

## SASKATCHEWAN BOOK AWARDS 2008 Annual Report

**Saskatchewan Book Awards recognize, celebrate and promote literary excellence throughout the year:**

- Fourteen awards provide cash and recognition to Saskatchewan writers and publishers.
- The annual fall Awards Gala celebrates the excellence of Saskatchewan books with a large live audience in addition to television and radio audiences
- Regina Brunch and Shortlist Readings recognize Regina authors and publishers nominated for awards
- Saskatoon Brunch and Shortlist readings celebrate Saskatoon literary excellence in their home town
- Reading Tours to small centres in the province bring authors to all corners of the province
- Reading Events and two multi-cultural awards celebrate the diversity of Saskatchewan writing and publishing by showcasing francophone and Aboriginal writers and publishers
- Displays throughout the year draw the attention of tourists, readers, librarians and educators to books entered, shortlisted and winning in the annual awards competition.
- Literary Salons after the Awards Gala provide opportunities for award winning authors to interact with their readers
- SBA's interactive website allows reporters, educators and the public to search for Saskatchewan authors and books on a searchable database and through the *Spirit of Saskatchewan* Youth catalogue of SK curriculum resources recognized by the book awards
- Partnerships with CBC and Access Communications provide additional media interviews and appearances for authors participating in the awards, throughout the year
- Full page ads in major newspapers and entertainment magazines draw attention to books shortlisted for the awards

***In the last four years Saskatchewan Book Awards, its activities, events and promotions of Saskatchewan books have tripled.***

**Saskatchewan Book Awards increase the audience for writers and publishers:**

- The new Readers' Choice Award raised awareness of **all** books entered into the SK Book Awards and encouraged sales through displays and voting at 300 libraries throughout the province.
- More than 1441 people attended the events held by SBA in 2008.
- Media ads and unpaid public service announcements or editorial coverage of the Book Awards and/or their events appeared in the majority of the province's media in 2008.
- **Book sales** at SBA events **exceeded \$12,000 in 2008**. This does not include sales in bookstores resulting from SBA events and promotions.

## The Saskatchewan Book Awards Organizational Overview:

The Saskatchewan Book Awards (SBA) were founded to recognize the excellence and diversity of Saskatchewan writing and publishing and, equally importantly, to promote greater awareness of the books produced each year and their authors. The strategy behind conferring awards is not only to give creators the recognition of their peers, but also to generate interest on the part of the general public in the year's production by Saskatchewan literary artists.

The Saskatchewan Book Awards are renowned across the country for their integrity, good organization and dynamism. Initiated through a partnership of the Saskatchewan Writers Guild, the Saskatchewan Publishers Group, and the Saskatchewan Library Association, it is incorporated as a non-profit corporation and is a registered charity.

The organization is governed and directed by a volunteer Board of Directors that includes professionals from various walks of life, not limited to writing and publishing, who contribute legal, financial and administrative expertise. The Board meets frequently (at least ten times per year) and each member contributes a high level of volunteer time. Each year the Board of Directors holds a strategic planning session to look at procedures, sponsorship, funding and new promotional tactics. The criteria are now undergoing a review, including comparison with guidelines for other awards programs, to resolve issues of eligibility that inevitably arise as the industry develops.

There is just one permanent position, which is part-time, that of the Executive Director. The former ED, Glenda James, brought a high-level administrative and communications skills from her career in education, media relations and event planning. The SBA also takes advantage of provincial employment programs to hire post-secondary students as interns. Aside from that, it relies on the donated services of a large number of volunteers, including committees for the organization of the brunches and readings in Regina, Saskatoon and other centres around the province.

In its 17-year history, the Saskatchewan Book Awards organization has grown significantly in the extent of its activities without incurring a ballooning budget. Since 1993, the number of awards and promotional events have **tripled**, while the budget has only doubled. In this time it has accumulated and maintained a modest contingency fund. Public funding through grants generally represents less than 20% of total revenues; other sources of income are sponsorships, sales of tickets, and donations.

The cash awards themselves are self-sustaining, through the recruitment of sponsors in the public and private sectors who cover the cost of an individual award and a portion of its administration. Currently award sponsors include The Co-operators, SaskPower, Agrium, SaskEnergy, the University of Regina Bookstore, the University of Saskatchewan, the Saskatchewan Arts Board, the City of Saskatoon and the Saskatoon Public Library.

The major public events, the Gala and the Brunches, operate primarily through the sale of tickets, shrewd management of outlay, and in-kind donations of services. They succeed through giving the public good value for the price. The Gala offers a gourmet meal, a talk by a literary star, a professionally-produced presentation ceremony, a souvenir program, and the opportunity to meet the writers and obtain an autographed copy of their title at a memorable evening event. Similarly, those who attend the Regina and Saskatoon Brunches and Reading Tours (held in Swift Current and Humboldt in 2008) are treated to a delicious meal in an elegant setting, are read to by talented writers and have the chance to make contact with the nominated authors. Ancillary events, such as brunches, are organized by local committees.

Literary Salons are organized by individuals with the guidance of a Board committee. They are funded by self-generated revenues and reading grants. Proceeds are contributed to the Book Awards budget. Attendance at the Gala, brunches and other readings directly linked to the Saskatchewan Book Awards has now reached well over 1,000.

