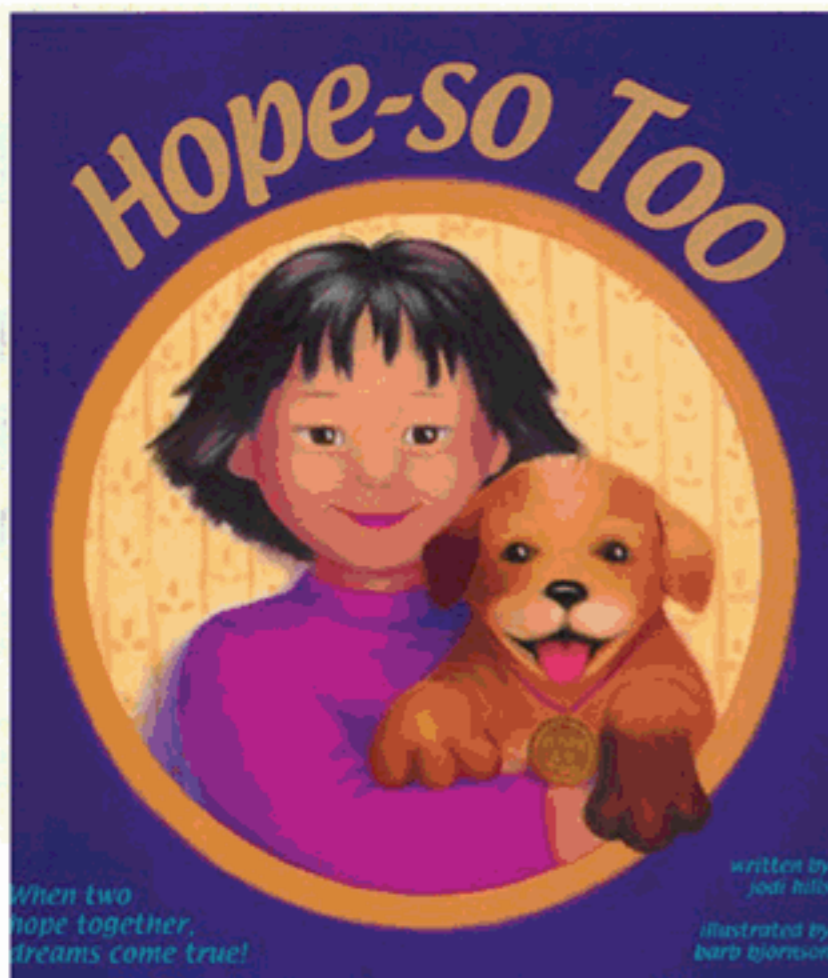


IN PRINT

ST. PAUL PIONEER PRESS WWW.TWINCITIES.COM

LITERARY CALENDAR



JODI HILLS: Minneapolis design studio owner reads from her new children's book, "Hope-So Too," the story of an adopted girl who longs to adopt a puppy from the shelter, with illustrations by St. Paul artist/illustrator Barb Bjornson. 11 a.m. Wednesday; Barnes & Noble in the Galleria, 3225 W. 69th St., Edina.

READERS AND WRITERS

A fresh cup of tea

Publisher takes a gamble with a new edition of a beloved classic.

Can a much-loved book survive a makeover? Brett Waldman will know the answer after the holidays, when he gets sales figures for the newly designed edition of "A Cup of Christmas Tea." Tom Hegg's gentle story of a man who finds joy in Christmas after visiting his great-aunt has sold 1.5 million copies since Brett's dad, Ned, first published it 20 years ago.

Fooling with a successful title can be a gamble, but Brett says it was time.

"There's no doubt the original book is a treasure, but it was tired. It needed a new freshness," he said while he tended his Tristan Publishing booth at the Upper Midwest Booksellers Association trade show at RiverCentre.

To provide the visual stimulation a new generation of readers craves, Waldman changed the book's shape to almost square. Warren Hanson's illustrations, which were in delicate pastels in the original edition, have been brightened, and a pretty gold metallic ribbon runs across the bottoms of the pages of the reissue.

"When my dad first published 'A Cup of Christmas Tea,' there were not a lot of books in the holiday gift category," Waldman says. "Now, there's more competition, and we need the book to stand out."

Waldman learned the book business by doing every job at the Minneapolis book distributorship co-owned by his dad. When Ned Waldman retired and moved up north,



MARY ANN GROSSMANN

Brett took most of the Waldman House Press titles under the wing of his new company, Tristan Publishing.

Brett's savvy enough to know there still might be demand for the original version of "A Cup of Christmas Tea," which many readers consider an old friend, and he's not ruling out selling both editions in the future.

In the meantime, he worried about how Ned Waldman would react to changes in a book that has been dear to his heart.

"My dad said he expected to hate the new edition," Brett says with a smile. "He told me there wasn't anything I could do to it that he would like. But he says he loves it."

NEW IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD

Carolrhoda Books, a division of Lerner Publishing, is also appealing to a new generation with reissues of four of Minnesota author/illustrator Nancy Carlson's Neighborhood titles published in the 1980s. They are: "Louanne Pig in the Mysterious Valentine," "Harriet and Walt," "Loudmouth George and the Big Race" and "Loudmouth George and the Cornet."

Carlson has 50 books in print, with total sales of more than 3.5 million copies. Her publisher says the reissued titles "maintain the vibrant illustrations and quirky composition (of the originals) but introduce a larger size and enlarged artwork."

APPLAUSE! APPLAUSE!

Minneapolis writer Ida Swearingen's "Owl of the Desert" (New Victoria)



won ForeWord Magazine's Book of the Year gay/lesbian fiction award.

ForeWord specializes in titles from independent, university and print-on-demand presses.

Apple Valley author Lou Martin's book "Wings Over Persia" was designated the best aviation writing by a Minnesotan for 2004 by the Minnesota Aviation Hall of Fame.

A former Air Force pilot and retired lieutenant colonel, Martin was with a small cadre of foreign pilots flying for an air charter company in Iran from 1976 to '79. His book is the story of intrigue and adventure during the revolution that overthrew the shah.

JUDGMENT DAY

Volunteers who want to serve as judges for the 17th annual Minnesota Book Awards have until Dec. 15 to file their applications with the Minnesota Humanities Commission's Minnesota Center for the Book.

Three judges will be chosen to read all the books nominated by selectors in each Book Award category (usually three to five titles), then discuss their choices by e-mail. If necessary, they meet in person at MHC to reach consensus.

To complete an online application form, choose the Minnesota Book Awards option on www.minnesotahumanities.org, then click on Judges and Selectors at the top of the page.

Mary Ann Grossmann can be reached at mgrossmann@pioneerpress.com or 651-228-