

Champ's Story Wins Teachers' Choice for the Family Award

Learning Magazine has selected *Champ's Story: Dogs Get Cancer Too!*, by Sherry North and illustrated by Kathleen Reitz, as a 2011 Teacher's Choice for the Family Award winner. *Learning* will publish the results of this competition in its April 2011 issue.

The Teachers' Choice for the Family Award is determined by a nationwide panel of judges, and is the only award that requires its judges to be both a teacher and a parent. Winning titles are chosen based on qualities important to both teachers and parents such as originality, creativity, ease of use, safety and durability, and high-interest level and motivation for children.

In *Champ's Story*, a young boy discovers a lump on his dog Champ which is diagnosed as cancer. The boy becomes a loving caretaker to his dog as he undergoes the procedures needed to get better, many of which are similar to the practices used in humans recovering from cancer. In the end, the dog returns the favor when the boy breaks his leg. *Champ's Story* is easily understandable and can help children deal with cancer or other serious illness.

Champ's Story and an accompanying stuffed animal golden retriever are an educational and awareness initiative of the ASCEND Foundation, a non-profit organization, partnered with Sylvan Dell Publishing. It is ASCEND's vision to introduce the cancer book with cancer-related teaching activities for children into school systems. By utilizing the fun, fictional book, along with the stuffed version of its main character, Champ; teachers, parents, and caregivers will be able to educate children on social concerns and treatment protocols for cancer in a way to which young children can relate. The ASCEND Foundation is a volunteer 501(c)(3) registered non-profit with a track record of initiatives designed to make a measureable difference in the battle against cancer.

Sherry North is an award-winning children's author and medical journalist. A former medical producer for CNN Headline News, Sherry has written and produced a number of award-winning medical documentaries for public television, and she currently contributes to WebMD. Her writing has appeared in *Highlights* magazine, and she was a runner-up in the 2008 Magazine Merit Awards. For more on Sherry visit her Web Site at <http://www.sherrynorth.com/>.

A lifelong artist and lover of art, **Kathleen Reitz** was drawing and painting before she learned to write her name. For nearly two decades, she has worked as an illustrator, designer, and product developer. In addition to *Champ's Story: Dogs Get Cancer Too!* Kathleen is illustrating *Prairie Storms* for Sylvan Dell Publishing, set for release in the fall of 2011. For more on Kathleen visit her Web Site at <http://www.kathleenreitz.com/>.