



# PRESS RELEASE

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### ***Blind Fairy* earns AAUW NC Young People’s Literature Award Honor is second consecutive for Level Elevate author Micki Bare**

**OLNEY, MD (December 1, 2023)** — Level Best Books (LBB) announced today that *Blind Fairy* by Micki Bare was selected to receive the 2023 AAUW NC Young People’s Literature Award during the annual meeting of the NC Literary and Historical Association planned for December 8 at the Archives and History/State Library Building, Raleigh, NC.

This is the second consecutive award for Bare, who earned the 2022 AAUW NC Young People’s Literature Award with her debut middle-grade novel *Society of the Sentinelia*, which is the first book in the Zahra of the Uwharries series.

“This is an incredible honor,” Bare said. “Writing strong female characters is one of my priorities as an author. I strive to reflect diverse characters in relatable stories that provide hope and inspiration to young readers. This award calls attention to and validates those efforts.”

According to AAUW NC President Pat Ashe in an email to Bare, the judges “relay to me their delight in reading the book because of the story, but also because of your writing style.”

AAUW NC works with the NC Literary and Historical Association to recognize the most significant work of original children’s literature published in the past year by a North Carolina author. Since 1953, 68 awards have been presented.

Bare joins the ranks of North Carolina authors with multiple wins, which includes John Claude Bemis (2010, 2012), Mebane Holoman Burgwyn (1954, 1970), Ruth and Latrobe Carroll (1953, 1955), Joanne Compton (1994, 1995), Lila Hopkins (1988, 1990), Gloria Houston (1997, 1999, 2011), Belinda Hurmence (1984, 1989), Alexander Key (1965, 1975), Kelly Starling Lyons (2013, 2019), Suzanne Newton (1971, 1974, 1978, 1979, 1982, 1991), Glen Rounds (1961, 1967,

1976, 1983), Julia Montgomery Street (1956, 1963), and Carole Boston Weatherford (2002, 2005, 2018).

*Blind Fairy* is the second of five middle-grade magical realism novels in the Zahra of the Uwharries series. Bare was contracted to write under the Level Elevate imprint of Level Best Books. The novel continues the story of Zahra, a scraebin about as tall as a wild dandelion, who discovered in *Society of the Sentinella* that she is a fairy. In *Blind Fairy*, she is summoned by her mentor fairy after cicadas emerge to lull her colony into a deep sleep. Zahra soon learns she is The Convener. After accepting her destiny, a turtle with amethyst eyes leads her to a lone, blind scraebin born with the markings of a fairy. Together, Zahra and the blind fairy must save the local scraebin colonies in the Birkhead Wilderness of the Uwharrie Mountains in central North Carolina. Book three, OMEGA CRAG, is due out in May 2024.

Bare is also the author of three early reader children's books, has short stories in two anthologies, and wrote a human interest column for 18 years. She is an active member of the Carolinas Chapter of the Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators (SCBWI) and the North Carolina Writers' Network (NCWN). She teaches eighth-grade social studies. She and her husband reside in Asheboro, NC. [www.MickiBareAuthor.com](http://www.MickiBareAuthor.com).

**ABOUT LEVEL BEST BOOKS:** Founded in 2003 as the publisher of crime fiction novels and short story anthologies, Level Best Books (LBB) has expanded into multiple genres. LBB publishes quality and award-winning contemporary and historical mystery, thriller, and crime fiction novels, literary fiction, fantasy, science fiction, select non-fiction titles, and middle grade and YA children's literature. [www.LevelBestBooks.us](http://www.LevelBestBooks.us)

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