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Press Release

Kimmel and Guevara win the 2006 June Franklin Naylor Award

San Antonio, TX: The Daughters of the Republic of Texas Library Committee is pleased to announce that the 2006 June Franklin Naylor Award for the Best Book for Children on Texas History is awarded to Eric Kimmel, author, and Susan Guevara, illustrator, for their book *The Lady in the Blue Cloak: Legends from the Texas Missions*, published in 2006 by Holiday House, New York.

The announcement was made Saturday evening, May 19, by Valerie Riefenstahl, daughter of June Franklin Naylor, in Dallas, Texas, at the 116th Annual Convention of the Daughters of the Republic of Texas.

Although unable to be present to accept the award, author Eric Kimmel confessed in a letter to the Library Committee that it was Davy Crockett as portrayed by Fess Parker “who sparked my life-long interest in American history and the story of Texas independence. The first book I ever purchased with my own money was John Myers Myers *The Alamo*.” He credited Adina de Zavala with originally collecting the legends he chose to retell in her classic book *History and Legends of the Alamo and Other Missions in and around San Antonio*.

Also absent was illustrator Susan Guevara who commented in a letter of acceptance, “History gives bones to our present, wings to our future.” For her, “The Texas mission legends have an enchanting mixture of faith, folklore, and the magically real,” qualities reflected in Ms. Guevara’s luminous oil on canvas paintings.

A three-member panel of judges comprised of historians, educators, and librarians judge the entries. The 2006 committee included its chairman Dr. Barbara Immroth, professor in the School of Information, the University of Texas at Austin, and committee members Dr. Viki Ash, Coordinator of Children's Services, San Antonio Public Library, and Linda Plevak, Library Director, Bulverde/Spring Branch Public Library

Committee members were pleased that the positive portrayal of mission life makes accessible a part of Texas history through storytelling that is true to facts and the spirit of an earlier age, part of the

diverse heritage that Texans share. The timeline of Texas mission history and an author's note citing the written source of the legends place the stories within the broader mission history.

The Naylor Committee gave honorable mention to Marion Hale's *Dark Water Rising*, published by Henry Holt and Company, and commended Susan R. Gregson's *Sam Houston, Texas Hero*, published by Compass Books.

The June Franklin Naylor Award for the Best Book for Children on Texas History, endowed by the family of June Franklin Naylor and sponsored by the Daughters of the Republic of Texas Library, is given annually to the author/illustrator of the most distinguished book for children and young adults, grades K-12, that accurately portrays the history of Texas, whether fiction or nonfiction. Mrs. Naylor, for whom the award is named, was a former schoolteacher and long-time resident of Odessa, and she served as President General of the Daughters of the Republic of Texas, Inc., from 1989-1991.