THIS ISSUE FEATURES:

- From Germany to the Sudan
- New Books for Little Ones
- A Few Clicks Away to Fun
- Reference Books for the School
- Classics Revisited
- Good Literature, Right Standards
- Renewed Vigor
- Reviews, Reviews, Reviews...
Dear Readers,

What a busy three weeks this has been, since we decided to go ahead with putting CLJ online! Hiring a web designer, learning new software, copying, pasting, and formatting text to make it easy on the eyes. And most of all, finding we had accumulated enough material to put out three issues of CLJ almost simultaneously.

By now you should have received our announcement about the change. We hope library subscribers will print out the PDF version, and make CLJ available to their patrons. We who work on the journal feel there is something for librarians, teachers, students, parents, home schoolers… something for all Christians who are interested in books and reading.

The response from around the world as we went online was heartening. Among the first hundred to register were librarians, teachers, and administrators from every continent. They made up almost 50% of the initial list, probably because both ACSI and CSI alerted their schools overseas of the availability of CLJ.

Would you like to play a part? Like to write an article for us, related somehow to books, authors, libraries? Like to become a reviewer? The more reviewers we have, the more titles we can review. Email me if you’re interested. And read our reviewer guidelines on the web site.

Our prayer now is that CLJ will directly or indirectly bless God’s people and their children, and that includes you!

In Christ’s love,

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The purpose of the Christian Library Journal is to provide readers with reviews of both Christian and secular library materials from a Christian point of view. About 300 titles from both Christian and secular publishers are reviewed each issue. Materials reviewed may reflect a broad range of Christian doctrinal positions and do not necessarily reflect the views of the staff of the Christian Library Journal.

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Published in the U.S.A.

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Many people are familiar with the books written by Corrie Ten Boom about her experiences in World War Two helping Jewish people escape from Nazi-occupied Holland. Eventually caught and sentenced to the concentration camps, Corrie survived, but her sister didn’t.

German theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer likewise paid the penalty for his beliefs and for opposing Hitler. Even now, a half century later, the world has yet to come to grips with the atrocities of the Holocaust or, equally as sadly, learned the lessons of that conflict. In many areas of the world people are still persecuted for their race or their beliefs.

World War Two and the Nazis don’t often make their way onto my reading lists, but recently several books have. One was *Hitler’s Cross* by Erwin Lutzer (Moody 1995). This book examines the role of the Christian church in Nazi Germany; how it lost its focus and hence its power to prevent the unfolding tragedy. While not neglecting mention of the faithfulness of some who stood up to oppose the evil of the Nazi regime, the book documents the church’s weak capitulation to nationalism.

The second book to occupy me was *The Doctor and the Damned* by Albert Haas (St Martin’s Press, 1984). Haas was a Jew of French and Hungarian descent, and a physician in the French Army. He and his wife played an active role in the French Resistance until they were captured and sentenced to the concentration camps. There, Haas ministered to fellow prisoners under the most degrading conditions. Both he and his wife survived the war, and the book unflinchingly documents the atrocities of the Nazi’s Godless regime, and the spark of hope that enabled many to survive the onslaught of evil.

*Resurrecting the Third Reich* by Richard Terrell (Huntington House, 1994) discusses parallels between our society and that of Nazi Germany. As our culture leans towards one of two opposing poles—the empty spirituality of the collected "New Age" movement on one hand, and God-denying secular humanism on the other—Terrell sees cultural despair and scorn for traditional Christian faith. Despite the book’s sensationalized cover, Terrell presents a reasoned argument that the Christian church must adhere to a strong doctrinal foundation if it is to be a stabilizing factor in society and resist the many theological, philosophical, and cultural factors that seek to undermine society.

It is important to remember that bright lights shone even in the darkest days of World War Two. One example occurs in the book *Beethoven’s Hair* by Russell Martin (Broadway Books, 2000). While it may seem strange to think that a book about the wanderings of a lock of Beethoven’s hair would contain Christian insights, the connection occurs because of the recounting of the response of the Danes to the intended Nazi roundup of Jews. A German officer alerted the Danish Resistance. The Danish church refused to sit on the sidelines.

"... Pastor Kjelgaard Jensen had read to his parishioners the letter that had been issued by the bishops of the Danish Lutheran church... It was the duty of church members, the letter instructed, to protest against the persecution of Denmark’s Jews, because Jesus had been a Jew, because persecution was contrary to his command to love one’s neighbors, and also simply because "persecution is contrary to the conception of justice that prevails in the Danish people."" (p. 95). The Danish people responded, and the vast majority of Denmark’s Jews were safely smuggled to neutral Sweden.

What is even more heartwarming is...
what occurred at the end of the war when the exiled Jews returned home. "... the welcome [the Jewish Danes] received from their countrymen was nearly as extraordinary as the assistance they had been offered back when they made their secret escapes. In Copenhagen and throughout the nation, the refugees came home to find their houses and apartments secure and clean—even freshly painted in some cases—their pets and gardens well cared for, their kitchens filled with food, their jobs and their businesses eagerly awaiting their return." (p. 119). It would be hard to find a more thrilling example of Christ-like behaviour than that of the Danes—who saw the Jews not as a different race, but simply as fellow Danes of Jewish persuasion.

And yet, this is more than a heartwarming tale from history—it is a challenge that all Christians are called to emulate. As we look around the world, there are many areas where persecution is the norm. One of the worst is the Sudan, where Sudanese Christians are tortured and killed for their faith with a brutality that matches that of the Nazis. Millions have been killed. Our pastor circulated a recent story from the Truro Family News (March 11, 2001) written by a member of the Standing Commission on Anglican and International Peace and Justice Concerns, which tells the harrowing story of the Sudanese Christians—the atrocities to which they are subjected, the faithfulness with which they hold the gospel, and—a fact which should cause us all to blush with shame—the indifference that the so-called "Christian" Western world shows to their plight. Here, if anywhere, is an opportunity for the church to unite, and, rather than meekly acquiesce to governmental indifference to evil, encourage our government and others to stand against persecution and injustice.

The Western governments are unconcerned. Are Christians of all denominations willing to take a stand as the Danes did against Nazi persecution of the Jews, or will the church remain silent, as the church in Nazi Germany, until it is too late? The choice is ours. This is what books teach us and why we read—it is so that we can learn from the mistakes of the past, and make a difference in the lives of people today.
New Books for Little Ones

by Lydia E. Harris

Parents, teachers, and caregivers will appreciate Baby Blessings, Standard Publishing’s new book series for infants and toddlers. The collection is designed for four different age levels: newborn and up, one year and up, eighteen months and up, and two years and up. The books were created in consultation with an educational psychologist who specializes in early childhood cognitive development. They focus on simple Bible stories or Christian values.

Newborn and Up

WHERE IS LITTLE LAMB?
0784711321, $7.99. This soft toy book stimulates baby’s senses of sight, touch, and hearing. Infants can touch the woolly lamb with floppy ears and tail on the cover and shake the book to hear the rattle. Puffy pages are made of bright yellow cotton trimmed with red fabric. In the story, children search for Little Lamb in a stroller, chair, tub, and on a blanket. Instead they find teddy, kitty, duckie, and puppy. Their search is rewarded when they find Little Lamb in bed and learn Jesus is their Good Shepherd. Simple drawings by Angie Sage illustrate this cheerful book.

BABY’S BIBLE FRIENDS,
0784711313, $6.99. A soft, accordion-fold crib book that unfolds into a long strip. Made in high contrast colors of red, white, and black—the first colors a baby can distinguish—it is visually stimulating and helps baby’s eyes focus. Simple illustrations by Angie Sage of a bear, flower, ball, hands, puppy, and face are paired with three-word phrases. A baby-safe mirror helps infants identify themselves. The book concludes with Psalm 139:14: “I am wonderfully made!” Velcro fasteners make it easy to attach this book to baby’s crib.

One Year and Up

Written by Lynn Moore and illustrated by Alex Ayliffe, WHO’S ON NOAH’S ARK? 0784711348, $10.99. A soft tub book made of bright turquoise, quick-drying taffeta. Children will enjoy the shiny, crinkly stuffed turtle on the cover attached by Velcro and a string. Turtle invites his underwater friends, a whale, octopus, angelfish, and sea star, to come and see his new friends from Noah’s ark. They see giraffes, camels, elephants, and zebras leave the ark two by two. The back cover includes: “The waters covered the Earth” (Genesis 7:24). The book was designed to develop manual dexterity, take another’s point of view, and learn names and features of animals. It’s fun to play with in and out of the tub.

The following three sturdy board books, with soft fabric binding around the edges, are safe for babies to chew on:

JESUS LOVES ME, 0784711356, $6.99. Includes lyrics of this familiar song accompanied by photographs of preschoolers from different nationalities playing, reading, and eating. The rhyme and rhythm of the song help develop language skills. The last page includes a slide-in frame to insert the child’s photo and reinforces that Jesus loves baby, too.

ALL THINGS BRIGHT AND BEAUTIFUL, 0784711372, $8.99. A touch-and-feel book illustrated by Rebecca Thornburgh. With words from the song by that title, it can be sung or read. Children will enjoy feeling the woolly lamb, soft flowers, shiny river, and textured garden produce. It concludes, “How great is God Almighty, who has made all things well.” A child-safe mirror allows children to see themselves as an important part of God’s creation and develop a positive self image.

HOW BIG IS GOD’S LOVE?, 0784711364, $6.99. A photo frame book with a place to slide in a family picture. Written by Sally Lloyd-Jones and illustrated by Moira Maclean, it teaches young children of God’s great love. They learn God’s love is bigger than the biggest hill, taller than the tallest tree, longer than the longest river, deeper than the deepest sea, higher than the sky, and greater than a family’s love for their child. It concludes with “God’s love is SO BIG!” The use of adjectives along with rhythm and repetition develop memory and prereading skills.
Eighteen Months and Up

Young children will enjoy the traditional and contemporary prayers in LITTLE PRAYERS AND GRACES, 0784711399, $7.99. Each cardboard page is illustrated by Anne Kennedy and highlighted with holographic foil pictures of familiar objects. Simple rhyming prayers teach children to be thankful and pray for themselves and others. This shining, bright book for will delight little ones.

HOW MANY SHEEP? 0784711380, $8.99. A sturdy board book with an abacus attached across the top. Children can move the five plastic sheep as they count sheep pictured on each page. Favorite Bible stories are told in one-line sentences along with Scripture references for further reading. Toddlers are introduced to the story of creation, Noah's ark, Moses in the basket bed, Jesus feeding the crowd, and Jesus blessing the children. Written by Alice Joyce Davidson and illustrated by Frances Cony. Moving the sheep teaches the concept of grouping and counting from one to five.

Written by Sue Kueffner and illustrated by Simone Abel, NOAH'S NOISY ARK, 0784911402, $10.99, is a 18-page peek-a-boo flap book. Toddlers discover a variety of lively animals as they lift flaps on the sturdy cardboard pages. They learn the sounds of lions, ducks, pigs, crickets, peacocks, mice, and doves. This interactive book tells the story of Noah's ark and fosters development of language and memory skills.

Two Years and Up

Author Alice Joyce Davidson and illustrator Cathy Beylon created two shaped board books for children two and up. Both are surprise-flap books made of sturdy cardboard pages. A BASKET BED FOR BABY MOSES tells the story of Moses, Miriam, a princess, and God's plan for Moses' life. FIVE LITTLE LOAVES AND TWO LITTLE FISH relates the special miracle of Jesus feeding the five thousand with a little boy's lunch. Both stories include short rhyming phrases and flaps with surprise pictures and words beneath. The flaps reinforce object permanence, and the books help children develop language and sequencing skills. Children will enjoy these fun books ($7.99 each) with colorful illustrations.

Lydia E. Harris, freelance writer in Seattle, Washington, enjoys reading these books to her grandson.
Ever hear children say learning can’t be fun? Know any adults who think computer fun is ‘empty’—time wasted with no educational value? Advocates of both camps need to see some of these websites, where familiar characters and programs guide children through enjoyable—and educational—leisure time fun.

Noggin, www.noggin.com a collaboration between Sesame Street and Nickelodeon, includes items from the archives of both partners plus original stories in the form of "chronicles." Educational consultants advise on the content which includes numerous games, word challenges, on-going stories, Noggin TV schedules, and the "Lab." Kids can make their websites, comic strips, logo, or animation at the "Lab." The site also includes a link to Noggin for Preschoolers.

Whit’s End, http://www.whitsend.org/ from Focus on the Family, is on-line fun based on the fast-paced adventure featuring Whit, Eugene, Connie, and the other Adventures in Odyssey characters. Check out the soda shop, the library, or visit the Imagination Station, in addition to reading more about the characters or the latest show.

Pockets magazine has a fun site produced by the Upper Room http://www.upperroom.org/pockets/ It includes info on characters regularly featured in the magazine, plus links to games and activities—including the Art Gallery—and Capp’s Calendar. This includes ideas for things to do, plus a Bible scripture, for each day of the month.

Keys for Kids, the devotional magazine for children, has a website at http://cbh.smartbusiness.org/kfk/ The site includes a new daily devotional story, archives of past issues, Quickie Quizzes arranged alphabetically, and information about the Children’s Bible Hour radio program.

KidzPlace http://www.kidzplace.org/ is a great site if you have a fast modem and PC. It requires Flash as part of your browser but provides a download link if you don’t have it. KidzPlace has a section for Children’s program leaders as well as a main section for children including an interactive a "show and tell" section.
Reference Books for the School Library

*Middle Grades, High Quality*

Colorful maps and along with information about each of the states makes this volume appealing to young readers. Entries provide standard information: state bird, state tree, and state flower along with lesser known information about each state. Middle grade students and teachers of U.S. geography will find this useful for state reports and information about particular states. Students will not be deterred by pages which seem cluttered: map in the center with information surrounding it. An index and drawings of state flags makes this a useful tool.

**Scholastic Encyclopedia of Space,** Jaqueline Mitton and Simon Mitton, Scholastic, 1999, 0590592270, $14.95  
*MS/HS, Good Quality*

A slim volume, as are all of the Scholastic reference works reviewed here, the *Encyclopedia of Space* gives an overview of the solar system and each planet. Pages are colorful with much information written in a readable style and printed in a type face and color that is easy for students to read. The reading level puts this at fifth grade and above, though much information can be gathered by using the pictures and diagrams. The volumes have eye appeal, and if the subject is of interest, students will read what they can. Purchase one for the reference shelf and one to circulate; then encourage classroom teachers to buy a copy so that it is readily available. Bindings look sturdy, but with heavy use the cover will show wear and tear.

The Big Bang theory, and evolution is presented here, as in almost every science book, but that does not detract from the usefulness of the book for facts about the solar system, planets, and the galaxy. The pages on stargazing and starmaps give young readers an introduction into the joys of astronomy.

**Scholastic Encyclopedia of the Civil War,** Catherine Clinton, Scholastic, 1999, 0590372270, $18.95  
*MS/HS, High Quality*

Clinton’s concise encyclopedia of the Civil War is divided into five parts: one for each of the years of the war, 1861 -1865, and its aftermath. Within those pages readers find major events discussed with lesser known events described or explained in sidebars or captions. The endpapers showing a map of the Union and Confederacy with battles and Sherman’s March to the Sea identified, is easy to turn to when reading the text. While not a comprehensive encyclopedia of the Civil War, it does provide information beyond that which is usually found in textbooks for this age group, and is written in an engaging style. Index, pictures with captions, and sidebars provide additional information. Will need a good reader.

**Words That Built a Nation: A Young Person’s Collection of Historic American Documents,** Marilyn Miller, Scholastic, 1999, 059029881X, $18.95  
*MS/HS, Good Quality*

Scholastic has collected the documents mentioned in most
American history textbooks into one volume and reprinted them giving information about the writer or writers, and providing a place for what they call "response." For example, after the Constitution, the response tells readers what happened in the new country, i.e., that ratification was difficult, there was debate and it wasn't until New Hampshire ratified that the Constitution became the law of the land.

This information is touched on in social studies and history books, but the authors provide a framework for the documents and illustrate them with pictures not usually found in textbooks. The lesser known and more current documents will be welcomed by teachers who want to bring the voices of different ethnic groups into the classroom, or those finding themselves teaching American 20th century history as well as that of the 18th and 19th.

Animal Fact File: Head-to-Tail Profiles of More Than 90 Animals, Dr. Tony Hare, Facts on File, 0816040168, $18.95

MS/HS, Fair Quality

This animal book provides much information about well-known and lesser-known animals in a format which younger reader will find easy to read. Each two page spread talks about one animal, giving its name, where it lives, describing its habitat and showing the skeleton. A small chart tells readers classification, size, coloration, and features which are then pointed out on the drawing of the animal. One very nice detail shows the animal compared to an average human being. However, one needs to remember that this animal is an import. All the animals of North America aren't found, and when found, the specific area in which they live may not be mentioned. The wolverine was said to live in Alaska, while the wolf in North America with no mention of specific area. This may be a picky point, but children don't always grasp the differences between English publications and those of the United States. Consider carefully weighing the information and visual appeal with volumes which might be more practical and specific to North America.

Children's Atlas, updated ed., David and Jill Wright, Facts on File, 0816044333, $18.95, 96 pages

MS/HS, High Quality

Attractive, full color endpapers showing flags of countries from Afghanistan to Zimbabwe lead readers to pages of information on countries and continents of the world. A variety of illustrations and map projections are used in each section. Though the color of some of the illustrations seems pale, the information given will be useful to students studying geography. Pages contain a lot of information. They seem somewhat cluttered, but the maps themselves are very easy to read, as are their keys and legends. Political and physical maps have lines of latitude and longitude well marked along with a grid system of letters and numbers which can help younger readers locate places. The index also includes directions for its use. A welcome addition to the reference shelf.


Elem., Good Quality

Children will find this an easy to use encyclopedia. The table of contents and index are divided into headings that are child friendly. For example, homes has four listings: caves and early homes; living in tents; village houses; and town houses as opposed to “townhouses.” Children think like this. Each entry seems to have one full page beginning with the explanation of the word, then an example, Bible text where the word or idea was used, and explanation of other words or ideas presented. The one negative that comes to mind is that the illustrations seem cartoonlike and are rather washed out. Still, this would be a good addition to a Christian school or church library.

Kid Concordance: Big Ideas from the Bible and Where to Find Them, Rick Osborne with Ed Strauss and Kevin Miller, Zonderkidz, 1999, 0310224721, $14.95

MS/HS, Good Quality

Definitions in this concordance are written in a chatty style that will appeal to young readers. Each word is defined, then a Bible text is used and explained with additional readings printed out for the reader. The final part of each entry is a "Didjaknow?" which has insights by the authors into the topic discussed. It may be a question or explanation. While this provides further explanation, the informality of the way in which the question is printed seems to detract from the seriousness of the topic. The New International
Version is used and readers should be familiar with that.

While this would be a helpful volume, the colors of the pages, white with purple print, are not particularly attractive nor are the line drawings illustrations. A plus is the index which is patterned after those found in Bible concordances, showing the word followed by a description or explanation and then the Bible verses where it is used, though not in as detailed a manner as those found in Bibles or concordances for adults.

**An Eyewitness to History: Slavery in America: From Colonial Times to the Civil War**, Dorothy Schneider and Carl J. Schneider, Facts on File, 2000, 0816038635, $65.00

HS, Good Quality

This comprehensive history of slavery in America includes an index, bibliography, short biographies of major figures in the slave trade and abolitionist movement, as well as first person accounts of slavery. The account begins in 1441 and continues through the end of slavery in 1865. This is heavy reading in many ways; the volume itself is indeed weighty, a little over 455 pages, but the content and description of what slavery involved makes this a volume for junior high school and up. Entries are clearly written with many illustrations and because many of the laws and bills are included in the section headed “Documents,” readers will have many aspects of slavery together in one source.

**The Write Stuff: A to Z of American Women Writers**, Carol Kort, Facts on File, 2000, 0816037272, $40.00

HS, Good Quality

Many, but not all, women writers are included in this volume. Users will recognize well-known writers from childhood such as Margaret Wise Brown, Louisa May Alcott, Yoshiko Uchida; from young adult reading Shirley Jackson and Willa Cather; as well as poets and writers for adults. Entries contain a brief biography of the subject, citing major works; many include photographs of the subject and give selections for future reading. The selection is however, eclectic. Many of the authors you would expect to see included are missing, and some who are listed are minor figures in the literary world. Yet this volume does provide a start for the student wanting to find out more information about authors. From here you will have to guide readers to *Something About the Author* and more comprehensive volumes. The selection is multicultural and spans many years of writing.

Leslie Greaves Radloff is the Media Specialist at Rondo Education Center in St. Paul, Minnesota. She has also worked in Christian school libraries, and has been a reviewer and writer for CLJ for several years.
For those of us who love everything about books - from the way they look and feel to the words and worlds they cradle between their covers - there is nothing quite like a re-issued classic. Nostalgia and anticipation converge happily as we reacquaint ourselves with, or introduce others to, old friends in fancy new jackets.

There is something for everyone in this list, from poetry to traditional fairytales to dear childhood companions.

So - get out your wish lists …


Now, here's a quandary: we must somehow choose between two lavishly-illustrated, large-format editions of Lewis Carroll's disorienting and oft-read tale of young Alice, who falls down a rabbit hole and encounters all manner of bizarre individuals and incidents.

The North-South edition boasts thick, white paper with generously-proportioned black type, and full-color illustrations by the award-winning Lisbeth Zwerger. Her work is witty and somehow restrained, almost elegant in its execution. She often uses unusual perspectives (Alice is sometimes just leaving the frame, or outgrowing it), encouraging readers familiar with the story to perhaps re-envision characters and events.

Her rather modern caterpillar, it should be noted, is perched on his mushroom holding a tiny cigarette in one of his many appendages, and a wine glass in the other. This might call for some explanations for the more observant among our young readers; but then, few children know what, exactly, a hookah is, so either way a brief discussion may be necessary.

