

B. G HENNESSY
Author Events
Winter 2014-15

**ARIZONA,
TACOMA, WA.
MADISON, WI.**



AUTHOR DAY
EDUPRIZE SCHOOL,
GILBERT, AZ



**A CHRISTMAS WISH
FOR CORDUROY**
HOLIDAY DEBUT



CCBC EVENT
50TH ANNIVERSARY
MADISON, WI

BGH BOOK NEWS



Recent Author Visits & Events

From signings to story times to school visits there was a whole lot of traveling going on this fall. One of my favorite trips was to the Eduprize School in Gilbert, AZ. I spoke to the the first graders and kindergartners-all 420 of them. They were the first group to hear the newest Corduroy book, A CHRISTMAS WISH FOR CORDUROY. They had a lot of suggestions for the next Corduroy topic- let's just say there were some basketball fans present. A big thank you to Changing Hands Bookstore for setting up the event.

PHOTO BY TANJA BAUERLE

**Ever wonder what
400+ Kindergartners
and First Graders
look like? Now you
know. Thank you
Eduprize School.**

More Events

CARE CARD ARIZONA EVENT

A benefit to St Joseph's Children's Hospital at PEEK, Kierland Commons



Barnes & Noble Events: 90th Street and Shea, Phoenix, and Desert Ridge locations



Cooperative Children's Book Center, Madison, WI

A great celebration with (left to right) Dean Julie Underwood, K. T. Horning the Director of the CCBC (and 2015 ALSC Distinguished Service Award winner!), B. G. Hennessy, and fellow Badger and author Kevin Henkes at the opening of the new CCBC home in the Teacher Education building at the Univeristy of Wisconsin, Madison.



Photo credit: Matzner Photography

*Tacoma, WA to
Madison, WI, to
Phoenix, AZ*

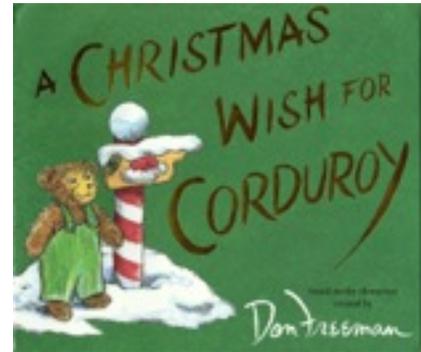
With visits at Teaching Toys & Books in Tacoma, WA, the Eduprize School in Gilbert, AZ, Changing Hands in Phoenix and Tempe, AZ as well as several Barnes & Nobles store, it was a busy book season.

Review

A CHRISTMAS WISH FOR CORDUROY

By B. G. HENNESSY and Illustrated by JODY WHEELER

Based on the character created by DON FREEMAN



The little girl stopped and looked straight into Corduroy's bright eyes. "Oh, Mamma!" she said. "Look! There's the very bear I've always wanted!" she said.

FROM KIRKUS REVIEWS

"A prequel to the beloved classics *Corduroy* (1968) and *A Pocket for Corduroy* (1978), this story tells how Corduroy found his green overalls (and his name)...The story's language and pacing match the tone of the original story, and the illustrations are a close match to Freeman's original.... this is a story that can stand next to the original two *Corduroy* tales without apology. A pleasurable and

satisfying back story for the beloved bear named Corduroy. Not too long, not too hard—just right."

The Perfectly Imperfect World of Corduroy Bear

A WORLD WHERE CHILDREN BELONG and HOW I GOT THERE

By B. G. HENNESSY



Madeline, The Snowy Day, Ferdinand, Make Way for Ducklings- I knew Viking's big backlist titles. So, when the editorial director began discussing plans for a sequel to "one of our top titles," that I had never read, by "one of by one of Viking's most popular author-illustrators," who I had never heard of, I was caught by surprise. It was 1977, I was the new art director at Viking, the sequel was *A Pocket for Corduroy*, and the author of course, was Don Freeman. Looking back now, I think how lucky I was to have met both Don and his bear as a "beginner."

After all, it is Corduroy and his beginner's point of view that has made this bear one of the most loved of all children's book characters. Just like a child, Corduroy experiences everything in his world for the first time. From his first trip up an escalator "Could this be a mountain?" to exploring the furniture department in a store "This must be a palace!" Corduroy tries to make sense of his world. Childhood is full of trying to figure the world out. I remember being confused by own my son's excitement at the arrival of a humidifier. It was only when he asked, "But where's the *FIRE?*" that I understood both his excitement and his disappointment. It was

a “Corduroy moment.” For children life is full of “Corduroy moments.” A first rain, a first snow, a first ice cream, a first friend.

