

Governor Mifflin School District

10 South Waverly Street, Shillington, PA 19607

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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MIFFLIN FIFTH GRADERS PARTICIPATE IN AUTHOR-ILLUSTRATOR'S FOCUS GROUP

SHILLINGTON, PA, OCTOBER 2011 - Two reading classes of fifth grade students in Ms. Donna Strobel's classes at Governor Mifflin Intermediate School have been a tremendous help to children's book author and illustrator Judy Link Cuddehe. For several weeks teacher Strobel augmented the reading curriculum with Cuddehe's four published books and guided the students in participating in a pre-publication focus group for Cuddehe's fifth book, "The Wondrous Autobiography of Leaf, Erik's Son," which is planned for release in January 2012. Judy Link Cuddehe, a Berks native and 1979 graduate of Fleetwood High School, has resided in Virginia for the last 25 years.

This marked the first time that Cuddehe used a focus group of students to assist in editing and critiquing a book, but it will not be the last. "The students' insights in design, storyline and writing mechanics were truly astounding, especially considering that the book had been proofed by a number of others in the editing process." Cuddehe clearly appreciates the time and effort that the students put into activity, because the students' suggestions were of such high quality that she incorporated the majority of them. "It is a rare gift to get feedback from the target audience. The students' recommendations concerned more than simple proofreading; they addressed overall book design, storyline alternatives, individual illustrations and the mechanics of text layout." She added, "The students' feedback helped me tighten up the narrative and improve the illustrations. I even eliminated a character after listening to the students' interpretations. Leaf's story is, without a doubt, more compelling, better in every way, as a direct result of the students' efforts."

On Thursday, October 20, the students and Cuddehe finally met face-to-face in the classroom. Cuddehe thanked them for their help, described her book creation processes and techniques, and provided instruction on how to draw several of the characters in her books. She also inspired them with wisdom gained over the years, although she is quick to add, "I have learned that in some ways I am not smarter than a fifth grader!"

Books by Judy Link Cuddehe include:

- "Forgive Me?" © 2011, ISBN 9780615436012, published in hardcover format by Found Link Books Publishing;
- "Mom Says I am Just Plain Squirrely," © 2011, ISBN 9780983665915, published in paperback format by Found Link Books Publishing;
- "Big Al Has a Foul Attitude," © 2011, ISBN 9780983665922, published in hardcover format by Found Link Books Publishing;
- "Flash Light!" © 2011, ISBN 9780983665908, published in paperback format by Found Link Publishing.

For more information on the focus group, as well as Cuddehe's appearances and book releases, contact author-illustrator Judy Link Cuddehe at (703) 966-2175 or JLcuddehe@verizon.net.

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