Compiler Cooper Edens has taken a very different approach with his version. He has selected from among the work created by some of the best Alice illustrators during the late 19th and early 20th centuries, offering up a visual smorgasbord which includes the likes of Arthur Rackham, John Tenniel (the original illustrator), Margaret Tarrant, and more than twenty other accomplished artists. A few of these images suffer slightly from the reproduction process (resolution may lack sharpness, for example) but the variety of vision and color is nevertheless highly gratifying. This text could be used to explore the changing approaches to children's book illustration between 1865 and 1929. An index of artists and dates is provided by Edens.


This book offers a re-telling as well as a re-imaging of this traditional tale about the transforming power of love. Artist Gary Blythe combines sweeping vistas with deep shadows; fantastic architectural details dwarf the soft, warm tones of the faithfully captured human figures. The Beast is properly beastly, and Beauty suitably lovely. Geraldine McCaughrean's version is true to the original, but is much more than a simple re-hashing. On the contrary, her rendering is spare, haunting, and quite wonderful, quietly drawing the reader's attention to the important truths underlying this well-worn tale.


A Child’s Garden of Verses is a cherished collection of poetic childhood reflections by Robert Louis Stevenson. Every library is bound to have several versions of this classic. This edition, however, is very special. For one thing, it also includes scripture passages, prayers, and treasured poems by Robert Browning, Christina Rossetti, and other well-known writers. In addition, this lovely book features the artwork of Thomas Kinkade, devout Christian and gifted artist.

His serene, glowing paintings, often depicting a country lane or garden path, invite the reader to enter in, and perhaps tarry awhile.

Brief biographies of Stevenson and Kinkade are provided, as well as useful indices to all the paintings and poems.


Now we come to a more contemporary classic …

Franklin the Turtle made his first debut in the 1980's. This text includes full-sized, full-color reproductions of the four Franklin titles published between 1986 and 1993, from Franklin in the Dark to Franklin Is Bossy.
Since Franklin first found the courage to crawl into his dark little shell - with help from friends and a night-light - his various escapades and crises have endeared him to many a child. So much so, in fact, that we always had a hard time keeping Paulette Bourgeois' reassuring tales on the shelf in the children's section of the public library.

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Some literary characters briefly capture a reader's imagination, then move on, leaving only a faint impression to be relegated to the dim, dusty backrooms of memory; others move in and are there to stay, boldly staking their claim. J.M. Barrie's brilliant and unforgettable cast of characters, including Captain Hook, the persistent, ticking crocodile, Tinker Bell, Wendy, and of course, Peter Pan, belongs unquestionably in the second category.

Since 1911, Peter Pan has pranced confidently across the pages of countless editions of the book, and has flown across the stages of numerous theater and movie productions. It seems we cannot get enough of the boy who will never grow up.

As with compiler Cooper Eden's Alice (see above), this edition brings together the best of the best in terms of illustrators. Once again, the work of the original artist, in this case F.D. Bedford, is featured, along with that of many other gifted individuals who sketched, painted, and illuminated Neverland during the early 20th century.


Editor Frances Schoonmaker has thoughtfully chosen some twenty-seven of Longfellow's most well-known poems for Poetry for Young People, including "Hiawatha's Childhood," "Paul Revere's Ride," and "The Slave's Dream." Some of the shorter selections are reproduced in their entirety, while others have been excerpted, to give young readers a manageable taste of the lengthier works.

Chad Wallace's artwork was created specifically for this text; its bold, broad strokes and deep hues convey a rustic sensibility, which suits the early 19th century ethos of this famous American wordsmith.

At the close of each poem, Schoonmaker inserts a helpful miniature glossary of unfamiliar terms. She has also penned a fairly in-depth, four-page biography of Longfellow, through which she introduces the various poems. The table of contents and the index of poem titles will be appreciated by readers who want to sample at random, or zero in quickly on a favorite.


If you didn't meet Pretzel when he was first born, in 1944, you will want to make his acquaintance now. Pretzel is a puppy, but he is not just any puppy. In the first place, he is a sort of younger cousin to Curious George, as both characters were created by the husband-and-wife team of Margret and H.A. Rey. On top of that, he belongs to the dachshund family, a breed of dogs known for its prodigious length; in fact, soon after his birth it becomes evident that he is the longest dachshund in the world!

Unfortunately, none of this is enough to impress Greta, a neighboring dachshund who coolly announces, "I don't care for long dogs." Nothing the smitten Pretzel does makes any difference to Greta, until she finds herself in danger, and realizes that only a dog of improbable length can save her.

Young readers will be drawn to Pretzel's indomitable spirit and to H.A. Rey's vigorous primary colors and strong, clean images.


This text combines the wit of Washington Irving, one of America's best-loved writers, with the fantastical images of Arthur Rackham, one of England's most gifted children's book illustrators.

The legend of Rip Van Winkle is often referred to, even by those who have never read it, for it has become a part of the fabric of our society. Imagine falling asleep, only to wake and find that twenty years have passed! (Some of us may feel that way after spending a week or two away from our jobs.)

Irving's gripping tale was first issued in 1819-1820. It clearly demonstrates his love of storytelling, as well as his incredible gift for language.

Rackham was asked to create 51 color plates for a 1905 edition of this story; thirty-four of these extraordinarily evocative illustrations are reproduced here.


Marguerite de Angeli was the award-winning author of many books, including the well-known The Door in the Wall, published in 1950.

Her stories, which often revolve around different ethnic groups, allow her to explore the underlying, profound commonalities which exist between all people.

Skippack School is a gentle story, first published in 1936, about a Mennonite family, newly arrived from Germany and busy adjusting to life in mid-1700's Pennsylvania. The day-to-day activities and customs of the time are seen through the eyes of Eli, a good-hearted but mischievous boy who would rather be outside playing than indoors learning his letters. But Master Christopher is a kind and patient teacher, who quotes scripture more often than he uses the rod. Soon he wins Eli's confidence, and Eli finds he is capable of more than he had imagined.

Angeli's descriptions of Eli's visit to the paper mill and the printing office, as well as references to the Penn Treaty and brief interactions with Native Americans, furnish a rich backdrop for her narrative.
and her own softly tinted illustrations bring depth to her characters.


Ken Setterington, storyteller and public librarian, here retells Hans Christian Andersen's tale about the healing and redemptive power of love.

The evil Snow Queen spirits young Kay away to her icy homeland. Determined to rescue her dear friend, Gerda sets out alone, finding both help and hindrance along the way. When a well-intentioned reindeer asks a wise woman for some magic potion to aid Gerda, the woman replies, "She has a pure and loving heart ... There is nothing greater that I can give her."

The Hofer's cut-paper art, known as scherrenschnitt, is presented starkly, in black silhouette against the clean, white paper; these amazingly intricate decorations are the perfect accompaniment to Andersen's sometimes harsh, but ultimately affirming tale. According to the author's note on the closing page of this text, Andersen himself practiced this ancient form of folk art.


The Stranger at Home is an anonymous, but presumably autobiographical account of young Elvira who goes to live with her grandparents from the age of six to the age of twelve. Her grandparents dote on her and spoil her to such an extent that, upon her return to her own family, she finds that the diligent and obedient behavior expected of her does not come easily.

Despairing of her stubbornness, her Christian parents resolve not to provide her with correction or punishment of any kind. Initially pleased with this arrangement, Elvira soon finds that she feels like a stranger in her own home.

In the end, there is repentance and a growing awareness of God's love for his wayward children.

The author of this text, which was last published in 1871, employs a very simple and straightforward narrative voice. Some of her punctuation is irregular by today's standards.

This slim volume is handsomely turned out in cloth binding with gold embossing. Tami Blauser's accompanying study guide is a combination fill-in-the-blanks workbook and discussion guide. Intended for use by readers of all ages, it provides comprehension tests, questions for discussion, and scripture references for each chapter of Elvira's account. The lengthy commentaries included in the answer key are thoughtful and detailed; Blauser occasionally relies on "answers will vary" for the discussion questions, but generally offers some helpful suggestions or alternatives.

A useful bibliography is provided, but because Blauser does not make use of foot- or endnotes, it is difficult to know which points are her own and which are based on these other sources. There are some typographical errors, as well as minor grammatical lapses.

It should be noted that not all readers will agree with some of the opinions presented; for example, on p. 60 of the study guide, it is suggested that many of today's "liberals" subscribe to certain attitudes (i.e. welfare for the poor) because they are carnally, rather than spiritually minded.


As a young pup, White Fang quickly learns the primary law of the wild: eat or be eaten. When he and his half-wolf, half-dog mother are taken by an Indian tribe, he learns his next lesson: fear of man. Hardship and severe conditions breed a merciless cunning, as well as a hampering dependence.

Sold to Beauty Smith, a cruel and twisted man, for the price of a few bottles of whisky, White Fang is forced to work for his survival as a professional fighting dog. Following an encounter that very nearly ends his life, he is rescued by Weedon Scott, a kind-hearted man whose boundless patience at last wins the wolf-dog's confidence, transforming him from a wild beast into a devoted and faithful companion.

London's gripping account, told from the perspective of the title character, serves as a fascinating window on the history of the north; it also allows the author to explore and comment on the interplay between heredity and environment.

This Whole Story edition reintroduces the complete, unabridged text as it was originally published in 1906. Sidebars, photos, and new color illustrations complement the text. Some of London's characters are rather rough, and so there is occasional use of mildly offensive language.
Bless this day : toddler prayers, text by Anne E. Kitch; illustrated by Joni Oeltjenbruns; cover and page design by Annika L. Chiodi. LCCN 00710307. Harrisburg, Pa.: Morehouse, 2000. PBB, 0819218275, $6.95.

Bless This Day is a delightful collection of short prayers and an accompanying Bible verse. The illustrations are bright, colorful, and eye-catching. Pictures are of familiar objects/persons that may assist in teaching new words to toddlers. The combined prayer with a Bible verse is particularly well done in that the reader may instill God’s word into the heart of the toddler in a fun and comfortable way.

Tammy Williams, Social Worker/Freelance Writer, Port Orchard, Washington


A boy discovers that he can fly and spends a summer perfecting his flying technique while also keeping his ability a secret from family and friends. One winter day the boy flies to the edge of the frozen sea. At home, food is scarce and life not much fun for the boy. But this flight is different. This time Wozzini the showman sees the boy and quickly lifts the sleeping boy up, wows him in blankets and places him near the fire to warm up. Once the boy is awake, Wozzini makes him a pair of eagle wings from wood and feathers, and the boy becomes a part of the traveling act. From town to town Wozzini takes his flying boy and in each town the people are amazed and cannot believe the boy can fly. Everyone assumes it is the eagle’s wings he wears. In one city, robbers kidnap the boy and hide him in a building with bars on the windows. They want to know the secret of flight. Finally the boy devises a plan to trick the robbers and is able to escape and fly home without the heavy wings. At last the boy realizes how much he missed his home and family.

Kathryn Cave has created an imaginative story in The Boy Who Became an Eagle, but a story that lacks continuity. Children will be puzzled at a story line which does not flow smoothly. It is almost as if a page or two is missing, leaving out the connection between one scene and the next. The story is a good illustration of the saying that the grass is not always greener, but the textual choppiness makes it difficult to use. Being famous is not all that much fun, as the boy eventually learns.

Visually, the book is beautiful. Illustrator Nick Maland has created appealing watercolor pictures with interesting detail. The colors are distinct yet at the same time have a softness that one might associate with a fairytale or myth.

Barbara Wall, School Library System Director, Orange-Ulster BOCES, Monroe, New York


On market day, Pablo and his grandmother (Abuela) are going to sell their vegetables. Since this is the first time that Pablo is allowed to go to market, he is so excited he can hardly wait. But first, Abuela makes Pablo wash all the vegetables before they put their wares into the truck. Impatient Pablo washes the vegetables and then Abuela asks him to count the limes, onions, tomatoes, and peppers. As Pablo washes the produce he counts by ones, by twos, by fives, and by tens. At the market he helps Abuela sell her wares plus he gives the customers a recipe for salsa.

On market day Pablo is a Math Matters activity book designed to help readers have fun with counting. Barbara deRubertis includes activities at the end of the book that will help K-2 students learn while having fun with Pablo. For each math concept the numbers are in bold type. Words like cilantro, salsa, and herbs will need to be explained and pronounced for readers. The story is interesting because Pablo is actually doing the counting plus having an adventure.

Connie Weaver, Church & Reference Librarian, Newville, Pennsylvania


What does a knight do? Where does he live? Do knights eat candy? What does a knight wear? Do Knights Take Naps? by author Kathy Tucker takes a light hearted look at these knightly questions and more as she explores the world of knights. And what about bad princes...and fiery dragons? She doesn’t leave them out either! After all, what is a knight without a fiery dragon? The young knight in your audience with giggle over Nick Sharratt’s cartoon-like figures doing their knightly best to be brave. Do knights take naps? Of course they do, right after their moms tuck them in and leave the light on in the hall!


Dr. White is an unusual physician. He is shaggy and small and often snuggles right next to his little patients, nudging them with his cold, black nose. He has his routine down pat and is well-respected by his co-workers. The nurses ask for him whenever they have a patient who is especially ill. In those cases, Dr. White jumps up on the critically ill child’s bed and curls up close, gently licking the child’s hand and thumping his tail for as long as he feels needed.

All is well until one day the health inspector notices the little white dog running loose in the hospital’s halls and begins screaming. Dr. White is no longer allowed to see his patients. Day after day he sits outside the hospital kitchen’s back door, worrying about his patients inside. Many are getting worse.

Months later the health inspector returns to the hospital. He is not greeted kindly by the head nurse. She stops talking when she sees the tears running down his face. His little girl is terribly sick. The nurse promises she will do what she can for the his daughter. That night she opens the back door and invites Dr. White in. He races to the room of the sick child and curls up close beside her. In the morning when the health inspector enters his daughter’s room, he sees the little, white dog lying on his daughter’s bed and the smile on her face as she opens her eyes for the first time in days. He understands then the “medicine” that Dr. White dispenses.

Jane Goodall, the noted scientist, was inspired to write Dr. White by the true story of a little white dog who was adopted by a hospital in London many years ago. Credit was given to the dog for aiding in the recovery of many sick children. It is a moving story and Julie Litty’s realistic watercolor illustrations, especially those of the sick and recovering children, add to the poignancy of the tale.

Lillian Heytvelt, Public Librarian, Pomeroy, Washington

A cute little girl is six years old today and she is about to have a party. She thanks God for her day but what she really wants for her birthday is fifteen flamingoes as party guests. Her imagination runs wild and she parties with her fabulous flamingoes until the doorbell rings announcing her fifteen real friends who have arrived for her party. Too bad, the flamingoes must go.

Elspeth Campbell Murphy has told an enchanting short story about the power of a little girl’s imagination. She has made nice use of alliteration with adjectives beginning with the letter “F.” This causes the story to be very fun to read aloud. The illustrations by Richard Bernal are a riot of bright, brilliant colors that make the birthday seem fantastic and festive all at once. This is a very sweet and joyous book for young children.

Teresa O’Donley, Library Media Specialist, Baymonte Christian School, Scotts Valley, California

Forever friends. (Jay Jay the jet plane.)
E. Children—Conduct of life; Children—Religious life; Christian life; 1 videocassette, Col., 30 min. (Elementary).
A set of three animated vignettes on videotape, Jay Jay the Jet Plane: Forever Friends, depicts a group of airplanes and their human radio traffic controller, Brenda Blue. The lead character is a bright blue airplane named Jay Jay. He and his friends learn biblical lessons throughout their adventures.

The first story, "Missing You," stars Jay Jay and his friend, Snuffy, a yellow airplane with constant nasal congestion. They are adjusting to their friend and mentor, Big Jake’s, an older airplane’s, absence. He has gone away for a week to see his brother. To ease their loneliness, the radio controller, Brenda Blue helps them look at Big Jake’s picture, write him a letter and call him on the radio.

The Buddy System shows Jay Jay and his friend, Tracey, a purple airplane, the value of sticking together the way God sticks with us wherever we are. They fly to a distant city and lose each other, but God intervenes and they gratefully reunite.

"Treasure Hunt" examines the value of friendship as Tracey and Savannah, a sleek silver jet, spend special time together looking for treasure. However, as Old Oscar, an antique plane, reveals, the true treasure is their friendship.

This video is outstanding. The animation is splendidly vivid, much improved over previous Jay Jay videos, but the terrific lessons of faith and friendship remain the same. Impressive voices give the cast human qualities such as vulnerability when they are lonely or lost, joy when they reunite or discover an exciting truth, and humility when they are wrong. The gentle biblical instruction is effective in this format. The characters model good communication skills, talking about their feelings and problems. Appealing to a wide range of ages, toddler to upper elementary, this superlative video will delight the eyes and heart.

Anna Goldman Horning, Freelance Writer, Lawrenceville, Georgia

E. Christmas—Fiction. unp. (Elementary).

Artaban, the fourth wise man, and his three wise friends read stars and recognize the new star signals the coming King’s birth. When he sees the star, Artaban gathers gifts to take to the great teacher born of the Jews. In his travels, Artaban aids a sick man along the road and buys protection from soldiers for a woman and her babe. Artaban continues his search for the King of Kings, and helps needy on the way. Even as the search continues, time passes. Soon, it seems, thirty-three years have passed. He returns to Jerusalem for a last, he believes, vain attempt. He discovers three men are being crucified, including Jesus of Nazareth, who claims to be God’s Son. Artaban knows this as truth and fumbles to get through the crowd, only to be stopped by a woman who is to be imprisoned for her family’s debts. In answering her plea, he spends the last gift he intended for the King. In the storm of the crucifixion, Artaban is injured, and hears a voice say, “Peace be with you, Artaban. … As often as you did these things for the least of my children, you did them for me.”

Susan Summers retelling of The Fourth Wise Man is done excellently. Readers sense Artaban’s conflict over stopping to help people rather than continuing his journey. The resolution when he realizes that he has pleased the King in his actions brings satisfaction and closure. Jackie Morris’ watercolors complete the story’s portrayal. The detail, lighting, and perspective serve to place the reader in each scene. The scene of the cross gives the impression that the reader is standing at the foot of the hill.

Carol M. Jones, Librarian, South Side Elementary School and Marquette Pre-K Center, Champaign, Illinois

Franklin goes to the hospital, by Sharon Jennings; illustrated by Brenda Clark. LCCN C99931786. Toronto, Ont.: Kids Can, 2000. HBB, 1550747320, $10.95.
E. Hospitals—Fiction. unp. Preschool-Primary.

In the middle of a soccer game Franklin is hit in the chest by the ball. The next day he still has a sore spot on his tummy. Franklin’s mother takes him to Doctor Bear who discovers a crack in his shell that must be pinned. Franklin has gone to the doctor for checkups, colds, and cuts, but until now he has never gone to the hospital. He looks at the book Doctor Bear gave him about hospitals. Then Franklin picks out his blue blanket and stuffed dog, Sam, to take to the hospital. All of Franklin’s friends and family tell him how brave he is. Even the nurses tell Franklin he is brave. But when Doctor Bear tries to take X-rays of Franklin, he begins to cry. He knows X-rays show what is inside of you and they will show he really is scared. Doctor Bear gently explains that, “Being brave means doing what you have to do, no matter how scared you feel.”

Franklin Goes To The Hospital by Paulette Bourgeois and Brenda Clark is an excellent book for any child faced with a hospital stay. However, learning to do what you have to do, no matter how scared you feel can apply to many other situations as well. All young readers will understand Franklin’s fear of the unknown. Brenda Clark’s delightful pictures convey Franklin’s feelings. Enough details of the X-ray room and operating room are shown in the pictures to help the reader understand what to expect if they will be going to the hospital.

Barbara Bryden, Freelance Writer, Olympia, Washington

E. Cats—Fiction. unp. Lost and found possessions—Fiction.

Whether the black cat found Emily and Charlotte or Emily and Charlotte found the black cat may never quite be known, but what is known is that a once stray, starving, and frightened cat with a too tight collar, wandered onto the right door step and wormed his way into the heart of the family. Where he came from, even the frightened black cat did not know, but where he belonged everyone knew.

After nursing the black cat back to health and trying to find its true owners with no luck, the family decides the cat must belong to them, but what is his name? They try everything, but nothing seems to fit the cat just right. It isn’t until Halloween comes around that the black cat is near the door when two young trick or treaters are leaving and one calls to his younger brother, “Hurry up, James!” that the black cat reacts, and the family discovers that James is his true name.

Libby Phillips Meggs tells this true story of her family’s cat, James. Her illustrations from a cat’s eye view are a wonderful backdrop for her story of love and commitment.

Judy Driscoll, Retired Teacher, Poolesville, Washington

Too sad to do anything since Grandma died. Grandpa sits in his chair in the house by himself. Then one day he decides he wants to eat some of his dear wife’s meatball soup again. Taking a tiny pot down from the shelf, he starts to make meatball soup. When it is done three mice come to the door. Grandpa shares his soup with them, but there isn’t much left for him. The next day he uses a bigger pot and remembers more things Grandma put in the soup. The three mice come back and bring a cat. Each day he uses a bigger pot and remembers more things Grandma put in the soup. The mice and the cat bring a dog. Then ten children come to the door and Grandpa discovers the best cure for his loneliness is sharing his soup with friends.

Grandpa’s Soup deals with the loneliness Grandpa experiences after the death of someone he loves. Any child who has lost a relative or pet or has had a friend move away will identify with Grandpa’s sadness and appreciate the happy ending. Eiko Kadono shows readers a positive way to express their feelings by remembering the good experiences and reaching out to others who need them. Taumi Ichikawa’s beautiful pictures include little details that illustrate how Grandpa’s feelings change. At first the flowers on the table are dead, but by the end of the story he has beautiful flowers in the vase. Children will delight in the procession of animals and children that arrive at Grandpa’s door.

Barbara Bryden, Freelance Writer, Olympia, Washington


Henry lives in the forest with many other creatures. He loves to sing but the other creatures say he is only making noise. One day the Maker of All Things visits the creatures of the forest. He reminds them how he made each one of them special. Then he asks the creatures of the forest an important question: “What are your voices for?” The creatures of the forest do not know. So the Maker of All Things tells them he will come back tomorrow. The creatures of the forest eventually decide their voices are for singing. They practice a lovely song and when Henry begins to sing, the other creatures do not want him to have any part in their song. They say he just makes noise. The next morning the creatures of the forest sing their wonderful song for the Maker of All Things. The Maker of All Things is sad when he hears their song. He knows Henry is not singing with all the other creatures. The Maker of All Things reminds the creatures of the forest that all their voices are for singing. Then Henry joins all the creatures of the forest in a wonderful song. The Maker of All Things is pleased.