## **Saskatchewan Book Awards' Impact on Authors & Publishers**

### **In 2008 Authors received increased recognition through:**

- Book signings added to displays
- Author features on weekly Talk of the Town SBA appearances
- Introductions, nametags and flowers at the Fall events
- Shortlist certificates given to all nominees at the Gala
- Signing tables with placecards at the Gala

The activities surrounding the Saskatchewan Book Awards are a concerted effort to bring the greatest possible exposure through the media and in person to literary artists. Generally acknowledged by writers, publishers and funding agencies to be one of the most efficient and effective of these events in Canada, it expands the audience for writers within the province, and across the country.

Writers are also included in SBA activities, such as promotional and media events and publicity, as well as readings around the province and the Gala ceremony itself. Aboriginal authors, and their community, receive particular attention through the First Peoples Award for Aboriginal writing and publishing. A special effort is made in the Aboriginal media to publicize this award and to invite submissions. The bi-annual Prix du livre français is also the subject of specialized promotion, and it offers Saskatchewan's French-language publishing house, La Nouvelle Plume, a unique opportunity to reach a wider audience that it would not be able to achieve through its own resources.

Although the activities follow a regular pattern, new writers and themes are constantly being brought forward; each year new authors and new books are recognized; in fact, there is an award for a first-time author. Only books published in the current year are eligible for the awards. It is, in effect, a new program each year, because the focus of the year is on the new books published each year. By its very nature, the fact that it is competitive and that the names of winners are not revealed until the ceremony, the process is dynamic; it stimulates curiosity, suspense and sometimes a healthy spirit of controversy.

## WHAT SASK BOOK AWARDS PROGRAMS DO FOR AUTHORS & PUBLISHERS

- **Provides recognition** of excellence each year to *shortlisted* and *winning* authors & publishers
- **Rewards excellence with cash** awards to *winning* authors, which often allows them to take time to write another book
- **Increases readership** and publicity through libraries with the Readers'Choice Award
- Encourages *Aboriginal* and *Francophone* authors and publishers through recognition and targeted ads
- **Expands their audience** through displays, events and publicity
- **Complimentary tickets** to *shortlist* authors for SBA Reading Events and the Awards Gala
- **Increases reading opportunities**, Sales & Signings for *shortlisted* authors at Events:
  - Regina Brunch (this year the Saloon)
  - Saskatoon Brunch
  - Southern Reading Tour
  - Northern or French Reading Tour
  - Literary Salons for *Winning* Authors
- **Increases Sales:** Book Sales directly related to SBA events came to over **\$12,000** last year
- **Increases publicity opportunities for ALL authors** and their books entered to SBA:
  - Displays and Silent Auctions of their books throughout the year
  - A spot on Cable TV programs like Talk of the Town in Regina
  - Articles about titles/authors that result from the Book Awards publicity
- **Increases publicity** for *shortlisted* and *winning* authors through print publicity:
  - Several News Releases and the annual Shortlist News Conference each fall
  - Book Displays of Shortlist at many libraries & bookstores throughout the province
  - Full page ads in Regina Leader Post & Saskatoon Star Phoenix
  - Full page ads in Planet S and Prairie Dog with insert for repeated distribution
  - Shortlist/Gala Posters
  - Reading Event Programs

## Saskatchewan Book Awards' Impact on the Individual Award Recipient

*\$23,000 went directly to individual Saskatchewan authors who won SK Book Awards*

*This is additional money for artists that comes largely from the business sector, non-traditional sources of funding.*

An author whose book is shortlisted or who wins an award receives an immediate boost in esteem and confidence, as well as a cash prize. He or she also has increased leverage in obtaining grants and readings. Similarly, a publisher can compete more effectively for sales, manuscripts and funding.

As Nik Burton of Coteau Books commented about coverage in The National Post, "Our appearance there, having one of the highest ranking award-per-title-published ratios in the country, was based solely on the number of Saskatchewan Book Awards that Coteau Books has received."

*"I was thrilled to receive the honour and almost went into cardiac arrest when they called my name." – Janita Van de Velde, winner of the 2008 Readers' Choice Award for **Postcards never Written***

"There's the recognition and celebration of a job 'well-done' – which feels AWESOME. It took me six years to write **Mostly Happy**. I worked hard on this novel and it is just so ...fabulous to have it recognized. It's easy for a book to get lost in the shuffle – especially a first book by a relatively unknown writer, published by a small press in Saskatchewan. The Saskatchewan Book Awards help draw the public's attention to the work of Saskatchewan Writers – which gets our stories out on more bookstore shelves and into more libraries." **Pam Bustin, winner of the 2008 First Book Award and Fiction Award for *Mostly Happy***

*"Support and recognition of the efforts of Saskatchewan publishers to bring First Peoples' voices to the larger provincial, national and international audience is certainly appreciated...When I announced my plans to enter the publishing business Harold approached me with some of his ideas for stories and books. It was a delight some fifteen years later to have published Harold's first non-fiction book (he has two novels published, with a third slated for release this winter)." Don Purich, Purich Publishing winner of the 2007 First Peoples' Publishing Award for **Two Families: Treaties and Government** by Harold Johnson*

