

## **Bios for *An Assortment of Animals***

**Kari Allen** writes picture books, early readers, and board books. Someday she might write a book longer than 1,000 words, but probably not. A graduate of Smith College and Plymouth State University, she currently teaches second grade and works with the National Writing Project in New Hampshire. Kari can usually be found in a bookstore or hanging out with her husband and two sons. She is thrilled to be a part of The Writers' Loft and the *Assortment of Animals: A Children's Poetry Anthology*. She is represented by Erzsi Deak. Find her on Twitter [@Kari\\_D\\_Allen](#) or on her website, [www.kariallenwrites.com](http://www.kariallenwrites.com).

**Priscilla Alpaugh** studied Illustration at Mass College of Art and UMass Amherst and did her graduate studies at Syracuse University. She is a member of the Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators and the American Society of Bookplate Collectors and Designers. She is also the New England Representative for the Graphic Artist's Guild. While raising her family, she made art whenever she could. She moved into a studio at ArtSpace Maynard in 2001. While her kids grew up, she designed logos and murals, painted traffic signal boxes, made t-shirts and greeting cards, and created several book projects for self-publishing clients. She now illustrates full time. Her first picture book came out in 2015, the year she won the NESCBWI Portfolio Showcase. She lives in Greater Boston with her husband. They have two grown children. She loves New England and everything about it. Her other interests are cooking, sea kayaking, hiking, the outdoors, and pretty much all animals, but Corgis in particular. She's on Twitter [@scillabert](#) and on Instagram [@priscillaalpaugh](#). Or check her website at [PriscillaAlpaugh.com](http://PriscillaAlpaugh.com).

**Jodie Apeseche** enjoys days filled with painting, writing, and dog walking. You can also find her digging in her garden, baking treats for her family, and reading to her granddaughter. A full-time artist, Jodie began her career in environmental mitigation and fisheries biology. Feeling that one degree wasn't enough, Jodie went back to school for her M.Ed. She taught elementary school, worked as a curriculum specialist, and was lucky enough to be in charge of her town's K-4 library acquisitions. Her painting and writing are inspired by these words of Albert Einstein: "Our task must be to free ourselves ... by widening our circle of compassion to embrace all living creatures and the whole of nature and its beauty." Visit Jodie's website at [art-jam.net](http://art-jam.net).

**Hayley Barrett** writes picture books and currently has three on the way. *Babymoon*, a love song for a new family, is coming from Candlewick Press on

April 2, 2019. *What Miss Mitchell Saw*, narrative nonfiction about astronomer Maria Mitchell's 1847 discovery of a comet, will be out fall 2019. *Girl Versus Squirrel* is coming from Holiday House in summer 2019, illustrations by Renée Andriani. Other than writing, Hayley's favorite activity is caring for and riding horses. Wednesday is her Happy Barn Day, when she gets to shovel manure, sing to horses, and take a riding lesson. Spoiler alert: Her poem is about horses. Hayley lives outside of Boston with her husband, John. Their two terrific kids have flown the coop. Connect with Hayley via her [website](#) and on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Instagram](#) too.

**Ellen Cohen** started her career writing *Dixie the Pixie* stories in elementary school and staying up past midnight reading Nancy Drew books. Though she's gone on to become a psychiatrist, hypnotherapist, and assistant professor at Harvard Medical School, she's still a fan of the titian-haired detective. (Her short story was included in the *Nancy Drew Anthology*, 2016). She has also enjoyed playing Scrabble since childhood and was tickled to have passed along her love of words to her son—then watched as he leapfrogged over her as a nationally ranked competitor. She's still trying to catch up!

**Doreen Buchinski** is the book designer and a contributing illustrator for *An Assortment of Animals: A Children's Poetry Anthology*. In her illustrations, she combined pencil with digital painting. Doreen has a degree in graphic design. In addition, Doreen worked as a part-time library assistant for many years—her experience has been a combination of two of her favorite things: art and books. Cape Cod beach scenes, the conservation land surrounding her home, and all kinds of animals influence her drawings. Her Corgi, who was a beloved family pet for 14 years, has been a great source of inspiration in her work. Most recently, Doreen designed and illustrated the new edition of the middle grade novel *Me and the Weirdos* by Jane Sutton. Doreen, her husband, and their adult children all live in Massachusetts. You can see more of Doreen's artwork at <http://www.doreenbuchinski.com>.

