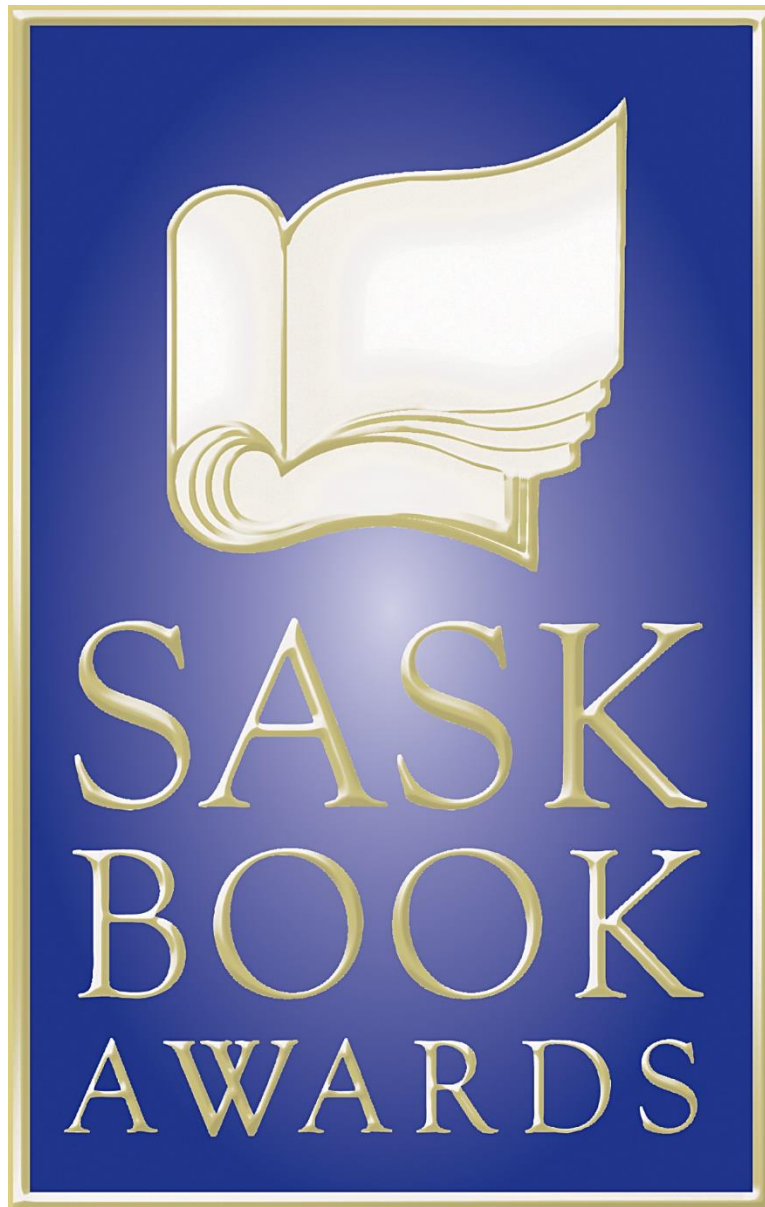


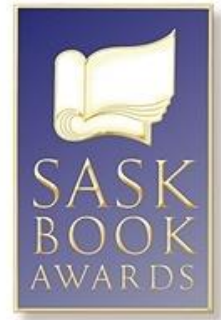
**Saskatchewan Book Awards
2020 Annual Report**



June 24, 2020

Introduction

Since 1993, the Saskatchewan Book Awards (SBA) is the premier promoter and advocate of Saskatchewan's literary and publishing community. As a literary platform, the SBA is pleased to use its nationally recognized reputation in order to celebrate and publicize countrywide-calibre writers and publishers throughout Canada.



Saskatchewan writers and publishers work together symbiotically to create a cultural product that celebrates our province's literary talent. As such, it is the position of the SBA to ensure that Award winners are chosen by a jury of peers from outside of Saskatchewan in order to assure neutrality and fairness in the selection process. Ultimately, SBA is a proud facilitator in working with friends and stakeholders such as bookstores, libraries, and schools to ensure that Saskatchewan books are placed in the hands of Saskatchewan readers and throughout Canada. The SBA is about celebrating Saskatchewan authors and publishers!

