

Eastern CT Children's Book Fair

Saturday, Oct. 1

10-4 at Jillson Square Park, Willimantic

The Willimantic Public Library and the Friends of the WPL invite you to the second annual Eastern CT Children's Book Fair. The Children's Book Fair will be held in conjunction with the Downtown Country Fair and will feature many family friendly activities. The BookFair features five Connecticut children's book authors reading from their works and discussing their books.

The Friends of the Willimantic Public Library is giving away free children's books to each child at the fair. Come to the Book Fair and register to get free books. Sit down for a book reading/talk and meet one of the CT authors featured at the Book Fair. River Bend Bookshop of Glastonbury will be offering books by these authors and others for sale.

10:00 at the Community Center at the Senior Center stage



Talia Aikens-Nunez has two books for infants and preschoolers in which Spanish vocabulary is introduced into the English text, *Small Nap, Little Dream* and *Escucha Means Listen*. She also has a book series for school age kids which starts with *OMG, Am I a Witch?* At 11:00, Talia will be signing books in the big tent on Jillson Square.

Talia Aikens-Nuñez wanted to be a meteorologist, a politician and a lawyer. She never thought she would be a writer. It was the birth of her daughter that caused her to start writing. Raising a bilingual child inspired Talia to write lyrical children's books. These 'first experience' books introduce Spanish to children and parents too! Talia's family loves nature so much that she and her husband vowed that they will always try to live close to water. They live on a river in Connecticut with their kids.

10:30 at the Community Center at the Senior Center stage



Jamie L. B. Deenihan is a former elementary school teacher and certified reading specialist turned picture book author. Jamie's picture books include *When Grandma Gives you a Lemon Tree*, *When Grandpa Gives You a Toolbox*, and *New Bird in Town*. Her books have been published in Spanish as well as English and will be available at the Book Fair. At 11:00 Jamie will be signing books in the big tent on Jillson Square.

Jamie lives in Connecticut with her two children and is forever grateful for the love, support, and encouragement her husband, Ricky, gave her before he lost his battle with brain cancer in 2020. Jamie is a member of the Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators and Julie Hedlund's 12X12 Picture Book Challenge.

12:00 on Jillson Square Park near the Book Fair tent



Cindy Rodriguez will be reading from her new picture book about a Mexican wedding titled *Three Pockets Full: A Story of Love, Family, and Tradition*. Cindy also has a graphic novel for middle grades, *The Doomed Search for the Lost City of Z*, which will also be available. After her presentation, she will be signing books in the big tent.

From 1993-2000, Cindy was an award-winning reporter for The Hartford Courant and an award-winning researcher for The Boston Globe's Spotlight Team, and, from 2000-2022, she was a public school teacher in Connecticut. She has degrees from UConn and Central Connecticut State University and two teaching certifications.

Cindy is a U.S.-born Latina of Puerto Rican and Brazilian descent and a founder of [Latinxs in Kid Lit](#), which has been celebrating children's literature by/for/about Latinxs since 2013. She has presented at numerous local, state, and national literary festivals and conferences about reading, teaching, and children's literature. Cindy currently works for an educational publisher. She lives in Connecticut with her family, and is a big fan of the three Cs: coffee, chocolate, and coconut.

1:15 On Jillson Square Park near the Book Fair big tent



Nancy Tandon will be reading from her book for middle grades titled *The Way I Say It*, a book about a child in middle school struggling to cope with teasing about his speech difficulties and changing friendships. *The Way I Say It* (Charlesbridge, 2022) was an American Booksellers Association Indies Introduce and Indies Next pick as well as a Junior Library Guild Gold Standard Selection. Also available will be her spooky book *The Ghost of Spruce Point* which takes place in Maine. Nancy will be signing books after her presentation. Nancy will be signing books after her book talk.

Nancy Tandon is a children's book author who loves sharing all kinds of stories. She has worked as an elementary school teacher, a speech-language pathologist, and an adjunct professor of Phonetics and Child Language Development, all of which helped plant seeds for stories about awesome kids doing brave things. Born and raised in Michigan, Nancy now lives with her family in Connecticut.

2:30 On Jillson Square Park near the Book Fair big tent



Rebecca Podos is an author and illustrator who writes books for Young Adults which include a contemporary fantasy *From Dust, A Flame* and *Like Water* an award-winning story about two girls navigating the unknowable waters of identity, millennial anxiety, and first love. Also available is *The Wise and the Wicked*, a story of magic, suspense, and romance. Rebecca will be signing books after her presentation.

Rebecca Podos' debut novel, *The Mystery of Hollow Places* (Balzer + Bray), was a Junior Library Guild Selection and a B&N Best YA Book of 2016. Her second book, *Like Water* (Balzer + Bray), won the 2018 Lambda Literary Award for LGBTQ Children's and Young Adult. Her latest releases are *Fools in Love* (Running Press Kids), a co-edited YA anthology with Ashley Herring Blake, and the YA fantasy novel *From Dust, A Flame* (Balzer + Bray). An agent at the Rees Literary Agency in Boston, she can be found on her website, Rebeccapodos.com.

All Day in the Book Fair Big Tent – display and puppet kits



The Malka Penn Award for Human Rights in Children's Literature

The Malka Penn Award is given annually to the author of an outstanding children's book addressing human rights issues or themes such as discrimination, equity, poverty, justice, war, peace, slavery or freedom. It is sponsored by Dodd Human Rights Impact. *Defiant* by Wade Hudson is the 2022 Malka Penn Award winner.

Named in honor of author Michele Palmer, who writes under the pseudonym Malka Penn, the award recognizes works of fiction, non-fiction, poetry, memoir, or biography which are written for children from preschool to high school. Within these larger themes, the award committee is particularly eager to recognize stories about individuals – real or fictional, children or adults – who have been affected by social injustices, and who, by confronting them, have made a difference in their lives or the lives of others.

UConn Dodd Human Rights Impact fosters a culture of human rights at UConn, in Connecticut, and around the world through outreach and engagement. They develop and support programs and initiatives that seek to directly impact communities by helping them meet their human rights challenges. They are a sponsor of the Eastern CT Children's Book Fair.