**Sandra Budiansky** loves words. Whether she's writing, doing a crossword puzzle or playing Words with Friends, letters and words surround her life. She has an MFA in writing for children from Simmons College. She is also a member of the Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators and The Writers' Loft. She lives in Hudson, Massachusetts with her husband, two sons, and about a zillion Lego bricks. Connect with her on Twitter [@sandyjoys](#).

**Elaine D'Alessandro** creates fiction and nonfiction for children and adults. When she isn't writing, she enjoys power walking by the beach, climbing mountains, snowshoeing, gardening, and baking. Elaine lives with her husband in New Hampshire. She has four children and five grandchildren. Elaine chose to write about the wolverine because it was an animal she didn't know much about, and wanted to learn more. Ultimately, she enjoyed weaving the wolverine's fearsome and pugnacious characteristics into an acrostic poem. Elaine can be found online on [LinkedIn](#).

**Audrey Day-Williams** can't walk past a noun without conjuring up a story. She looks for the least-expected angle. Sometimes it's an odd-toed ungulate's amazing feet, or that animals with paws probably have a hard time bowling. As a passionate out-loud reader, Audrey appreciates long, beautiful, satisfying words like odd-toed ungulate, heliotrope, and bouffant. She lives in Cambridge, Massachusetts with her delightful family. When she's not taking *the 90* to The Writers' Loft for critique groups or workshops, you'll find her daydreaming while gardening, cooking, and making bad-mom jokes. You may need to call her name twice. You can also try reaching her on Twitter [@AudDayWilliams](#).

**Alice Carty Fulgione** lives in Massachusetts with her husband, her 16-year-old Shih Tzu, and her 12 fresh water guppies. Oh, excuse me, there are now 18 guppies in her aquarium. When Alice, a former kindergarten and reading teacher, isn't working out in the gym, practicing yoga, gardening, running a household, or exploring wonders in the world around her, she's sitting in front of her computer, writing or revising one of her picture book manuscripts or stories. She often leads picture book critique groups and she attends writing workshops, courses, and conferences to continually improve her craft. Her observations of her prism-hued now-departed pet betta fish inspired her to write the "Betta Fish" poem. Alice is an active member of the Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators and The Writer's Loft. Find her on Twitter [@alice fulgione](#).

**Josh Funk** writes silly stories and somehow tricks people into publishing them as books—such as the *Lady Pancake & Sir French Toast* series, *Lost in the Library: A Story of Patience and Fortitude*, and more! Josh is a board member of The Writers' Loft and was the co-coordinator of the 2016 and 2017 New England Regional Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators Conferences. Josh grew up in New England and studied computer science in

school. Today, he still lives in New England and when not writing Java code or Python scripts, he drinks Java coffee and writes manuscripts. Connect with Josh via [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), or his [website](#).

**Bonnie Gold** squeezes everything she can from words to create prose poetry that carries a punch. At times, she infuses her favorite children's stories into her writing for added flavor and complexity. She frequents poetry readings and gets a kick out of participating in open mics. Bonnie's creative side is balanced by her work to bring a mental health initiative to her temple in Needham, Massachusetts. She and her committee strive to erase stigma, offer support, and provide educational programs. Bonnie plays tennis simply for fun, since a consistent forehand seems out of her reach. With their son in college and their daughter in grad school, she and her husband live peacefully with a new cuddly puppy and a velvety cat. Bonnie also has a soft spot for prickly porcupines and was tickled to write a poem about them. She thinks they're mighty cute—just don't try to hug one!

**Sally Hinkley** is a writer/illustrator who works on her art inside a red shed nestled among the pines of her backyard. When she's not there, she can be found at The Writers' Loft where she is on the board of directors, or teaching art classes at the Danforth Art School. She illustrated a historical fiction picture book for a small Massachusetts press in 2012. Sally lives with her husband, two children, and a lightning-fast dog named Penny. Vist her online to learn more at <http://www.sallyhinkley.com>.