2020 Saskatchewan Book Awards Recipients

The Saskatchewan Book Awards offers 14 annual or semi-annual awards to celebrate, promote and reward Saskatchewan authors and publishers worthy of recognition. In 2020, awards were given to the following:

1. **City of Saskatoon and Public Library Saskatoon Book Award** *Blanket Toss*

Under Midnight Sun: Portraits of Everyday Life in Eight Indigenous

Communities by Paul Seesequasis (Knopf Canada)

2. **SaskBooks Publishing in Education Award – Your Nickel’s Worth Publishing** for *When We Had Sled Dogs*, (as told by Acimowin Ohci Wanihikiskanahk, Ida Tremblay and Miriam Körner)
3. **Ministry of Parks, Culture and Sport First Book Award** *Kaidenberg’s Best Sons* by Jason Heit (Coteau Books)
4. **Jennifer Welsh Scholarly Writing Award** sponsored by University of Regina and University of Saskatchewan - *Back to Blakeney: Revitalizing the Democratic State* Editors David McGrane, John Whyte, Roy Romanow, and Russell Isinger (University of Regina Press)
5. **G. Murray & Edna Forbes Children’s Literature Award** - *When We Had Sled Dogs*, as told by Acimowin Ohci Wanihikiskanahk. Ida Tremblay and Miriam Körner (Your Nickel’s Worth Publishing)
6. **City of Regina Regina Book Award** – *Wide Open: A Searing Memoir of Sexual Assault and Recovery* by D.M. Ditson (Coteau Books)
7. **Saskatchewan Arts Board Poetry Award** – *This Hole Called January* by Paula Jane Remlinger (Thistledown Press)

8. **City of Saskatoon and Public Library Saskatoon Book Award** – *Blanket Toss Under Midnight Sun: Portraits of Everyday Life in Eight Indigenous Communities* by Paul Seesequasis (Knopf Canada)
9. **Rasmussen, Rasmussen and Charowsky Indigenous Peoples' Writing Award** – *Peace and Good Order* by Harold R. Johnson (McClelland & Stewart)
10. **Muslims for Peace and Justice Fiction Award** – *Kaidenberg's Best Sons* by Jason Heit (Coteau Books)
11. **University of Saskatchewan Non-Fiction Award** - *Vasily Grossman and the Soviet Century* by Alexandra Popoff Yale University Press
12. **Regina Public Library Book of the Year Award** – *Blanket Toss Under Midnight Sun: Portraits of Everyday Life in Eight Indigenous Communities* by Paul Seesequasis (Knopf Canada)
13. **Creative Saskatchewan Publishing Award** University of Regina Press for *Black Writers Matter* (Edited by Whitney French)

Chair of the Board Report

Donna Woloshyn

I am pleased to introduce the SBA 2020-2021 Board of Directors:

- Donna Woloshyn (Chairperson)
- Joe Couture, (Vice-Chair)
- Zoé Beaulieu Prpick (Secretary)
- Brenda Niskala - resigned June 2020
- Carla Flengeris, representing Saskatchewan Library Association
- Jack Walton, representing Saskatchewan Writers Guild
- Shelley Svedahl – added September 2019
- Emily Dmyterko – added June 2020 (Finance) representing SaskBooks
- Elena Bentley – added September 2020
- Rochelle Smith – added September 2020
- Margot Johnston – added September 2020

I would like to acknowledge that for the first time in several years the SBA has had a full complement of directors (10) who have provided excellent guidance and support in helping the SBA to remain viable despite many challenges over the past year. I conducted an orientation with new board members, Elena Bentley, Margot Johnson and Rochelle Smith in September 2020.

I also set up a new committee, the Finance Committee, composed of the Treasurer, the Chairperson, the Executive Director, and SBA's accountant in 2020. This committee has proved to be very helpful in keeping close track of our revenues and expenditures and our bottom line. Other committees that are in place include the Policy and Governance Committee, the Criteria Committee, the Award Committee and the Fundraising Committee. As well, by delegating more work in 2020 through our committee structure, I have been able to maintain monthly board meetings to around 90 minutes maximum. I am especially grateful for board members' enthusiastic participation on committees and thank everyone for the volunteer time and expertise each has provided throughout their term.

