

BIOGRAPHY

Cathey Nickell is a Houston-based author and speaker who brings the field trip to your school! Art cars and yarn bombing—and outsider art in general—are a type of folk art that doesn't hang on a wall. This is the basis of Cathey's two children's books: *Arthur Zarr's Amazing Art Car* and *Yazzy's Amazing Yarn*, both of which encourage outside-the-box imagination.

Cathey introduces her award-winning books with a dynamic writing presentation for elementary and middle schools. Cathey talks to students about how to find that spark of inspiration to uncover amazing story ideas. A favorite moment is when she shows the actual books she wrote as a child—homemade with folded paper and stapled binding. Her message is: “Just keep writing! Just keep writing! Just keep writing!”

Cathey's goal is to inspire kids to read, write, draw, and create as much as possible. Themes of friendship and community, recycling and re-purposing, imagination and art, are woven together in the tapestry of these original stories that Cathey presents to your school.

Following the presentation, the children go outside to see a REAL art car. Locating an art car in Houston is quite easy, since the city is the world's art car capital. Cathey also has had success scheduling them in other visit locations if she can track down a driver.

Cathey Nickell draws from her experience as a former newspaper reporter to bring an inspirational presentation full of personal stories and writing tips. Cathey earned a B.A. from Baylor University and an M.A. from LSU-Shreveport. She is the author of *Arthur Zarr's Amazing Art Car* and *Yazzy's Amazing Yarn*, winners of numerous book awards:

ARTHUR ZARR'S AMAZING ART CAR | 2016

Written by Cathey Nickell; Illustrated by Bill Megenhardt

Winner - Texas Association of Authors

Winner - National Indie Excellence Award

YAZZY'S AMAZING YARN | 2019

Written by Cathey Nickell; Illustrated by Emily Calimlim

First Place - Royal Dragonfly Book Award, Picture Books 6+

Finalist - American Book Fest/Best Book Award

Winner - Texas Association of Authors

Finalist - SPR Book Awards

Both of Cathey's picture books include a nonfiction page in the back: The History of Art Cars and The History of Yarn Bombing. This helps teachers incorporate the colorful topics into their art and writing curriculum.