Corduroy’s positive spirit and boundless imagination never disappoint. Don was a master at capturing Corduroy’s gleeful joy and wonder as he encounters the newness of his world, even when the world is a department store, or a laundromat, or a room in an apartment that feels so cozy it must be “home.”

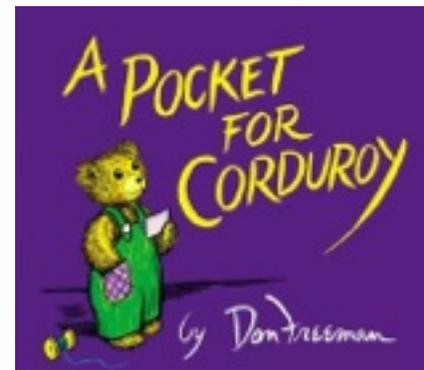
Don learned much about humor, suspense, and drama from his work in the theater. He also knew his audience: Don understood that suspense does not have to be dangerous. What the Corduroy stories lack in threat or menace, they make up for with emotional suspense. I believe this is one of the reasons why the Corduroy books still appeal to children today, and perhaps, especially today.

In Corduroy’s world, if you are lost, you will be found. You will be loved as you are, missing button and all. If you are left behind, you will be returned. In Corduroy’s world, people are helpful, kind and caring. But even the Corduroy world is not perfect. It is a familiar, child’s world where mothers are in a hurry “We must be getting home” and a beloved object is left behind, or a longed-for toy remains on a shelf because “I’ve already spent too much money.” Yet, this world is safe for children, and bears, to explore on their own. It is a world where children belong.

For an illustrator and art director, working on a book is a bonding experience. Getting to know Don as we worked on *A Pocket for Corduroy* was a journey. We became friends over the constant back and forth of sketches, samples, black line drawings, blue-boards, typesetting, design, and finally, finished artwork. I remember Don as a careful artist with an exquisite eye, and as a superlative storyteller, both on and off the page.

I had no idea how little time we would have to work with each other. Two days after the final printing of *A Pocket for Corduroy*, Don was gone, felled by a heart attack.

Years later, after I had begun writing picture books of my own, Viking and Don Freeman’s estate approached me about writing new Corduroy stories. After thirteen lift-the-flap books, the sequel *Corduroy Lost and Found*, and now the upcoming prequel, *A Christmas Wish for Corduroy*, I realize working on these books has been a beautiful way to honor that friendship. Even today, when I stare at the blank first page of any new project, I think of Don’s words: “This is the start of a fascinating problem.”



For me, a lot of Don lives within that little brown bear with the green overalls. How I wish I had asked what other adventures he had in mind for Lisa and Corduroy. When writing a story based on such a perfect character and written by such a wonderful friend, sometimes it is hard for me to let a story go. *Is this how Don would have said it? Will it ever be good enough?* But the most important question is always the same: *Is this a story about the very bear that Lisa has always wanted?* If so, my job is done.

Illustrated in Don's familiar scratchboard style by the amazing Jody Wheeler, *A Christmas Wish for Corduroy* will be published this October. I can imagine Corduroy looking at the shiny, gold ribbon writing on the bright green cover and saying: "This must be a present! I have always wanted a present."

Upcoming Events and Visits

More information about school, bookstore or library visits can be found at www.bghennessy.com



SCHOOL VISITS

Eagle Ridge Elementary School, Arizona

Boulder Creek Elementary School, Arizona

Greater Paradise Valley Reading Council, Phoenix Arizona

NOTE TO LIBRARIANS & BOOKSELLERS

I do a lot of traveling and if you would like to be on my "stop by" list or on my list of possible author visits send an email to: bghbooks@gmail.com.

Upcoming travel plans: Egypt, Tacoma/Seattle, Los Angeles, Des Moines, Las Vegas, France, New York.

To sign up for my mailing list- send your e-mail address with the subject line "Newsletter" to: bghbooks@gmail.com.

I will try to contact you before my trips as I am always happy to stop by and sign books.

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