

Artistic flair led to career

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times when you have that click of recognition."

She said she immediately knew that the introspective and thoughtful child character in the book wasn't a blond and was a bit "serious looking".

Obviously, judges who reviewed hundreds of books to nominate candidates for the award thought she'd captured the essence of the girl and story with her illustrations.

'Doctor Kiss Says Yes' is the third children's book Ms. Fitzgerald has illustrated. Her two previous works include 'Plain Noodles' written by Betty Waterton and 'Emily's House' written by Nikko Scherer.

She's currently at work on a 64 page children's book called 'Ten Small Tales' written by Celia Lotteriete which includes over 100 illustrations.

It's her biggest project to date and Ms. Fitzgerald finds it somewhat surprising that she en-

joys it so much considering she never had any intention to be an illustrator.

Having always exhibited an artistic flair, she knew early she wanted to train in the arts and chose to study fine arts, earning a Bachelor of Fine Arts from Mount Allison University in New Brunswick.

But upon graduation, she soon found economic circumstances would dictate her fate and landed herself a job as an illustrator on staff at the Royal Ontario Museum.

"It was a bread and butter issue," she admits. "You may be an artist but at some point you have to make some money."

After one year at the ROM, she decided to freelance her illustrating skills and soon became busy illustrating food for the Globe and Mail and magazines such as Chatelaine and Toronto Life.

She then branched into illustrating educational books and one of her illustrations in the

childrens nature magazine, Chickadee, caught the attention of an editor at Groundwood, the childrens book division of the publishing company Douglas and McIntyre. In time, she was working on her first childrens book.

When undertaking a book, Ms. Fitzgerald says she tries to put herself into the story as an observer and screens the manuscript for clues about the characters.

"In a childrens book, there's not a lot of manuscript so you end up doing a lot of second guessing," she said. "You find yourself looking at what the character does and how she, or he, reacts to things to come up with a complete picture of what that character is like."

She admits she rather likes illustrating childrens books now because "it's a nicer place."

No doubt, she'll be able to spend a lot of time in that nicer place now that her talent has been recognized in the top literary competition in Canada.



Illustrating the fact

Fact is that Joanne Fitzgerald, a childrens' book illustrator from Georgetown, has just won Canada's top literary award the Governor General's Award for English Literature in the Illustration category. The award was presented Tuesday, three days after Ms. Fitzgerald spent the afternoon signing copies of the book which garnered her the award, 'Doctor Kiss Says Yes' at Oxbow Books in Georgetown.

Chamber sponsors consultation meeting

The Halton Hills Chamber of Commerce and HAPITAC (Halton and Peel Industries Training Advisory Committee) announced that they will be co-sponsoring, with the Government of Canada, a public consultation meeting on economic competitiveness and learning issues.

The consultation in Halton Hills, which will be held on December 9, 91 from 6:30 p.m. to 10:30 p.m. at the Georgetown High School, is one of 170 such meetings being held across Canada as part of the government's Prosperity Initiative. The meeting will be facilitated by government officials and is designed to allow individuals from the community the opportunity to gather together to offer input to the federal government regarding its com-

petitiveness and learning priorities in the years ahead.

"This consultation will result in a series of concrete recommendations to the government regarding the views of Halton Hills residents on the key issues of economic competitiveness and learning," said Doug Penrice of the Halton Hills Chamber. "It is a unique opportunity to have direct input into government decision making".

Dave Wright of HAPITAC said the format of the meeting has been designed to allow as many people to participate. "The bulk of the meeting will take place in small discussion groups so that we can keep the atmosphere informal and allow everyone to contribute fully," he said. All residents of Halton Hills and area are invited to attend and

express their views on such issues as trade policy, skills training, science and technology, and other issues that affect the economic competitiveness on the area.

For more information contact Doug Penrice at the Chamber Office at 877-7119.

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Ministry of the Attorney General



Optimist Youth Award winners

These four local youths were honored for their accomplishments and dedication during Optimist Club of Georgetown's annual Youth Appreciation Night Nov. 26 (From left to right) Allison-Lynn Mac-

Farlane, Junior runner-up, Christy Michalak, Junior award winner, John Manning, Senior runner-up, and Senior award winner Marclia Streutker. (Herald Photo)

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