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Author awarded for lifetime contribution to children's literacy

Speech Pathology Australia today announced one of Australia's most prominent authors has won the 2006 Children's Language and Literature Award.

"We are honoured to present Colin Thiele with the award, which each year honours an Australian author who has made a significant and ongoing contribution to children's language and literature," said Speech Pathology Australia's National President, Trish Bradd.

"During his remarkable career, Colin Thiele has published almost 80 books and produced some of Australia's most iconic titles, including *Storm Boy*, *Sun on the Stubble*, *The Fire in the Stone* and *Magpie Island*.

"The award formally acknowledges Colin Thiele's lifetime commitment to the development of children's literacy in Australia and we are honoured to induct him into the Hall of Fame," she said.

Speech Pathology Australia will also announce its annual 'Book of the Year' awards at a ceremony at Riverbend Books and Teahouse in Brisbane at 12pm today.

Presented to Australian authors in three categories, including Young Children, Lower Primary and Upper Primary, the awards are based on an author's ability to promote interaction, communication and literacy development.

This year's winners are Deborah Niland for *Annie's Chair*, Lisa Shanahan for *The Postman's Dog* and Steven Herrick for *Naked Bunyip Dancing*.

"These engaging books captured the judges' hearts through their creative illustrations, colourful storylines, accessible language and sprinkles of humour," Ms Bradd said.

"To select the winners, judges analysed the book's appeal to children, as well as its ability to promote interaction, communication and literacy development.

"With concise language and strong imagery, each book encourages problem solving, communication and discussion - instrumental in assisting the development of children's literacy," she said.

The Book of the Year awards are presented as part of Speech Pathology Week, 23-29 July, held each year to celebrate the profession and its vital role in helping Australians with speech and language difficulties.

For further information visit www.speechpathologyaustralia.org.au.

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About Speech Pathology Australia:

Speech Pathology Australia is the peak body for more than 3,700 members. Speech Pathology Australia supports and regulates the ethical, clinical and professional standards of its members.

Notes to Media:

- Speech Pathology Australia's National President, Trish Bradd, is available for interview and photo opportunities available.
- Images of book covers available in jpeg format.

Media Contacts:

For all media enquiries or to arrange an interview, please contact Kate Doman or Christina Hickie on (03) 9600 0006, 0417 540 600 or 0417 130 420.

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