

## PACKET PICKS

Wed., April 4

### Chamber to host networking event

Cocktails and Connections Evening Networking Event, 5:30-7:30 p.m., Ruth Chris Steak House, 2 Village Boulevard, Princeton Forestal Village, Princeton. Join the Mercer Regional Chamber of Commerce in conjunction with the Young Professionals Connective for an evening of great food, cocktails and networking. Lite fare is included with registration. Cash Bar. For more: [www.mercerchamber.org](http://www.mercerchamber.org)



### Orchid society to host potting party

A Potting Party, sponsored by the Central Jersey Orchid Society, will be held at 7:30 p.m. at D&R Greenway Land Trust, Johnson Education Center, 1 Preservation Place, Princeton.

The annual event is a great way for orchid lovers to try new varieties without spending a lot of money. Frequently, members will bring in a spectacular blooming orchid which started as a purchased seedling at a past potting party. At this meeting, seedlings, potting mix, pots, and labels will be supplied, and you get the opportunity to choose which seedling(s) you'd like to purchase.

The following seedlings will be available this year: *Ionopsis Utricularoides*; *Den. Roy Tokunaga*; *Den. Nestor*; *Den. Andree Millar*; *Slc. Bright Circle*; *Slc. Pat Thrall*; *Lc. Liptonii*; *Den. Super Ise*.

For more: [www.central-jerseyorchids.org](http://www.central-jerseyorchids.org)

Thu April 5

# Read local

## Princeton Public Library hosts Local Author Day

By Scott Morgan  
Special Writer

You've been encouraged to shop local and to eat local. But do you read local, too?

The Princeton Public Library certainly hopes so. And in an effort to encourage that sentiment, the library recently hosted its annual Local Author Day.

I was honored to be asked to deliver the opening workshop at the March 24 event, a lecture on character development for fiction writers. Publisher Karen Hodges Miller, who owns Open Door Publications in Lawrence and is the writer of three books, delivered the second of two workshops on time management for writers. Readings by several authors also took place just outside the community room after the workshops.

For the afternoon, the library's community room was transformed into a one-stop shop for about 40 Princeton area authors, whose titles for sale ranged from the practical, such as "Stop the Drama: The Ultimate Guide for Female Teams," by Doc Robyn Odegaard, to the uplifting, such as Amy Julia Becker's "A Good and Perfect Gift: Faith, Expectations, and a Little Girl Named Penny."

This year's event, which the library touts as a way to "meet the local literati," was the fourth incarnation of Local Author Day, and according to co-organizer Janie Hermann, was a greatly expanded version of the original concept.

"The first two years we did this it was simply an author fair in the community room and the readings took place in the community room as well," Ms. Hermann says. "This year we moved the readings to the front lobby as we had 40 authors for the author fair."

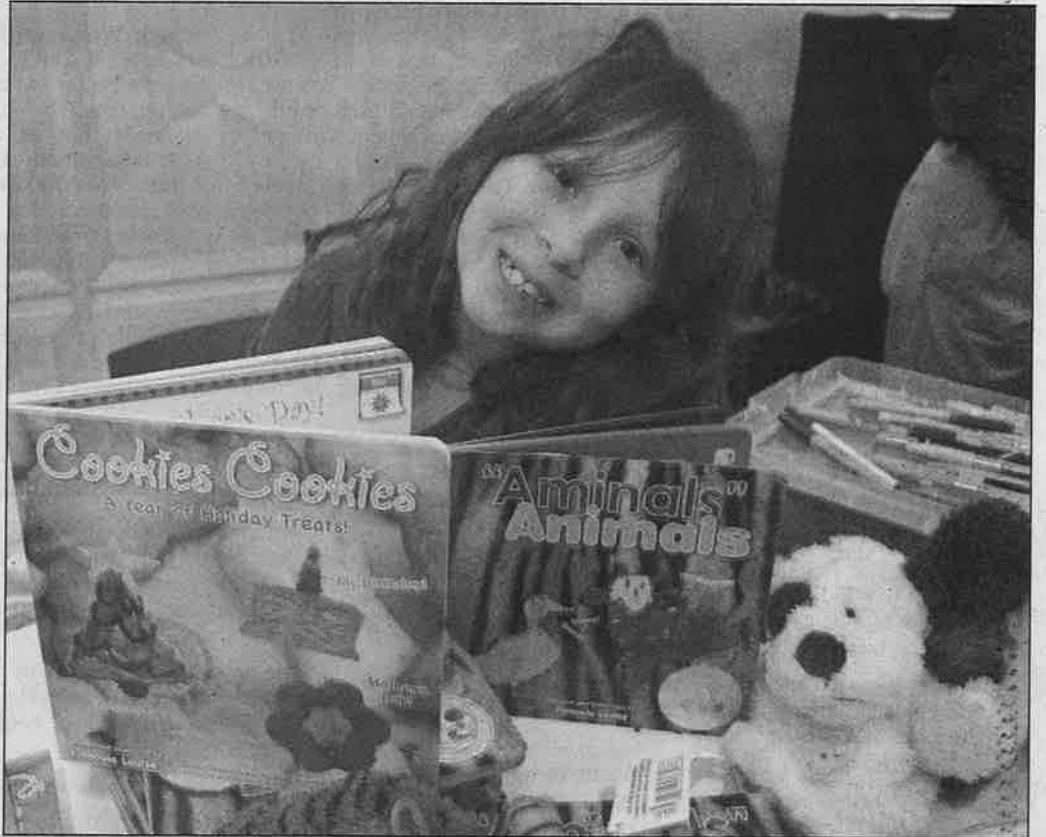
The library's goal, Ms. Hermann says, was to have at least half of the attending authors live within a 20-mile radius of Princeton, and 80 percent of the authors from New Jersey.

This is also only the second year to feature morning workshops, and this year was the first time the library added a post-fair networking event at the end of the day by featuring the Philadelphia Liaison Club.

"We are always tweaking it and looking for ways to improve it and make it a day that is valuable for the authors on several fronts," Ms. Hermann says.

Also new this time around was the chance for authors to be on television. Public relations maven and producer Jeanne Murphy, whose show highlighting homegrown talent is slated to air on Princeton TV-30 by the beginning of May, interviewed any and all interested authors from the fair.

"Author Day was the perfect opportunity to showcase talented authors and to highlight the unique and extraordinary Princeton Public Library itself," Ms. Murphy says. "We did some special segments at the end featuring the library, too."



Photos by Mark Czajkowski

Seven-year-old author Finnoula Louise with her books, "Cookies Cookies," and "Animals Animals."



Author Kevin Simme, left, speaks with John Alleyne of Montgomery. Author Henry Henkel is in the background.

The overall feedback, Ms. Hermann says, was very positive.

"Several attendees commented on the diversity - we had everything this year from a 7-year-old author of books for other kids to memoir to photographic history to non-fiction and mystery and romance and cooking and more," she says.

Eileen Sinett, a Plainsboro-based speaking coach, author of "Speaking That Connects" and first-time attendee this year, agrees. "I was impressed with the diversity of subjects and authors and the ongoing flow of interested people that attended," she says. "All in all, a great opportunity to network among fellow-authors and meet the community."