

# The Newfoundland and Labrador Book Awards

*Under the distinguished patronage of the Honourable Frank Fagan, CM, ONL, MBA, Lieutenant Governor of Newfoundland and Labrador*

MEDIA RELEASE

*For immediate release*

## **Finalists for 2014 Newfoundland and Labrador Book Awards Announced**

(April 16, 2014 – St. John's, NL) The Writers' Alliance of Newfoundland and Labrador is thrilled to announce the finalists for this year's Newfoundland and Labrador Book Awards. These awards honour excellence in literary works by Newfoundland and Labrador authors. This year the awards recognize exceptional works in the categories of fiction and children's/young adult literature.

The finalists for the **Writers' Alliance Fiction Award** are:

- ***Strays* (Killick Press, 2013) by Ed Kavanagh**
- ***Caught* (House of Anansi, 2013) by Lisa Moore**
- ***Whirl Away* (Thomas Allen Publishers, 2012) by Russell Wangersky**

The finalists for the **Bruneau Family Children's/Young Adult Literature Award** are:

- ***The Wonderful Dogfish Racket* (Pennywell Books, 2013) by Tom Dawe, illustrated by C. Anne MacLeod**
- ***Jack and Mary in the Land of Thieves* (Running the Goat Books & Broadsides, 2012) by Andy Jones, with illustrations by Darka Erdelji**
- ***Free Flight* (FriesenPress, 2012) by William Pryse-Phillips, with illustrations by C. Anne MacLeod**

The winners of the 2014 Newfoundland and Labrador Book Awards will be announced on Tuesday, May 27th during an Awards Ceremony at Government House. Readings by finalists of the children's literature award will take place on Saturday, May 24<sup>th</sup> at the Rocket Room (St. John's) at 1pm. Readings by finalists of the fiction award will take place on Sunday, May 25<sup>th</sup> at the Ship Pub (St. John's) at 7:30pm. Both of these readings are free and open to the public.

The Newfoundland and Labrador Book Awards are presented under the distinguished patronage of the Honourable Frank Fagan, CM, ONL, MBA, Lieutenant Governor of Newfoundland and Labrador. This is the 18th consecutive year for these prestigious provincial book awards which alternate between fiction and children's/YA literature in even years, and non-fiction and poetry in odd years. The Bruneau Family has sponsored the children's/young adult literature category of the Newfoundland and Labrador Book Awards since 2002. Other supporters of the awards this year include *The Telegram* and Perfect Day. This generous support helps the Writers' Alliance pay tribute to the essential role our writers play in the vibrant culture of this province. The winner in each category receives a cash prize of \$1,500, and runners-up each receive \$500.

All finalists and winners are selected by an independent panel of judges. Below are excerpts from the judges' comments on the 2014 finalists:

- **Strays, by Ed Kavanagh** ... is a collection of ten short stories... Kavanagh's characters inhabit the marginal edges of Newfoundland communities past and present... Kavanagh's prose is beautiful and lucid without calling undue attention to itself; he writes with a clarity that lets character and setting shine through the words.
- **Caught, by Lisa Moore** ... opens with David Slaney's prison break...[and a trek that] takes him across Canada and down the Pacific Coast to Columbia - always one step ahead of Patterson, the police detective determined to put Slaney back behind bars... The narrative alternates between these two characters both of whom are good guys...we end up rooting for both of them... Her writing is quick, clever and insightful. Her descriptions are spot on.
- **Whirl Away, by Russell Wangersky**... opens with a rusty bolt let loose from the bed of a pick-up truck, hurtling towards the driver's head as the truck crashes nose-first into an embankment. An apt opening to a collection in which sharp and telling detail cracks open every story and illuminates its depths.

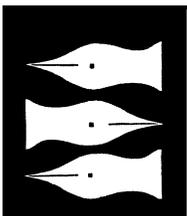
- ***The Wonderful Dogfish Racket, by Tom Dawe***... A master poet, in *The Wonderful Dogfish Racket*, Tom Dawes' lyrical, whimsical genius is in full display... Although rooted in a historical event, the message of community self-empowerment is timeless and global. This book is a winning blend of history and poetic excellence and will be recited for generations to come.
- ***Jack and Mary in the Land of Thieves, by Andy Jones***... The bardic, original voice of Andy Jones in another of his word perfect Jack tales gives us a world away from now, a world that celebrates Newfoundland's sailing history, song and the art of storytelling itself... *In the Land of Thieves* [is] a book that does what classics do –appeals to an audience of young and old alike.
- ***Free Flight, by William Pryse-Phillips***... Charming, funny, whimsical, with a proverbial wink at parents and the raising of offspring... Pryse –Phillips created an original, enchanting picture book where ultimately we are shown that freedom is as exciting as the safety of home is reassuring.

The Writers' Alliance of Newfoundland and Labrador was formed in 1987 to support writers and writing in the province. With a membership of over 400, it has become the provincial literary sector organization, providing professional development programs and services, and organizing literary events in various communities around the province to increase public awareness of, and celebrate, our literary and storytelling culture.

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