The warm message that the Maker of All Things made each of us special is very clear. The creative use of collage and color bring the story to life.

Susan K. Brown, Teacher, Noblesville, Indiana


Hurricane Bob is fast approaching and a young girl and her daddy rush around to prepare their waterfront home for the strong rain and winds that will assault it. Everywhere they go they see people hammering, tying things down, buying extra supplies, flashlights, and batteries. The town is going to be as prepared as possible! When the storm hits everyone rushes indoors to safety. Many go to shelters, but the young girl and her father stay in their home. He encourages his daughter, “This house has stood through many a hurricane.”

When at last the storm is over the beach is scattered with debris, broken boats and pieces of roofing. Even Mr. Finney’s place right on the sand is gone, but he is safe in the town shelter. Now the town sets about restoring, repairing, and even planting new trees and plants so there will be new landmarks and hope even as the old memories remain intact.

Hurricane! by Patricia Lakin brings the tenseness of preparation for such a huge storm. The full-page color illustrations by Vanessa Lubach portray the emotions and fierceness of
the storm beautifully. The ending is a bit anticlimactic, but the two-page "Hurricane facts" at the end of the book make this a usable tool for teaching terminology and answering questions. This is a book that you might want to add to your collection if you enjoy weather-related stories.

Mary McKinney, Writer, Editor; Former Teacher, Port Orchard, Washington


E. Grief--Fiction; Deaths--Fiction. unp.

"If Nathan were here, we would meet in our tree fort to choose which team hats to wear from our Baseball Hat Wall of Fame. But Nathan isn’t here.” And so a young boy tries to remember what his lost friend was like, what he would share with his friend if he were here, and how he is going to fill the emptiness he feels over the death of his friend. Nathan. Mary Bahr follows the grieving of this young boy with his friends and classmates at school, his neighborhood, family, and even Nathan’s sister herself. Not meant to try to answer questions about death, or to sweep the emotions surrounding death away, author Mary Bahr simply and gently paints various aspects of grief with picture words. Accompanied by the soft illustrations of Karen A. Jerome, If Nathan Were Here is a perfect backdrop to allow the young grieving child an avenue to express his own thoughts about his loss.

Judy Driscoll, Retired Teacher, Poulsbo, Washington


E. Mouse--Fiction; Christmas--Fiction. unp.

Laura Numeroff and her exuberant little mouse are back again in If You Take a Mouse to the Movies. If you should take the little critter to a movie, naturally he’ll want some popcorn. The cause-effect roller coaster story takes off from there to offer a view of Christmas from a mouse’s perspective. As in their previous title, If You Give a Mouse a Cookie, Numeroff and her illustrator, Felicia Bond, have captured the wide-eyed wonder of the world through the eyes of ever-enthusiastic Mouse and his accommodating human friend. Felicia Bond’s lovable depictions continue to engage our sympathies even as Mouse’s pleas for new experiences become more and more extravagant. If You Take a Mouse to the Movies defines joie de vivre for the child who has yet to put a name to the experience and is a sweet reminder to those adults who have forgotten.

Pamela A. Todd, English Teacher/Librarian, Chalcedon Christian School, Cumming, Georgia


E. Fairy tales. unp.

Seldom do both a story and its illustrations work together to produce the feast that is presented in The Magic Nesting Doll. Jacqueline K. Ogburn has drawn on the tradition of the fairy tale to tell the story of young Katya, who owns a matryoshka, a Russian nesting doll. But Katya’s nesting doll is unique in that it was given to her by her grandmother with the admonition that it contained three wishes, and that Katya should not open it until her need was great, and then help would come when it was opened and she remembered her grandmother.

Katya goes out into the world alone with her matryoshka in her pocket. One day she hears about a young Tsarevitch who has turned to ice, and thereby his kingdom is doomed to winter without thaw, night without moon, and dark without dawn. Katya determines to find the young prince and use his matryoshka to try to break this evil spell. She travels to his distant window where he is guarded by his hot and fearsome uncle the Grand Vizier.

As she opens each doll, one at a time, its character grants her the wish she requests, and with each doll the prince becomes a little less icy, and the Grand Vizier, becomes a little weaker. The bear, the wolf, and the firebird each do their part in rescuing the kingdom from its wintery spell. But it is not until loves’ first kiss that the prince is awakened to greet his bride, and the Grand Vizier, now ice himself, is destroyed.

Those who delight in a good fairy tale will be entranced with Jacqueline K. Ogburn’s ability to tell a good tale, but the greatest feast of color, symbol, and design. Done in Russian folk art style with decorative borders, the paintings did you linger a little longer over each page and explore all that she has accomplished with color, symbol, and design.

Judy Driscoll, Retired Teacher, Poulsbo, Washington

Mei-Mei loves the morning, written by Margaret Holloway Tsubakiyama; paintings by Cornelius Van Wright & Ying-Hwa Hu. LCCN 97026675. Morton Grove, Ill.: Albert Whitman, 1999. HBB, 0807550396, $15.95.

E. Grandfathers--Fiction; China--Fiction. unp.

Little Annie is in big trouble! She’s just lost her mitten. That makes five in one winter. Can Annie and her faithful dog Oscar possibly find it? They begin by retracing Annie’s snowy steps. They find other articles of clothing belonging to her friends at a sled run and a snow fort but not the mitten. Annie’s imagination begins to run wild when she mistakes a cardinal for a flying red mitten. Maybe the mitten is a bird’s nest, a baby eagle’s hat, a mouse’s sleeping bag, or even a mouse’s Halloween disguise.

Her improbable scenarios end when they encounter Miss Seltzer, who has not seen the mitten but surmises that it could be in the garden. Annie doesn’t find her mitten there either but once again with her great imagination fantasizes about what could happen if a mitten was planted and a mitten tree grew. Then she would have enough mittens to give to everybody for presents on special occasions. Darkness and rain overtake her and she retreats to the house to have hot chocolate with Miss Seltzer, who notices that Annie’s snowman outside the window has a heart. Mitten found!

Once again Steven Kellogg has created a fanciful and engaging story for younger
children. They will love following Annie and Oscar on their search. As usual, his illustrations are funny, clever, and skillfully colored and drawn. His cover illustration even hints at the mystery to the answer. He has very much captured the "stream-of-consciousness" manner in which a child thinks out a problem. Most children will want to read this book over and over again.

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E. 'Mice--Fiction; Camping--Fiction; Parent and child--Fiction. unp.

In *Monk Camps Out*, Emily Arnold McCully once again uses simple text and illustration to convey the importance of being small. She has a way of bringing out how great the small things in life really are. In this book, Monk, the young mouse who strives to show how big he is getting to be, requests to sleep out in the backyard. The author brings a freshness to this old theme of independence and reluctance to let it happen. Young readers will easily empathize with Monk’s trepidation at being seemingly so far away while just in his backyard. And parents will delight in McCully’s poignant humor of how Monk’s parents handle their young son’s step towards growing up. The combination of text and character lines adds to the warmth of the bright illustrations. As with the other Monk books, readers will warm to the little mouse who proves himself big in his efforts.

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E. Jesus Christ--Nativity--Fiction; Magi--Fiction. unp.

Renowned for his wisdom, Ashlar speaks to crowds hungry for his knowledge. He tells a of the promise of a king sent from heaven. When he discovers the new star that signifies the king’s coming, he sets off to find him. Throughout his journey, he meets those in need of his wisdom and shares what will meet their needs. Though each invites his company, he travels on alone in his endeavor to see the new king. When he stops for the night in a small crowed town, he notices that the star is just above his window. Although he notes the presence of the star, he does not stop to inquire in the stable, for he is far too wise to seek a king in a stable. Ashlar returns home with his “wisdom,” but without witnessing the birth of the king he seeks.

Alan MacDonald has created an enchantingly-rendered story. The lesson that faith does not depend upon wisdom rings clear in this tale of the wise man who narrowly misses the king.

The illustrations by Andrew Rowland impeccably support the plot, while intimating all along that Ashtar may not be quite as wise as he seems. The reader will notice in Rowland’s scene of the Nativity the travelers with whom Ashtar crosses paths on his journey. With subsequent readings, readers will find more and more pointers to the coming Christ child.

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E. Schools--Fiction; Russia--Fiction. unp.

Philipok is a classic Russian tale originally told by Leo Tolstoy. Ann Keay Beneduce has now retold the story in a simple easy-to-read style which keeps very close to the original.

Philipok is a young boy who wants nothing more than to go to school with his brother Peter. Mother says he is too young and small; he will have to stay home with Grandmother. Philipok stays, but when Grandmother falls asleep he becomes lonely and decides to go to school by himself. Along the way he encounters a mean dog, the cold winter winds, and many strangers. By the time he reaches the schoolhouse he is afraid to go in. What if the teacher is angry and sends him home? Philipok finally goes inside. He proves he is smart enough to come to school because he can spell his name and knows his alphabet. The teacher agrees and from then on Philipok goes with Peter to school.

This charming story will become a classic to a new generation of children. A refreshing story of a child who wants so much to learn that he finds his own way to school. Gennady Spirin, a graduate of the Stroganov Institute of Art in Moscow, brings an authentic feel to the story. His illustrations are finely-detailed and expressive of the Russian culture. A winning combination.

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E. Pigs--Fiction; Friendship--Fiction; Animals--Fiction. 48 p.

*Poppleton in Fall*, by Cynthia Rylant, is more of the same wry humor and illustrations found in the previous Poppleton books. In this particular story Poppleton invites several passing geese on their way south to stop and have cookies. Feeding geese whose names continually rhyme reduces Poppleton to speaking gibberish, so that Cherry Sue, his level-headed friend and neighbor must tend to his weariness.

In the second story when Poppleton goes to get a new coat, Zacko the tailor points out that Poppleton is too big. Cherry Sue points out that being a big pig is just fine, and big is a matter of perspective.

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E. Education--Fiction; Schools--Fiction; Social classes--Fiction; Contests--Fiction; Korea--Social life and customs--Fiction. unp. Preschool-Primary.

"In the days when kings ruled Korea, only the privileged ‘yangban’ children went to school. They wore fine clothing and carried handsome books. They competed in The Royal Bee at the Governor’s palace. They grew up to be scholars and noblemen. Song-ho was not among the privileged. He was a ‘sangmin’ boy dressed in rags. But the distant sound of a school bell made him dream of the day when he could read books and write poetry."

Succinct yet descriptive, this story is based on the authors’ own grandfather as an illiterate boy in late nineteenth-century Korea, too poor to attend school but who eavesdropped at the door of the rich children’s school until he was allowed to attend. This story follows the same plot with wonderful scenes. Sung-ho wants to make life better for his mother who works hard in the farmers’ fields. Sung-ho also wants to learn how to read and write. One day, after finishing his chores, he follows the sound of the school bell in the valley where he listens to the lessons outside the rice-paper door. The school master sees the boy’s shadow outside the door and confronts him, yet does not send him away. Sung-ho continues listening in on lessons outside the door day after day. Weeks pass into winter. Taking pity on the huddled, shivering boy, the master invites him inside where he is allowed to stay if he can pass a verbal test on the lessons. He passes every question and is joyful to be able to sit with the other students. Sung-ho is later selected by his classmates to represent their school at the annual Royal Bee, where students from all over Korea are challenged by questions. At the end, only he and one other student remain. To win, Sung-ho composes a poem about what winning the competition would mean to him.
Frances and Ginger Park make good use of repetition in their prose, making this a wonderful book to read aloud to children. The messages of family (Sung-ho’s love for his mother), learning, pursuing your dreams, and doing your best ring true in this book. Illustrations by Zhang are acrylic paintings done in muted colors.

Karen Swenson Gollnick, Writer, Speaker & Teacher (Marion Independent Schools), Marion, Iowa


E. Francis, of Assisi, Saint, 1182-1226--Fiction; Jesus Christ--Nativity--Fiction; Donkeys--Fiction; Christmas--Fiction. unp. Preschool-Primary.

Saint Francis and the Christmas Donkey is a charming tale in which Saint Francis, the Patron Saint of animals, meets a donkey in the forest. The little donkey is lamenting loudly about the hard work a donkey must do, and how the other animals laugh at his bray. Saint Francis tells the donkey a story in answer to his lament.

Francis tells the story of creation. In the beginning, God blessed the donkey with delicate ears, a tiny, tail and a beautiful voice. The donkey became so proud that he began to make fun of other animals. Finally the other animals became so angry that they pulled the donkey’s ears and tail. All the donkey could do is to cry with a loud raucous voice. God was also angry at the donkey and decreed that his laugh would become a ridiculous Hee-Haw. He would also have long, floppy ears and a scrawny, scraggly tail. He would have to work hard and carry heavy loads. Throughout history the donkey has worked very hard, but he has also helped to build the civilized world. As a crowning achievement, the donkey carried Mary to Bethlehem. His warm breath comforted the baby in the manger. Even the magnificent gifts of the Wise Men could not equal the donkey’s wonderful gift of love. Thus Francis shows the donkey that everyone has gifts to offer, each of us is uniquely important in God’s eyes.

In a note to the reader, the author gives a short thoughtful dedication page.


E. Jesus Christ--Nativity; Christmas--Stories in rhyme. unp.

The Savior That God Sent by Kelly A. Rainbolt goes beyond the holiday gift book category. In its cause and effect story style, young readers will be able to better comprehend the interconnection of the traditional manger story. The sing-song text and the joyous illustrations of Roberta Collier-Morales will guarantee multiple readings. Each passage builds up to the importance of baby Jesus, the Savior that God sent.

The book allows for further discussion of this all-important cornerstone of Christian faith: that Jesus came to save us because God sent Him. Adults who desire to introduce the very young to the miracle of Jesus’ coming will appreciate the simplistic appeal of the rhyming repetition. A book to consider for gift giving with its thoughtful dedication page.

Pam Webb, School Librarian, Sandpoint, Idaho


E. Afro-Americans--Fiction. unp.

“I am Black. I am Unique. I am the milky smooth brown in a chocolate bar and the golden brown in sugar.” The text continues in simple language as it describes the various skin tones, hair textures, and eye color of black children. A celebration of our children.

Sandra L. Pinkney has found a unique way to use familiar items to describe children in Shades of Black. From pretzels to popcorn, and cotton to rope, all describe the uniqueness of black children. Myles C. Pinkney brings the book alive with his brilliant color photographs. The faces of these children are priceless. From the inquisitive eyes to the happy smiles, they are enchanting. This book is a celebration of the differences in black children as well as a way to explore and embrace a different culture.

Marcia Snyder, Librarian, Missoula, Montana


E. Generosity--Fiction; Sharks--Fiction. unp. Preschool-Primary.

Winner of the 2000 Parent’s Choice Silver Award, The Shaking Bag by Gwendolyn Battle-Lavert spins a magical tale of southern hospitality and generosity, similar to the Bible story where Elijah is miraculously fed by the ravens at the Lord’s command in the Kerith Ravine. Colorful illustrations by Aminah Brenda Lynn Robinson bring Miss Annie Mae to life. Displaying her African American ancestry, Annie Mae appears with large brown braids that cascade down her back. Her strong, earthy hands are filled with food for five Ravens and other wild birds. Annie Mae and her dog live in a run down cabin and share what little they have. One night a mysterious stranger named Raven Reed knocks on her door. She invites him in and shares a meal. She puts the crust of bread, putting the last crust aside for the birds and her dog. When he sees this, he takes the bag from her, reaches in and pulls out what she needs most: chairs, firewood, food to eat and even a table at which to sit. While they share a meal and talk all night she notices his eyes, “young of age, but ancient of spirit.” When he departs, he hands her the bag and explains because of her generosity the sack will never again be empty. His departure is as miraculous as his stay had been. When she sees the Ravens again there are five and the eyes seem familiar. Both native and outsiders, both hard work and kind done, complement one another. This extraordinary story will be read more than once and remain in everyone’s memory for generations to come.

Gail Weldorn, Reporter/Free lance Writer, Everett, Washington


E. Sockeye salmon--Fiction; Salmon--Fiction; Animals--Migration--Fiction. 31 p. Preschool-Primary.


E. Hammerhead sharks--Fiction; Sharks--Fiction. 32 p. Preschool-Primary.

The blend of facts and an absorbing story will help instill interest and fascination in young readers as they learn about the world around them in the Oceanic Collection put out by the Smithsonian Institute.

Sockeye’s Journey Home by Barbara Gaines Winkelmann, illustrated by Joanie Popeo, is part of the Smithsonian Oceanic Collection. Readers learn through the informative, yet engaging text the life cycle of the salmon. Without having to resort to personification, the author still adds a dimension of singularity as Sockeye makes his way from the Pacific Ocean to Cedar River. The colorful, real-life illustrations alone tell of the tremendous struggles this determined fish must face before finding a mate and securing the next generation of salmon.

What young reader can resist a story about sharks, especially those that combine a stirring story with fascinating illustrations? Young

E.  Vacations—Fiction; Bubbles—Fiction.  unp.

Strega Nona, Grandma Witch, is not herself lately.  She is hearing the voice of her deceased Grandma Concetta, beckoning, “Veni, Nonalina, Come.” It distracts her so that she almost gives out the wrong remedies to the townsfolk.  She finally follows the voice and goes on a vacation to the seashore.  Bamboolina and Big Anthony are left behind to do her work.  In the past Big Anthony has caused many mishaps and Strega Nona warns them not to touch the magic pasta pot.  That’s not problem.  When gifts arrive from Strega Nona, however, there is trouble, and this time it is Bamboolina who is the cause.  Strega Nona returns and is able to set things straight, and a new lesson is learned.

With the same playfulness and warmth as the previous Strega Nona stories, Tomie dePaola uses subtle watercolor paintings and clear text to tell this humorous tale.  Large pictures fill the pages, often revealing the plot without words, and the storylines are rather simplistic.  There seems to be an over-abundance of talking about the problem rather than “showing” which may result in children losing interest during the storyline.

Mary McKinney, Writer, Editor, Former Teacher, Port Orchard, Washington


E.  Jesus Christ—Crucifixion—Fiction; Jesus Christ—Resurrection—Fiction.  unp.

The Thornbush by Michael Laughtlin retells the crucifixion by expanding upon the legend of how the drops of Christ’s blood transformed the thornbush from mediocrity to beauty.  Appropriate for Easter, this book nevertheless could remain available throughout the year since it portrays so well both the sorrow and joy of Christ’s death.  Young children will understand how insignificant the thornbush felt, yet will delight in how even at Jesus’ most demanding time he noticed the little plant.

The illustrations by Richard Stergulz add warmth and light to what could be considered a dark time.  The personification of the thornbush seems somewhat overdone, yet the message comes across that Christ cares for all of his creations.  The story also simplifies this complicated aspect of Christ’s life, his death and resurrection, in such a way to invite discussion.  Sunday school teachers, parents, and other adults will appreciate this gentle tale as young readers absorb the message of how Jesus died, yet is alive.

Pam Webb, School Librarian, Sandpoint, Idaho


E.  Children—Conduct of life; Children—Religious life; Christian life.  l videocassette, Col., 30 min.

This video presentation brings three short stories to the pre-schooler, all centered around Jay Jay and his airplane friends.  If your child is familiar with Thomas the Train or Theodore the Tugboat, he/she will find Jay Jay a similar friend.  The first episode is called “Big Jake’s Team” and speaks to the idea of helping a friend in need.  “Revin Evan’s Day” is about appreciating someone’s hard work, and the third story, “Hero Herky,” has Herky the helicopter rescuing a stranded skier.  There are songs included in each episode and “The Bible says” applies a biblical truth to each lesson.

Although the graphics are good, ie. colorful, cute, and clever the way the airplanes talk, the storylines are rather simplistic.  There seems to be an over-abundance of talking about the problem rather than “showing” which may result in children losing interest during the storyline.

Mary McKinney, Writer, Editor, Former Teacher, Port Orchard, Washington


E.  Pandas—Fiction; Kindergarten—Fiction; First day of school—Fiction; Schools—Fiction.  unp.  Preschool—Primary.

Tom the Panda walks by the kindergarten every day with his mother and Baby.  He gazes in the windows, anxious to be old enough to join in the fun.  At home he tries to play with Mother and Father but they are busy doing the daily chores, so he plays with Baby.

Soon Tom is old enough to attend Kindergarten.  The teacher Mrs.  Polar Bear is very welcoming but Tom is afraid and clings to his parents, so Mrs.  Polar Bear invites them to stay for the day.  They are reluctant but have so much fun that the next morning, even though Tom doesn’t cling, they would like to stay.  But Kindergarten is for Tom, not for them, and they must go, however they have learned how to take time for play.

Tom Goes to Kindergarten, written by Margaret Wild and illustrated by David Legge, is an extremely sweetnatured book that speaks exactly to small children.  Tom’s conflict over being ready to go to school, but nervous about staying rings very true, and most kindergarteners will like the part where his parents want to participate but only Tom is allowed to stay.  The illustrations are beautifully colored and the characters are charmingly engaging.  Wonderful book for any child preparing to go to school for the first time.

Teresa O’Donkey, Library Media Specialist, Baymont Christian School, Scotts Valley, California

Kerry Cunningham, Librarian, Camano Island, Washington

Pam Webb, School Librarian, Sandpoint, Idaho
**Turnagain, Ptarmigan, where did you go?**

E. Ptarmigans--Fiction; Stories in rhyme. unp.

Those who delight in exploring the world of animal camouflage will rejoice in James Guenther’s *Turnagain Ptarmigan! Where did you go?* A young Alaskan girl romps through the changing seasons and landscapes of our fiftieth state in pursuit of finding the Alaskan state bird, the ptarmigan, in its changing feathers. The large print verse leads the reader with an enticing lilt to turn to the next page in search of the ever elusive ptarmigan. Those familiar with Alaskan place names will see the extra bit of humor in the double entendre of the title alone. Illustrator and Alaskan, Shannon Cartwright has outdone herself with her detailed and lavishly colored bird designs and faithfulness to her subject. Children will delight in the world of the ptarmigan’s famous ability to blend in with its changing environment as well as the discovery of how they too can blend into their environment. A page at the back of the book gives a short science and history lesson about ptarmigans, their habitat, habits, food, and how it came to be the Alaskan state bird. *Turnagain Ptarmigan!* is a must have for those interested in the far north of either Alaska or Canada.

