



Inaugural Killaloe Kids BookFest

Sponsored by the Killaloe and District Public Library (www.killaloelibrary.ca) in partnership with Killaloe Public School, St. Andrew's Catholic Elementary School, the Community Resource Centre (www.crc-renfrewcounty.com) and the Ottawa Valley Creative Arts Open Studio (www.ov-caos.org)

Where: Killaloe Ontario (location to be determined)

When: May 2016

Proposed Format:

Four authors, four early evening gatherings where each is invited to read from one or more of his or her books, to inspire kids, not only to read but to become young writers, celebrating the importance of storytelling, which is such a strong part of our local cultural heritage.

Authors will also help celebrate original artwork. This artwork will be part of the pre-BookFest activities. Each author will have his or her work promoted in the month to six weeks before their appearance. Kids will be invited to read each author's books and create a piece of art (painting, papier maché, sculpture, song, spoken word etc.) that will be on display at the library in the weeks before the BookFest. The art linked to each author's books will be celebrated on that author's evening with pride-of-accomplishment prizes, which the author will help present.

Each evening we will offer healthy (non-sticky!) snacks for all, made locally.

Why We Want to Do This

Killaloe has a small permanent population (600) but a thriving library of more than 1800 users. Like many small rural communities in Ontario, we are struggling to keep our community vibrant, and economically viable. A big part of that is being able to offer families with young children opportunities to grow their knowledge of, and appreciation for the world around them. Reading is an essential way of doing that. And our kids simply don't have access to the inspiration that comes from meeting authors whose books speak to them. We are not a large urban centre, but our kids are just as important as the kids who live in larger cities where festivals happen more frequently.

Our library bursts out of two rooms behind our municipal offices and a plumbing business, and children make up a growing part of our client base. We have a significant number of local

families that home school their children and rely on our library to support their efforts. In the summertime, our library is a cultural tourism draw, inviting those who live in the community during these months to use our internet services, borrow our books and CDs and participate in our summer reading programs.

Over the past five years our volunteer children's programming coordinator has launched three initiatives that have increased our connection to the children in our community:

- 1) **Babes in Bookland** (The ABC's of Children's Authors - www.killaloelibrary.ca): a weekly hour long gathering of infants to three year olds where we read stories and use puppets to introduce very young kids to the joys of reading and to what our library can offer.
- 2) **Family Literacy Activity Kits (FLAKs)** (www.killaloelibrary.ca): eighteen themed kits for kids from 0 to 12 years of age, developed with support from the Sarah Badgley Literacy Grant for Rural Ontario Children and the Friends of the Killaloe Library. Each kit includes books about a theme (for example, Science, Bugs, the Stars and the Sky, Being a Good Friend, Good Food, Helping Others), along with a musical or film CD, suggestions for crafts and activities and a vetted list of online resources.
- 3) **100 Awesome Books to Experience Before High School:** in partnership with the Edmonton Public Library, we have a great resource that helps reluctant readers in the 8-12 age range to get excited about books.

Now we want to do more, inspired by the success of the Bonnechere Authors Festival happening every July in Eganville, Ontario (<http://www.bonnechereupl.com/baf.html>).

What's In It for You as a Children's Author to be Part of the Killaloe Kids BookFest

- 1) Costs covered as per expectations
- 2) A great opportunity to bring your inspiration and magic to rural children who are keen to learn more about your books and you
- 3) Summer in Killaloe and the Upper Ottawa Valley, truly an amazingly beautiful place to visit
- 4) Private accommodation hosted for you on the Bonnechere River
- 5) A pre-BookFest dinner in your honour at the Sands on Golden Lake or the Wilno Tavern
- 6) An opportunity to promote and sell your books, with media coverage that stretches through all of Renfrew County
- 7) Arrangements for transportation can be made to suit your needs

For more information, please contact Cathy Lyons, Killaloe Library's Volunteer Children's Program Coordinator, at 613-757-0166 or lyonsczm@gmail.com