

# Celebrate @ your library with an Authors' Booking Service!

## Martha Martin and Marsha Skrypuch

**T**here is no better way to celebrate your library than with an author visit!

Canadian award-winning authors Valerie Sherrard and Marsha Skrypuch know this well. Three years ago, they formed Authors' Booking Service. When they began, they had a mere handful of presenters, but they have grown with the demand. They now represent close to 100 high profile creators who are known for their first-rate presentations, as well as their outstanding books. Talk about a reason to celebrate!

In that time, the two have noticed some trends. "Boys' literacy is a hot topic," says Valerie Sherrard. "Our male authors like Michael Kusugak, Matt Beam, Robert Weston, and Shane Peacock are good role models. Not only do boys love their books, but they can see themselves [reflected] in these authors."

"Creators of graphic novels are also popular," says Marsha Skrypuch. "For older elementary and high school students, Svetlana Chmakova is wonderful. She's the author and illustrator for the *Dramacon* series. And we have Liam O'Donnell and Martin Springett for younger students."

Current nominees for the Forest of Reading programs are always sought after for school and library readings. Marsha and Valerie have a policy of accepting every current Tree nominee who asks for their help. Authors' Booking Service keeps tabs on their schedules, so by simply emailing [abs@authorsbooking.com](mailto:abs@authorsbooking.com), a teacher-librarian can book a Tree nominee!

Marsha and Valerie pride themselves on helping their authors and illustrators as well. The average income for a Canadian children's author or illustrator can hover around the poverty level. School visits are key

to keeping the wolves at bay. But if an author is invited for one reading in London and another in Peterborough, how can they logistically fulfill those requests? They ask Authors' Booking Service to spread the word. Making sure that authors have the income to write means that teacher-librarians have more books to choose from and students have more books to read. Another reason to celebrate!

### Who Are the Most "Celebrated" Authors and Illustrators?

There are certain categories that are always popular:

- High-profile fiction writers
- Picture-book authors and illustrators
- Authors who give writing workshops
- Illustrators who give art workshops
- Presenters who can do an entire elementary grade spread over four sessions
- Presenters who will do JK
- Authors and illustrators who can do "Family Literacy" events during the evening or on weekends
- Fresh new illustrators and authors who charge less than their more seasoned colleagues

### Trends for the Future?

When asked what they think will be "celebrated" in library visits in the future, Marsha and Valerie are quick to reply.

"Non-fiction," says Marsha. "Boys who are turned off by novels will pick up Helaine Becker's *Super Agent Y.O.U.* or Larry Verstraete's *Lost Treasures: True Stories of Discovery*. They are enthralled by Jan Thornhill's presentation with her "museum in a bag" and Jake