Judy Driscoll, Retired Teacher, Poulsbo, Washington


E. Mothers--Fiction; Cats--Fiction. unp.

"Mother do you love me?" asks the young kitten. His mother’s inevitable answer is yes, even when he asks "But how can you love me when I scream and SCREAM the way you don’t like?" And mother’s wise answer, "I don’t love you all the other time just because you are not screaming,... so why should I stop loving you sometimes just because you are screaming?" As the question continues throughout the day in all the kitten’s activities, his mother’s answer remains steadfast. Written in the tone of *Mama, Do You Love Me?* by Barbara Joose, Miriam Schlein takes a light hearted yet sensitive look at this age old question in *The Way Mothers Are.* Joe Lasker’s pictures which have the feel of children’s book illustrations out of the past provide the setting for this timeless question.

Judy Driscoll, Retired Teacher, Poulsbo, Washington


E. Anger--Fiction; Rabbits--Fiction. unp. Preschool-Primary.

*When I Feel Angry* teaches children various ways of dealing with anger. The main character, a cute female bunny, sometimes becomes angry. She feels angry when she can’t draw the way she’d like to or when classmates make fun of her. She gets angry when her mother makes her stop playing to clean her room. Anger makes her feel like hitting or being mean. She knows there is a difference between feeling like you want to strike someone and actually doing it. The bunny has learned ways of coping with her anger. She can ride her bike very fast or just spend time away from the bunny who made her angry. Sometimes someone needs to change. It could be another bunny or it could be her. Some things that make her angry can’t be changed. She can get help figuring it all out by talking to an adult. Now when she gets angry, she has learned ways of handling her feelings.

Author Cornelia Maude Spelman has written an appealing story children will relate to. The personable rabbit illustrations by Nancy Cote really make the book. The relatively simple text and fun drawings combine to effectively tackle a serious topic in a non-threatening way. The first half of the book gives examples of things that make the character angry. The second half presents ways of dealing with those intense feelings in an appropriate way. Written from a secular perspective, other solutions, like praying could easily be added to the list offered. Spelman includes a note to parents making a similar point. Designed to bring about discussion, adults could learn as much about their anger management skills as children.

Elizabeth Coleman, Freelance Writer, Tumwater, Washington
BOOK REVIEWS

**CHILDREN’S FICTION**

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F. Coal mines and mining--Fiction; Fathers and sons--Fiction; Cape Breton Island (N.S.)--Fiction. unp.

Young James is following in his father’s footsteps by working in the turn of the century coal mines of Nova Scotia. It is his first day but he feels confident in being with his father who has worked the mines for twenty years. James’ father shows him how to dig for coal until it is lunchtime. James finds that his mother has packed a few daisies in his pail to commemorate his first day. After sharing their lunch, there is a cave-in and James’ father is knocked out. After he comes to, they try to dig their way out and other miners come to their aid. Soon they are headed home with the understanding that they will be back, because this is their job.

**Boy of the Deeps** is loosely based on the experiences of author and illustrator Ian Wallace’s grandfather, who was a coal miner in England. The full color illustrations are rather dark and foreboding and give the reader a good sense of what it is like to spend one’s days underground in a mine. Even though the story ends happily it leaves the reader questioning the quality of James’ life and wondering if he will survive a lifetime of working in the dangerous mines. This book could open up some good discussions with children about other children, past and present, who had very different lifestyles from their own, but the subject may be somewhat dark for younger readers.

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F. Dogs--Fiction; Rottweiler dog--Fiction; Ranch life--West (U.S.)--Fiction; Humorous stories; West (U.S.)--Fiction. 131 p. Elementary (Middle school).

Hank the Cowdog is the Head of Ranch Security on a ranch in Texas and takes his role very seriously. His job is to investigate every visitor and mysterious event that occurs behind the borders of his domain along with his faithless sidekick, Drover. In this latest adventure in the series by John R. Erickson, Hank and Drover check out a visiting dog on the ranch, which they initially assume is a bear or a gorilla, but is a rottweiler. Hank is sent by Slim the Cowboy to intervene when Bruiser goes after a baby fawn. He is successful in distracting Bruiser, but then pushes his luck when Bruiser is chained in the back of the pickup and Hank begins taunting and insulting the rottweiler, erroneously assuming he’ll never see Bruiser again. Bruiser’s new mission in life is to seek revenge against Hank and thus the novel begins.

The charm of these books is the subtle, dry humor of a story told from the perspective of a dog who perceives himself as the embodiment of every shining, glorious doggy virtue, but is in reality, not. The language is pure fun as when he gives the following directive to sidekick, Drover, ‘Back to the porch, son. Go to Turbo Five and don’t speak to any strangers. Let’s hit it!’ “Once safely on the porch, “I went straight into a Code Three Barking Sequence.” Gerald L. Holmes provides pen and ink drawings throughout the book that capture the characters’ thoughts wonderfully in their facial expressions. Hank is a character whose adventures you will want to share again and again.

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F. Jesus Christ--Miracles--Fiction; Conduct of life--Fiction; Fathers and sons--Fiction; Demonic possession--Fiction; Bible. N.T.--History of Biblical events--Fiction. 113 p.


F. Moses (Biblical leader)--Fiction; Fear--Fiction. 116 p.


F. Jesus Christ--Miracles--Fiction; Brothers and sisters--Fiction; Raising of Jairus’ daughter (Miracle)--Fiction; Jews--Palestine--Fiction. 111 p.

KidWitness Tales is a new series from Heritage Builders, a ministry of Focus on the Family. These stories have fictional children as the main characters and follow them through real events from the Old and New Testaments. Written by different Christian authors, the intent of the series is to “help kids become excited about reading the Bible on their own.” While character development is fairly limited, and some readers may be bothered by the creative license taken by the authors, these three titles are successful in bringing to life Bible stories that may be inaccessible to some children. At the end of each book is a section called Letters From Our Readers. The questions these letters cover a range from, “Is this story true? If so, where do I find it (in the Bible)?” to “Why is there so much gross stuff in this story?” The combination of serious and humorous answers further engage readers in the Bible stories and encourage reflection and discussion.

**Crazy Jacob** retells the story of the demon-possessed man found in Mark 4:35 - 5:20 and Luke 8:22 - 39. Jim Ware writes from the perspective of the demon-possessed man’s young son. This fictional character, Andrew, watches as his beloved father gradually changes from a skilled boatbuilder to a naked, violent madman. Andrew’s only hope is a man called Jesus, who people say has healing powers. In **Trouble Times Ten**, Dave Lambert revisits the land of Egypt during the time of Moses through the eyes of a young Jew named Ben. Ben’s biggest fear is water. When he was quite little he almost drowned. As plague after plague comes to Egypt, however, he becomes frightened of things he never imagined before. Ben’s biggest challenge comes when he must follow his family and cross the Red Sea to freedom. For a boy terrified of even walking near the river, passing between the huge towers of water proves to be an almost insurmountable obstacle.

**The Worst Wish** retells the story of Jairus and his daughter. Lissa Halls Johnson creates a fictional brother, Seth, and builds tension by imagining a very poor relationship between he and his sister Tabitha. In fact, things are so bad that Seth wishes Tabitha were dead. Seth and his friends trick Tabitha into drinking a broth into which they have put a lizard, and dirt, and all sorts of disgusting things, and somehow this makes Seth finally feel that he has gotten the upper hand. But when Tabitha suddenly falls deathly ill, Seth blames himself and guilt about his behavior towards his sister tortments him. A strange rabbit named Jesus visits the region and Seth’s father, Jairus, believes that this controversial rabbit has the power to heal his daughter and also his son’s troubled spirit.

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F. Gymnastics--Fiction; Guardian angels--Fiction; Angels--Fiction; Brothers and sisters--Fiction; Death--Fiction. 88 p.

F. Guardian angels--Fiction; Angels--Fiction; Christian life--Fiction. 86 p.

Gymnast Rebecca Browner seriously trains to be an Olympic contender. However, widowed Mrs. Browner is having trouble getting sponsors for Rebecca. Rebecca’s brother (T.J.) feels sad, alone and neglected because of their nomadic lifestyle. Enter the three Angels from the TV show, Touched by an Angel. A Delicate Balance retells an episode in which the Angels must help for Rebecca. Rebecca’s brother (T.J.) feels sad, alone and neglected because of their nomadic lifestyle. Enter the three Angels from the TV show, Touched by an Angel. A Delicate Balance retells an episode in which the Angels must help Rebecca recover after her fall from the 


F. Mothers and daughters--Fiction; Sisters--Fiction; Death--Fiction; English language--Spelling--Fiction; Guardian angels--Fiction; Angels--Fiction. 86 p.

The scene is set in the high school hallway as two sisters meet. Annie and Kate are complete opposites. Annie loves words and recites from her treasured dictionary; Kate loves basketball and is the star of the team. Although they are very different, their love for each other is very evident. They are truly each other’s best friends.

Great grizzly wilderness : a story of the Pacific rain forest, by Audrey Fraggalosch; illustrated by Donald G. Eberhart. (Soundprints habitat series.) LCCN 99044597. Norwalk, Ct.: Soundprints, 2000. HBB, 1568998384, $15.95.

F. Grizzly bear--Fiction; Bears--Fiction. 27 p.

A grizzly bear briefly wakes from hibernation to give birth and nurse her two baby cubs in the rain forests of the Pacific Northwest. Audrey Fraggalosch takes the reader on a year and a half journey in the lives of the mother grizzly bear and her cubs. As we read about the bears exploring their habitat, searching for food, meeting dangers, and hibernating, a picture of a unique environment, the temperate rain forest of the Pacific Northwest, is vividly painted. Illustrator Donald G. Everhart does this unique area justice with his detailed and colorful paintings.

Although Great Grizzly Wilderness is a work of fiction in its story line, the text is factual and well researched with regards to the environment, climate, and habits of the grizzly bear. Included for readers wishing to learn more is a map indicating the area of the Pacific rainforest as well as a section with more details about the rain forest, and addresses to write for additional information about the Koeye River Valley that is depicted in the story.

The end of the book includes two foldout pages with small paintings of each animal native to the rain forest mentioned in the text of the book. This book represents a good introduction to an environment with which many are not familiar.

Doodlebugs

Great grizzly wilderness

How do you spell faith?


F. Mothers and daughters--Fiction; Sisters--Fiction; Death--Fiction; English language--Spelling--Fiction; Guardian angels--Fiction; Angels--Fiction. 86 p.

The scene is set in the high school hallway as two sisters meet. Annie and Kate are complete opposites. Annie loves words and recites from her treasured dictionary; Kate loves basketball and is the star of the team. Although they are very different, their love for each other is very evident. They are truly each other’s best friends.

One Friday afternoon Annie is at school taking the test for the Regional Spelling Bee and Kate is off for the big game. Annie is unaware of what has happened until the test is over, but soon discovers that her whole world has fallen apart. In a tragic accident, Kate has been killed. Now Annie has lost her best friend and is left with only her mother. A mother she has never been able to connect with before.

How Do You Spell Faith? is based on the TV series Touched by an Angel. Tess, Monica, and Andrew are angels in the book who help both Annie and her mother cope with their loss. Monica Hall has taken an unfortunate situation and shown how our faith in God and His love, he can mend hurts and heal broken relationships. This book shows a beautiful and accepting relationship between sisters, and shows parents how they can overcome favoritism.


Lenny’s father has gone on foot to fight in World War II, leaving Lenny and his mother to survive in wartime London. Before leaving he gives Lenny a medal with a lion and a unicorn on it. After a bombing raid destroys the neighbor’s house, Lenny’s mother decides that he must go to live in the country.

After traveling on a train, Lenny and three girls, Joyce, Patsy, and Winnie, arrive at the estate of Lady De Vass. The country seems strange and Lenny is lonely and frightened. He also feels different because he is Jewish. No one at his new school is kind to him and he has trouble adjusting. But one day he discovers a hidden garden on the estate that contains a beautiful unicorn statue. He also discovers Mick, a young man there who is friendly to him. But his mother’s letters stop coming and he decides to run away to London to find her. On his way out, he thinks he hears a lion coming to devour him and hides in the garden of the unicorn. Ultimately he must decide if he will always be afraid of the “lions” of the world or if he will be brave like the unicorn.

Anyone who has ever been homesick or lonely or felt out of place will identify with Lenny and his fears in The Lion and the Unicorn. Shirley Hughes has done a marvelous job of conveying to the reader Lenny’s sense of isolation and fear. Her use of the analogies of the fearsome lion and the courageous unicorn are very well done and her illustrations are beautifully warm and vibrant. A lovely book to read aloud with children and discuss not only an important moment in 20th century history but the fears common to us all as well.


F. Honesty--Fiction; Tardiness-Fiction; Afro-Americans--Fiction. unp.

In this next release of the Little Bill books, Little Bill gets caught in a big lie. He has permission from his parents to ride his bike to the pool to practice with his friend for the upcoming swim meet, but he has to be home on time for an early dinner.

Little Bill rides his bike by some friends who are playing basketball, and he decides to stop and play with them for awhile. Finally, at seven in the evening, Little Bill realizes he is very late and he knows he’s going to be in trouble. With a little of encouragement from his friends, Little Bill considers excuses he can give for not obeying. His parents meet him at the door and demand to know where he’s been. Little Bill creates a story about getting into a car with a stranger, to explain his behavior. His dad decides to call the police and Little Bill tells the truth. ‘To punish him, his parents have him write out a copy of the story of “The Boy Who Cried Wolf.” Little Bill realizes he wants his parents

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to trust him and after a moment they tell him they do.

Bill Cosby has written a light hearted book about a little boy who tells a lie and draws a parallel to "The Boy Who Cried Wolf." The illustrations by Varnette P. Honeywood are simple and colorful.

In the front of the book, a letter to parents is included by child psychiatry specialist, Dr. Alvin Poussaint. He endorses the educational punishment, and explains that since Little Bill’s parents maintained their confidence in him, he will try harder to live up to their expectations in the future.

**Debby Willett, Freelance Writer, Canyon, Texas**

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Three days before New Year’s Eve, the meeting of the Cúl-de-sac Kids comes to order. Stacy Henry has a great idea for resolutions. She would like each member to select one fruit of the Spirit and impress in that area during the year. All nine members of the club think the idea is cool except Jason Birchall. No one can figure out a way to help him join the fun. At first Stacy thinks her desire to become more loving doesn’t include Jason, but quickly realizes loving means loving everyone. Putting her resolution into action, Stacy helps Jason when he finds a dirty stray dog. He would like to keep the dog, but isn’t sure his mom will say yes. Perhaps if he and Stacy get the dog really clean, then his mom will let him. When Stacy points out that he is showing kindness to the dog, he realizes this fruit business isn’t so bad. At the club meeting on New Year’s Eve, Jason admits Stacy’s idea wasn’t dumb after all and announces he’s picked all the fruits of the Spirit to work on during the year.

**Mystery Mutt** by Beverly Lewis is an entertaining way to present the fruits of the Spirit to children. As each fruit is listed and then selected during the first meeting, a brief explanation of each one is given. Each member of the club is a nice kid, even Jason who initially doesn’t seem like one. Smaller lessons are interspersed with the theme. When Jason says Stacy’s idea is dumb, another club member, Eric Hagel tells him, ‘Don’t say ‘dumb.’ It’s not cool.” Black and white text illustrations by Janet Huntington add depth to the story. A good introduction or review to the fruits of the Spirit.

Elizabeth Coleman, Freelance Writer, Tumwater, Washington

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Budding artist and Three Cousins Detective Club member, Timothy Dawson made something out of papier-mache for everyone on his Christmas list this year. Timothy carefully hid all the gifts, especially the snake for his grandfather. Now they have a home with him and plenty of adventures to keep them busy like The Mystery of the Empty Safe, a recent addition to The Boxcar Children series created by Gertrude Chandler Warner. The Alden children are hired to plan parties in a wealthy neighborhood, where every house was built with its own safe. But at each home where the Aldens are busily entertaining, someone breaks into the safe and steals its valuable contents.

The children take on the task of discovering the thief. Is it Cassandra the Great, the mercurial magician who is upset that the Aldens are infringing on her business? After all, the highlight of her shows is a trick where she magically causes the items in a safe to disappear. Is it the gruff Mr. Woodruff, who happens to be good at fixing things—like the locks on safes? As they sift through possible clues, the young sleuths struggle against jumping to conclusions. They decide to set a trap at their next party and help police nab the crook, whose identity surprises everyone.

As in other selections in the series, the Boxcar Children demonstrate timeless Judeo-Christian values without specifically referring to religion. They treat others with respect. They are polite to adults, friendly to children, and helpful to those facing misfortune. They are also a resourceful bunch, making the most of their time and possessions.

Children will enjoy an engaging mystery and the detailed descriptions of the crafts, refreshments, and decorations that the Boxcar Children choose in planning the parties. This book is a good addition to any home or school library.

Sharon Berg, Freelance Writer, Bellevue, Nebraska

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**The mystery of the painted snake**

Elizabeth Coleman, Freelance Writer, Tumwater, Washington
The Secret of the Ghostly Hot Rod has a number of unbelievable plot points. For example, Jeremiah is a green leprechaun like character who is created by the Henry’s scientist friend. Jeremiah is not actually human, but described as “a bundle of nervous energy.” He randomly appears in various sizes on computer monitors, watch faces, and television screens. The reader is asked to suspend their disbelief a number of times and the solution to the mystery is rather farfetched. Sean and Melissa are good role models, sticking firmly to their beliefs and trying to help their community. They are siblings, however, and they have moments of slight disagreement. Overall, they get along and seem to enjoy each other’s company. Mildly suspenseful, the title is the scariest part of the book. Young readers will be entertained with Bill Myers’ successful combination of comedy and kid-friendly writing.

Elizabeth Coleman, Freelance Writer, Tumwater, Washington


F. Dogs—Fiction; Animals—Infancy—Fiction; Diaries—Fiction. 60 p.


F. Cats—Fiction; Pride and vanity—Fiction. 60 p.


F. Turtles—Fiction; Self-acceptance—Fiction. 59 p.

Spunky introduces himself and his life. That life includes his family, the Dobson’s. The children, Tracy and Mark, are fun, but Mark is the special one because he’s the one who takes care of Spunky. Mark makes Spunky see a walk to the park and there they find lots of other kids to play with. Spunky wants a ball small enough that he can carry. He looks around and finds a small blue ball in a sand box. Mark teaches him a lesson about not taking things that don’t belong to him, and Spunky returns the ball to the sand box. One Sunday morning Spunky does not want to be left behind, so after the Dobsons leave for church, Spunky looks for and finds a way to escape the backyard. All he wants to do is to be with his family. He uses his nose to find them and causes a mild disturbance at church. His adventures are not yet over, though. The Dobsons take Spunky with them to a farm where he outdoes himself in establishing his presence. Before long fall comes and Tracy and Mark return to school. That is when Spunky has his most exciting adventures!

Who knew finding a home would be so difficult? Mittens is one of five kittens born to Tabby. Her birth home becomes her late home after she and her siblings begin to break things in their zestful playing. The little girl, Cindy, helps carry them to the animal shelter where they will find new homes. Though it is scary there, Mittens has hope that a new home awaits her. Before long, Dorothy adopts her and brings the kitten home. The new home has the added interest of a puppy, Tabby. After school has started in the fall, Dorothy and her parents go on a picnic and bring Mittens and Tabby along. The kitten decides to teach Dorothy a lesson by hiding from her, which only creates a new problem for Mittens—that of being lost. Mittens’ life then changes in ways that she could not expect, and after awhile, she finds herself ministering to the residents in a rest home.

Pogo hates being a turtle. In fact, he hates it so much he spends half of his young life looking for ways to become different. While playing with his friends in the water, they decided to tease some ducks by nipping at their feet which dangle below. When the mother duck leads her babies away, Pogo looks to other amusements to add excitement to his life. Even though he knows it is dangerous to be around the hooks thrown by fishermen, Pogo enjoys tricking them by tugging on their submerged lines. Boredom soon gives way to other games and he talks his friends into sliding down a slope, just as he saw some boys doing. The problem with that, is the turtles can’t carry enough water up the slope to make it slippery enough, and all the turtles soon tire. Soon a thunderstorm comes along, and Pogo and his friends look for new adventures. Poor Pogo. Everything he wants to do is slowed down by his shell. That is until he meets up with another critter also looking for adventure.

Spunky’s Diary, The Impatient Turtle, and The Prodigal Cat by Janette Oke are charming first chapter books for young children. The sentences are short, the words are simple, and the books are full of action. Each chapter is a lesson on what should and should not be done. Nancy Munger’s illustrations are detailed and colorful, with a bit of whimsy. The covers are treated to withstand long term use. Children ages six to ten are the target audience, but I think younger children will enjoy the stories just as much. They are great read-to books, and are recommended for every library.

Deborah Willett, Freelance Writer, Canyon, Texas


F. Kings, queens, rulers, etc.—Fiction; Princesses—Fiction. 47 p.

Katherine Paterson is an author who can truly spin a yarn. The Wide-awake Princess is just such a story. At first the reader thinks this might be another sleeping beauty variation only to
discover that it is quite different and with a much deeper message.