*"I was deeply honored to receive the non-fiction prize at the Saskatchewan Book Awards in November. My book, **I am Hutterite**, was a 7 year labor of love, and to have it recognized in this way was an absolute thrill! Thank you for...supporting writers such as myself who spend long, thankless hours bringing important and diverse stories to life...thank you...for making me feel so proud of my Hutterite roots. It made the long, lonely hours I spent writing it all worthwhile!" **Mary Ann Kirkby, winner of the 2007 Nonfiction Award for *I am Hutterite****

*"I have fantastic news to share with you. *Amélia et les papillons* is shortlisted for the 'Prix des lecteurs 15-18 ans de Radio-Canada' (young readers' choice award)! This is a national award. I am so excited!" **Martine Noël-Maw, winner of the 2006 Prix du livre français***

## **Saskatchewan Book Awards' Impact on the Community at Large**

*\$19,252 went to authors and publishers for Reading Fees, Travel and Jury fees in 2008.*

Saskatchewan's book community benefits from inclusion in the Saskatchewan awards in terms of expansion of the impact; its members are recognized on a provincial and national scale and partake in a collective effort that has the entire provincial machinery behind it.

The fact that the awards Gala, the Short-List Readings and Brunches, as well as the Literary Salons continue to draw paying participants in the hundreds attests to the success of this process in stimulating the interest of the general public. Those who attend in person are the tip of the iceberg; the others are the people who see the posters, hear and see the media broadcasts, read the ads and articles in the newspaper, and attend readings across the province.

The attempt to keep costs and ticket prices down, along with the organization of more ancillary events in centres around the province, has increased accessibility. The general public also has access to information about the awards granted and the ceremony itself through extensive media coverage following the Gala, including the television programming produced by Access Communications.

The awards are comprehensive in that they recognize poetry, fiction, non-fiction, children's literature and scholarly genres. They recognize publishing as well as writing. They honour new writers with the First Book Award. In recent years the awards have recognized important minority groups by introducing the annual First Peoples Publishing Award and the bi-annual Prix du livre français, and by finding sponsors for these awards. Now under discussion are questions of including awards for dramatic writing, young adult literature and children's illustration.

- *Nominees receive complimentary tickets to Saskatchewan Book Awards events.*
- *Writers who wish to volunteer at the Awards Gala are provided with complimentary tickets.*
- *SK Book Awards events alone generated more than \$12,000 worth of book sales*

## **Saskatchewan Book Awards Programs:**

### **Program Overview:**

- 446 people attended the 16<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Awards Gala
- 77 people attended the Regina Shortlist Reading
- 120 people attended the Swift Current Brunch and Shortlist Readings
- 63 people attended the Humboldt Shortlist Reading Reception
- Approximately 75 people attended the Bellevue Reading
- A sell out crowd of 230 people attended the Saskatoon Brunch and Shortlist Readings
- Over 50 people and Regina media attended the Regina Shortlist News Conference
- Approximately 50 people and Saskatoon media attended the Saskatoon Shortlist News Conference
- Over 330 people attended Literary Salons, which is up from 165 last year
- A post-Gala television special went to an audience of 85,000 through Access Communications and Shaw Cable

### **Venues:**

- Conexus Arts Centre – Annual Awards Gala
- Delta Bessborough Hotel - Saskatoon Brunch and Shortlist Readings
- The Exchange Club - Regina Shortlist Readings
- Days Inn - Swift Current Brunch and Shortlist Readings
- Bell Vista Inn - Humboldt Shortlist Reading Reception
- Campion College – Regina News Conference
- Frances Morrison Library - Saskatoon News Conference
- Centre Culturel Le Rendez-Vous – Bellevue Reading
- Various homes Throughout Saskatchewan and CBC Galleria - Salons

### **Saskatchewan Book Awards Website offers Year Round Internet Promotion:**

- *Hits for the SBA's web-site in 2008 were 201,131*
- Interactive features to the SBA website, make it easier for visitors to get up to date information about SBA events
- New photos of the events, covers of winning books, portraits of winning authors and publishers are now posted on the website. The home page features a slideshow of the Awards Gala
- A searchable database of nominated and winning authors and titles is now available
- A *Facebook* group also features updates on events, photos and opportunities for writers, volunteers, book lovers to network
- The Call for Entries and entry forms are posted on the website
- Criteria for all awards are posted on the website
- Policies relating to the adjudication of the awards such as Jury process and Conflict of Interest policies are posted on the website once they are approved by the Board

## Year Round Displays

SBA partners to feature displays of book entries at both short-listed and winning titles to bookstores, literary festivals, association meetings and conferences, and provincial meetings of academics, teachers and librarians. The displays bring the books to the attention of school librarians, teachers, community librarians and special interest groups such as those attending conferences, as well as the public. In 2006, SBA expanded its venues with a display at Taste of Regina, a multi-day festival that is attended by thousands of people. In 2007, it piloted displays at several Museums to target the tourist market. Plans are in place to expand these tourist focused venues. Overall displays have served to raise awareness among readers, professional groups and the public.

