winners and festival attendees was celebrated that evening at the historic Hattiesburg Train Depot.



# Tudor Place Exhibit

By Claire Thompson

In 2022, de Grummond received notification of the gift of a dollhouse from Harry Davis, who had studied the art of Tasha Tudor for several decades. Originally a teacher after graduating from Virginia Commonwealth University, Davis left that field to become a businessman upon striking up a friendship with the famous illustrator in the late 1980s. He and Tudor collaborated throughout the '90s, co-creating a business called Corgi Cottage Industries. Through Davis' savvy promotion, he aided Tudor in organizing public appearances, reaching wider audiences, and was the initiator for Tudor's monumental dollhouse exhibition at the Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Folk Art Center in Williamsburg, Va. He has published several books on Tasha Tudor's work, including *Tasha Tudor's Dollhouse*, *The Art of Tasha Tudor* and *Forever Christmas*.

Tudor's style of illustration was frequently characterized as romantically old-fashioned, Victorian and 19th-century. In addition to numerous other awards and honors, two of her works, *Mother Goose* and *I Is One*, were named Caldecott Honor Books. Tudor passed away at her home in Marlboro, Vermont, on June 18, 2008, at age 92.

The dollhouse, Tudor Place, was designed by Harry Davis in 1999 to imitate Tasha Tudor's first adult residence, a townhouse on Boston's Beacon Hill. Much of the furniture was made by Tasha's son, Seth Tudor (and, subsequently, bought from an antiques dealer by Mr. Davis). Of the dollhouse's creation, Davis said, "It was built by Greg Hershey of Richmond, Va. Ann Jackson Sandler of Richmond faux-painted the outside of the house to resemble limestone blocks. She also marbledized the fireplace mantel and painted the finish on the library walls. Harry Davis plastered the ceilings, and Jim Orum of Richmond wallpapered the bedroom. Lighting was installed by Chris Moser of Richmond."

The dollhouse arrived in large packing crates and was reassembled in an exhibit space in the McCain Library. The contents of each room had been meticulously labeled and packed in smaller boxes, which were carefully unwrapped and put in place according to photographs. There are panels on the wall corresponding to each room, highlighting the important pieces of the collection. The dollhouse is lit from within and protected by large plexiglass panels.

Twelve of Tudor's paintings from the collection are on display in the room, along with period clothing, which may have been made and worn by the artist. The Children's Book Festival's guests and attendees were invited to visit the exhibit in April. Anyone may now sign up for an appointment to visit, Monday-Friday, 9 a.m.-4 p.m., by going to [degrummond.org](http://degrummond.org) and navigating to our exhibits page.





# Graphic Novels and Comics: The Gateway to Children's Literacy



By Marge Sauls

We've all seen the movie where the young child stays up late with a superhero comic and a flashlight, listening intently for their mother's steps coming down the hallway to avoid being caught. In recent years, educators have begun to advocate for graphic novels as a gateway for "reluctant readers." What they lack in long-winded prose, they make up for in beautifully designed illustrations.

Graphic novels, comic books and manga have been prevalent in the lives of children and adults alike for years, but with a shadow of judgement brooding over them. Things have changed. The 2023 Southern Miss Medallion winner, Gene Luen Yang, is an award-winning cartoonist and teacher. His 2016 book, *American Born Chinese*, was the first graphic novel to be nominated for a National Book Award and the first to win ALA's Printz Award. This book has been adapted into a TV show, which aired on Disney+ on May 24. Comic books are real books after all!

Graphic novels have also branched out from the fictional superhero to nonfiction ones, like *It's Her Story: Marie Curie* by Kaara Kallen and Rosie Baker and *We Hereby Refuse: Japanese American Acts of Resistance During World War II* by Frank Abe, Tamiko Nimura, Matt Sasaki and Ross Ishikawa. If you know a reluctant reader, or someone who has expressed a disinterest in the wordiness of most novels no matter their age, gift them a graphic novel. Christmas is coming up...in, like, four months!

