

THE LAST WORD

The Enduring Power of Corduroy Bear

Francie Goldberg

Corduroy, Don Freeman's beloved bear in green overalls, showed up at my doorstep one winter Monday morning. I was definitely not expecting him but was intrigued to see him.

The marketing team at Penguin Publishing Group sent him with a copy of Corduroy's *A Christmas Wish for Corduroy* and a request to please fulfill Corduroy's Christmas wish by sending him on a week of exciting adventures. To document Corduroy's activities, participants were asked to post pictures on social networking sites with the hashtag #CorduroysWish.

I truly enjoyed Corduroy's company for a week since I am always looking for new and innovative ways to bring characters to life at story time, and this opportunity literally fell into my lap.

While I was prepared to introduce this special guest to the children, I was extremely surprised how many parents had not heard of Corduroy (or his pocket). This guest appearance became a teachable moment when I could keep the humble

Corduroy relevant amid today's plethora of popular—and often TV-related—characters.



Sending Corduroy to homes, schools, and libraries across the country was a brilliant marketing technique by Penguin. It was a tangible way to bring this beloved character to life, beyond just reading the stories together. Children could hug him and bring him into their lives, show off their favorite books and toys, and take him to their classrooms.

Thanks to #CorduroysWish, Corduroy now has a prominent online presence rivaling, perhaps, Grumpy Cat, and it's sure to get people talking about him, remembering him, and introducing him to their young ones. Heck, maybe he'll even get his own movie, like Paddington!

As I watched Corduroy capture the hearts of the young families at story time, I knew that this tiny bear will truly stand the test of time as a beloved children's literary character. 🐻



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Got a great, lighthearted essay? A funny story about children and libraries? Books and babies? Pets and picture books? A not-so-serious look at the world of children's librarianship? Send your Last Word to Sharon Verbeten at CALeditor@yahoo.com.