Ongoing	Moose Jaw Shaunavon N. Battleford	Books entered into the awards have been displayed and sold on consignment at three museum gift shops as a co-operative pilot. These museums do not have the budget to stock SK books in their gift shops, which are primarily volunteer operated. However, they do receive many visits from tourists who are interested in purchasing SK books. This pilot increases the visibility of SK books with tourists.
May 4	Saskatoon	Saskatchewan Libraries Association Conference - attended by most of the librarians in the province.
July 22-23	Moose Jaw	Living Skies Festival of Words – which draws tourists, writers, librarians, teachers, booksellers and book lovers of all kinds.
September	Province wide	Libraries throughout the province, and in particular the Regina Public Library, displayed titles <i>entered</i> in the book awards and encouraged readers to read them.
PreGala	Moose Jaw	Oak & Rose Book Shoppe features shortlisted titles and posters
Pre Gala	Regina	University of Regina bookstore featured the SK Book Awards titles and posters in one of its display units after the announcement of the Shortlist.  Book & Brier Patch also created a display of the shortlisted books.
Pre Gala	Saskatoon	McNally Robinson bookstore featured the SK Book Awards titles in a Display.  University of Saskatchewan Bookstore also created a display.



### Call for Entries: *Sixteen Years of Growth*

The Call for Entries were publicized by our partners and cultural groups in the province, most notably the SK Writers Guild, SK Publishers Group and the SK Libraries Association. With the help of the Canada Council, the Aboriginal and Francophone awards are publicized in media that targets those two groups. Criteria and entry forms were posted on the website and also mailed out to publishers and other related organizations throughout the country.

79 books written by Saskatchewan authors or published by Saskatchewan publishers were entered in the 2008 SK Book Awards.

A number of the books were entered into multiple categories, and all books entered by July 31 were entered into the Readers' Choice Award, resulting in 361 entries.

<b>Submissions:</b>	<b>Average</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>
Book of the Year	28	37	33	34	47
Fiction –	8- 12	11	8	12	18
NonFiction	15	29	25	23	21
First Book	10	23	21	16	19
Children's Literature	12	14	14	15	11
Poetry	7	12	11	9	18
Regina Book -	12	13	16	15	16
Saskatoon Book -	12	21	18	18	17
Scholarly Writing –	10-12	13	11	12	7
Prix du Livre Français –	5	Na	6	na	7
Award for Publishing –	15	19	32	25	25
First Peoples' Publishing	5	6	8	6	11
Publishing in Education –	7-10	23	17	25	24

### History of Entries:

Year	Titles	Entries	Publishers	Authors
1995	44	78	24	43
1996	48	85	28	47
1997	40	80	29	40
1998	80	162	35	50
1999	81	170	48	60
2000	84	212	46	75
2001	63	125		
2002	80	166	35	79
2003	71	166	10	45
2004	92	210	45	52
2005	87	221	51	54
2006	96	219	50	53
2007	79	273 (210)	42	91
2008	112	361 (241)	54	97

***Province wide voting for Readers' Choice Award promoted all titles during September***

In 2008, the Readers' Choice Award was chosen by public vote thanks to an increased sponsorship by the Regina Public Library. During the month of September, Saskatchewan readers were encouraged to read and vote for their favourite new Saskatchewan book at their local public library or online at the Regina Public Library website.

96 titles appeared on the 2008 Readers' Choice Award ballots. All of the books were entered into the various award categories by its first deadline, July 31.

The book that received the most votes won the Readers' Choice Award at the Saskatchewan Book Awards Gala in November. The winning author, Janita Van de Velde whose book *Postcards Never Written*, received a \$2,000 cash prize. Readers who voted were also entered for a draw to win prizes of books.

***News Conferences: Now held in both of the Province's major Centres***

The press conferences announcing the Awards' shortlist is held simultaneously in Regina, at Campion College on the University of Regina campus and in Saskatoon, at the Frances Morrison library. This is important promotion for the books at a critical time for book sales.

The Saskatoon News Conference is an event that grew out of a demand by Saskatoon readers, writers and publishers to attend the news conference announcing the SK Book Awards shortlist who are unable to travel to Regina to attend the annual News Conference there.

Held before the annual Gala, each of the news conferences were attended by approximately 50 members of the community and generated numerous interviews and features.

## Promotions

Saskatchewan's readers come to know the writers and their works through the publicity and promotion of the short-listed titles. They hear and see authors being interviewed and have the opportunity to meet them at promotional events. Bookstores sponsor readings and signings. Schools, universities and community organizations invite authors to speak. This familiarity with Saskatchewan writers and their books not only enriches the literary experience of readers but also helps to build broader markets for the publishers.

### Media Partners provide \$50,000 in-kind promotional assistance

- CBC Saskatchewan provides promotion worth approximately \$18,000 to the SBA
- CBC Saskatchewan also donates its staff and studio for the Multimedia Gala presentation
- Regina's Leader Post and Saskatoon Star Phoenix provide approximately \$15,000 worth of advertising
- Regina's *Prairie Dog* and *Planet S* weekly entertainment magazines provide approximately \$5000 worth of complimentary advertising
- Access Communications through weekly appearances on *Talk of the Town* and its post-Gala television special provides approximately \$10,000 worth of coverage

### 2008 SBA promotions of Saskatchewan-authored and -published books:

- Ad feature/insert in *Prairie Dog* and *Planet S* weekly entertainment magazines
- Press releases, PSA's, mailings and media interviews
- Letter campaign to book clubs, salon hosts and attendees as well as past event attendees, to promote the Gala and shortlist events
- Simultaneous shortlist news conferences held in both major cities, Regina and Saskatoon
- Weekly 10 minute television appearances on Access by Regina and area authors whose books were entered into the SK Book Awards
- Sheila Coles of CBC Radio serves as the SBA Awards Gala MC and promoted the events on her morning show, particularly the Awards Gala

### Partners helped to promote SK Book Award Activities through newsletters and websites:

SK Libraries Association  
 SK Writers Guild  
 SK Publishers Group  
 Regina Public Library  
 Saskatoon Public Library  
 Saskatoon Writers' Coop  
 CONNECTIONS Services Directory  
 Tourism Saskatchewan Directory and Event Listings

## Press Releases

In 2008, press releases highlighted the shortlist and winners, and were tailored and targeted to generated maximum coverage with media in authors' home communities.

