

# Patricia Reilly Giff



Photo © 2003 Tim Keating

“I want to see children curled up with books, finding an awareness of themselves as they discover other people’s thoughts. I want them to make the connection that books are people’s stories, that writing is talking on paper, and I want them to write their own stories.”

—Patricia Reilly Giff

Patricia Reilly Giff has written more than 60 books for young readers. She has received two Newbery Honor Awards for her middle-grade fiction.

# About the Author

“I always start each day by writing. That’s like breathing to me,” says Patricia Reilly Giff. In fact, this bestselling author admits: “I wanted to write from the first time I picked up a book and read. I thought it must be the most marvelous thing to make people dance across the pages.”

Reading and writing have always been an important part of Patricia Reilly Giff’s life. As a child, her favorite books included *Little Women*, *The Secret Garden*, the Black Stallion books, the Sue Barton books, and the Nancy Drew series. Giff loved reading so much that while growing up, her sister had to grab books out of her hands to get Giff to pay attention to her; later, Giff’s three children often found themselves doing the same thing. As a reading teacher for 20 years, the educational consultant for Dell Yearling and Young Yearling books, an adviser and instructor to aspiring writers, and the author of more than 60 books for children, Patricia Reilly Giff has spent her entire life surrounded by books.

Patricia Reilly Giff has earned an M.A. from St. John’s University, a Professional Diploma in Reading and a Doctorate in Humane Letters from Hofstra University, and another honorary doctorate from Sacred Heart University in the Spring of 2006.

While earning her B.A. degree from Marymount College, Giff took the advice of the school’s dean and decided to become a teacher. She admits, “I loved teaching. It was my world. I only left because I was overwhelmed with three careers—teaching, writing, and my family.”

Then one morning, Giff told her husband Jim, “I’m going to write a book. I’ve always wanted to write and now I shall.” Jim worked quickly to combine two adjacent closets in their apartment into one cramped workspace and, as Giff jokes, she “began [her] career in a closet.”

Giff explains, “I want the children to bubble up with laughter, or to cry over my books. I want to picture them under a cherry tree or at the library with my book in their

hands. But more, I want to see them reading in the classroom. I want to see children in solitude at their desks, reading, absorbing, lost in a book.” Giff tries to write books “that say ordinary people are special.” She says, “All of my books are based in some way on my personal experiences, or the experiences of members of my family, or the stories kids would tell me in school.” Therefore, when she runs out of ideas for her books, Giff says, “I take a walk and look around. Maybe I spend some time in a classroom and watch the kids for a while. Sometimes I lie on the living room floor and remember my days in second grade or third. If all that doesn’t work, I ask Ali, or Jim, or Bill”—Giff’s children, whose names often appear in her books.

When she’s not writing, Patricia Reilly Giff enjoys reading in the bathtub and going to the movies and eating

popcorn. In 1990, Giff combined her two greatest loves: children’s books and her family, and, with her husband and her children, opened The Dinosaur’s Paw, a children’s bookstore named after one of her Kids of the Polk Street School novels. This store is part of

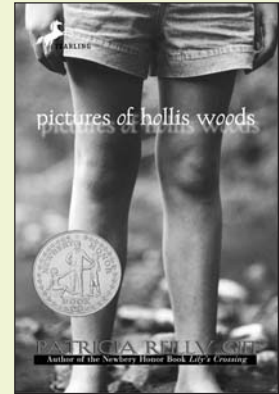
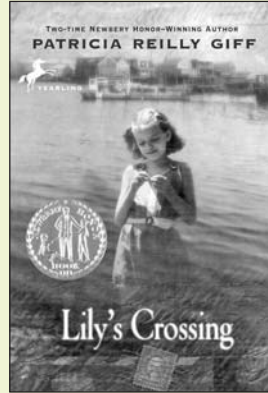
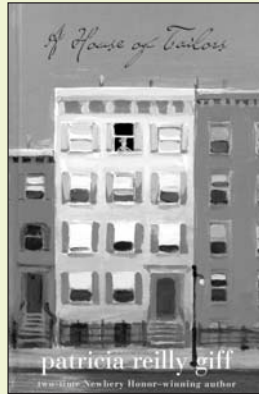
“Anyone who feels can write.  
It’s only talking on paper about  
things that matter to us.”