**Helen Kampion** grew up as an Army brat and has called many places home. She was born in England, lived in Germany, and attended schools in Japan, California, Virginia, and Florida. She has always loved to write and focuses on picture books and middle grade novels. Her picture books have received recognition from The Katherine Paterson Prize for Young Adult and Children's Writing (Special Mention) and the National Association of Elementary School Principals (Finalist). She has published magazine stories and written nonfiction articles for The National Children's Book and Literacy Alliance where she serves as Treasurer. In addition to an MBA, Helen holds an MFA in writing for children and young adults from Vermont College and founded the In a Nutshell Short Story Award at the College to encourage tight, focused writing. When not scribbling away, volunteering, or helping fellow authors set up events, you will find her curled up with a book, a cat, and a nice hot cup of tea. Helen is on Twitter [@HelenKampion](#).

**Heather Kelly** explores the fabric of the universe through writing MG, YA, and everything in between. She founded the Writers' Loft community in Sherborn, MA and wears many hats -- teacher, editor, author, director. She's always searching for (and finding) ways to help authors become more prolific storytellers. Heather thrives on collaboration, creativeness, and community. Heather is on Twitter at [@HeatherGKelly](https://twitter.com/HeatherGKelly).

**Jane Kohuth** grew up in Brooklyn, NY, filling notebooks with poetry, journal entries, and unfinished novels. She graduated from Brandeis University with a degree in English and creative writing and from Harvard Divinity School with a master's degree in theological studies. Though not all of what she's studied makes an appearance in her work (no Biblical Hebrew yet), she finds that poetry and picture books have a lot in common. She also loves combining her interests and writing books that feature Jewish characters and themes. She has worked as a Jewish educator, a children's room library assistant, a writing teacher, and a children's bookseller and organizer of author events. Jane now lives and works in her house in the historic district of Holliston, Massachusetts with her husband, son, and black cat. The strangest thing that ever happened to her occurred when she was working on her first book, *Ducks Go Vroom*. When she was storyboarding the text, she drew the three duck characters with a baseball cap, a purse and pearls, and a scarf. She never shared these pictures with her editor, but when the sketches arrived from the illustrator, they depicted the ducks wearing a baseball cap, a purse and pearls, and a scarf. Visit Jane online at [www.janekohuth.com](http://www.janekohuth.com) or find her on Instagram [@janekohuth](https://www.instagram.com/janekohuth).

**Marty Lapointe-Malchik** writes picture books, paints papers, and pastes together collage art. When she is not filling up feeders or watching *Snowbirds* she is filling up her calendar with critique groups, conferences, book signings, and revision classes. She is happy to be published in children's magazines by the folks at *Highlights* and *High Five*. She is a longstanding member of the Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators and a recent member of The Writers' Loft. She is grateful to have ongoing support from so many generous fellow children's book authors and illustrators. She can be found at [imarty.com](http://imarty.com) or [@imartytweet](https://twitter.com/imartytweet).

**Brian Lies** is the author/illustrator of more than two dozen children's books, including his *New York Times*-bestselling bat book series (*Bats at the Beach*, *Bats at the Library*, and more). His latest books are *The Rough Patch* (which generated three starred reviews from PW, SLJ, and Booklist) and *Got to Get to Bear's!* Brian was born in Princeton, New Jersey, and attended Brown University. After graduation, he worked in editorial illustration before switching over to creating children's books. Brian has a grown daughter and lives with his wife and two cats in Duxbury, Massachusetts. When he's not working on his next books, he's likely to be found visiting schools around the country, encouraging young students to write and illustrate. Brian also speaks at The Writers' Loft and notes, "It's a great group of energetic and dedicated people, working hard to improve their craft!" Learn more about Brian at [www.brianlies.com](http://www.brianlies.com) or on Twitter [@BrianLiesbooks](https://twitter.com/BrianLiesbooks).