**Jan 12** – Literary Salon

**May 28** – Call for Entries Announced

**August 31** – Readers' Choice Award & voting announced

**October 15** – Shortlist announced – coverage in PA Herald, MJ Herald, Regina, S'toon

**October 15** – Regina Brunch & Shortlist Reading announced – radio interviews, articles

**November 30** – Award winners announced

## Promotion resulted in editorial coverage in:

- Regina Leader Post
- Saskatoon Star Phoenix
- Moose Jaw *Times Herald*
- *Humboldt Independent*
- *Prairie Post*
- TV and radio coverage by CBC
- CTV features
- *Quill & Quire*
- Saskatoon Shaw Cable and Access interviews

## Printed Promotional Materials

A three-colour poster announcing all of the shortlisted books, was distributed to libraries and bookstores throughout the province to promote both the shortlist and the Awards Gala. It was posted throughout Regina and mailed to bookstores throughout the province. With the assistance of the Provincial Library, the poster was distributed to all over 300 libraries throughout the province.

After the Gala, a bookmark featuring the award winners, was distributed to all the province's libraries and bookstores and was included in all displays and mailings throughout the year.

Flyers and programs promoted each of the Reading Events. Seals identifying award winners are distributed to publishers and booksellers.

## Paid Advertising

Leading up to the Awards Gala, full-page ad features in the Regina *Leader Post* and the Saskatoon *StarPhoenix* promoted the short-listed titles for all 14 categories.

In 2006, full page ads began in Regina's *Prairie Dog* magazine and Saskatoon's *Planet S* magazine, featuring the shortlist, events and promoting new books with an over run to hand out at displays.

Following the announcements, ads congratulating winners appeared in the *Leader Post*, *Saskatoon StarPhoenix*.

Unfortunately due to a reduction in funding from Canada Council the number ads and calls for entries were reduced.

## READING EVENTS

*When readers and the public have an opportunity to meet, hear or read about local authors and books, they are more likely to read and seek out books written by those they've been exposed to.*

SBA has continued to expand its Reading Event programs in a variety of venues throughout the province. With the addition of the Literary Salons program in 2008, Reading Events promoting writers and publishers nominated and winning Saskatchewan Book Awards now extend throughout most of the year.

### Regina Brunch & Shortlist Readings

The Regina Shortlist Reading is an annual event associated with the Awards that features readings by local authors nominated as finalists. This year the SBA held a Saloon themed reading at the Exchange.

A local volunteer committee organizes the Regina Brunch. *SasKatchewan Books Go Public* CJTR radio host, Jillian Bell, served as the MC and also promoted the saloon during her radio show.

Readings at the 2008 Regina Saloon were:

- Gerry Hill read from *My Human Comedy*
- Alison Lohans read from *This Land We Call Home*
- Dan Mcdonald read from *Macgregor's Hard Ice Cream and Gas*
- Jeanne Pelletier read from *The Story of the Rabbit*

Through the Brunch program, 75 participants were able to take part in the important process of recognition and celebration of Regina writing. They were also encouraged to buy the nominated titles and get the books autographed. Book Sales at this event were **\$373**

### Saskatoon Brunch & Shortlist Readings

The Saskatoon Brunch is the premiere venue to showcase Saskatchewan literary artists in their home town of Saskatoon. Every year, Saskatoon writers and publishers are well represented in each award category at the Awards Gala in Regina, but they value the opportunity to celebrate and be recognized in Saskatoon. The readings regularly feature an Aboriginal and Francophone nominee, and are hosted by a local literary personality. Numerous Saskatoon companies provide door prizes, and publishers donate books to be given away.

Through this brunch, Saskatoon residents become more aware of writing that is currently being produced and published in the city, and are exposed to writers and books they might not otherwise be aware of. They are given an appreciation for the high calibre of literary art produced in Saskatchewan, and more specifically in Saskatoon.

A very dedicated Saskatoon volunteer committee co-ordinates the Brunch each year and a volunteer Saskatoon board member of the SBA works with them. A number of additional volunteers help on the day of the event.

A series of readings was held at the Saskatoon Brunch on Sunday morning, November 23 at the Delta Bessborough Hotel. It included a first-class buffet breakfast followed by readings by four Saskatoon nominees for the Book Awards:

- Louise Halfe read from *The Crooked Good*
- Pam Bustin read from *Mostly Happy*
- Taylor Leedahl read from *No Apologies for the Weather*
- Jerry Haigh read from *The Trouble with Lions*

In 2008, the event drew 236 participants to hear the authors read, meet them, purchase their books, and get autographs. Book sales at this event were **\$1771**

### **Reading Tours: *Raising Province-wide Awareness of SK books***

Bringing short-listed books and authors to smaller communities around the province ahead of the Awards Gala has two results: creating interest in the awards and bringing books and authors to outlying communities.