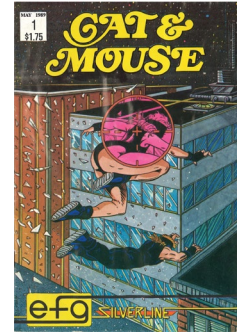
## My History with Comics

In 2022, the de Grummond Children's Literature Collection received a large donation of 1980s and '90s comic books, some Marvel, some DC, and a lot of *Archie*. In it was No. 1, Vol. 1 of *Cat & Mouse* (1989), an independently owned comic about two New Orleans-based vigilantes named Cat and Mouse. The copy was signed by the scripiter, Roland Mann, and the inker/letterer, Steven Butler. Knowing my parents' appreciation for the obscure comic, I texted them the cover and signatures. This opened up a rabbit hole of information. My mother told me that she actually knew Steven. He is a South Mississippi-based cartoonist who used to work for Marvel Comics, and he is currently a freelance cartoonist. His current works include *Biff Stone, Monster Hunter for Hire*, *Funnyman* and *The Extraordinary Miniature Man*. With Marvel, he worked on *Web of Spider-Man*, *The Amazing Spiderman*, and *Silver Sable and the Wild Pack*, just to name a few.

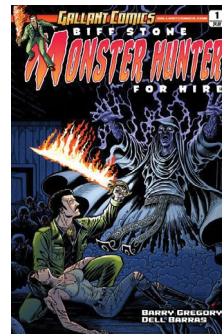
As he was leaving *Silver Sable*, he recommended my mom, Megan McDowell, become the colorist. This marked the beginning of her career at Marvel! She went to work on titles like *Spider-Man 2099*, *Doom 2099*, *Punisher 2099* and *X-Men 2099*. She is now a "picker," artist and owner of The Shop at Lemon Tree in Columbia, Miss.



Silver Sable and the Wild Pack Vol. 1, No. 33



Cat & Mouse Vol. 1, No. 1



Biff Stone, Monster Hunter for Hire #1



Cat & Mouse Vol. 1, No. 1, with signatures



Spider-Man Vol. 1, No. 35



"Whimsical Hand Painted Silver Plate Coffee Service" enamel paint on silver, Megan Sauls, 2022



Spiderman 2099 Vol. 1, No. 36

# Thresholds of a Children's Book Vagabond



By Chuck Galey

Growing up, I had everything I needed to learn how to draw: a pencil, a piece of paper, and a long-winded preacher. True. Many artists got their start with frustrated parents giving their wiggly children pencil and paper to keep them occupied during church.

I took art lessons from a German immigrant who lived in Greenwood, Miss., my hometown. Mrs. Wacht

was a classically trained painter in eastern Europe and served tea and played classical music during art class. She could spin a yarn and often told some whoppers. She claimed to have been taught by Oskar Kokoschka, a member of the Viennese expressionist group in the early 1900s. There's no way of proving that her alleged early education is true, but I believe it. I appreciate that original Kokoschka painting that hung in her parlor more now than I did when I was 15.

The newspaper clipping is from *The Greenwood Commonwealth*, May 1969. Mrs. Wacht and I are pictured with two of my art classmates and my winning painting in the Penny Art Contest. The painting



Mrs. Wacht and me pictured with my Pennies for Art winning painting, *Tho the Sky Be Gray*, May, 1969

Photo credit: The Greenwood Commonwealth

is titled *Tho the Sky Be Gray*. I titled it with such dramatic flair. In the painting, two children are playing on the steps of their old house. Storm clouds are looming in the background. Lying beneath my youthful artistic uncertainty, a creative confidence began to form.

I did not know of anyone making a living as an artist. However, learning to scuba dive at a nearby swimming pool, I thought oceanography

would be a great living. My studies at Mississippi State University brought me to summer work at the Gulf Coast Research Laboratory (GCRL) in Ocean Springs, Miss.

At GCRL, there was an infamous on-deck incident. I was assigned to spend several multi-hour work anchorages in the Mississippi Sound taking various marine readings. The boom that supported the scientific equipment was creaky from the salt water that splashed on it. While swatting at the “no-see-ems,” sand flies swarming around him, the captain of the boat maneuvered the screeching boom into position.

