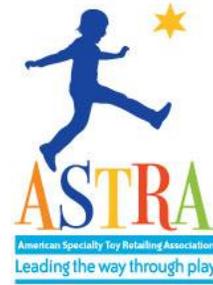


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MARY SISSON TO RECEIVE ASTRA TOP HONOR

INDUSTRY CONTRIBUTIONS TO BE RECOGNIZED AT ASTRA'S MARKETPLACE & ACADEMY IN NEW ORLEANS



Chicago, Illinois (May 14, 2018)– The American Specialty Toy Retailing Association (ASTRA) announced today that specialty toy retailer and industry leader Mary Sisson of Kazoodles Toy Store in Vancouver, Washington will be honored at [Marketplace & Academy](#) with ASTRA's Lifetime Achievement Award.

A veteran journalist who volunteered as editor of the ASTRA quarterly newsletter two months after opening her first toy store, Sisson is known for her willingness to help ASTRA and her fellow retailers wherever there is a need. She has served on the

ASTRA Board of Directors and over the past twelve years, she has guided the ASTRA member publication into its current format as *Toy Times* magazine. During her tenure as “ASTRA’s Editor,” she consistently provided useful, easy-to-access information to the toy trade on industry trends, business development, retail store management, and more.

“Our annual gathering at Marketplace & Academy is an appropriate time to pause and recognize a leader like Mary, who has had such an immense impact on the specialty toy industry,” said Kimberly Mosley, President of ASTRA. “Mary is the best kind of volunteer. She jumps right in, gets involved, and makes things happen when she takes on something new. Honoring her with the Lifetime Achievement Award is our way of saying ‘thank you’.”

“Mary's leadership and vision have been clearly demonstrated through her role as Editor,” says ASTRA Board member Amy Saldanha, owner of kiddywampus in Hopkins, MN. “But I believe her true gifts are her approachability and her authentic desire to want good things for others. She is always kind, always positive, and always cheerleading for others. In today's fast-paced and sometimes snarky world, those qualities are refreshing, rare, and inspire others to be better.”

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“Mary represents what the specialty toy industry is all about,” says ASTRA Board member Kevin McGrath, President of The Original Toy Company in Milford, CT. “She has been a true angel on the shoulders of specialty retailers and a beacon of light for our industry. Thank you, Mary!”

ASTRA will present Sisson with the Lifetime Achievement Award at its annual Awards Breakfast and Business Meeting on Monday, June 11, 2018 from 8 AM to 9:30 AM Eastern Time at the Morial Convention Center in New Orleans, LA.

About the American Specialty Toy Retailing Association (ASTRA)

Founded in 1992, the American Specialty Toy Retailing Association (ASTRA) is an international not-for-profit trade organization that develops and supports a membership of independent retailers, manufacturers and sales representatives in the toy industry. Inspired to change the world through the power of play, ASTRA is a community of dedicated professionals committed to providing children with healthy, quality play materials that have a high play value and are designed with a focus on what the child can do, rather than what the toy can do. Through certification programs, educational resources and networking opportunities, ASTRA equips and empowers members to make a positive impact on the economy and culture of the communities they serve. For more information, visit www.astratoy.org/.

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