**Megan Litwin** has built her life around books. After graduating from Simmons College with a master's degree in children's literature, she spent many years as a classroom teacher, doing the magical work of growing readers. She's also been a school library teacher, a literacy tutor, and a writer of leveled readers. Helping kids learn to read—and LOVE to read—is her passion. Now, she is lucky enough to write picture books and poetry for children with that very same goal in mind. It was truly her lucky day when a dragonfly landed on the edge of her notebook, inspiring the poem "Dragonfly." A member of the Society of Children's Book Writers and The Writer's Loft, Megan lives in Massachusetts with her husband and two book-loving boys. You can find her on Twitter [@meganmcdwrites](https://twitter.com/meganmcdwrites).

**Deb O'Brien** started drawing as a child, first with crayons and then graduating to her current favorites: ink, watercolors, colored pencils, and acrylics. She has not yet mastered digital art so all of her work is original. Deb is a member of the Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators and The Writers' Loft. She loves writing and illustrating children's stories, whether they're middle grade, picture book, rhyming, or poetry. Deb has also been known to dabble in the fashion show industry, creating elaborate costumes out of unusual materials. Please check out her website: <http://www.deb-obrien.com>.

**Dave Pasquantonio** is a board member at The Writers' Loft, and a member of Grub Street, the Editorial Freelancers Association, the New England Speculative Writers, and the Mystery Writers of America. A former instructional designer, technical writer, and corporate training manager, Dave

is now a stay-at-home dad, a freelance writer and editor, and a newspaper stringer. He misses office life, but listens to way more classic rock than he could in a cubicle. He writes speculative fiction and mysteries, and he daydreams about noir films and baseball. He can be found at [www.davepasquantonio.com](http://www.davepasquantonio.com).

**Charlotte Sheer's** writing journey began in elementary school, when a hometown newspaper published two of her poems. She creates children's stories and poetry gleaned from her kaleidoscope of life experiences, which include being an avid photographer, bicyclist, camping traveler, and emerging watercolor painter. Her poetry has been published in The Writer's Loft's publication, *Firsts*, as well as *The Magic Story Makers' Variety Show*. A retired teacher, Charlotte received an M.Ed. in elementary education from the University of Vermont and has been recognized for developing the Holocaust Stamps Project, a creative approach to teaching students in kindergarten through grade 12 about history, tolerance, acceptance, and respect for differences. Charlotte's online on [LinkedIn](#).

**Cathy Stenquist** is grateful to be surrounded by all things picture books; whether it is sneaking a peak at books in progress at Charlesbridge where she works, leading critique groups at The Writers Loft, or just listening to the furnace hum late at night working on her picture book manuscripts. Her anthology poem "s'il vous plait" is dedicated to Camille, the finicky, funny sable cat who adopted her and her family 17 years ago. Cathy enjoys kayaking, hiking, cooking along with the chefs on PBS, and time spent with her two granddaughters. She is an active member of the Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators and Julie Hedlund's 12 x 12 Picture Book Challenge. Find Cathy online on [LinkedIn](#).

**Jane Sutton** is the author of seven picture books, three middle grade novels, and one young adult novel. Faced with the indignities of growing up on Long Island, she developed a sense of humor and love of writing. After graduating from Brandeis University with a degree in comparative literature, she was a newspaper writer and copywriter. Now a writing instructor and tutor, she also visits schools to inform, entertain, and inspire children to write. Talks for adults describe the roller coaster life of an author. Her most recent books include *What's Up With This Chicken?* (a hen refuses to get off her eggs), *Paulie's Passover Predicament* (a moose wants his first seder to be perfect, but it's decidedly not), and a new edition of her award-winning middle grade

novel *Me and the Weirdos*, featuring wonderful new illustrations, with the cover and design by Doreen Buchinski. Jane was inspired to get the book back in print when students in Utah turned it into a musical. But that's a long story, which Jane will be glad to elaborate on. (See the blog on her website.) Her playful anthology poem is about a strikingly colorful bird with an unusual tail that Jane and her husband ooh-ed and aah-ed over in Costa Rica. Jane lives in Lexington, Massachusetts with her college sweetheart husband, a science educator. Visit <http://www.jane-sutton.com> for more.

