

# Media Advisory



## **Alberta Readers' Choice Award Names Top 5 Books** **Public vote will choose the winner for the biggest book prize in Alberta**

**EDMONTON, Alberta, March 1, 2010** – The Alberta Readers' Choice (ARC) Award committee is pleased to announce its top five books vying for Alberta's biggest book prize. The \$10,000 award rivals other major national book awards in Canada and is presented in partnership by the Edmonton Public Library (EPL) and the Book Publishers Association of Alberta (BPAA). Announced last May, the ARC Award promotes the works of Alberta authors and publishers and encourages the reading public to support literary works published in Alberta.

The final phase of the award process culminates in a public vote for the prize of \$10,000, awarded to the author. The inaugural award is the brainchild of Linda Cook, Chief Executive Officer, EPL and Linda Cameron, Director of the University of Alberta Press.

"I'm thrilled to see the Alberta Readers' Choice Award come to fruition with the final voting phase," said Linda Cook. "It's important to recognize the great books being produced in our province. Putting the selection in the hands of Albertans is a great way to raise the awareness of the authors and publishers."

The ARC Award organizing committee reviewed over 200 submissions published in Alberta and produced a shortlist of 20 for a vote among Alberta libraries. Librarians helped reduce the list to 10 and the final phase saw guest jurors select the top five titles. ARC's five guest jurors will champion one finalist title respectively during the voting process. Jurors have selected the top five titles based on a range of criteria, from readability and literary merit, to potential consumer appeal. Public voting begins March 15 and runs until April 30th.

The top five books are:

- *The Frog Lake Reader* by Myrna Kostash: published by NeWest Press; championed by the Honourable Tommy Banks, Senator, musician and long-time broadcaster
- *The Forgotten Explorer: Samuel Prescott Fay's 1914 Expedition to the Northern Rockies* by Samuel Fay: published by Rocky Mountain Books; championed by Morris Flewwelling, Red Deer Mayor
- *Fishing for Bacon* by Michael Davie: published by NeWest Press; championed by Laurie Greenwood, bookstore owner and literacy advocate
- *Bomb Canada and Other Unkind Remarks in the American Media* by Chantal Allan: published by AU Press; championed by Fil Fraser, former broadcaster and author
- *Buying Cigarettes for the Dog* by Stuart Ross: published by Freehand Books  
Championed; Simone Lee, Calgary-based independent bookseller



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The \$10,000 cash award is one of the largest literary awards in Canada and will be announced at the Book Publishers Association of Alberta Awards Gala on May 14, 2010 in Edmonton.

## **About Book Publishers Association of Alberta**

The Book Publishers Association of Alberta (BPAA) represents more than 30 Alberta publishers with a shared mission. BPAA publish books by local, national and international authors and provide significant cultural and economic benefits to this province. BPAA work with writers, printers, artists and other creative people to produce high quality books that are sold in Alberta and throughout the world. BPAA are leaders in Canada's best-developed knowledge-based industry and are one of the strongest communities of regional publishers in North America. Visit [www.bookpublishers.ab.ca](http://www.bookpublishers.ab.ca) for more information.

## **About the Edmonton Public Library**

The Edmonton Public Library (EPL) has been an integral part of the city since it first opened in 1913. It currently serves a population of more than 782,439 through 17 physical branches and the EPL website. In 2009, EPL saw an estimated 12,623,814 in person and online library visits with 12,014,589 items borrowed. The second half of 2009 provided a significant achievement for EPL as it recorded, for the first time, monthly circulations of over 1 million from July through November. EPL is committed to broadening its reach, increasing its access and strengthening its capacity to serve Edmonton's many diverse communities. For more information on the Edmonton Public Library, visit [www.epl.ca](http://www.epl.ca).

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