In my third year as SBA's Chairperson, I would also note that my role as Chairperson changed considerably as our new Executive Director, Kam Teo, who assumed the position in October 2020, relieved me of many operational duties

that I had assumed in 2019 when SBA was without an Executive Director from July 2020 to October 2020. I am pleased to report that we have developed a very productive working relationship that has contributed significantly to SBA's success and ability to adapt to change in 2020, "the Year of Covid 19 lockdown".

2020 SBA Successes, Challenges and Opportunities:

Successes:

2020, the "Year of Covid-19 lockdown", brought many new challenges and unanticipated changes. One of the events not affected by Covid lockdown was the 2020 Saskatchewan Book Awards Shortlist Announcement simultaneously announced at two Saskatchewan locations on February 14, 2020. The SBA Shortlist announcement was hosted by Saskatoon Public Library Writer in Residence, Edward Willett, and Regina Public Library Writer in Residence, David Gane, at their respective locations.

All other events in which SBA has traditionally participated such as the Cathedral Village Arts Festival, Regina Public Library's "Writes of Spring", Moose Jaw's "Festival of Words". were either modified for delivery online through Facebook. Regrettably, many SBA reading events were cancelled including one of SBA's most well attended events held annually in the fall hosted by the Government of Saskatchewan's Legislative Library.

Like many other organizations affected by Covid-19, the SBA soon realized that our organization could not close and that we would have to be doing things differently, mostly through social media. Our first challenge was to figure out how to hold monthly and committee meetings so we obtained a Zoom account and learned how to conduct meetings remotely and share documents. Speaking for myself, I experienced a steep learning curve on acquiring new technology applications but have been impressed with the ease to which our board members have adapted to conducting the SBA's business, perhaps even more efficiently than anticipated. Our next thoughts turned to figuring out how the SBA could deliver the 28th Saskatchewan Book Awards Ceremony online which was originally scheduled to be held at the Conexus Centre on April 28, 2020. The venue was cancelled and purchased tickets for the event were refunded.

With assistance from SBA board member representing the Saskatchewan Writers Guild, Jack Walton led us through the process of developing and producing the 28th Saskatchewan Book Awards ceremony whereby recipients in 13 categories were announced. The online event was broadcast on June 14, 2020 on SBA's website and through the social media platforms of Facebook and YouTube. Through social media, we were able to reach many more people and we received many compliments, not only from Saskatchewan residents but from beyond our borders. The Awards Ceremony was the product of many individuals and in addition to Jack Walton, I would like to thank the following for their assistance and support in making our first online event such a great success: Shirley (Saskatchewan Writers Guild), Little Ox Film Company (Saskatoon), Jeff Bolton and Roxanna Woloshyn.

Challenges

Funding for operations continues to be an issue. Revenue is generated through the following sources: book submissions, grants, sponsorships, donations and in-kind. SBA's 2020 Budget as of December 31, 2020 included revenue of \$96,535 compared to \$135,575 in 2019 and Expenditures of \$98,658 in 2020 compared to \$136,110 in 2019. The net deficit in 2020 was -\$2,123 compared to a net deficit of \$535 in 2019. The loss in revenue can be attributed to loss of grants and revenue that would have been earned by holding a live ticketed annual awards ceremony which didn't happen in 2020.

Through the Executive Director's persistent endeavours, the SBA received partner sponsorships for all 13 SBA writing and publishing awards presented in 2020 reflected in the 2020 SBA budget). SBA did apply for grants in 2020 to support SBA operations (i.e., the Access Grant, Saskatchewan Arts and the Canada Council) but did not receive approval for funding requests, thereby creating fiscal challenges to maintain a full-time staff position and to offer a full program of events. However, through various Covid 19 funding supports made available in 2020, SBA was incredibly fortunate to receive support funding from the following organizations (reflected in the 2020 SBA budget): Canada Council, ArtsVest, Saskatchewan Arts, Government of Canada's Wage subsidy program). Without Covid 19 support funding, SBA would have had to dip into our reserve funding.

Thank you to our accountant, Toni Weber, for assisting with tight financial control and supports to the Board's Financial Committee. Though SBA sustained significantly greater loss in revenue, this was a relatively positive budget outcome given fiscal challenges in 2020. However, it is clear that SBA cannot continue to operate at a deficit and will likely have to access reserve funding in order to remain viable throughout 2021. As such, SBA will continue to work with both the Finance and Fundraising committees to explore fundraising options and seek new funding opportunities in 2021.

