

A home-grown personal touch

By ANGELA BLACKBURN
Staff

Deal Bigger
June 3/98
M.V. 500 kids will help the author paint a Whale Wall at the Civic Centre.

Mississauga children's author Eric Walters keeps churning out books with a very personal touch.

"I write for my class," said the 41-year-old teacher who presides over a Grade 2-3 class at Bramalea's Clark Blvd. Public School.

He's also made dad to his own three kids, 13-year-old Christina, 13, Nick, 10 and 6-year-old Julia, 6 — who just happen to be the characters in the author's more than a half-dozen books that are set in Streetsville and Erin Mills.

The Erin Mills resident spent Saturday at Mastermind Educational on Erin Mills Pkwy., signing copies of his latest literary effort, *War Of The Eagles*.

He'll launch another book, *Stranded*, June 13 at the Mississauga International Children's Festival. Walters will be in the Atrium at the Living Arts Centre (LAC).

Stranded is about the plight of a pod of whales, perfect for the children's festival with a theme based on the oceans. The book is based on a unit of study Walters did with his class.

As part of the festival's Author's Series, Walters will help kids explore the writing and character development and

The social worker-turned teacher-turned author remains active in all three fields. He also does family counselling at Credit Valley Hospital.

Walters is taking next year off to tour and visit 120 schools. He has already spoken to 16,000 Grade 3-8 students over the last three years.

"Sometimes I go in costume, perhaps dressed as a large, menacing biker. I get rid of the costume and we talk about creating characters," Walters said.

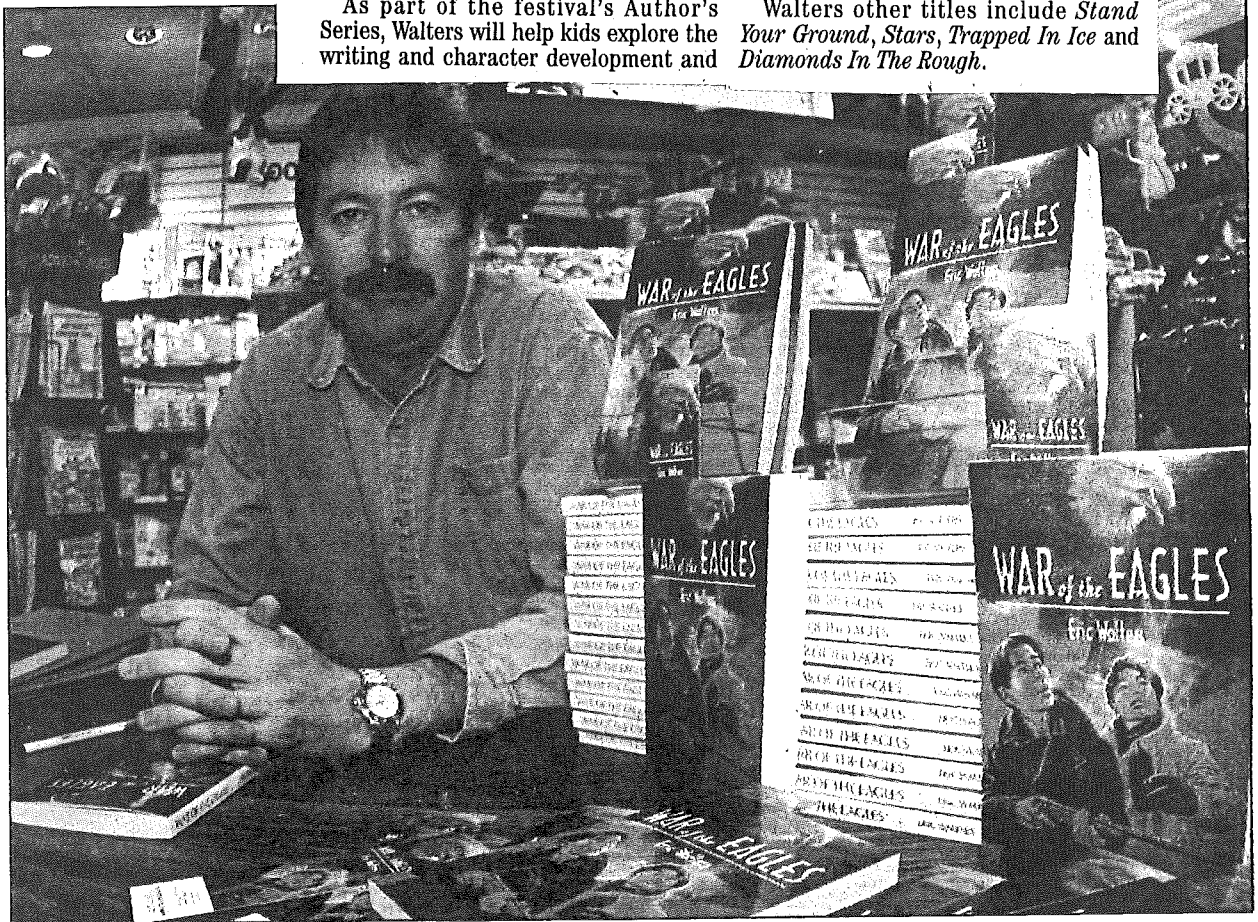
Or, he brings with him a photo that inspired *War Of The Eagles*, a story that's set in Prince Rupert, Saskatchewan in 1941 and deals with cultural clashes among native Canadians and Japanese and Canadian soldiers.

His novels are pure fiction, inspired by reality.

"Reality is so much more creative than imagination," said the award-winning author.

His first book, *Stand Your Ground*, is about a young boy who is dumped at his grandparents' Streetsville home on Christmas Eve by his con man dad.

Walters other titles include *Stand Your Ground*, *Stars*, *Trapped In Ice* and *Diamonds In The Rough*.



Staff photo by Chris Horobin

Erin Mills children's author Eric Walters was signing his new book, *War Of The Eagles*, Saturday at Mastermind Educational Books on Erin Mills Pkwy. He'll launch another book June 13 at the Mississauga International Children's Festival. Many of his books include references to life in Mississauga.