



Some books published with the title under which they were accepted:

- Death Mountain** by **Sherry Shahan**
- Frozen Stiff** by **Sherry Shahan**
- The Higher Power Of Lucky** by **Susan Patron**
- Like A Maccabee** by **Barbara Bietz**
- My Big Sister Is So Bossy She Says You Can't Read This Book** by **Mary Hershey**
- Stop Pretending** by **Sonya Sones**
- 101 Ways To Bug Your Parents** by **Lee Wardlaw**

With many thanks to all the authors mentioned in this article, for sharing.



Attention SCBWI-L.A. Members!



SCBWI-L.A. 4TH ANNUAL SCHOLARSHIP CONTEST

We've got a grrreat contest this year for our L.A. ILLUSTRATOR members so get ready to fire up those synapses.

Details about the 4th Annual Scholarship Contest will be e-mailed or mailed out in mid-January.

The winner will receive **FREE** tuition to one SCBWI conference of his or her choice, either the 2008 L.A. Summer Conference or the 2009 N.Y. Winter Conference. Be sure to check the website at www.scbwisocal.org for details and updates. ⇨

Setting My Imagination Free



by [Laura Lacámara](#)

When I was in my twenties, starting out as an illustrator, I came to my father for help countless times. "How do I make the penguin look like he's actually riding the surf board?" I would ask him. My dad knew how to draw anything, so I could always count on him.

"When a client asks if you can do a job, always say, 'YES!'; he would tell me, "then come to me and I will help you." Soon, I was illustrating alligators on bicycles, whales eating ice cream, even the famous Stearns Wharf dolphin fountain in Santa Barbara—all with my father's help. It had become routine for me to get an assignment and immediately call my dad to help with the initial sketches.

Although I was very grateful to my dad, I began to worry that I was becoming so dependent on his expertise that I wouldn't be able to do the work on my own. That's when something life changing happened. I remember the moment well. Dad was seated at his drafting table in my parent's garage studio in Woodland Hills. As usual, he got out his tracing pad and pencils, then I told him exactly what my client had requested. I looked over his shoulder, seeing his pencil swirl around making one loose sketch after another. His imagination flowed. He explored any crazy, unpredictable idea that came out of his mind onto the paper. He was coming up with ideas I would never even have considered. He

seemed to be veering too far from the client's original concept. "Wait, Dad," I protested. "This isn't what the client said to do!"

"What does the client know? He isn't the artist, you are!"

And that's when it hit me: the client hired me for my own unique approach. The client was looking to me for answers! In that moment, I gave myself permission to set my imagination free. And I realized, it wasn't only my father's amazing drawing skills I had depended on, it was also his willingness to take a risk and open his mind to limitless possibilities.

After that day, with each new assignment, I asked for less and less help from my dad. Instead, I drew on the new found confidence that he inspired in me: to trust my own instincts and artistic vision over all else.

My father knew firsthand the struggles of trying to make it as an artist, and yet, he never discouraged my choice. In fact, toward the end of his life he told me many times how proud he was of me for working hard and never giving up.

Growing up, I always heard my father say, "Work is the most important thing in life." Well, of course, that's because Dad loved his work! And thanks to his support and his example, I have always pursued the artistic work I love, as well.