Miranda is a princess born to a King and Queen who are bored with everything and have lost touch with their subjects, the peasants who farm the land and provide the basis for all the luxury in the palace. Even the nobles only spend their days arguing about useless things. But Miranda is different. Her godmother has given her the special gift of being wide-awake during all her waking hours. As Miranda grows up, she is interested in everything, never bored, and always exploring the world around her. After Miranda’s parents, the King and Queen die, the nobles of the land refuse to allow Miranda to assume the throne. Miranda is after all a girl and still young. At age twelve Miranda decides to go out into the kingdom and explore what the world has to offer. Miranda becomes a friend of the peasants who do not know who she is, and soon helps them to appreciate the value of what they already have in order to make changes in a way of life. Eventually the peasants rise up peacefully and take back the kingdom with Miranda as their leader.

Katherine Paterson has woven into the story of a princess, the wonder of learning to find resources within you to make change come about. _The Wide-awake Princess_ is a peaceful revolution and a polite feminist statement making both points quite effectively without needless rhetoric. The art is pencil with watercolor and a pleasure to look at.

Barbara Wall, School Library System Director, Orange-Ulster BOCES, Monroe, New York

The yellow star: the legend of King Christian X of Denmark, by Carmen Agra Deedy; illustrated by Henri Sorensen. LCCN 00010602. Atlanta, Ga.: Peachtree, 2000. HBB, 1561452084, $16.95.

F. Christian X, King of Denmark, 1870-1947--Fiction; Denmark--History--German occupation, 1940-1945--Fiction. unp.

_The Yellow Star_ does a superb job of making dark subject matter—the Holocaust—accessible to young readers. Readers first meet King Christian as he rides his horse through the streets of Nazi-occupied Denmark. When the order is given that a Nazi flag must fly above his palace, he defies the order. When the Nazis demand that all Jews wear a yellow star, the king ponders what to do, and gazing at the night sky, is inspired by the millions of stars overhead. The next morning he rides through the streets with a yellow star sewn on his jacket. The Danish people see by example what they are to do and overnight everyone begins wearing the yellow star.

“And once again, in the country of Denmark, there were only Danes.” Henri Sorensen’s wonderful double-page illustrations draw viewers into the events of this terrible time in a way that informs without terrifying. Close-up portraits and street scenes depict the warmth and the strength of the Danish people going about their daily lives. In contrast, dark tones dramatize the confrontation between the Nazi commander and the king.

Carmen Agra Deedy’s author’s note is an important part of the book as it explains what is known to be true about this legend. It also makes clear the moral issue that is truly the most important idea to bring away from the book: “What if we could follow that example today against violators of human rights?”

Lillian Heytvelt, Public Librarian, Pomeroy, Washington


Children familiar with Focus on the Family’s Adventures in Odyssey radio series and videos will love this new addition: The Adventures in Odyssey Bible, a New King James paperback featuring their favorite characters on a bright red cover.

Designed to teach children how to study for themselves, and to relate the Word to their lives, the Odyssey Bible enables them to move quickly through Old and New Testaments using a reference-linked study system. In thirty-two pages of brightly-colored comics, Odyssey characters delight readers with engaging stories. Fifty memory verses appear in special little boxes. Extra teaching comes through Whit’s Wisdom columns and from miniature Odyssey characters, who appear 100 times to clarify the Scriptures.

Focus on the Family has created a Bible children will treasure. Its format and illustrations entice, motivate, and instruct. One reference link summarizes the story of Nadab and Abihu in Leviticus, “To meet a brother and sister who were jealous, fly to page 190.” The readers zoom to the next reference and learn to help their siblings do what God wants—avoid sinning against Him and getting each other into trouble. In one comic insert, two brothers on stilts learn the importance of obedience.

Children will grasp powerful understandings from a text with high reader identity content. Nearly 1700 pages long, The Adventures in Odyssey Bible is easy to handle. It will become a dear friend, and youngsters will exclaim with affection, "This is my Bible!"

Rhonda Marie Lackey, Writer/Substitute Teacher/Former Librarian, Tukwila, Washington


221.9'505. Bible stories--O.T. 72 p.

Heather Amery has chosen twenty-two stories from the Old Testament of the Bible for her retelling in The Usborne Children's Bible: The Old Testament. These stories are surely some of the best-loved and most important stories from the Bible. Our Christian history as told first through the stories of the Old Testament is one that is rich with interesting people living in God’s world. Each story and each character is represented with reverence and understanding in the easier language of our times. As a means of becoming familiar with the stories of the Bible, this is an excellent venue. After hearing or reading these retellings, children will certainly be encouraged to read the originals in the Bible. Although worded and formatted for use with children, adults will enjoy the story essence in such treasures as Noah and his Ark and Joseph and his wonderful coat. The modern language does not take away from the beauty of the Biblical stories.

Illustrator Linda Edwards has provided simple, colorful pictures for each story. Most of the illustrations are small, although for several stories there are full-page panels. Each page has a border unique to that story. Joseph and his wonderful coat is bordered with multi-colored diagonal stripes reminiscent of that wonderful coat. Moses leads his people out of Egypt includes a full page illustration of one of the plagues God delivered upon Egypt prior to Pharaoh permitting the Israelites to leave with Moses. Full of detail without becoming cluttered, this illustration is bound to spark discussion of this important event in our Christian history. This retelling of loved Bible stories is a pleasure to read and view.

Barbara Wall, School Library System Director, Orange-Ulster BOCES, Monroe, New York


231.7'65. Creation; God. unp.

This story begins once upon a time when there was no time. There was only darkness and the waters of the deep and a father and son who watched over them. The book follows the days of creation as the son speaks it into being and the father approvingly looks on. There is great excitement as each new, beautiful creation is added. When all the work is finished and everything is perfect, both the father and son stop and rest. They admire the work of their creation.

Nikki Grimes has found a new and creative way to tell the story of creation in At Break of Day. The book has a bit of the traditional culture of storytelling. The scene is set and you listen intently as the story unfolds. Paul Morin has created some exquisite illustrations. The pages are covered with colors and textures. The sun seems to almost be burning on the page. It reflects a beautiful combination of styles. This book would make a delightful addition for young and old.

Marcia Snyder, Librarian, Missoula, Montana

Love one another: the last days of Jesus, retold by Lauren Thompson; illustrated by Elizabeth Veyhara. LCCN 99025157. New York: Scholastic, 2000. HBB, 0590318306, $15.95.

232.9'7. Jesus Christ--Resurrection; Jesus Christ--Biography--Passion Week; Easter. unp.

Throughout his ministry, Jesus teaches people to love God and each other. Crowds are drawn to him and his words. Jesus continues to teach the crowds, his followers, and his disciples even as his own death looms imminent. Although his disciples do not comprehend what is coming, Jesus continues to love and teach them. After his trial, Jesus is crucified at the crowd’s insistence urging. Mary arrives at the tomb, and finds the tomb empty. She inquires of a man nearby, “Someone has taken our dear teacher away. Can you tell me where?” When he speaks, she knows he is alive rather than in the tomb. Later disciples gather with Jesus, and
learn that they will now teach others as Jesus taught them to love God and one another. The author, Lauren Thompson, shares the Easter story of Christ's ministry, crucifixion, and resurrection in plan language that follows the biblical accounts. She reveals in the author's note that to her "the heart of the Easter miracle is this: No sorrow is so great that love cannot heal it." Her retelling of the story closely reflects scripture. The oil on canvas paintings by Elizabeth Uyehara are vibrant and moving. They communicate the essence of each scene, and portray the crucifixion in realistic, but loving terms. One departure from scripture is that Jesus is painted on the cross with rope binding him there. The allusion, the lack of scriptural pearl of wisdom, has been modified to suit the artist's vision. The introduction to this appealing book encourages prayer for Bibleless peoples. Originally published in 1986, the 1994 revision notes progress in the translation efforts for some of the languages featured. (Some Scriptures are now available in several of these languages. Before her recent death from cancer, Lewis had hoped to proceed with a second book, describing twenty-six more from among the more than 3000 people groups still without the Scriptures. Her partner plans to carry on with that vision.) These snapshots of the lives of people around the world remind readers that God loves people from all cultures. The task of translating the Bible into remaining languages is immense. Readers who have Internet access may wish to check translation progress in the various languages using the online Ethnologue produced by the Summer Institute of Linguistics (www.sil.org/ethnologue/).

Donna W. Bowling, Graduate Institute of Applied Linguistics Library; Dallas, Texas


264: 23. Nature—Religious aspects—Christianity; Praise of God; Nature—Songs and music; Creation—Songs and music; Hymns. unp. The hymn "All Things Bright and Beautiful" by Cecil Frances Alexander is a beloved and well-known celebration of God's creation. The hymn joyfully recounts God's handiwork as displayed in plants, animals, and the earth itself, and then reminds the listener that God also gave us eyes to see and lips to tell "how great is God Almighty who had made all things well." This well-known and beloved hymn is whimsically illustrated by Preston McDaniels, All Things Bright and Beautiful is a wonderful tool for sharing God's creation and power with young children. As in God of the Sparrow, the first book in the series, the illustrations are fantastical and fanciful and will undoubtedly be attractive to young children. Humor is evident on most every page. However, unlike God of the Sparrow, this hymn makes for a very straight-forward picture book. Its clarity of point and directness of theme allow even a very young listener to understand its message. Music and words to the hymn are included.

Kerri A. Cunningham, Librarian, Camano Island School, Washington


266. Missions; Bible—Translating. 32 p. From Arapesh to Zuni: A Book of Bibleless Peoples is an alphabet book with a difference. From among thousands of people groups without the Bible in their "heart language," twenty-six people groups from various countries on six continents are illustrated and briefly described—one for each letter of the alphabet. Each letter page features a three-inch-wide column with simple text by Karen Lewis describing elements of the culture and climate of the people group pictured in an eight-inch by 8 1/2-inch full-color illustration. Alice Erath Roder based her uncluttered paintings on photographs focusing upon people from each area. Beneath the name of each people group is a guide to correct pronunciation of that name. Each page ends with the refrain that "The ... people do not have the Bible in their own language." A world map at the end of the book shows the location and population of each of the people groups featured.

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Donna W. Bowling, Graduate Institute of Applied Linguistics Library; Dallas, Texas

300's—Social Sciences


Mountain Town is the third book in Bonnie and Arthur Geisert's series of books (River Town and Prairie Town) illustrating the lifestyles of differing types of towns for young readers. The clever illustrations cycle the reader from winter to winter through a year in small town in the mountains. The book does a nice job of depicting life in a rural American town that is mainly dependent on mining and lumber for income. The finely detailed illustrations are extremely fun to look at and readers will be able to see “mini-stories” happening—from a chimney that is slowly being built, to a blue car that shows up all over town, to an attempted bank robbery. Great book for reinforcing younger readers' social studies lessons.

Teresa O'Donley, Library Media Specialist, Baymonte Christian School, Scotts Valley, California
for children; to be read in short sittings rather than all at once, and used as a guide and resource for further exploration of the world of the blind. The book contains resources at the end for further study, and is indexed.

Judy Driscoll, Retired Teacher, Poulsbo, Washington


371.1. Teachers; Occupations. unp.

In this gentle follow-up to What is a Scientist? author Barbara Lehn suggests many possible answers to the question "What is a teacher?". A teacher encourages, demonstrates, never gives up, shares, etc. Each attribute is wonderfully illustrated by lovely photographs taken by Carol Krauss. The photographs have brightly colored borders that are very appealing to the eye and portray children teaching others. At the end of the book are two pages summing up all the things that teachers do.

This charming book not only reinforces in a hearted description of what teachers do.


398.2. Fairy tales; Folklore--West Indies. unp.

Virginia Hamiltonís book, The Girl Who Spun Gold, is her retelling of the story of a cruel little man who helps a woman spin fibers into gold, often known by the German title of the best known version of this story, "Rumpelstiltskin." Hamiltonís version is taken from a West Indian variant, called "Mr. Timman" (meaning "little man"), which she took from a collection of stories by Pamela Colman Smith, published by R. H. Russell, New York, in 1899. Smith used a difficult-to-read black dialect, which Hamilton translated for her story into a simpler style that she says "is easy to read aloud and is a truer reflection of a lifting West Indian speech pattern."

The bookís illustrations, painstakingly done using a four-color process overpainted in gold, with gold leaf borders, look as if they were simple to do, but the illustrators (Caldecott-medals winners Leo and Diane Dillon) say they werenít. [Although we knew] the difficulty of painting with metallic paint as well as the difficulty of reproducing gold, we still chose to use it, for the story itself revolves around the concept of gold."

The human faces (including main characters Queen Quashiba and Big King) are strong and attractive, while the villain, Lit mañ Bittyam, is evil-looking, with yellow eyes, pointed teeth, and a long pointed tail. The costumes and detailed backgrounds add to the strong West Indian flavor already present in the story through Hamiltonís use of colloquial speech. The Dillons and Hamilton have collaborated on other books before, but this is their first picture book together.

Betty Winslow, Bowling Green Christian Academy, Bowling Green, Ohio


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Betty Winslow, Bowling Green Christian Academy, Bowling Green, Ohio


398.2'096623'02. Folklore--Mali. unp. (Preschool).

The hatseller is filled with happiness. He loves to sell hats to everyone in his own and neighboring villages. He makes different kinds and colors of hats: the wide-brimmed dibri hat that offers shade on hot summer days, and the close fitting fugulan caps that keep the rain away. Because he is so happy, when he enters the villages the children run to him and sing along with him. He works extra hard for a big festival they are celebrating and forgets to eat. On his way to town BaMusa becomes so weak from hunger that he has to stop and rest under the shade of the mango tree. There are many monkeys in that mango tree, and they take all his hats and fall asleep high up in the tree. How is BaMusa ever going to get his hats back?

The Legend of the Kite by Jiang Hong Chen is beautifully illustrated by the author in the classic style of Chinese painting. Medieval China is depicted with detail, grace, and humor as the backdrop for this typical fairy tale of star-crossed lovers. The text is spare and, curiously, the present day part of the story is written in present tense; the more commonly used past tense being reserved for that part of the story that takes place in the past. The last several pages provide readers with a map of the People’s Republic of China, some facts about China and a page on the place of kites in Chinese culture. The pronunciation for several Chinese words used in the text is provided, as well as a translation. This is a gentle book that is amenable to a variety of uses from art class, to social studies, to storytime.

Pamela A. Todd, Librarian/English Teacher, Chalcedon Christian School, Cumming, Georgia

Happy New Year, everywhere! by Arlene Erlbach; illustrated by Sharon Lane Holm. LCCN 99057335. Brookfield, Ct.: Millbrook Press, 2000. HBB, 0761317074, $22.90.

394.364. New Year; Holidays. 48 p.

"Bón Aneé!" This is "Happy New Year" in Creole, one of Haiti’s two official languages. In India, it’s "Sal Mubarak" (sal muh-BAH-rahk), in Greece it’s “Chronia Fólla” (KRON-ya pole-AH) and in Germany it’s “Frohes Neues Jahr” (FROY-es NOY-es Yahr). From Belgium to Viet Nam, author Arlene Erlbach presents delightful details covering twenty countries around the world and how children celebrate New Year’s Eve in those countries. The information is attractively arranged on double-page spreads, including the date for the New Year, the special greeting and how to pronounce it, and a light-hearted description of that country’s celebration traditions. A small world map appears in the upper left corner of each double-page spread showing the location of the country being featured.

A special bonus are the craft and activity ideas for each country’s New Year traditions. For instance, Belgium children complete a New Year’s letter to their parents in which they express their gratitude and include their promises for the new year. They decorate these letters with drawings, stickers and glitter, and on New Year’s Day, each child stands on a chair and reads the letter to his or her parents “to show them how much they are appreciated.” Some activities to be aware of include Germany (a fortune telling game), and India (lighting lamps to invite Lakshmi, India’s “goddess of wealth and prosperity”). However, the cultural information is interesting and can be used to compare or contrast with our own traditions in the U.S. Delightful illustrations by Sharon Lane Holm appear on every page, done in a clear style using pen and watercolor, adding lots of charm to this well-researched book.

H.K. Swanson Gollnick, Writer, Speaker & Teacher (Marion Independent Schools), Marion, Iowa

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When the monkeys throw mangoes down at BaMusa he decides to eat some and get his strength back. Now he can think clearly! BaMusa’s clever and funny antics finally trick
the monkeys into throwing their hats back at him. He picks them up and hurries to the festival where he is able to sell all of his hats.

The story is simple and filled with fun and unusual words. Some meanings are obvious, and others are given. The illustrations are colorful and humorous, becoming as important to the story as the words. The Author’s Note at the end of the book introduces the author/illustrator, Baba Wague Diakite, who explains the tradition of hat-making and the life lessons one learns from this simple story, The Hat Seller and the Monkeys.

Mary McKinney, Writer, Editor, Former Teacher, Port Orchard, Washington


The fables of Aeop seek to teach virtues that will make life better for those who choose to practice them. Loyalty, gratitude, kindness, and modesty are some of the values common to Aeop. Fables of Aeop is a collection of thirteen fables. The clever fox and the foolish crow, the vain peacock who learns a lesson, the little mouse who helps a lion are a few of the memorable characters found in this collection of fables.

Tom Lynch brings a fresh new-life to these tales. He has adapted the text to a crisp, one-page dialogue. Each one is precise and to the point with the lesson spelled out at the conclusion. So remember… Lynch illustrates these well-loved tales with brilliant and colorful fabric collages. This book is a great example of how children could illustrate their own stories with collage.

Marcia Snyder, Librarian, Missoula, Montana

400's—Language


In the opening years of the nineteenth century, the people of France were enthralled with the enigma of Egypt’s ancient writing was to decipher Egyptian language—Writing, Hieroglyphic; Egyptologists. unp.

In the opening years of the nineteenth century, the people of France were enthralled with the enigma of Egypt’s ancient writing. James Rumford’s text is deceptively simple, but perfectly suited to convey the wonder and determination of Champollion and the mystery of the writing he deciphered. His pen and watercolor illustrations are clear and inviting, but the real delight are the hieroglyphics sprinkled within the text like a rebus. Like young Champollion, children will be fascinated with these little pictures whose meanings are made clear in the text and sidebars. With the return to classical sequences of study, one problem has been the dearth of attractive, yet informative resources for the younger elementary grades. Seeker of Knowledge is both with the added bonus of a literary style and a tone that conveys a love of the subject.

Pamela A. Todd, Librarian/English Teacher, Chalcedon Christian School, Cumming, Georgia

500’s—Natural Sciences & Mathematics


Large print, bright colorful illustrations, and photographs will encourage both adults and children to try Sally Hewitt’s Nature for Fun Projects. Divided into six sections, the book contains interesting projects that will teach young readers more about the world they live in. Beginning with the weather, Hewitt goes on to cover plants and wildlife living in rivers, ponds, and seashore, the backyard, life cycles, woods and meadows, and our changing seasons. In the weather section Hewitt describes how to make an easy barometer using a balloon stretched over the top of a jar. Some of the river and seashore projects would require access to the appropriate natural area, but other projects in the section could be done anywhere. In the woods and meadows section Hewitt gives clear directions for making leaf rubbings and a sketchbook of flower pictures. If you don’t have access to a meadow many of these projects could be done in a yard or park.

Clear, basic directions accompany the projects. Special signs tell the reader when an adult is needed. Yellow warning signs lets you know when special care must be taken. For example, never look straight at the sun and never collect shells with live creatures inside. The glossary at the back of the book contains additional information on some of the words used in the book. There is also a good index.

The photography of Roger Vlitos and illustrations by Tom Kenyon, Stuart Squires, and Mike Atkinson are combined to produce a delightful book with great visual appeal. This would make a good one or two year natural science program for schools or homeschool moms. It would also be a good book for parents to take on vacation or use on those days when the children can’t find anything to do.

Barbara Bryden, Freelance Writer, Olympia, Washington


A book for children, but don’t be surprised if adults linger! The twenty-six alphabet based riddles provide mystery and puzzles to solve. Each double-page layout includes DuBosque’s clever illustrations that melt into Joyce’s text. Joyce’s earlier Alphabet Riddles (1998) gets further attention here as the passages slip into rhyme. The book’s pleasing layout and graphics in bright color place this playful approach to learning a sure hit with children. Primary grade teachers can utilize the title both with individual children who need extra attention, and in a group setting in creating phonemic awareness.

The author’s experience of childhood dyslexia has created sensitivity and real help to make sense of letters, sounds and words. Children will likely so enjoy the experience that they won’t realize they are growing in phonemic awareness. Highly recommended for private purchase and in use in primary classrooms.

Lenny Hommeding, Director, Fort Myers Beach P.L. District, Fort Myers, Florida


River of Life is a wonderfully illustrated book that discusses life along an Alaskan river. Illustrated by the official Iditarod Alaskan artist, Jon Van Zyle, the portrayal of the wildlife is so realistic that the reader can actually see the detail of fur, feathers, and fish scales. Each wildlife painting includes a description of the action taking place. The reader will see the humor of a fish splashing water into a moose’s face, a brown bear fishing for salmon, and scavengers circling a dead fish that is being eaten by a fox.

Author Debbie S. Miller describes the Alaskan wilderness with poetical words that help the reader to envision the swirling snowflakes of a snowfall, the trickle of a springtime river, the warmth of a summer day watching a dragonfly, and the quietness of an autumn day. Although
The simplicity, yet detail, of this book by Gordon Morrison beg for examination again and again. There’s so much here to learn. Watching a large oak tree through a year’s seasons, we learn about the tree itself; the animals, birds, and insects who live and feed in it; and the effect of the four season’s cycles on them all. Morrison’s genius is leaving white space on the page and including brief facts in smaller type on the sides or bottom. His skill with detail in both text and illustration is outstanding, allowing us to feel as if we really watched a red-tailed hawk build a nest in the upper branches, or the cocooning of a cecropia moth as it attaches itself to a twig. Morrison blends science, botany, zoology, and a knack for fictionalized nonfiction that is unparalleled. This book is best given to a child to read on his or her own so he or she can spend time examining each page, and is an excellent choice for libraries.

Connie Weaver, Church and Reference Librarian, Newville, Pennsylvania


583’.4. Oak; Trees; Forest ecology; Ecology; Seasons. 30 p.