Since many of the centres served by this program have no local bookstore, there is a positive effect not only for the local population but also for the book industry. Over one-third of the Saskatchewan marketplace is outside the two major urban centres. Outlying communities are seldom considered in author promotion tours or public reading programs, despite a significant potential for sales.

In 2008 the reading tours went to Humboldt, Bellevue and Swift Current.

#### **Humboldt Shortlist Reading at the Bella Vista Inn**

Date: November 6, 2008

Attendance: 50 approximately

Three short-listed authors read from their works:

- Maureen Ulrich read from *Power Play*
- Harold Johnson read from *Charlie Muskrat*
- Allan Safarik read from *Yellowgrass*
- Donna Caruso read from *Journey Without a Map, Growing Up Italian: A Memoir*

The Reading Tours are sponsored by Canada Council for the Arts, SaskPower and the SK Publishers Group with funds from Canadian Heritage. The short-listed books were available for sale and signing after the readings. **Book sales** at this event came to approximately **\$500**.

### Swift Current Shortlist Reading Brunch at Swift Current Days Inn

Date: November 16, 2008 Attendance: 50 approximately

Four short-listed authors presented their works to an enthusiastic audience:

- David McLennan read from *Encyclopedia of Saskatchewan*
- Bonnie Dunlop read from *Carnival of Glass*
- Sharon Butala read from *The Girl in Saskatoon: A Meditation on Beauty, Innocence and Murder*
- Arthur Slade read from *Jolted: Newton Starker's Rules for Survival*

All of the short-listed titles were represented at the book sales table and **book sales** at this event came to **\$2102.20**

The Reading Tours are sponsored by Canada Council for the Arts, SaskPower and the SK Publishers Group with funds from Canadian Heritage. Local donations offset additional co-ordination and travel expenses occasioned by holding the event in a distant area of the province, which normally would have been cost-prohibitive. The writing and publishing communities, as well as those who host the events, often comment on how important these events are in promoting awareness of books and authors.

### BelleVue Shortlist Reading at the Bella Vista Inn

Date: November 9, 2008

Attendance: 50 approximately

Three short-listed authors read from their works:

- David Baudemont read from *Olga*
- Martine Noel Maw read from *La Malchance a Austin*
- Francoise Sigur-Cloutier et Stephnae Cote read from *Le Thater Fransaskois, Tame 2*

The Reading Tours are sponsored by Canada Council for the Arts, SaskPower and the SK Publishers Group with funds from Canadian Heritage. The short-listed books were available for sale and signing after the readings. **Book sales** at this event came to approximately **\$500**.

Included with this report are copies of the programs from the events.

### Awards Gala

The 2008 winners of the Saskatchewan Book Awards, hosted by Sheila Coles of CBC radio, were announced on Saturday, November 29<sup>th</sup> at the 16<sup>th</sup> Annual Awards Gala in Regina. Guest speaker, Maria Campbell, award winning author and activist along with renowned Métis fiddler John and Vicki Arcand set the stage for a unique Métis themed evening with a crowd of over 450 enthusiastic book lovers, writers and publishers at the Conexus Arts Centre.

Dignitaries such as the Lt. Governor, Gordon Barnhart, ministers Christine Tell and Rob Norris, Councillor Fred Clipsham, as well as representatives from Saskatchewan's cultural community made it a point to be present at this prestigious event recognizing Saskatchewan's finest literary artists.

The banquet hall is framed by large prints of short-listed book covers, each one a souvenir for the authors. Table decorations for the 2008 16th anniversary Gala featured excerpts from the shortlisted books, a teaser intended to draw more attention and sales for the entire shortlist.

A multi-media presentation of the shortlisted books and authors recognizes both the artists and the sponsors at the main event. The visual displays of the book covers make them easy for attendees to identify when they go out to purchase the books at the event or later.

An independent bookstore, The Oak and Rose Book Shoppe from Moose Jaw, provided book sales, the Saskatchewan Publishers' Group have a display table, and SBA showcases all of the books entered into the awards.

**Book Sales at the Gala were \$7,394.90, which is up \$1,000 from last year.**

Access Communications taped the Gala and later aired a one-hour feature of the Awards Gala, which was picked up by Shaw Cable. The viewing audience for this special is approximately 85,000.

After each winner is presented with an award, photographs are taken of the author with the sponsor, which are posted on SBA's website and Facebook group.

## Literary Salons

There were 11 Literary Salons held in 2008. They featured 2007 award winners reading from their works. Authors were invited to bring and sell their own books at each salon, and made **approximately \$1,000** in sales. The profit went directly to the authors and their publishers; with no commission taken by SBA.

Authors were invited to bring and sell their own books at each salon. They **sold approximately \$1,000** worth of **books** through the salons. The profit for these books went directly to the authors and their publishers; no commission was taken by SBA.

CBC Radio promoted the salons from the time they were announced and conducted interviews both with SBA representatives as well as hosts, authors and participants.