Opportunities

- The Executive Director Performance Review which was to take place in October 2020 was deferred as the format for evaluation required updating. A committee was set up to develop a new template format and process and work will continue in 2021.
- The SBA's current Strategic Plan is due to expire in 2021 and though we had intended to review it in 2020, it was deferred for review in 2021 to accommodate ongoing and potential future changes. Of particular interest is the development of a social media strategy to promote SBA more widely.
- Work with the SBA Governance Committee will continue in 2021 to update the SBA Policy and Procedures Manual to reflect current policies adopted by the Board and procedural changes to increase SBA operational effectiveness.
- Apply for grants and seek new sponsorships in 2021.

**Saskatchewan Book Awards
Report of the Executive Director
Kam Teo
December 2020**

2020 Call for Submissions Announcement September 1, 2019

The Call for the 2020 SBA submissions was announced on September 1, 2019 and closed October 31, 2019. For the 2020 awards, SBA received 185 submissions (80 titles) in 2019 for 13 categories, for assessment for the 2020 SBA Ceremony.

The year 2020 was year of tremendous challenge for the Saskatchewan Book Awards (SBA) as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. A pandemic of historic proportions, scheduled author readings in the spring and the 2020 in person ceremony scheduled to take place in Regina had to be cancelled as a result. Due to the efforts of board member, Jack Walton, an online ceremony was created. As a result of the online format the SBA had 322 views on Youtube and 1,700 on Facebook.

The need to remain relevant during a time of economic uncertainty created new opportunities in which to promote 2020 SBA winners and shortlisted authors. This meant SBA sponsored Online author readings with traditional partners The River Volta Reading Series, Sage Hill, and the Saskatchewan Festival of Words. We added a new partner, independent book store, Penny University. We look forward to working with traditional partners and new partners in 2021!

Finally, the SBA would be remiss not to mention the financial assistance of the Government of Canada during such historically challenging times. Since the SBA had to cancel the in-person ceremony in April – which garners literary buzz as well as financial assistance to the SBA operationally – such assistance from Ottawa helped in stabilizing the fiscal strength of the organization.

2020 Author Readings

In May, the SBA partnered with the Cathedral Village Arts Festival for online readings author readings by shortlisted authors, Raye Hendrickson and Beatrice Wallace. The autumn began with the SBA sponsoring a Covid-19 protocol author/Zoom reading at the Sage Hill Writing Experience in Humboldt with Jason Heit. In November, the SBA funded author readings by Helen Knott and D.M. Ditson for the River Volta Reading Series (run by MFA students at the U of S) as well as the poetry readings of Belinda Betker and Paula Jane Remlinger for the Saskatchewan Festival of Words. The month of December was an opportunity for SBA to partner with the Festival of Words and Penny University in order to promote perspective holiday gifts. Regina authors Ed Willett, Beatrice Wolfe, and Allan Dotson had author readings at Penny University while Mohamed Abdulkarim Ali and Candace Savage had author readings for the Saskatchewan Festival of Words.

Partnerships and Sponsorships

In these challenging Covid-19 times, partnerships with sponsors are critical to the success of the SBA. Support from the Canada Council for the Arts funded online readings of 2020 SBA winners and shortlisted authors throughout the year. And as noted above we sustained partnerships with the Cathedral Village Arts Festival, Sage Hill and the Saskatchewan Festival of Words and attained a new partner with Penny University Bookstore and Café. We look forward to working with the above sponsors and partners in 2021.

The volunteer Board of SBA and its Executive Director continue to sustain and build relationships with its sponsors and partners in order for the Saskatchewan Book Awards to fulfill its mandate as the province's premier promoter of Saskatchewan writers and publishers. Now more than ever, the direction set by the SBA Board is important in sustaining a viable organization

**Awards Ceremony Committee Report to the Board of Directors
Annual General Meeting – June 24, 2020
Kam Teo**

The 27th Saskatchewan Book Awards Ceremony took place online on Thursday, June 18, 2020. A 20-minute presentation created by board member, Jack Walton, the online ceremony garnered 322 views on Youtube and 1,700 on Facebook. We are thankful for the efforts of Jack Walton with a little assistance from Little Ox Films and Saskatoon musician Earl Pereira.