The old saying that “necessity is the mother of invention” certainly applies to Girls Think of Everything by Catherine Thimmesh. Throughout history women have been filling needs with new inventions. Unfortunately, during most of these years women got no credit for their inventions. If any woman chose to patent an invention, she would be forced to do so under a man’s name. In many instances, a busy woman’s invention was simply a means of saving time, as in the invention of the Toll House chocolate chip cookie. Other inventions were the result of a woman witnessing someone else’s need, as in the case of the invention of the windshield wiper by Mary Anderson because she felt sorry for a streetcar driver who was struggling to see. Some inventions described are by women in the workplace to help with their jobs, such as paper bags, liquid paper, and the computer compiler. Other women, such as NASA employees Jeanne Lee Crews and Valerie Thomas, have created their inventions as a part of their work. Age is also no barrier for young inventors such as ten-year-old Becky Schroeder, the youngest female to receive a US patent for her glow-in-the-dark paper.

Along with stories of women inventors, Girls Think of Everything includes a list of some of women’s inventions from 3000 BC to the present. The author has also included information on obtaining patents, contests and organizations which encourage creative young minds, and a bibliography for further reading. Small watercolor portraits of the inventor and bright full-page collages of the invention greatly enhance the book. This book should be widely enjoyed by readers regardless of age or gender, and hopefully will help creative young people to realize that anyone can be an inventor.

Virginia Brown, Library Assistant/Freelance Writer/Former Teacher, Sheridan, Wyoming


598’.918. Peregrine falcon--Fiction; Falcons--Fiction. 32 p.

The Peregrine’s Journey by Madeleine Dunphy is the story, in words and pictures, of the highlights of a peregrine falcon’s annual trip from Alaska to Argentina. The book begins with a line map marking the route and tying it to page numbers of the text. The migration was tracked from actual scientific data using satellite telemetry. Her route and activities, diet, natural enemies, and her ability to travel using her eyesight and instincts are described in a simple and focused manner. The text closes with a page “About Peregrine Falcons,” which discusses the recovery of the bird from near extinction. The illustrations play a beautiful and significant part in the book. The falcon is shown with incredible detail from many different perspectives and in many flight positions that show off her magnificence. The landscapes are accurately portrayed in strong colors and soft lines, with the exception of the boxy skyscrapers in Seattle. Many contrasts are used: realistic and soft, dark and light, grand and small, for example. The reader might well wish to view the flight of this bird from a high vantage point in Central America where she traveled with thousands of other birds.


The Peregrine’s Journey


629’.45’0092. Glenn, John, 1921; Space flights; Space shuttles; Astronautics; Astronauts. 72 p.

What do you get when you cross a persistent, popular man with a need to research aging? You get seventy-seven year old John Glenn aboard the space shuttle Discovery. The first astronaut to orbit the earth in 1962, Glenn longed to return to space and got his wish in 1998. His mission: to collect data on aging, zero gravity, and the effects on the body. After his first mission, Glenn served as United States Senator and real estate investor, but his passion remained space.

A fitting tribute to one of America’s heroes, John Glenn’s Return to Space by Gregory Vogt engagingly illustrates the life of this legend with color and black and white pictures, about one every three pages. Photos of Earth from orbit, Glenn with President Kennedy and his fellow astronauts are special treasures. Complexity of words and length of chapters make the book appropriate for upper elementary students.

A two-page glossary contains space terminology along with project and spaceship names. Also included is a two-page chronology of Glenn’s life from birth in 1921 to the present. For further study, readers will find a list of related books, magazine articles, and websites. Finally, a comprehensive three-page index directs readers to topics within the book.

This chronicle of Glenn’s lifelong love affair with the universe will delight and inform older children and adults for years to come.

Connie Weaver, Church and Reference Librarian, Newville, Pennsylvania


In The Kids Can Press Jumbo Cookbook, Canadian authors Judi Gillies and Jennifer Glossop set out to make cooking seem like a simple, easy, and fun thing for kids to do—and they succeed! The book begins with very helpful sections on basic cooking terms and techniques, measuring methods (both metric and imperial), safety tips, and menu planning. It then proceeds to the recipes, which include kid-friendly foods such as French Toast, Grilled Cheese Sandwiches, Chili con Carne, Pizza, and Pretzels, and fun foods like Jelly Aquariums and Toad in a Hole. Some of the recipes, such as Quesadillas, Hummus, and Sushi, are somewhat unusual foods for children, but if a child had a hand in the preparation, he or she might be willing to at least try one or two of them.

The recipes are written clearly enough for a child to be able to read and understand them without much help, and each one includes the utensils and ingredients needed for it and the amount of time it takes to prepare and cook it, as well as the instructions for producing it. The authors also include, in recipe margins, helpful hints and how-to’s for things like making a hard-boiled egg and how to tell if chicken is done, as well as “Try This!” tips that let the child cook add his or her own touch to a recipe. Last but not least, Louise Phillips’ funny line drawings

The Peregrine’s Journey
demonstrate a few techniques while provoking giggles along the way.

Betty Winslow, Bowling Green Christian Academy, Bowling Green, Ohio

700’s—The Arts and Recreation


745.94'T2. Christmas tree ornaments; Handicraft.

Don’t throw away those old neckties, marker caps, buttons, or plastic Easter eggs. In her book, More Christmas Ornaments Kids Can Make, Kathy Ross tells how to turn everyday materials into Christmas ornaments. Children trace their hands and feet and add sequins and pompoms to create a reindeer, string together a pasta candy cane, and twist pipe cleaners into a pine bough. There are twenty-nine project ideas to choose from, with a variety of Christmas themes.

Each activity has a materials list and easy to follow, step-by-step instructions. Illustrator Sharon Lane Holm provides simple, colored drawings which clearly show the phases of each project. Crafts are made from common objects that are found around the house, or inexpensive to purchase. A fine resource for parents and teachers, most activities are explained simply enough for older elementary children to do on their own.


784.2. Orchestra; Musical instruments: unp.

The Story of the Incredible Orchestra is a delightful way to introduce children to the history of the orchestra and to the instruments that together create such a wonderful sound. Written and illustrated by Bruce, a musician who has played the violin and jazz guitar for years, the book can be enjoyed by both the casual reader as well as the music lover. The double-page spreads begin with a focus on a particular period of music and are followed by studies on the individual instruments introduced during that period, for example, violins during the Baroque Period and clarinets during the Romantic Period. The text itself is engaging and well-placed questions help focus attention on important points.

Colorful illustrations spill across the pages, bringing the text to life and engaging the reader in a deeper understanding of what is being discussed. Side-notes and smaller diagrams explain the text further and give specific definitions and notes of interest. The end pages depict and name by group all the instruments that are to be found in a symphony orchestra.

Koscielniak encourages readers to make orchestral music a part of their lives, and his book may well inspire a budding young musician to pick an instrument and join in.

Lillian Heytvelt, Librarian, Pomeroy, Washington


796.1. Games. 48 p.

Have you forgotten how to shoot marbles? Play snake or airplane hopscotch? Puss in the corner? Let’s Play: Traditional Games of Childhood, an oversized paperback book by Camilla Gryski, offers children of all ages an easy to read collection of old-fashioned games, some dating back centuries to the Greeks and Romans. Within fourteen categories of games are fascinating historical facts, variations of each game, and directions for playing all of them successfully.

Large print and humorous watercolor and pen and ink illustrations by Dusan Petricic guarantee readers’ amusement with pictures of children playing ball games, counting out, tag, hide-and-seek, hunt the thimble, and leapfrog. Detailed pictures appear everywhere, some as full or two page spreads. Close-up photos give special instructions and hand positions in finger games. Gryski hides charming little Pssss! messages in the text.

Who would guess that jumping rope was first popular with boys? That people believed Peas Porridge Hot, to warm their hands on cold winter mornings? Children will giggle with delight at Gryski’s rich assortment of engaging facts and capricious playmates.

Rhonda Marie Lackey, Writer/Substitute Teacher/Former Librarian, Yakula, Washington


811.6. Children’s poetry—American; American poetry; Africa—Poetry. unp.

Poetry can be a joy to share with children and adults alike when it is truly written to be read aloud. Uzo Unobagha has provided the reader with a book of poems written to reflect the variety and rhythm of the African continent. The poems are as varied as the peoples of Africa and beat with the rhythm of an African drum. The names, objects, and seasons of Africa populate each poem, creating a learning moment as well as a pleasurable read. Off to the Sweet Shores of Africa and Other Talking Drum Rhymes provides the reader first hand experience with the diversity that the author, a native of Nigeria, conveys with the different poems in this volume.

The illustrations are colorful watercolors. An excellent author’s note provides further background and a glossary helps with unfamiliar


William Shakespeare introduces to children Shakespeare’s poetry through a sampling of his sonnets and excerpts from his plays. Twenty-seven samples are presented and include such favorites as Hamlet’s soliloquy, the Macbeth witches’ “Double, double, toil and trouble” speech, and the popular “Shall I compare thee to a summer’s day” sonnet (Sonnet 18). Each sample or sonnet is preceded by a brief introduction and the title, act, scene, and lines, if applicable, and is followed by a short glossary of the more difficult words. Each page contains an illustration depicting either the scene or the topic.

Edited by David Scott and Marina Kastan, William Shakespeare is a useful tool for introducing Shakespeare to children. The introduction familiarizes readers with Shakespeare’s life and accomplishments. It also explains in detail why Shakespeare is regarded as the greatest playwright of all time. The brief introductions which precede the samples set them up and explain their main ideas. Both are helpful for children trying to grasp Shakespeare’s world and words. Glenn Harrington’s color illustrations are beautiful and bring to life the various scenes. William Shakespeare is part of the Poetry for Young People series which includes, favorite poets such as Frost, Dickinson, and Whitman. An index is included.

Kerri Cunningham, Librarian, Camano Island, Washington

900’s—Geography, History, & Biography


910.92. Hudson, Henry, d.1611; Explorers; America--Exploration and discovery; Arctic--History.

Beyond the Sea of Ice is an historical account of the four voyages of Henry Hudson and his crews. There is not much biographical information available about Hudson’s early years before his voyages of discovery. Historians do have information from journals of crewmembers and Henry Hudson himself. There are also government records from 17th century Holland and England, the two entities for whom Henry Hudson sailed searching for the passage to the Orient that sailors, mapmakers, and governments believed existed. This scant information has been woven into a riveting account of exploration.

Joan Elizabeth Goodman has compiled an historic and accurate record of one of our more famous early explorers. Henry Hudson is portrayed as a complete person with a realistic look at his skill at leadership in many cases his lack of strong leadership. Hudson’s last voyage ended in a mutiny with Henry, his son, and seven other crewmembers put into a skiff and left to fend for themselves on the open seas. These men never returned to England. Of particular interest is Goodman’s description of the winter spent in the Arctic by Henry Hudson, his ship the Discovery, and the crew on the fourth voyage. Excerpts of journals written by crewmembers are included on several pages. Illustrator Fernando Rangel has captured the illustrative quality of the search for the Northwest passage. Rangel and Goodman have included a number of maps and charts as well as beautiful full color paintings. There is an index and author’s note, both of which assist the reader in using this work as a reference tool.

Barbara Wall, School Library System Director, Orange-Ulster BOCES, Monroe, New York


917.986. Canoes and canoeing--Yukon river (Yukon and Alaska); Yukon River (Yukon and Alaska)--Description and travel; Yukon River Valley (Yukon and Alaska)--Description and travel; Yukon River Valley (Yukon and Alaska) Gold discoveries. 47 p.

Yukon River takes the reader on a beautifully written and illustrated trip down the Yukon River from Whitehorse, the capital of the Yukon Territory up near the Arctic Circle, to Dawson, where the Klondike River flows into the Yukon. This book combines past and present beautifully as the author and his friend Ernie canoe 460 miles down river. The author skillfully blends archival and modern narrative of the present day trip down river. The adventure of the Yukon River and the Klondike Gold Rush is portrayed as a complete person with a realistic integration. The prejudice and harassment she received are discussed as well as being mentioned in John Steinbeck’s Travels with Charley, receiving a letter from Eleanor Roosevelt, and being featured in a painting by Norman Rockwell.

While Ms. Bridges tells her own story, she also adds thoughts and quotations from writers and adults who observed her during her first grade year. Also included are many photographs which do an impressive job of recreating Ruby’s historic year, and an update of Ruby’s life today. Through My Eyes carefully and impressively explains an important period of American history and would be a wonderful addition to any collection.

Kerri Cunningham, Librarian, Camano Island, Washington


Children at play, at school, or at home are the focus of stories set in their natural setting in Africa Is Not a Country. Children come to appreciate the cultural, ethnic, environmental, and social diversity of the fifty-three countries that make up the African continent. The colorful illustrations are inviting and lively. The alphabetical listing of the countries at the end of the book with capital city, population, how to pronounce the name of the country, national flag, currency, and unique facts about each makes it easy to highlight the variety.
The front inside of the cover pictures a procession of children carrying the flags of the nations. The back inside of the cover has the procession in reverse, this time with names of countries on the flags included.

Parents reading this with children will surely grow in their own understanding while children are treated to a subject treated with decorum. Children in school will gain a valuable insight into this unique continent. Recommended for wide usage.

Lorry Hommerding, Director, Fort Myers Beach P.L. District, Fort Myers, Florida


This informative book reads like a novel with its descriptive details: "rising columns of smoke from campfires marked the villages." *The Wigwam and the Longhouse* describes the lives of the Woodlands tribes before the coming of the white man. The first chapter covers the communities they lived in and how tribes got their names, types of houses—wigwam and longhouse—and organization of tribes into several confederacies. Later chapters focus on travel and clashes with white settlers. The book concludes with a brief chapter about Woodlands people and land today.

Creative and appealing illustrations break up each chapter, as do subtitles. A lengthy index and a thorough bibliography are also included with titles most appealing to younger readers marked for quick reference.

**The Wigwam and the Longhouse** provides a descriptive and appealing history of daily life among people of the Woodlands tribes. The authors Charlotte and David Yue show respect for this vanished way of life and instill the sense of importance for remembering the customs and culture of all Native Americans. This book is sure to be as well-liked by young readers as their parents.

Lisa A. Worbie, Library Aide/Freelancer Writer, Plymouth, Michigan


973'.7 3092. United States--History--Revolution, 1775-1783--Biography. unpaginated.

On November 19, 1863, Lincoln delivered his immortal Gettysburg Address, and though he expressed the idea that "the world will little note nor long remember what we say here," his brief remarks have stood the test of time. *Abraham Lincoln’s Gettysburg Address* is dedicated to expanding the young reader’s knowledge not only of how and why Lincoln wrote his speech but also of the events that led up to the day, including a brief description of the battle and of the decision to establish a memorial cemetery at the site. There is also a section relating some of the facts of Lincoln’s life and what led him to say what he did. Another chapter describes how the speech was received at the time and since. Barbara Silberdick Feinberg has done a fine job of presenting her material in a fashion that flows easily for younger readers, while at the same time adding interesting details for readers of all ages. This nicely indexed volume also has some wonderful photos and illustrations that bring the story much more to life. She has included not only her sources but has also listed other materials, including websites, for the reader who would like to learn more. A wonderful addition to a social studies program covering the Civil War or for the interested student.

Teresa O’Donley, Library Media Specialist, Baymonte Christian School, Scott Valley, California

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973'.7 42. United States. Army--History--Civil War, 1861-1865; Confederate States of America. Army--History; Soldiers--United States--History--19th century; Soldiers--Confederate States of America; United States--History--Civil War, 1861-1865. 96 p. (Middle school).

The reasons for resorting to war and the meaning of the events that occur during it are often a matter of perspective. Almost one hundred and fifty years in our past, the great war of 1861-1864 still challenges our understanding, adult and child alike, of what America was and is to be. Although the words of politicians and generals are very important in understanding past wars, children want to know what it was like, and that means war from the soldier’s viewpoint. Susan Provost Beller’s *Billy Yank and Johnny Reb*, real soldiers Theodore Garrish and Carlton McCarthy, tell their story through quotes on their views of the major events in a soldier’s life from the day he signs up to fight, through training, deployment, engagement, the uncertainty of hospital, and life after 1864.

**Billy Yank and Johnny Reb** joins the parade of many books looking at soldiering during the Civil War but with significant differences. First, it is squarely aimed at the upper elementary, middle school reader with the intent of providing solid information in a readable and attractive manner that does not “talk down” to the reader. The balance between the author’s presentation of facts and the pertinent excerpts from soldiers’ letters is well maintained, keeping the narrative interesting and personal. Another refreshing difference is the respect with which Beller treats the Confederate side of the story, eschewing the dangerously inaccurate simplification of the causes of the war that is so widespread, especially in children’s books. Neither is the war romanticized. Every page spread includes black and white period photographs or reproductions of period documents to illustrate the subject of the chapter and the devastation of war. *Billy Yank and Johnny Reb* ends with a map of the major battles and cities involved in the war, a chronology of events, a chapter by chapter list of the resources the author consulted, and a short list of books, CD-Roms, and internet sites for further study. Beller has gathered together a book that is well able to provide for those students looking for resources for reports as well as those who are fascinated with the war itself.

Pamela A. Todd, Librarian/English Teacher, Chalcedon Christian School, Cumming, Georgia

In this third installment in the Good News Club series, Carlos, Marshall, Anna, and Felipe are having a fantastic time on the group trip to Yosemite, but they are concerned about Bronce, who seems overly selfish with his boom box. Carlos and Felip trail him one night and discover that he is meeting with a stranger. The next night they recruit the girls and have just discovered that it is a cocaine drop, when the stranger takes them hostage. Carlos gets away and goes off through the trees to find help. He is lost, so he prays and remembers that he should find and follow water, but he forgets not to drink. Meanwhile, the stranger drives the rest deeper into the forest where he abandons them. They are trying to trust God when a forest ranger finds them and takes them back. At the same time, the camp leaders find a very ill Carlos. As Carlos recovers, the rest of the camp goes on a day trip with Mr. South, the ranger who rescued the kidnapped kids. Mashell sees that he has the same weird scar on his arm that their abductor had and realizes that they are same man. She cannot get the adults to fully trust him but on a visit to answer questions, Carlos notices that Mr. South has Bronce’s boom box and realizes that the proof is probably still hidden in it. Can he get to it before the drug smuggler catches on?

Kathryn Dahlstrom has succeeded once again in Captives in the Wilderness in adding a note of realism while telling a quickly paced, involved story that will appeal to most children. The kids learn that they can rely on God even in the scariest of circumstances and that He is always faithful.

Teresa O’Donley, Library Media Specialist, Baymonte Christian School, Scott Valley, California

Color me dark: the diary of Nellie Lee Love, the great migration North, by Patricia C. McKissack. (Dear America.) LCCN 99016459. New York: Scholastic, 2000. HBB, 0590511599, $10.95.

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Teresa O’Donley, Library Media Specialist, Baymonte Christian School, Scott Valley, California

points out the prejudices, even among the black community, that produce acceptance of light skinned and rejection of dark skinned African Americans. Though light skinned, she proudly rebels against this type of thinking, stating “Color me dark!”

Color Me Dark by Patricia C. McKissack echoes a short story by Jamaica Kincaid called “Girl” about a little Jamaican girl listening to the voices in her head (i.e. mother, culture, society). They repeatedly tell her she must never rise above herself, because she was born to work hard, satisfy others, and die. Not to aspire or dream. McKissack has an amazing gift of bringing history to life so clearly and with such natural flow as to take the reader on this adventure with the protagonist. Without preaching or blame she tells of the need for all races to work together in order to obtain true freedom.

Kim Harlin, Librarian, Newman Riga Library, Churchville, New York


Before Willo’s mother dies, Willo’s father promises to buy her a horse. Now she is shopping for one with Granddad, with whom she lives while her father travels on business. Granddad warns her not to fall for the first horse she sees, but when she sees Tess, an abused ex-racehorse, she knows what horse she wants. Her father is not pleased when he returns home, but is leaving again and gives Willo until his return to have the horse gentled.

With the help of her friends Dove and Colin, she begins the process of cleaning up Tess and training her to let Willo first ride her, then jump her. Diana, Colin’s mom, who is a trainer, encourages Willo and tells her how to get Tess “on the bit” which means that the horse surrenders total control to Willo.

Willo continues to train her horse as she sorts through her ambivalent feelings about her absent father, who is rarely home and has a drinking problem. She is also developing romantic tendencies toward Colin and he finally kisses her. Meanwhile Colin has his own difficulties with a stepfather that he hates. It all culminates the night before a competition when Willo is going to prove to her father that Tess is worth keeping and when Colin’s step-father shoots Jack, his favorite horse.

The First Horse I See by Sally M. Keehn deals honestly with many issues that trouble teens—first love, death of loved ones, stepfamilies, alcohol abuse, and difficulty with parents. It would be good to read this with your child and discuss the areas that are addressed. Also from a Christian perspective, through the character of Dove there is a fair amount of blurring of the differences between religious superstition and genuine faith that could be confusing for younger readers.

Teresa O’Donley, Library Media Specialist, Baymont Christian School, Scotts Valley, California


F. Ice skating—Fiction; Grandmothers—Fiction; Christian life—Fiction. 117 p. (High school)

Livvy’s mother has died and now Livvy must try to reach her dream of an Olympic medal in skating without her biggest supporter, Mom. Not only that, Livvy now has her father’s mother living with them and grandmother is a handful. Livvy tries to discuss the problem of grandmother interfering in her training, but her father has no real answer for Livvy. When Livvy discusses it with her friends, they have a Girls Only meeting and pray for Livvy. Eventually Livvy finds out that her grandmother is fulfilling a promise she had made Livvy’s mother to make sure Livvy gets a shot at the Olympics. Everyone understands now and Livvy really starts to push for her dream.

This book is number five in a series dealing with issues that Christian girls face in their lives. It is written from a Christian viewpoint and therefore there are many occurrences/references to prayer and Christian behavior. The characters are not well developed and the dialogue is simplistic, as is the plot. However, a middle school girl or young high schooler should enjoy this book. The cover is attractive and the binding is durable. The author, Beverly Lewis has also written the Cul de Sac Kids, Summer Hill Secrets, and the Heritage of Lancaster County series and is well acquainted with what people like to read.