Giff’s quest to bring children and books together. She and her family are trying to “share our love of children’s books and writing and to help others explore the whole world of children’s books.”

Throughout the year, Giff visits schools and libraries around the country and speaks to her readers about her books, and about writing. When discussing her work, Giff claims, “I have no special talent, you know. I never took a writing course before I began to write.” She believes that “anyone who has problems, or worries, anyone who laughs and cries, anyone who feels can write. It’s only talking on paper . . . talking about the things that matter to us.”

Giff lives in Trumbull, Connecticut, with her husband, Jim. They are the proud parents of three children and grandparents of seven grandchildren.

# Praise



## WILLOW RUN

- ★ "Tough and tender, this is an excellent addition to World War II shelves."—*Booklist*, Starred
- ★ "[A] finely wrought story of cowardice, courage and digging deep."—*Kirkus Reviews*, Starred

## A HOUSE OF TAILORS

"This novel is rich with believable, endearing characters as well as excitement and emotion."

—*School Library Journal*

"The plot is swept along by dramatic truths of Brooklyn life in the 1870s: economic struggle, epidemic, and fire, as well as a hint of romance. Giff's fans will be pleased."—*Kirkus Reviews*

## MAGGIE'S DOOR

- ★ "Heart-wrenching and unforgettable."—*Kirkus Reviews*, Starred

"Giff uses vivid language and precisely detailed observation to convey both experience and emotion."

—*The Horn Book*

## PICTURES OF HOLLIS WOODS

- ★ "Giff expertly portrays the intense heartfelt emotions . . . and gives [Hollis] talent and spunk. . . . This touching story will leave readers pleasantly drained, satisfied with the happy ending, and eager for more about Hollis's future."—*Kirkus Reviews*, Starred
- "Giff again introduces a carefully delineated and sympathetic heroine."—*Publishers Weekly*

## LILY'S CROSSING

- ★ "Details . . . are woven with great effect into a realistic story of ordinary people who must cope with events beyond their comprehension."—*The Horn Book*, Starred
- "Set during World War II, this tenderly written story tells of the war's impact on two children, one an American and one a Hungarian refugee. Giff's well-drawn, believable characters and vivid prose style make this an excellent choice."—*School Library Journal*

## NORY RYAN'S SONG

- ★ "Newbery Honor winner Giff weaves wisps of history into this wrenching tale of an Irish family sundered by the Great Potato Famine. . . . Riveting."—*Kirkus Reviews*, Starred

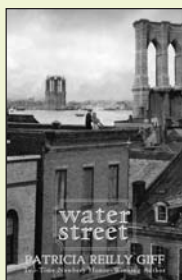
- ★ "Giff brings the landscape and the cultural particulars of the era vividly to life and creates in Nory a heroine to cheer for. A beautiful, heart-warming novel that makes a devastating event understandable."—*Booklist*, Starred

## The Kids of the Polk Street School #6: THE VALENTINE STAR

"Humor and trials are portrayed through realistic characters and situations and natural dialogue."

—*School Library Journal*

# Book List



## **WATER STREET**

Ages 9–12 • Wendy Lamb Books  
 HC: 978-0-385-73068-6 (0-385-73068-3)  
 GLB: 978-0-385-90097-3 (0-385-90097-X)

## **WILLOW RUN**

Ages 9–12 • Wendy Lamb Books  
 HC: 978-0-385-73067-9 (0-385-73067-5)  
 GLB: 978-0-385-90096-6 (0-385-90096-1)  
 • A *Booklist* Children Editors' Choice

## **A HOUSE OF TAILORS**

Ages 9–12 • Wendy Lamb Books  
 HC: 978-0-385-73066-2 (0-385-73066-7)  
 PB: 978-0-440-23800-3 (0-440-23800-5)  
 GLB: 978-0-385-90879-5 (0-385-90879-2)  
 • A Jefferson Cup Winner