**Bob Thibeault** is an illustrator, designer, and animator based in Massachusetts. His love for nature and science fiction is the inspiration for most of his work. The other is humor in the form of one- to four-panel comics he creates for the sheer love of it. He joined The Writer's Loft in 2017 and found a nurturing community of talented writers and creators that have helped him on his storytelling journey. He won the "Stephen Colbert Art Me Up" challenge in 2011, where his work was hung on the set of *The Colbert Report*. His other work includes animation for ABC, Legal Seafood commercials, and museum work. He earned a BFA in illustration/fine arts from UMASS Dartmouth.

**Pam Vaughan** enjoys writing stories, making connections, and inspiring others. She is on the board of directors at The Writers' Loft and can often be found there. Pam is also the director of the Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators Whispering Pines Writers' Retreats. She presents workshops on mental toughness, leadership, and team-building, and thinks playing ice hockey is exhilarating. Pam's dog, Paxton, which means *peace*, was the model for her poem.

**Robin Brett Wechsler** is fond of words, and figures you are too if you're reading this. A member of The Writers' Loft and the Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators, Robin writes poetry and fiction and nonfiction picture books that she hopes are funny, fascinating, and foster empathy. She does her best writing standing at home in her kitchen with a cup of tea and her cats nearby, but thinks about writing almost anywhere. When she's not writing, revising, reading, taking long walks, baking, playing with her kids, or driving them around, she volunteers to promote sustainability, writes for her town's newspaper, and freelance edits. You can find her latest thoughts on Twitter [@RobinBWechsler](https://twitter.com/RobinBWechsler).

**Joy Nelkin Wieder** is a published author and illustrator of books for young children, an educator, and a freelance writer. Joy is thrilled to have her first picture book, *The Passover Mice*, published by Doubleday Books for Young Readers in spring 2020, illustrated by Shahar Kober, a wonderful Israeli artist. The unpublished manuscript for *The Passover Mice* was awarded the SCBWI/PJ Library Jewish Stories Award in 2018. Represented by Olswanger Literary, Joy has written and illustrated several books for children, including two historical novels, *The Secret Tunnel* and *The Great Potato Plan*, which is based on her grandfather's family in Warsaw, Poland during WWI. In educational publishing, she has written nearly thirty leveled readers for publishers such as McGraw Hill and Harcourt Achieve. Joy illustrated stories for a reading program by Palmtree Publishing and was awarded Best Picture Book Text for an unpublished manuscript in the 2004 Jewish Children's Bookfest writing contest. She also teaches creative writing for children in fourth through sixth grades, and several of her students have been awarded second and third place in the Junior Division of the Massachusetts Scenario Writing Competition. Joy is also a freelance copywriter for newsletters, blogs, press releases, and more. Visit <http://www.jnwieder.com> for more information.

**Kristen Wixted** is a co-editor of *An Assortment of Animals: A Children's Poetry Anthology*. She got the idea to create the book from reading a plethora of poetry anthologies to her kids when they were little. She is very grateful to all the poets and artists for jumping in to contribute to this project. Usually she writes middle grade novels, but she likes to dip her toe into picture books and young adult sometimes, too. Kristen is on the board of directors of The Writers' Loft and lives in MetroWest Massachusetts with her family, a singing dog, and a glamorous cat who writes the family Christmas card. Find her at [KristenWixted.com](http://KristenWixted.com).

**Jane Yolen** has published over 370 books, with more about to come out. Often called the "Hans Christian Andersen of America" because of her nearly 100 fairy tales, she admits to being a story-holic. Her books range from poetry to novels to cookbooks to picture books—the most well-known being the Dinosaur series (*How do Dinosaurs Say Goodnight*) and *Owl Moon*. Her newest book (with Heidi Stemple) is *Fly with Me*, a treasury celebrating the world of birds. Jane's books have won many awards including the Caldecott, Nebula, and Christopher medals. One award set her good coat on fire. Mother of three, grandmother of six, she lives in Massachusetts but spends summers in

Scotland writing, walking, watching birds, and dancing at ceildhs. Find her at [JaneYolen.com](http://JaneYolen.com).