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First-Ever National I Read Canadian Day to Take Place on February 19, 2020

NEW RELEASE

October 28, 2019 (Toronto, ON) – A new nationwide initiative that celebrates the richness, diversity, and breadth of Canadian literature, was announced today. The I Read Canadian Day, taking place for the first time ever on February 19, 2020, will empower families, schools, libraries, bookstores, and organizations to host activities and events by reading Canadian books for just fifteen minutes.

“The purpose of this event,” says Rose Vespa, Executive Director of the Canadian Children’s Book Centre, “is to raise awareness of Canadian books and to celebrate the excellence of Canadian literature.”

This initiative was created as a collaboration between the Canadian Children’s Book Centre (CCBC); children’s author Eric Walters; Canadian Society of Children’s Authors, Illustrators and Performers (CANSCAIP); and the Ontario Library Association (OLA.).

“We want people to buy, borrow, read and talk about Canadian books – whether they are in English, French, or Indigenous languages, and can be in print, e-format and accessible formats,” says Sharon Jennings, president of CANSCAIP. “The target venues in the inaugural year are schools, public libraries, and bookstores. We hope parents, caretakers, educators, and others will join in!”

The social media campaign, using the hashtag #IReadCanadian, and the website, Ireadcanadian.com/day will launch October 28 on Canadian School Library Day. Registration

will open December 1. Key activities will take place February 14 to February 21 with February 19 as the official I Read Canadian Day.

“We want the entire nation to be excited about reading Canadian books,” says Meredith Tutching of the OLA. “We encourage everyone to take some time out of their day to read for fun and share their experiences.”

About the CCBC: The Canadian Children’s Book Centre (CCBC) is a national, not-for-profit organization founded in 1976. We are dedicated to encouraging, promoting and supporting the reading, writing, illustrating and publishing of Canadian books for young readers. Our programs, publications, and resources help teachers, librarians, booksellers and parents select the very best for young readers. See more at bookcentre.ca.

About Eric Walters: It all began in 1993 when Eric was teaching a Grade 5 class. His students were reluctant readers and writers and Eric began to write to encourage them to become more involved in literature. Since his first novel Eric has exploded on the children’s and young adult scene. Over the following years he has published over 104 more novels and picture books with 8 more scheduled in the coming years. Eric is the recipient of The Order of Canada for his contribution to literature. See more at ericwalters.net.

About CANSCAIP: CANSCAIP is dedicated to Canadian children's authors, illustrators and performers and their work. We provide promotional and networking opportunities to over 400 professional Members and 600 Friends, making us the largest organization in Canada supporting creative work for children and teens. Canada's creators for young people have achieved great success here and around the world, and CANSCAIP has been an important part of encouraging that success. See more at canscaip.org.

About the Forest of Reading: The Forest of Reading® is Canada's largest recreational reading program! This initiative of the Ontario Library Association (OLA) offers ten reading programs to encourage a love of reading in people of all ages. The Forest helps celebrate Canadian books, publishers, authors and illustrators. More than 270,000 readers participate annually from their school and/or public library. All Canadians are invited to participate via their local public library, school library, or individually. See more at accessola.com/forest.

About the Ontario Library Association: Founded in 1900, the OLA is the oldest continually operating non-profit library association in Canada. With more than 5,000 members, the OLA is the largest library association in the country. We provide the chance for library staff and supporters to share experience and expertise while creating innovative solutions in a constant changing environment. We offer opportunities for learning, networking, recognizing, influencing and celebrating within the library world. See more at accessola.org.

To book an interview with Meredith Tutching from the Forest of Reading, Sharon Jennings from CANSCAIP, or Eric Walters, please contact Karen McMullin, National Publicist, Nimbus Publishing, at 647-461-3824, or by email at kmcmullin@nimbus.ca.

To book an interview with Rose Vespa, Executive Director, Canadian Children's Book Centre, please contact Emma Hunter, Marketing and Communications Coordinator at 416-975-0010 ext. 221, or by e-mail at emma@bookcentre.ca.

