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800 Vine Street
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45202-2071

Contact
Richard Helmes
Phone•369•6959
or
Phyllis Hegner
Phone•369•4571

PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Fax 513•369•4565

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Mystery Writer Wendelin Van Draanen at Delhi Township Branch September 28, 4:00 p.m.

Mystery writer Wendelin Van Draanen will appear at the Delhi Township Branch Library, 5095 Foley Road, on Saturday, September 28 at 4:00 p.m. as part of the branch's *Mystery Saturday* series of events that will last until 7:00 p.m. She will discuss her latest book, *Sammy Keyes and the Search for Snake Eyes* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2002, \$15.95), and talk about how she got her start as a writer. After a question-and-answer session, a book signing will follow. Copies of her book will be available for purchase through the Friends of the Public Library.

Sammy Keyes and the Search for Snake Eyes is the seventh book in the series for young readers, a story with a seemingly unsolvable crime and a series of misconstrued events. The Sammy Keyes series was named a Book Sense Children's 76 selection, and has over 250,000 copies in print.

"With Sammy, I try to combine what I learned as a teacher, what I experienced as a kid, and what I want for my own children as a parent," said Ms. Van Draanen. "It's my hope that they'll believe that their thoughts and actions matter, and that they do hold the power to shape their own destiny."

Ms. Van Draanen has been everything from a forklift driver to a high school teacher. Her parents were both chemists who emigrated from the Netherlands and started a business manufacturing chemicals used in the coating of blueprint paper. That American dream abruptly ended when an arsonist destroyed their factory and her father died six months later. "Though this left our family

financially and emotionally devastated, my brothers and I vowed to rebuild the business,” she said.

After writing a screenplay on the tragedy that never got made, she realized that she had a talent for writing and began writing novels for adults, a ten-year adventure she pursued part-time while teaching high school computer science. “I woke up at five every morning, wrote for an hour before going off to teach, and came home, exhausted, to a mailbox full of rejection slips from publishers,” she continued.

Encouraged by her husband to write for children, and using some of her own childhood experiences with her brothers and friends as a catalyst, she found success, publishing her first book, *How I Survived Being a Girl* (HarperCollins, \$15.95) in 1997. Her books presently appear on eleven State Award Master Lists, including California, where *Sammy Keyes and the Sisters of Mercy* (New York: Knopf: Distributed by Random House, c1999, \$15.95) is a contender for the 2002 California Young Reader Medal. Wendelin also won the 1999 Edgar Allan Poe Award for Best Children's Mystery. Her books are being published in seven foreign languages to date, and she lives in California with her husband and two young sons. Her hobbies include the "Three R's": Reading, Running and Rock 'n' Roll.

From 5:30-7:00 p.m., children ages 10 and up can also enjoy *Who's a Fraily Cat?* and solve a Library Mystery, earn a Super Sleuth Certificate by decoding a message, play spy games, and make invisible ink. Pizza & drinks will be provided. For additional information, contact the branch at (513) 369-6019.

The event is sponsored by the Friends of the Public Library.

√Information about events at the Main Library and 41 branch libraries is available on the Internet site: www.CincinnatiLibrary.org.

√Interpreter available upon request for the hearing impaired. Please call 369-6944 (TDD 369-6946) at least one week before program.