They were enormously successful, drawing audiences that do not normally attend reading events or SK Book Awards Events. A number of people who had been involved with the salons later made it a point to attend the Awards Gala because they became so interested through their introduction to SK writers through the salons they had attended earlier in the year. They were attended by approximately 273 people who became so enthusiastic about them, that a number of people attended several salons. Some of the comments were:

*We drove out to Assiniboia on such a beautiful Saskatchewan day -- it was simply magnificent -- the beauty of the land outdone only by the beautiful people driving it's highways. The whole day was a glorious one for me -- to be surrounded by such interesting people. To listen to the authors read from their works in this beautiful Art Gallery was really great -- emotions from A to Z! Bill Shurniak is a wonderful host and it is great that he has offered to do this on an annual*



basis. Quite the undertaking, really. (...) Merci mille fois.

**-- Jacqui Schumiatcher**

*I attended my first literary salon at the home of Byrna and Ron Barclay and have, since then, attended five others including salons held in Regina and Saskatoon. Through the literary salons, I have been introduced to first time Saskatchewan novelists and became reacquainted with senior Saskatchewan writers producing new and interesting work. Without the literary salons, I may not have purchased and read such marvelous books. Saskatchewan writers have a great deal to be proud of. I hope the literary salons continue well into the future.*

**- Justice Donna Wilson**

*Just a quick note of gratitude for all your hard work putting on the salons. The photos are happy memories. It was great to hang out with (writers) and the food was great!*

**- Mary Ann Kirkby, winner of Best Non-fiction**

*Friday's Book Awards salon night was truly remarkable. The readings were superb. As I looked around at the faces everyone listened with rapt attention. Mary Ann Kirkby and Robert Currie reading to us, with friends. That's a line-up that's hard to top. Thank you again.*

**- Georgina & Gerry**

*Thank you so much for having me as your guest at your literary salon. Great people and great conversation certainly provided for an enjoyable evening.*

**- The Honourable Christine Tell**

*CBC is still chatting about the event, so I would suggest it was a huge success. If there is a repeat we'll have to engage our programmers more fully to broadcast it as well! I hear Assiniboia was equally fabulous...so mega congrats to you for a well conceived idea and a job well done. It was a great evening, and I hope they all enjoyed themselves as much as I did! Thanks for making CBC a part of your Literary Salons!*

**- Shawna Kelly, Partnership Manager, CBC Sask.**

*Just want to congratulate you for originating the salons for the Book Awards. Thank you for dreaming up the idea and spending time organizing the salons.*

**- Pat Krause, Nominated for City of Regina and Best Non-fiction**

*My wife and I regularly attend the SBA Awards dinner, an important event where we gain useful information about publications of Saskatchewan writers, and purchase most of their books. As well, the Awards is a significant gathering where we have the opportunity to meet and talk with Saskatchewan writers, members of the literary community and like-minded members of our community at large. We appreciate the efforts and contributions to this indispensable function by you and your colleagues, publishers, governments and libraries, and we look forward to many successful, buoyant repeats in the future.*

**- Justice G.M. Kraus & Susan Whitney**

## **SBA VALUES ITS PARTNERS**

- *Less than 20% of SBA's budget comes from government grants*
- *30% of SBA's budget comes from self generated funds*
- *More than 50% of SBA's budget comes from private and corporate sponsorships and Donations*

## **SASKATCHEWAN BOOK AWARDS SPONSOR RECOGNITION**

- Display of their logos used in full page ads in Regina *Leader Post*, *Prairie Dog*, Saskatoon *Star Phoenix*, *Planet S* & on our Website, Poster, Gala Program page related to sponsorship
- Display of their logos on multimedia screen at the Gala
- Print recognition in ALL SBA event programs
- Award sponsors names with the award and winning book in Congratulations ads in the Regina *Leader Post* and Saskatoon *Star Phoenix*
- Award sponsor names with the award winning book on bookmarks distributed to over 300 libraries and bookstores in the province, as well as through Welcome Wagon and displays
- Public recognition and speaking opportunity at the Gala through presentation of the Award

Complimentary Tickets for Sponsors to attend the Awards Gala

Sponsors receive a photograph of the award presentation and an autographed copy of the award winning book as well as a package of promotional material that recognizes their contributions.

**Saskatchewan Book Awards Sponsors and Partners**

Access Communications  
Agrium  
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BMO Nesbitt Burns – Cam Bower, P.F.P.  
Book & Brier Patch  
Dr. Nola Buhr & James Romanow  
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Campion College  
Canada Council for the Arts  
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Chinook Regional Library  
City of Regina Arts Commission  
City of Saskatoon  
The Co-operators  
Coteau Books  
Crescent Point Energy Trust  
Pamela Kendel-Goodale & Hon. Ralph Goodale  
Greystone Managed Investments  
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Saskatchewan Culture, Youth & Recreation  
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Saskatchewan Publishers Group  
Saskatchewan Writers Guild  
Saskatoon Public Library  
SaskCulture Student Employment Experience Program  
SaskEnergy  
SaskPower  
Drs. Morris & Jacqui Shumiatcher  
The StarPhoenix  
Thistledown Press  
University of Regina Bookstore  
University of Saskatchewan  
Valleyview Petroleums  
Your Nickel's Worth Publishing

### **Saskatchewan Book Awards Volunteer & Fundraising Contributions:**

At its displays and events, Saskatchewan Book Awards included fundraising activities:

- *Silent auctions of display copies of books*
- *A silent auction at the Awards Gala*
- *Sales of glass wagons used for table decorations at the Awards Gala*
- *Donations requested at literary salons*

### **VOLUNTEERS:**

#### **2008 Board of Directors:**

The Saskatchewan Book Awards Board is larger than most boards because it is a hands on board. In addition to attending 10 board meetings each year, as well as committee meetings, each of its 14 members provided countless hours of volunteer work.

