



## **CALLING ALL BEAR ENTHUSIASTS... BUILD-A-BEAR WORKSHOP® ANNOUNCES WRITING CONTEST FOR CHILDREN AGES 9-14**

August 6, 2002

ST. LOUIS, MO (August 6, 2002) - Remember Paddington Bear, Winnie the Pooh and The Three Little Bears? These stories have graced the hearts of big and little kids for decades. This year, in celebration of the 100th anniversary of the Teddy Bear, Build-A-Bear Workshop® is encouraging children ages eight to fourteen to tell their Teddy Bear's tale to mark its place in history.

The national Beariffic™ Bear Story Writing Contest, which launched August 1 calls for participants to submit a 250-300 word story about Teddy Bears. All entries are due by September 20. "Teddy Bears have been an important part of children's lives for generations. Now children across the country will get a chance to bring their own Teddy stories to life in the form of a creative story," says Maxine Clark, founder and Chief Executive Bear of Build-A-Bear Workshop.

Entry forms for the "Beariffic™ Bear Story Writing Contest" will be available at Build-A-Bear Workshop locations nationwide, on the Build-A-Bear Workshop website ([www.buildabear.com](http://www.buildabear.com)) and in Discovery Girls Magazine. Prizes will be awarded to one grand prize winner and runner up in two age categories (ages 8-11 and 12-14).

The grand prize winner in each age category will join Build-A-Bear Workshop on a trip to New York City to see the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade™. The two winners will also receive a \$1,000 Series EE Saving Bond and a Furbulous \$100 shopping spree at Build-A-Bear Workshop. In addition, a regional winner from the west, central and eastern United States will receive a \$100 shopping spree at Build-A-Bear Workshop and a one-year subscription to Discovery Girls magazine.

The contest is inspired by the origins of the first American Teddy Bear who has a wonderful story of his own. As the tale goes, President Theodore Roosevelt-who was known around the world as Teddy-was in the woods on a hunting excursion. While hunting, he discovered that someone had caught a bear cub and tied it to a tree for him. President Roosevelt refused to shoot the bear. This story of his kindness quickly spread and political cartoonist Clifford Berryman drew a cartoon showing the President's refusal to shoot an innocent bear. This cartoon ran in a newspaper in Washington D.C and captured the attention of candy store owners Rose and Morris Michtom. They were so inspired by the story that they started making bears-including one that resembled the President. As the story continues, the Mitchdom's sent the bear to President Roosevelt, seeking permission to name the bear "Teddy"

Most humbly the President replied:

"Dear Mr. and Mrs. Michtom,

I warmly thank you for your letter and the fine stuffed bear you made. I can hardly wait to show my children. However, I don't think my name is likely to be worth much in the toy bear business, but you are welcome to use it. I wish you good luck with your toy bear business.

Sincerely,

Teddy Roosevelt"

To celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Teddy Bear, Build-A-Bear Workshop has launched a number of literacy initiatives including Bearemy's Book Club, an on-line club that encourages reading and recommends good books which have been selected by a panel of experts.

Build-A-Bear Workshop® has also partnered with First Book to put books into the hands of children who would otherwise not have them. Together, they have created a special new furry friend -- Read Teddy™ -- that went on sale July 15th. The new Read Teddy will further the company's partnership with First Book through a pledge of one dollar of every purchase of the new bear. First Book's mission is to give disadvantaged children the opportunity to read and own new books. The donations from the purchase of Read Teddy will help the organization purchase books that will be distributed through its 310 local advisory boards in communities across the country.

Build-A-Bear Workshop® is an interactive, entertainment retailer that invites Guests to create their own customized stuffed animals. The company is proud to be a part of the Teddy Bear Centennial™. Build-A-Bear Workshop currently operates over 95 stores nationwide and plans to have over 100 stores by the end of 2002.