Bianca Elliott, Teacher, Linwood, Kansas


F. Farm life—Alabama—Fiction; Afro-Americans—Fiction; Carver, George Washington, 1864-1943—Fiction; Alabama—Fiction; Penn, William, 1647-1718—Fiction. 142 p.


F. Detectives and Mystery and detective stories; Arson—Fiction. 168 p.

Volume Six in the Good News Club Series begins with friends Carlos, Felipe, Mashell, and Anna deciding to be welcoming to Judy Choi, who is a visitor to the Good News Club Meetings as well as new to the neighborhood where they live in the Watts area of LA. They notice that many in the neighborhood are not kind to Judy’s parents and will not frequent the grocery store they own. The kids get the idea of putting their memory verse, John 15:17, into practice. They form a secret group called Hate Fighters. They decide to secretly leave yellow sticky notes commending people when they are “caught” doing good and blue sticky notes reprimanding people when they are unkind.

Meanwhile, Stan, boyfriend of Miss Lindstrom, the Good News Club leader, offers to pay for Carlos to take an obedience class with his dog Peppy. Peppy is a natural and Carlos sets the goal of training his dog to be a competitor in obedience trial competitions, but he needs a way of earning the entrance fees. His friends are helping him with a car wash at the Choi’s store, when a mysterious arsonist sets the building on fire.
Kathryn Dahlstrom continues the adventures of the Good News Kids with this involving narrative that moves swiftly along. Most children will enjoy reading how the neighborhood becomes more accepting of the Chois and how Carlos realizes his "doggy dreams." Hate Fighters does a fine job of emphasizing how even children of different races and backgrounds can not only love and support each other, but encourage others to do so as well. The story is a wonderful illustration of how Jesus' commandment to love one another can be lived out in practical ways even by the young.

Teresa O'Donley, Library Media Specialist, Baymonte Christian School, Scotts Valley, California


In 1932 twelve year old Lily lives on the Vermont family farm with her parents, grandparents, and her sister Emily who is one year older. Lily believes that she truly hates Emily, who she claims is two-faced and the favorite of the adults. Hearing that grandma's sister, Aunt Nell, is coming home for a visit from India where she has been a missionary since Lily's birth, she plans to ingratiate herself with her aunt so that she can be someone's favorite. Aunt Nell is carefree and captivating and it seems that she may fulfill Lily's dream of owning a horse. Because she wants to go the circus by herself with Nell, Lily entices Emily to a water-filled quarry and shoves her in. The next morning Emily does not feel well but Lily has a fine time at the circus, especially watching the performer with the diving horse. Upon returning home she is chagrined to find that Emily has been stricken with polio. An iron lung is moved in and life changes forever.

As Emily slowly fades away, Lily is caught up in training her new horse to dive. Eventually she realizes that her parents are struggling emotionally and financially and decides to sacrifice what is most precious to herself for the good of the family.

If Wishes Were Horses is a moving book told from Lily's first person point of view. Readers can be living out in practical ways even by the young.

Connie Weaver, Church & Reference Librarian, Newville, Pennsylvania


F. World War, 1939-1945—United States—Fiction; Orphanages—Fiction; Spies—Fiction; Black market—Fiction; Mystery and detective stories. 150 p. (Elementary, High school).


F. Orphanages—Fiction; Migrant workers—Fiction; Mexicans—Fiction; Runaways—Fiction; Christian life—Fiction. 144 p. (Elementary, High school).

Jeanmarie's parents are no longer able to care for her, so they admit her to the Apple Valley Orphanage. Now it is night, and the cottage windows are covered with thick black cloth to protect the residents from the German bomber planes. Yet, after bed time, Jeanmarie and her best friend, Pearl, observe two strangers with German accents out in the snow, meeting by flashlight. Jeanmarie and her friends—Pearl, Winnie, Tess, Maria, and Wilfred—are drawn into solving this mystery.

First they discover boxes of frozen chicken are missing from the orphanage's freezer. An adult friend, Luke, gets hit on the back of his head and knocked unconscious. They try to put pieces together and stumble across an occupied cabin at Gould's Camp, a deserted summer camp for children. Things go from bad to worse, and the six friends are bound and gagged and locked up in a cabin—to be dealt with later by the meat thieves. However, the meat thieves have more in mind than just the stolen chicken. Nazi spies have infiltrated the East Coast, and are preparing bombs to sabotage critical areas.

In the second installment, Jeanmarie and her five friends come upon two Mexican children, Juan and Serena, who have escaped from a migrant boss, Don Carlos. The children's parents have died and Juan and Serena have been left in the care of the boss. He has stolen their earnings, and lied to their grandfather about their being alive! Jeanmarie and her friends go through a myriad of schemes to provide food, blankets, coat, and clothing for these two children. Jeanmarie resorts to lies and deceptions in order to do what she thinks is right. In the end, she learns a valuable lesson about honesty and trusting her authorities with her concerns.

Jeanmarie and the FBI and Jeanmarie and the Runaways by Lucille Travis are quiant stories of World War II vintage based on the author's own experiences in an orphanage similar to Apple Valley. The stories are full of action and choices put before Jeanmarie and her friends. Ultimately they must decide what direction they put before Jeanmarie and her friends.

excellent choice for students nine to sixteen, and are highly recommended for any library.

Debby Willett, Freelance Writer, Canyon, Texas


Orphans, Jasper and his brother Tom are going to the New World; however, they become separated in London. Jasper is on the Mayflower, indurmented to a printer and Tom remains in London. Jasper writes a diary of the journey so that Tom will know all about the stench of the ship's lower deck, the deplorable food, the deaths, and the bullies. Jasper and the Pilgrims have a tough first winter, but two Indians, Squanto and Samoset, give directions on planting their gardens and which Indian tribes to avoid. The Journal of Jasper Jonathan Pierce ends a little over a year after the Pilgrims leave England.

Well known historical author, Ann Rinaldi (My Heart is on the Ground!) researched this time period and the effort shows in this diary format book. No romantic view is portrayed; Rinaldi describes the poor living conditions, the deaths, and the terror of facing war-painted Indians. An epilogue tells what happened to Jasper and his brother Tom in their adult years. The historical section includes black and white illustrations depicting the Pilgrim's life, plus information on the actual people who were a part of this book.

Connie Weaver, Church & Reference Librarian, Newville, Pennsylvania


The story begins on October 1, 1851, at Tiger Rock in Southern China. The announcement has come. Uncle, Precious Stone, is going to the Golden Mountain of America. Gold has been found there and many Chinese have crossed the great ocean to become a guest of the Golden Mountain. Wong Ming-Chung has always been looked upon as the "runt." Runt spends his time reading and learning to write. He enjoys his studies, but he is small and weak. His brother, Blessing, however is large and strong. Blessing wants to go with Uncle to America.

There is a famine in China and food is very scarce. Many times supper is weed soup. Then the first letter arrives from America. Uncle has made the trip and has sent money to the family. Everything changes now. The family is now
looked up to as important. Uncle asks Blessing to come to America, but father refuses and sends Runt instead. Runt is sure that his father and mother feel they will not suffer any great loss if he dies, but they cannot bear to lose Blessing. So Wong Ming-Chung sails to America. He manages to survive the trip and is of greater value than he ever imagined because he is the only one who can read and write.

The Journal of Wong Ming-Chung by Laurence Yep is one book in the My Name is America series. These books are written in diary form with dated entries. These books are a fast, easy read. The details included bring history to life through the experiences of young boys.

Yep has brought to life the horrible experience of the ships and the inhumane treatment of the Chinese. You also see the desperation of the Chinese, their willingness to work hard, and their dedication to their family. They would do nothing to disgrace the family name. You can see how many of the advances made in mining equipment and in merchandising came from the Chinese culture. This is a fascinating book with great insight into the Chinese culture of that time.

Marvia Snyder, Librarian, Missoula, Montana


F. Slavery--Fiction; Afro-Americans--Fiction; Literacy--Fiction; South Carolina--Fiction. 213 p. (High school).

It's 1851 and twelve year old Miles is the house slave of Gency Tillery, one of the richest men in South Carolina. It's a privileged position and Miles feels fortunate to have it until the master catches him gazing at a book. He is then taken by Bounty, an old slave who is himself a slave-catcher, to the "breaking ground" to become a more obedient slave. His fear and despair is alleviated by the friendship of Elijah, another slave who has been sent there.

Elijah secretly teaches Miles to read and write and how to fool the breakers by acting simple-minded and compliant. As he becomes more literate, Miles comes to understand the value of freedom. Soon he is deemed "broken" and makes ready to return to the plantation. Elijah tells him to get reassigned as a field hand so he will be ready to go with Elijah when he makes a run for the north.

Once again at home, Miles must eventually reveal to Mama Cee, the old woman who has raised him, his plans and convince her to come with him. He must move carefully. One of the slaves is the master's spy and another unknown slave is surreptitiously leaving notes for Miles from Elijah. Who can he trust and of whom should he be wary? When he and Mama Cee do make their dash for freedom, he is surprised at who their secret accomplice is. But is being able to read and having help enough to make it north?

Alice McGill's inspiring and excellent storytelling causes the reader to identify with Miles' emotional, mental, and spiritual journey from compliant slave to a bold young man who values freedom and literacy and is willing to die in order to obtain them. Well told and a must read for any YA reader.

Teresa O'Donley, Library Media Specialist, Baymeont Christian School, Scotts Valley, California

Reach for the stars, by Beverly Lewis. (Girls only (GO!); 4.) LCCN 99006717. Minneapolis: Bethany House, 1999. PAP, 0764200161, $5.99.

F. Skis and skiing--Fiction; Single-parent family--fiction; Christian life--Fiction. 118 p.


F. Gymnastics--Fiction; Competition (Psychology)--Fiction; Friendship--Fiction; Korean Americans--Fiction; Christian life--Fiction. 120 p.

Miranda Garcia is a twelve year old hopeful Junior Olympic ski contender. She and her single mom live in Alpine Lake, Colorado, where their lives revolve around skiing. Amanda, aka Manda, takes skiing lessons, baby-sits, and belongs to an exclusive Girls Only club. Exclusive because its four members are committed to excellence in athletics—each member having their own special skill. Her mom, Adelina, is a ski instructor at the Alpine Ski Academy located at the base of Cascade Peak.

So far, life was relatively uneventful for the mother and daughter team; then things came tumbling down. Manda's mom fell and broke her leg, putting her in the hospital for a few weeks. In the interim, Manda takes over her mom's ski classes, which makes Manda a very busy teen. While her mom is in the hospital, Manda eats dinner with the families of her friends, visits with her mom every day, attends school and keeps up with her school work, teaches her mom's classes, and baby-sits, too. In fact, it's the new babysitting job that has her mom feel they will not suffer any great loss if they lose her. Runt instead. Runt is sure that his father and mother will not suffer any great loss if he dies, but they cannot bear to lose Blessing.

Jessica Richardson is turning twelve, and has just received a birthday present from her paternal grandmother. For a young girl who lives and breathes horses, this present is perfect. A week's stay at Flannigan's Trail Outfitters in the Rocky Mountains of Alberta, Canada. Jessica's parents are divorced and she lives with her mom; her dad lives in Japan with his second wife and their new baby. Before she leaves for the birthday present extraordinary, Jessica begins to notice that she is thinner than normal, having to use the bathroom more, and she doesn’t quite have as much energy as before. She hopes it's not a case of the flu trying to get her down.

At home in British Columbia, Jessica helps out at a riding stable so she can have riding lessons. There she rides English style. On the mountain trail she has to ride Western style. It is on the trail that Jessica comes face to face with the cause for her "flu" symptoms. She blacks out while riding her horse for the week and wakes up in a hospital. Jessica has juvenile diabetes. Becoming educated on self-care is now a focus for her and her parents. She is very angry and resentful of the serious condition she now finds herself in, and several times loses her temper at her mother, grandmother, and friends.

Nikki Tate's Return to Skoki Lake is the sixth in a series about Jessica. The story is well written and gives excellent detail about the self-care involved for a diabetic. Tate has truly done some thorough research for this story. Any child who has diabetes will appreciate the details and the explanations. The anger and resentment of Jessica's character may be representative of an adolescent in her position, but she is disrespectful and rude, without contrition, especially with her mother. This book is an
excellent story of the detail involved in diabetes self-care, and taking care of horses.

Debby Willett, Freelance Writer, Canyon, Texas


F. Hospital—Fiction; Brothers—Fiction; Grief—Fiction; Palestine—Fiction; Israel—Fiction; War—Fiction. 185 p.

Samir, a Palestinian boy, injures his knee and dreads going to the Israeli hospital because his brother Fadi was killed by Israeli soldiers. He finds himself in a room with four other children who have unique problems. Yonatan reads books about stars and speaks to Samir only in Arabic. "I hide under my courtyard and gleefully urinate together."

"Down your pants," says the doctor. "Catheter— in Satan's snake pit after all." "I hide under my dresser, a storage for beautiful glasses and bowls, does double duty when the Nazi soldiers find themselves in a room with four other children who have unique problems. Yonatan reads books about stars and speaks to Samir only in Arabic. "I hide under my courtyard and gleefully urinate together."

Through their interactions, the children grow in compassion and help each other resolve conflicts. Yonatan keeps his promise to take Samir to Mars, pushing him in a wheelchair through the dark hospital to a room where he runs a computer disc. On "Mars" Samir suddenly understands his brother's death and the meaning of his deep friendship with Yonatan.

Daniella Carmi, an Israeli author whose story is told from a child's point of view. Children will enjoy Samir's thoughts and escapades related in first person, present tense. "So maybe I won't end up in Satan's snake pit after all." "I hide under my blanket and try my magic sentences."

"Pull down your pants," says the doctor. Catheter-free, Tzahi and Samir escape to the hospital courtyard and gleefully urinate together.

The text is sprinkled with a few vulgar and several profane words. Samir and Yonatan has received honorable mention for the UNESCO prize for Children's Literature in the Service of Tolerance.

Rhonda Marie Luckey, Writer, Former Teacher/Librarian, Tabwilla, Washington


F. Jewish children in the Holocaust—Fiction; Holocaust, Jewish (1939-1945)—Fiction; Jews—Fiction; Historical fiction. 128 p.

Eight year old Paul, and ten year old Vera are playing hide and seek in their Babichka's big three-story home, when one of them asks if she had ever played hide and seek. For Babichka, the question takes her back to her own childhood. The setting is 1940 Eastern Europe, and Gabi Kohn lives with her father and mother on a small farm in Czechoslovakia. Life was good, and Gabi had not a care in the world. As Jews, the Kohns were orthodox in their religious practices, observing the sabbath on Friday nights, and not working through the day of rest. Her family was big with lots of aunts, uncles, and cousins.

One day a classmate announces to Gabi that she won't be able to attend school anymore because she is a Jew. People and children who were once kind to her have suddenly turned cruel.

One classmate even told her she didn't do well on a test because of her Jewishness. Gabi's life begins to turn when she learns that her mother is a survivor of Auschwitz.

Newspapers begin to give harrowing accounts of the treatment of Jews in neighboring countries, and then her father dies. Gabi and her mother are forced to let the farm go and before long their lives change dramatically. The dresser, a storage for beautiful glasses and bowls, does double duty when the Nazi soldiers come looking for Gabi. Though cramped and stuffy, it is the dresser that saves Gabi's life and allows her a future to enjoy her grandchildren, Paul and Vera.

Kathy Kacer's book, _The Secret of Gabi's Dresser_, is an evocative account of historical times. Ms. Kacer's book is even more important because is it the account from her own mother's childhood. The events from Gabi's youth are a painful reminder of the atrocities committed against an entire group of people simply because of their ethnic and religious beliefs. This book shares those details openly and candidly. Ms. Kacer has written Gabi's story in a way that provokes thought and conversation. An excellent read for families.

Debby Willett, Freelance Writer, Canyon, Texas


F. Grief—Fiction; Twins—Fiction; Christian life—Fiction. 136 p. (High school).

Once upon a time, Merry Hanson had a twin. Fathie died of leukemia when she and Merry were young children. Since then, Merry has had a special sensitivity to other twins who have lost their twin sibling. It is because of this sensitivity that Rachel Zook, an Amish friend, asks Merry to help with a baby lamb who lost its twin. The lamb won't eat or drink, and Rachel is afraid it won't survive. Reluctantly, Merry agrees to nurse the lamb, and names her Jingle Bell. In an almost uncanny way, Merry is able to make a connection with the lamb, and Jingle Bell thrives.

Merry then makes a connection that she is not prepared for. This connection is with Rachel's older brother, whom Merry had an child's interest in. The brother is considering engagement to a young Mennonite woman, and Merry has to sort out her feelings for the brother and the young man, Jonathan Klein, she is making a connection with. Through her struggles she has a revelation and realizes the reality of the scripture that says God will never leave her comfortless. Merry makes her share of mistakes, and then takes responsibility for them and makes them right. She is a good friend to Rachel, and to Jonathan, while helping her mom with the new business. This story is number ten in Beverly Lewis' series, and is engaging, charming, and laced with humor. Her characters are well-written and easy to identify with. The suggested ages are 11 - 14, though I think girls as old as 16 and 17 would enjoy reading the book. Merry is a character most parents would want their daughters to befriend. An excellent story and an excellent choice for any library.

Debby Willett, Freelance Writer, Canyon, Texas


F. Segregation—Fiction; Prejudice—Fiction; Afro-Americans—Fiction; Oklahoma—Fiction. 214 p.

In 1961, segregation is no longer a law, but in Quiver, Oklahoma, there are the much deeper, stronger cultural laws that govern the townspeople. For Francine Driscoll, this has never been a problem, until she meets Celeste Chisholm, who has arrived with her father from St. Louis, Missouri, for rest and research. The Chisholms move into the town's "haunted house," which is revealed as a long time meeting place of the Ku Klux Klan. The spilled blood, associated with the house and its surrounding field, represents a past allowed by townspeople who have, through fear, turned a blind eye to the violent murders of many area black families. Celeste becomes the first black student ever to attend the all white school in Quiver. Though she is obviously wealthy and culturally well-bred, she is greeted with ignominy and prejudice. When she and Francine Driscoll become friends, Celeste slowly gains acceptance with some of her fellow students, but is often reminded that she is considerably considered an interloper in the community. While Celeste’s father is researching the history of an ancestor who was once killed there, and Francine get locked in a mansion in a nearby mining cave. These same runaway prove to be the key that unlocks the family’s hidden past. The girls’ rescue leads to an education for all, before the Chisholms return to their home in St. Louis.

_The Starplace_ by Vicki Grove is a slow mover, but well worth sticking with. Unfortunately the story may not move quickly enough for some of today's young readers. However, due to the author's attention to era related details, this book could work well as a group or class study of sixties historical fiction.

Kim Harris, Librarian, Newman Riga Library, Churchville, New York
The violence issues.

develop an interesting story and no overkill on
well presented, with enough suspense to
age appropriate. Concepts of crime and murder
both books. Vocabulary and literary quality are
within a non-denominational Christian setting in
provides a good balance of fun and adventure
books set in Los Angeles, California. Dahlstrom
Kathryn Dahlstrom, are Good News Club Series
Street Games
and
Witnesses--Fiction. 174 p.

In Street Games, Carlos, his sister Anna, and
friend Mashell are part of a Christian youth
group, who work together to prevent gang
violence from overtaking their neighborhood.
But when one drive-by shooting takes the life of
a friend, and another gets Carlos shot in the leg,
revenge seems the only answer. Anna and
Mashell discover the shooter’s identity and that
Carlos’ older brothers, Ricardo and Luis, are
the next targets. When Luis is found dead, Carlos
blames Mashell for keeping the shooter a secret.
Mashell runs off crying, more determined than
ever to locate and warn Ricardo to leave town.
On her way, she is chased by gang members,
who trap her on the roof of an apartment
building and plot her capture. While Mashell
awaits her demise, Ricardo and friends arrive
and become involved in another street war.
Carlos and the police reach the scene before any
deaths occur, stop the shooting, and catch the
gang members.

In Sent into Hiding, Mashell, Carlos, Anna, little
brother Felipe, and friend Bronce are asked to
testify against one of the biggest drug rings in
Los Angeles. When all but Mashell are
kidnapped by members of the drug ring, she and
her family are separated and sent into the
witness protection program. Cat and mouse
chases ensue as the kids manage to stay, mostly,
one step ahead of the crooks. Long desert walks
and dangerous ski slopes can’t keep these kids
from testifying.

Street Games and Sent into Hiding, both by
Kathryn Dahlstrom, are Good News Club Series
books set in Los Angeles, California. Dahlstrom
provides a good balance of fun and adventure
within a non-denominational Christian setting in
both books. Vocabulary and literary quality are
age appropriate. Concepts of crime and murder
well presented, with enough suspense to
develop an interesting story and no overkill on
the violence issues.

Kim Harris, Librarian, Newman Riga Library, Churchville, New
York

Trapped by an earthquake, by Kathryn
Dahlstrom. (Good News Club series; 2.)
Warrenton, Mo.: CEF Press, 1996. PAP,
1559768274, $4.99.

F. Detective and Mystery and detective stories;
Earthquakes--Fiction. 213 p.

In Trapped by an Earthquake, author Kathryn
Dahlstrom follows two main characters in their
daily lives in California: Mashell, a twelve-year-
old African American girl struggling with her
mother’s bad choices in men and drugs, and
Carlos, a fifth-grade Hispanic boy dealing with
a school bully. The story begins with Mashell
sneaking out at night to join her cousin Shawnda
to tag buildings, bridges, and billboards with
spray paint. Mashell fights her conscience,
justifying her actions since her mother breaks
the law by abusing drugs. The two girls get
captured before committing the crime, and
Mashell wishes for a father like the security
guard who is firm but gentle with them.

Then we meet Carlos and his family preparing
for a school day. Later, he and his friend Felipe
try to avoid bully Cortez and his gang at school.
Both main characters deal with immediate
conflicts, and both have longings for a better
situation. Both attend a neighborhood Good
News Club, a place where they learn about
God’s love for them and how to pray about their
greatest concerns.