“Chuck, get that spray can over there and help me!” I grabbed the can and began to spray the captain’s legs with what I thought was insect repellent. Turns out, it was WD-40 lubricant. I knew then that I had no business working in physical oceanography!

After a bout with seasickness on every work cruise, I changed my major to art. Somehow, I would make a living using my artistic talent.

Many years later, my wife, Forrest, and I were starting our careers; I had a tiresome job as an advertising agency art director. Our three-year-old son, Sean, asked during our bedtime picture book reading, “Daddy, will I know words when I grow up?” The sweet innocence of childhood swirled with the whimsy of Pooh’s hundred-acre wood, the tinkling bell in *The Polar Express*, and the absurdity of *Dinosaur Bob*. Children’s literature beckoned. Right then and there, I decided to pursue picture book writing and illustrating. I haven’t looked back since.



My Pennies for Art award winning painting, *Tho the Sky Be Gray*, May, 1969

Photo credit: Chuck Galey Studio

There is a clear path between the Fay B. Kaigler Children’s Book Festival and my career in children’s literature. I have made many wonderful friends through this event and other literary programs.

Berthe Amos, an author/illustrator, invited me to speak at her workshop in New Orleans. During my presentation, I mentioned that I had just returned from taking my illustration portfolio to New York to visit art directors and editors there. The keynote speaker later approached me, saying, “The next time you come to New York, you can stay with me.”

That man was Newbery Medalist Richard Peck. Over the years, I stayed with him whenever I was in the city. We remained good friends until his passing in 2018. What a treasure to have known one of the most prolific young adult writers in children’s literature!

The de Grummond Children’s Literature Collection, the Fay B. Kaigler Festival, and the Society of Children’s Book Writers and Illustrators continue to serve as my master classes in writing and illustrating for children’s literature.

Like a curious vagabond, I eventually got to where I am now. After 15 illustrated books, written by other authors, I am still sending out manuscripts and art samples. I am trying to catch that lightning in a bottle—the synthesis of words, pictures, characters and heart that connects with children.

And, yes, I am anticipating that next threshold.



Richard Peck, Patsy Perritt and Chuck Galey at Patsy’s 2001 retirement party at the LSU College of Library Science, where Patsy was a professor of children’s literature

Photo credit: Ron Perritt



# New Shoes

By Sheila Green

In the early summer of 1956, just out of college, I saw a pair of brown pumps in the window of a shop on Fifth Avenue. They cost more than any shoe I'd ever bought.

Carrying them home, I decided they would not walk me to the CBS typist job for which I had just interviewed but would take my feet to find out if what I loved to do could be called "work" and make a living.



I cannot recall a time when I was not drawing. Doodles, comic strips, imagined stories with characters filled the margins of school papers and took up the backs of notebooks.

As an art major at The High School of Music and Art in Manhattan, I found new ideas and media to explore, as well as a community of classmates with the same passion.

However, it wasn't until college that I learned it was possible for a serious career to be made from pure pleasure.

Before starting an office job, I wanted to check this out.

In the mid-1950s, an illustrator could show one's drawings to actual people at actual publishing houses, of which there were many. I put together a portfolio of the doodles that had festooned my college notebooks, and in my new—as it turned out, uncomfortable—shoes, set forth.



Since I had grown up on the Upper West Side of Manhattan, where I still lived with my parent, buses and subways eased the way.

I wasn't Cinderella dancing at a ball, but amazingly on my first day out, Russell Lynes at *Harper's Magazine* gave me an article to

illustrate and sent me to see Susan Carr (now Hershmann) and Ursula Nordstrom in Harper Children's Books, where I was offered a collection of poems.

Though a day like this would never happen again, I walked home in my now magically off-the-ground shoes.

At a time before publishers merged to become large corporate entities, it was editors—not the sales department—who made major decisions about what was to be published. I loved visiting offices full of books and the people who created, edited and published them. At Harper, I met my friend Karla Kuskin and her friend Maurice Sendak, along with Tomi Ungerer. It was like being part of a small world full of new, exciting beginnings.