## **MAGGIE'S DOOR**

Ages 8–12 • Wendy Lamb Books  
 HC: 978-0-385-32658-2 (0-385-32658-0)  
 PB: 978-0-440-41581-7 (0-440-41581-0)  
 GLB: 978-0-385-90095-9 (0-385-90095-3)

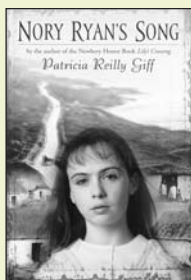
## **ALL THE WAY HOME**

Ages 8–12 • Wendy Lamb Books  
 PB: 978-0-440-41182-6 (0-440-41182-3)  
 • A Maine Student Book Award Winner  
 • A Kentucky Bluegrass Award Winner



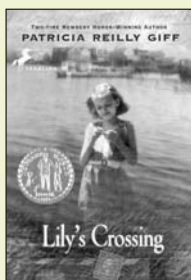
## **PICTURES OF HOLLIS WOODS**

Ages 8–13 • Wendy Lamb Books  
 HC: 978-0-385-32655-1 (0-385-32655-6)  
 PB: 978-0-440-41578-7 (0-440-41578-0)  
 GLB: 978-0-385-90070-6 (0-385-90070-8)  
 • A Newbery Honor Book  
 • An ALA Best Books for Young Adults  
 • An ALA Notable Book for Children  
 • A Christopher Award Winner



## **NORY RYAN'S SONG**

Ages 8–12 • Delacorte Press  
 HC: 978-0-385-32141-9 (0-385-32141-4)  
 PB: 978-0-440-41829-0 (0-440-41829-1)  
 • An ALA Best Book for Young Adults  
 • An ALA Notable Children's Book



## **LILY'S CROSSING**

Ages 8–12 • Delacorte Press  
 HC: 978-0-385-32142-6 (0-385-32142-2)  
 PB: 978-0-440-41453-7 (0-440-41453-9)  
 • A Newbery Honor Book  
 • An ALA Notable Children's Book  
 • A *Boston Globe-Horn Book* Honor Book

## **FOURTH-GRADE CELEBRITY**

Ages 8–12 • Yearling  
 978-0-440-42676-9 (0-440-42676-6)

GLB=Gibraltar Library Binding

## **THE KIDS OF THE POLK STREET SCHOOL SERIES**

Illustrated by Blanche Sims  
 Ages 6–9 • Yearling

## **THE BEAST IN MS. ROONEY'S ROOM**

978-0-440-40485-9 (0-440-40485-1)

## **FISH FACE**

978-0-440-42557-1 (0-440-42557-3)

## **THE CANDY CORN CONTEST**

978-0-440-41072-0 (0-440-41072-X)

## **DECEMBER SECRETS**

978-0-440-41795-8 (0-440-41795-3)

## **IN THE DINOSAUR'S PAW**

978-0-440-44150-2 (0-440-44150-1)

## **THE VALENTINE STAR**

978-0-440-49204-7 (0-440-49204-1)

## **LAZY LIONS, LUCKY LAMBS**

978-0-440-44640-8 (0-440-44640-6)

## **SNAGGLE DOODLES**

978-0-440-48068-6 (0-440-48068-X)

## **PURPLE CLIMBING DAYS**

978-0-440-47309-1 (0-440-47309-8)

## **SAY "CHEESE"**

978-0-440-47639-9 (0-440-47639-9)

## **SUNNYSIDE UP**

978-0-440-48406-6 (0-440-48406-5)

## **PICKLE PUSS**

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## **THE BEAST AND THE HALLOWEEN HORROR**

978-0-440-40335-7 (0-440-40335-9)

## **EMILY ARROW PROMISES**

**TO DO BETTER THIS YEAR**  
 978-0-440-40369-2 (0-440-40369-3)

## **MONSTER RABBIT RUNS AMUCK!**

978-0-440-40424-8 (0-440-40424-X)

Look for other popular series  
 by Patricia Reilly Giff:

- THE NEW KIDS AT THE POLK STREET SCHOOL
- THE POLKA DOT PRIVATE EYE
- POLK STREET SPECIALS