The Board of Directors includes committees for the major areas of activity, including the Gala, Shortlist Brunches, fundraising and sponsorships, criteria and Literary Salons. In addition to making executive decisions and setting direction in these areas, Board members contribute skills and support in many ways that include implementation, organization and representation at events. For example, members negotiate sponsorships, organize and lead salons, review criteria and screen submissions for eligibility, nominate jurors, and provide support for brunches and readings.

In addition, volunteers and often Board members provide invaluable assistance with:

- packing and shipping the books to the juries
- folding posters
- stuffing envelopes
- making decorations for the Awards Gala and Brunches,
- proofreading
- editing

Its members include writers, representatives from the publishing community, libraries, the academic community and professionals:

Jeff Barber, Byrna Barclay (President), Jillian Bell (Secretary), Ted Bowen, Annette Bower, Aydon Charlton (Second Vice President), Laurier Gareau, Elsa Johnston (Gala Chair), John Hill, Connie McIntyre, Barbara Shourounis (First Vice-President), Sue Stewart, Linda Winkler, Allison Wilson (Treasurer).

## **VOLUNTEERS**

Saskatchewan Book Awards is a volunteer-based organization. It takes many willing hands to sustain the programs, and we appreciate all the assistance. The following volunteers were essential to the success of SK Book Awards events:

**In Regina:** Linda Biasotto, Jonathan Bryant, Tammy Bryant, Mike Dereniowski, Rosemary Deitrich, Tracy Hamon, Jason Hammond, Gail Jansen, Beth McLean, Kelly-Anne Riess, Ruth Steinker, James Trettwer, Joyce Wells, Elsa Johnston, Jillian Bell, Annette Bower, Connie McIntyre.

**In Humboldt:** Keri Dalmon, Hazel Kellner, Barb Longhorst, Robert LeBlanc, Norine Mann

**In Swift Current:** Lennie Neufeld, Edith Gibbings, Laurie Glenn, Mavis Jenson, Lennie Neufeld, Debbie Simonson, Barbara Walter, Norm Krell, Madelon Smid

**In Saskatoon:** Wenda McArthur, Paul Denham, Rae Hearn, Lise Fortier, Eleanor Cardoza, Diane Winter, and Susan McConkey

### **SASKATCHEWAN BOOK AWARDS 2008 Comments from Authors, Publishers**

*“I was thrilled to receive the honour and almost went into cardiac arrest when they called my name.” – Janita Van de Velde, winner of the 2008 Readers’ Choice Award for **Postcards never Written***

“There’s the recognition and celebration of a job ‘well-done’ – which feels AWESOME. It took me six years to write **Mostly Happy**. I worked hard on this novel and it is just so ...fabulous to have it recognized. It’s easy for a book to get lost in the shuffle – especially a first book by a relatively unknown writer, published by a small press in Saskatchewan. The Saskatchewan Book Awards help draw the public’s attention to the work of Saskatchewan Writers – which gets our stories out on more bookstore shelves and into more libraries.” **Pam Bustin, winner of the 2008 First Book Award and Fiction Award for *Mostly Happy***

## **SASKATCHEWAN BOOK AWARDS 2008**

### **Media Coverage - PRINT**

**Regina Leader Post** on Monday, December 1, 2008 featured one of the SK Book Awards non-fiction award winner, **Donna Caruso, *Journey Without a map Growing Up Italian: A Memoir.***

Regina's **Prairie Dog Magazine** featured the shortlist in articles, promoted SBA Events in its events section and covered the awards winners in its post-Gala edition.

**Quill and Quire** on December 2, 2008 featured an article on the Award winners.

**Humboldt Journal** on October 1 reported on the record number of Saskatchewan Book Award entries.

The **Regional Trader** on October 3 reported on Saskatchewan Book Award entries breaking all previous records.

Then on October 22 the **Humboldt Journal** reported that local poet Allan Safarik was nominated for fan award.

November 12 the **Humboldt Journal** featured a story on the shortlist readings by Harold Johnson, Maureen Ulrich, Donna Caruso and Allan Safarik.

### **Media Coverage - RADIO Promotions**

**CBC Radio** promoted the SK Book Awards Gala on the morning show in November as well as featured interviews with Glenda James by Joanne Skidmore.

Regina Community Radio **CJTR**— interviewed executive director, Glenda James, about the awards, books nominated and the Gala in November and featured shortlisted authors leading up to the Gala.

**Saskatoon Community Radio** – featured various interviews with nominated authors throughout the year.

**Golden West Radio** in Swift Current promoted the Swift Current Brunch & Shortlist Readings as well as the authors reading at it.

### **Media Coverage - TV Promotions**

**SaskTel Max** featured a 15 minute special on the Book Awards Gala.

**CTV** featured a noon hour interview with Glenda James leading up to the Gala.

**Access Communications** featured interviews with nominated authors from September to November.