Soon, I was illustrating all kinds of books for different publishers.



I illustrated cookbooks and humor books and how-to books, but most of the books were for young readers. Among them was the now classic *Pink Motel* by Carol Ryrie Brink, to be reissued soon by Echo Point Reprint Books using the original illustrations.

Though Doubleday had published my picture book for adults, *A Metropolitan Love Story*, it was a children's book editor at MacMillan who suggested I write, as well as draw one, for children. A long and tortured process ensued, but with her help, my first book resulted.

Writing was so much harder than drawing, only once I started, it was what I wanted most to do. I liked to explore issues that were important to me like materialism, sexual precocity, competition, etc. To my surprise, it turned out that these issues were important to 10-year-olds, as well. Who knew? Juxtaposing drawings and text, as in the Rosy Cole series, helped create humor to mask a message.

When I started illustrating in the '50s, mothers in the books I illustrated did not wear pants or work at jobs.

There were no minorities and little to no fantasy or rhyming.

Then, in the '60s, the pendulum swung.

Witches, vampires and aliens began to come out of the woodwork. A mother could be a bus driver or a tugboat captain. It was a new and exciting world.

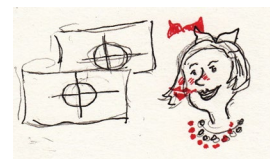


A few years ago, I sent the de Grummond Children's Literature Collection boxes containing over 60 years of my work for children. This included not just dummies of books that were published, as well as those that never were, but

old color separation sheets, which had to be carefully aligned with "registration marks."

If the mark was off, mistakes happened.

Meeting Ellen Ruffin and her staff at de Grummond has evoked for me so much more than what I could fit in a box.



It has recalled the long lunches with editors, where conversations could lead to new book ideas, as well as long-lasting cherished personal relationships.

I know in today's world, my brown pumps could not have gotten me through the door of any publisher. Drawing styles have changed, as they should with each new generation. The incredible technology used in book production is beyond my understanding.



I don't know how things went for Cinderella in glass slippers that enabled her to live with a prince in a castle, but I feel hugely lucky my brown pumps started me off on seven decades of doing the work I love.

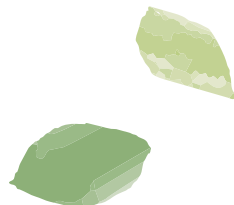
**Editor's note:** Sheila Green's work (under the pen name Sheila Greenwald) will soon be available for research at the de Grummond Children's Literature Collection. Stay tuned for a finding aid in the coming months!



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## DE GRUMMOND CHILDREN'S LITERATURE COLLECTION

# Curatorship Initiative

The de Grummond Children's Literature Collection at USM is one of North America's leading research centers in children's literature. Founded in 1966 by Dr. Lena Y. de Grummond, the Collection holds the original manuscripts and illustrations of more than 1,400 authors and illustrators and more than 200,000 published books dating from 1530 to the present.

Researchers from across the United States, around the world, and from all disciplines regularly visit the Collection, located within University Libraries on the Hattiesburg campus of USM, to study its fables, fairy tales, folklore, alphabet books, nursery rhymes, textbooks, religious books, moral stories, fantasy, fiction, primers

and children's magazines. These holdings are composed of scholarly studies, biographies, bibliographies and critical works.

The USM Foundation recently launched a fundraising effort to establish an endowment to sustain the ongoing acquisition of children's literature, highlight its meaningfulness through traveling exhibitions, and host workshops for authors and illustrators. With a \$2 million goal, the endowment, once fully funded, will bolster the de Grummond curatorial position in a manner that would sustain ongoing scholarship in an academically free environment.

Please consider supporting the de Grummond Curatorship Initiative today.

Gifts to the de Grummond Children's Literature Collection Curatorship (Fund #2506) at any level are welcome and may be paid outright or pledged over five years.



To support the de Grummond Curatorship,  
scan the QR code or visit [usmfoundation.com/curatorship](http://usmfoundation.com/curatorship).