For these things, I applaud Dahlstrom. Some
readers may find her habit of spelling out each
ethnic name or choice of words disruptive to the
story’s flow (Mashell, “pronounced Muh-
SHELL,” Felipe, “pronounced Fay-LEEP,” loco
crazy, pronounced LOE-koe,” etc.), while
younger readers may appreciate the help. The
event described in the title, being trapped in an
earthquake, occurs near the end of the book
when Mashell and Shawnda sneak out one
more to tag a freeway onramp and they get
trapped under it during the earthquake. Their
friends at the Good News Club pray for the
girls’ safety. Meanwhile, Carlos is asked to
allow rescue teams to use his dog to sniff out
earthquake victims in his neighborhood and he
accompanies them, only to discover his nemesis
Cortez buried but still alive. Cortez’ brutal
treatment of Carlos almost causes Carlos to turn
away, but the Lord convicts him and he decides
to help his enemy. In the end, both the girls and
Cortez are rescued; Carlos understands Cortez
in a deeper way; and Mashell finally surrenders
her will to the Lord. The last page includes a
note to the reader with the sinner’s prayer and a
phone number to find out about Good News
Clubs in the area.

Kim Swenson Gollnick, Writer, Speaker & Teacher (Marion
Independent Schools), Marion, Iowa


The combination of wise words and the wise gal humor of Martha Bolton make Don't Jump to

**Conclusions Without a Bungee Cord** no ordinary teen devotional. Brio readers will be familiar with Bolton as the magazine’s Cafeteria Lady, while others might recognize her as a humorist who has been around long enough to know what funny is all about. This 90-day devotional centers on a pretty heavy book: Proverbs. Yet somehow Bolton adds a playful twist to Solomon’s solemn advice with the inclusion of a Bumper Sticker for the Day, along with her quick-to-the-wit lead-in story, plus thoughts to ponder. The devotions are targeted for teens, yet adults will get something out of the reading too. A great gift for graduates, or any young adult who could use a large dose of wisdom served up with a smile.

Pam Wesb, School Librarian, Sandpoint, Idaho

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**200’s — Religion**


241’.676. Teenagers—Prayer-books and devotions--English; Friendship--Religious aspects--Christianity. 120 p.

Jeff and Ramona Tucker hit the mark with their devotions for students book, Maximum Friendships. The authors deal with choosing and being a best friend. Some devotional topics include loyalty, honesty, sibling rivalry, shyness, being “dumped,” pretending, insecurity, “going too far,” hero worship, and being friends with older people and younger children. It ends with “The Forever Friend,” Jesus.

In the first devotional, “Friendship Power,” Tina’s conservative background and Chris’s liberal upbringing make them opposites, though they are friends. The authors take the reader to the Bible to show how unlikely friendships develop. Moses and Aaron, brothers who were raised in different surroundings, and Elijah and Elisha, who were different on social position. Following the Bible study, the authors say, “Evaluate your three closest friends. How are they like you? Different from you?” Finally, they provide an action step, “Thank God today for giving you unique friends and for giving you such a special place in His hands.”

Similar to typical devotional books, Maximum Friendships has an anecdote, brief Bible story, an application, and a positive “assignment” or action step. It differs in that for eight weeks, the authors present different types of friendships and provide a place where teens can write about their developing relationships.

Maximum Friendships is a thin volume with a bright cover designed by David LaPlaca. Photos by Jamie Marcial and Arthur Tilley depict typical young people talking and playing. Young teens will find it attractive. Parents won’t be disappointed in the content.

Del Smith Klein, Writer, Teacher, Catalina, Arizona

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**Wis e up : stand clear of the unsmartness of sin, by Kevin Johnson.** (Early teen discipleship.) LCCN 00010397. Minneapolis: Bethany House, 2000. PAP, 1556616376, $7.99.

248’.83. Sin—Biblical teaching; Christian teenagers—Conduct of life; Bible—Textbooks; Christian life; Conduct of life; Bible—Study. 125 p.

Wise Up is a part of the Early Teen Discipleship series, written by Kevin Johnson. The text is divided into parts, The Way of the Wise, Under Construction, Scrubbing Up Your Attitudes, Sudsing Up Your Actions, and Standing Up to Sin. Each part includes five chapters and a discussion summary. The chapters cover a particular lesson or concept.

The fragmented nature of the book continues within the chapters. Each divided into sub-components with names like “Brain Drain,” “Bible Chunk,” “Sticky Stuff,” and “Act It Out.” Each “Sticky Stuff” directs the reader to memorize a removable Scripture Card from inside the back cover of the book.

While many adults may find the “spoon feeding” nature of Wise Up unappealing, this book is intended to grab and hold the attention of junior high school students. Older elementary/middle school kids could definitely benefit from the Bible studies in this book. While each chapter opens with a hip, irreverent vignette, the rest of the chapter is very serious about directing the reader to Scripture and God. The text is focused on equipping and encouraging students to live for God.

The Bible studies within this book are designed for group or individual use. It’s easy to see a junior high group getting maximum use of this material. Groups may choose to use only part of a lesson and defer the rest as “homework.” The memory cards are an important bonus: they encourage internalizing Scripture.

If the rest of the Early Teen Discipleship series is of the caliber of this book, Young groups
across the country will soon be using this text and its sister volumes.

Kirk Hunt, Instructor, Pima County Community College-Business & Industry Division, Tucson, Arizona


266. Liddell, Eric, 1902-1945; Missionaries--Scotland--Biography; Missionaries--China--Biography; Runners (Sports). 203 p. (High school).

Janet and Geoff Benge bring the life and times of this famous Scotsman, Eric Liddell, to the reader. This book starts with Eric’s win in the Olympics, traces his humble beginnings, and ends with the impact his life has made after his death in a Japanese internment camp. The book quickly and simply tells how deeply committed to following Christ Eric was. The plot is easy to follow and basically chronological with the focus on Eric, which helps the reader to see inside his mind. This allows the reader to understand the why’s and why not’s of Eric’s choices. Recurrent through the book is Eric’s commitment to do what God told him to do at the right time. Additionally, Eric’s ability to get along with others without being judgmental is exemplified often in the book. Supporting characters are handled well but are not developed completely. The actions of the Chinese and Japanese during the life of Eric are mentioned while never being derogatory. The paperback is of high quality and the attractive cover should draw the attention of many middle school to lower high school students. The bibliography and map will guide the reader to more information regarding this remarkable Christian. This husband and wife team has over thirteen years of writing, and they work with Youth with a Mission, the publisher of this book. This is just one in a series of Christian Heroes: Then and Now. This will be a welcomed edition to any library.

Bianca Elliott, Teacher, Linwood, Kansas


266. Aylward, Gladys; Missionaries--England--Biography; Missionaries--China--Biography; Women--Biography. 205 p.

Gladys Aylward struggled to warm herself. With an offhanded invitation from a female missionary, she left her home in England traveling through Germany and Russia, until she found herself in the midst of a war in Siberia. The train she traveled on through Russia was now picking up dead Russian soldiers. She had been kicked off the train and was now retracing her steps down the freezing railroad tracks. Janet and Geoff Benge tell an exciting tale of Gladys Aylward’s determination and frustration as she meets obstacles blocking her missionary call to China in their biography Gladys Aylward: The Adventure of a Lifetime.

Unaccepted by the China Inland Missionary Society for poor grades and advanced years (she was twenty-seven), her barriers to serving in China begin before she leaves England. With very little money and no missionary training, Gladys takes work as a housemaid to earn her way to China. She preaches from a soapbox in the park to practice her oratory skills. One day she overhears that an elderly missionary to China needs help. She applies for the job, thus beginning her journey into inland China.

From housemaid to inkeeper, foot inspector to adoptive mother, Gladys Aylward serves the Chinese people, showing them Jesus’ love and sharing the Gospel. The authors intertwine the story of Gladys with Chinese history and the political climate of Europe. This gives the reader a fuller understanding of the struggles of working within China.

The biography is one of fourteen books in the series, Christian Heroes: Then and Now. This will be a welcomed edition to any library. The paperback is of high quality and the attractive cover should draw the attention of many middle school to lower high school students. The bibliography and map will guide the reader to more information regarding this remarkable Christian. This husband and wife team provides a map of China in the front of the book with a more detailed inset of the area within which Gladys ministered. Except for a brief mention of the 1931 New Year, the reader must wait to find out the exact time period that Gladys served. Flashbacks further into the book reveal the date Gladys departs from England. There is a very short bibliography at the end of the book for further reading.

Joanne M. Haffly, Homeschool Parent/Freelance Writer, Gig Harbor, Washington


Hudson Taylor listened with feigned interest to the biblical teaching of his father and his minister. Resentment toward their old fashioned teachings built up until one morning, utterly bored, Hudson picked up a religious pamphlet from his father’s store. In his father’s warehouse he accepted Christ into his heart. Hudson’s discovery that both his mother and his sister had prayed for his conversion led him to a realization that God did answer prayers. In their biography Hudson Taylor: Deep in the Heart of China, authors Janet and Geoff Benge capture the remarkable trust this man had for God.

Soon after his conversion, Hudson heard the calling to China. So he set about to learn more about the Chinese language by comparing the Chinese translation of Luke with the English version. Inspired by the work of Walter Medhurst, Hudson was also determined to acquire medical training. Each step along the way, Hudson’s policy was to take each need to prayer and never ask anyone for money. Time after time, he waited and watched as the Lord led individuals to contribute to his training and ministries.

Upon arrival in China, Hudson adopted another idea from Medhurst. He dyed his hair and wore the clothes of the Chinese. His belief was that he would be more accepted for his message if the people weren’t fearful of his appearance. Some of his unconventional methods alienated him from established missionary groups. Ultimately he formed the China Inland Mission.

This biography is one of fourteen books in the Christian Heroes: Then and Now series by the husband and wife team. The story begins with an exciting moment in Hudson’s life, then flashes back so it immediately captures the reader. The first chapter neglects to set the exact time Hudson left for China so the reader must wait until halfway through the second chapter to understand the time frame. The authors provide a map of China in the front of the book with a more detailed inset of where Hudson served. The book ends with a simple bibliography for further reading.

Joanne M. Haffly, Homeschool Parent/Freelance Writer, Gig Harbor, Washington

700’s—The Arts and Recreation


With engaging descriptions, George Sullivan explores the gamut of hockey. He outlines the game, rules, skills, the offense, the defense, the NHL, the World Cup, and star players. There is an extensive glossary with novice and advanced terminology. Black and white photography and figures illustrate the concepts well, but lack the pizzazz of color diagrams and photographs. This may be a deterrent for teen and pre-teen sports fans who have become accustomed to glossy, color presentations.

Carol M. Jones, Librarian, South Side Elementary School and Marquette Pre-K Center, Champaign, Illinois

900’s—Geography, History, & Biography


921.3 (325.092). Wells-Barnett, Ida B., 1862-1931; Civil rights workers; Afro-Americans—Biography; Race relations; Women—Biography. 104 p.
Once upon a time, about 140 years ago, a little black girl was born into a very white world. *Ida B. Wells-Barnett: Powerhouse with a Pen*, by Catherine Welch, is her story.

Although born after the Civil War, Ida's life wasn't easy. At age sixteen she lost both parents and a brother to yellow fever. Ida was a strong, passionate person. The prejudice that began to rise up catapulted her to action. She wrote a letter to the editor of her hometown newspaper in Memphis, Tennessee. Soon another editor contacted her to write a column for his newspaper, *The Free Speech*. Ida jumped at the chance. She wanted to rile up the black community to action. Soon she gained a reputation for being gutsy; however the white papers called her a troublemaker.

That didn't stop her. Like any good reporter, Ida investigated many so-called crimes the white papers reported and learned that the white press often lied about black crimes. They also liked to publicize, even sensationalize black lynchings. Although most of Ida's friends were getting married and starting their families, Ida had no heart for that. Her passion and faith drove her. Many times Ida risked her life for her cause.

This book will inspire Americans even now, a century later. Welch's research and simple writing style along with antique photographs will appeal to all. Black and white, young and old, will all learn from history and especially from the spitfire, Ida B. Wells.

*Ginger McGrath, Freelance Writer, McMinnville, Oregon*


Cal Ripkin is best known for holding the record of playing the most consecutive major league baseball games. In *Cal Ripken, Jr.: My Story*, which children's sports writer Dan Gutman adapted from Cal's autobiography *The Only Way I Know*, the reader follows Ripkin from his childhood as the son of a baseball manager and coach, through his years in the minors, to his career as a major league shortstop and third baseman for the Baltimore Orioles. Cal's reflections on the fame that came when he broke Lou Gehrig's record will be of special interest, as will his thoughts about the game in general—breaking a slump, knowing the importance of the basics, and what inspired him to 'play well and play every day.' Ripkin comes across as a decent human being who appreciates the advantages he has been given. He also reveals a deep sense of family, talking about what it was like to work for his father, Cal, Sr., and play for the Orioles alongside his brother Billy, and his desire to shield his wife and children from the glare of publicity.

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**MIDDLE SCHOOL NONFICTION**
The simple sentence structure and narrative style make this book a good choice for reluctant readers. Two sections of mostly color photographs illustrate the text, and some of Ripkin’s career statistics are included at the end. While baseball fanatics will find this a sure-sell, this book will appeal to a more general audience as well.

Lillian Heytvelt, Public Librarian, Pomeroy, Washington

**Wow, Canada!** is the perfect travel guide for upper elementary or middle school-aged youngsters heading for any part of that vast country, or anyone who would just like an unconventional glimpse of it. Each province or territory has its own colorful chapter illustrated with snapshots, enlarged slides, and, ostensibly, kid’s drawings and cartoons of what they have seen. Sidebars entitled According to Mom, According to Dad, Food I Was Introduced to for My Own Good, and Exceedingly Weird are found in each chapter, lending humor to the presentation of interesting facts. The entire book is presented as a kid’s running commentary on what he is seeing, things he is learning, and people he is meeting as he travels across Canada with his family. All sorts of interesting facts are woven into his fascinated report scattered among a scrapbook-like arrangement of pictures, souvenirs, and cartoons. The end of the book contains a small handbook listing each province or territory, giving its flag, the origin of its name, symbols, size, population, etc., and finishes with an index of the entire book.


In Abraham Lincoln the Writer: A Treasury of His Greatest Speeches and Letters, editor Harold Holzer has arranged a compilation of primary source materials to allow readers to get to know Lincoln through his own words. While this offering includes excerpts from his famous speeches, inaugural addresses, and debates, the telegrams to his family, letters written to families of fallen soldiers, and rhymes jotted on the margins of a childhood arithmetic book give readers a more personal insight into Lincoln’s world. Holzer has written a number of books about Lincoln and he does a fine job introducing each excerpt, giving historical perspective and explaining the text’s importance to one’s understanding of Lincoln.

While this is probably not the only book one would use to write a report, it is a fine resource for students seeking quotations and for those who already have some knowledge of Abraham Lincoln. The short sections, usually one to a page, include many black and white reproductions of period photographs, drawings, and documents that illustrate the text effectively. Students will find the detailed year-by-year chronology of important events in Lincoln’s life very helpful. Also included is an interesting list of “Lincoln Places to Visit” such as Ford’s Theater National Historic Site in Washington, D.C., and the Gettysburg National Military Park in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania.

Lillian Heytvelt, Public Librarian, Pomeroy, Washington

F. Musicians--Fiction; Mystery and detective stories. 202 p. High school.


F. Mexican Americans--California--Fiction; Agricultural laborers--Fiction; California--Fiction. 262 p. High school.

Esperanza Ortega begins her life in Aguacalientes, Mexico, on El Rancho de las Rosas. Her father, a wealthy landowner, coddles and spoils her and gives her pretty dresses, beautiful things, and a lovely doll. Esperanza has many friends, including Miguel, the son of her father’s servants. Though she is fond of Miguel, she feels they are worlds apart because she is the daughter of a wealthy landowner and he is but the son of a servant. She expresses this to him by saying they are on opposite sides of a river.

Tragedy strikes, when her father is killed on the eve of her birthday. Esperanza’s life changes dramatically. Frightening and mysterious occurrences convince Esperanza’s mother they are no longer safe in Mexico. Esperanza and her mother escape with Miguel and his family to California in the United States. There, wearing old clothing and living in a farm laborer’s camp, Esperanza learns how to work and begins to deal with her own attitudes about classism. In her new country, with the help and friendship of Miguel and his family, Esperanza learns to cross the river to equality.

The book is rich in symbolism. Children and teens will not miss the symbolism of the hills and valleys of the Abuelita’s knitted blanket. And, they will quickly grasp the passage of time in the fruit and vegetables that Ryan uses as the title of each chapter. Younger readers may have more difficulty understanding Abuelita’s smooth stones and the angry thorn of the rose.

Pam Munoz Ryan has created a beautiful story based on the mythical creature, The Phoenix, rising from ashes. Esperanza Rising is a beautifully crafted novel that brings history to life for young readers from the eyes of one young Mexican immigrant. Ryan touches on women’s rights, the Mexican Deportation Act, and the plight of farm laborers during the Great Depression with a compelling, absorbing story.


F. Cartoons and comics--Collectors and collecting--Fiction; Mystery and detective stories. 202 p. High school.


F. Musicians--Fiction; Mystery and detective stories. 232 p. High school.

In Of Heroes and Villains, Byte, Jake, Peter, and Mattie are high school students who have formed a group called the Misfits. When anonymously invited to a comic book convention, they not only discover the identity of the friend who invited them but witness the theft of valuable film canisters by a comic book bad guy brought to life. Their investigation of the case uncovers a bitter comic strip creator, disgruntled employees, and a plot to destroy a comic hero who has become a household phenomenon. The Misfits face fireworks, cleverly disguised thugs, and entrapment in a burning trailer; however, they are not dissuaded from their mission to solve the mystery and save the day.

In Growler’s Horn, Jake acquires a clarinet from an auction that opens the door to two forty-year-old mysteries: 1.) disappearance of a nearly famous jazz clarinet player, Growler Morton, and 2.) theft of three million dollars worth of...
untraceable bonds. Clues found in Jake’s clarinet, a record, and some sheet music hold the key to both mysteries. The Misfits band together once again to catch the villains. Includes a fully fleshed out, believable thief, keeping the really evil guy hidden until the end. Puzzling clues, plenty of red herrings, and dialog interplay of Misfits make this quick read a treat.

Of Heroes and Villains by Mark Delaney is a formula puzzler, written in much the same style as Nancy Drew or Hardy Boys mysteries. Teens encounter funny business, face near death danger, win respect of local, skeptical police chief in cracking tough case, as criminals are led away in handcuffs. Growler’s Horn is a major improvement over the more canned mystery, Of Heroes and Villains. Delaney must have just been warming up in book #2, because #3 is a winner. No need to have read previous books in series to keep up with characters.


In this fourth installment in the Horsefeathers series fourteen year old Sarah Coop or Scoop to her friends is caught in a financial crisis. Since the death of her grandfather she has been struggling with the help of her aunt Dotty, her little brother B.C., and her friends Maggie, Carla, and Jen to keep Horsefeathers Stable solvent.

When she rescues Diablo, the runaway appaloosa of high school junior Ben Thayer, she hopes for some new business and is thrilled to discover that his mother is the host of “Della’s Place,” a popular local television show. Ben arranges for his mother to profile Horsefeathers. Maybe this “fifteen minutes of fame” will be enough to save the stable. But as her friend Maggie gets more romantically involved with Ben, Scoop hears rumors about him and becomes worried for her friend. Soon Maggie involves her in “little lies” to conceal the relationship and to make it appear that Scoop is performing miracles in training Diablo for the upcoming show. Inevitably Maggie feels the conviction of the Holy Spirit. What should she do? Can’t she just make everything right after she gets the needed media exposure?

Dandi Daley Mackall has fine insight into the temptations of teens. Through Scoop’s trials the reader easily sees the way that rationalizations are used in order to justify “small sins” which lead to bigger and bigger transgressions, ultimately pulling one away from a loving God. But the author does not leave the reader there and goes on to portray how through the ministry of the Holy Spirit the transgressor is led back into the merciful arms of our forgiving God.


F. Afro-Americans--Fiction; Chicago (Ill.)--Fiction. 160 p. High school.

It’s 1927 in Pickettville, Georgia, and twelve year-old Lorraine Dixon’s mamma is facing a hard decision. Lorraine’s father has just been convicted of stealing a wallet from the white man whose car he was working on, and because he stood up for his innocence in court, they have now heard that his accuser may come after the rest of the family as well. Daddy said they were to leave Pickettville and move to Chicago, Illinois, where they could be safe and where opportunities for Negroes were abundant. Nobody wants to leave Daddy behind during his year-long sentence, but Lorraine, her older sister, Nancy; and little brother, Marcus, follow Mamma onto the train and north to a very different world. Once in Chicago, Mrs. Dixon finds work caring for the children of an Italian family who own one of the most popular Italian restaurants in the city. These successful immigrants treat the Dixon’s more like family than employees or “colored folk.” Lorraine is soon introduced to new foods, new ideas and new people, including her idol, the famous actress, Nell Aldrich, who has come to Chicago to make a movie. Invited to visit the site and watch the movie being filmed, Lorraine and Marcus meet Miss Aldrich’s nephew, Charley, and together they become involved in tracking down the thief who stole Miss Aldrich’s diamond necklace.

Luck by Dorothy and Tom Hoober contains the right amount of historical references to set this story squarely in its time period. The popular movie culture of the time and the setting of the story in Chicago reflect the excitement and flavor of the time. Even Babe Ruth makes a last chapter appearance. The plot is fast paced and exciting, the main events taking place in a mere few weeks.

In general, Luck is a good read and exceptional in its development of setting for readers of this age level, but a problem arises with the fact that this book, and the series of which it is a part, is also presented as an historical and sociological look at the decade of the 20th century with which each deals. It is an admirable and ambitious goal, but it is here that the novel falls short. The “rags to riches” story of the black Dixon family is just too incredible to believe. From a poor but respectable, rural Georgia existence threatened by stereotypical white trash, they are catapulted into rubbing elbows with movie stars and famous gangsters in a matter of days. The fact that they are “Negroes” suddenly becomes irrelevant, and by the end of the story they have solved a famous crime, are best friends with the wealthy scion of the New England Aldrich’s, and are spending the summer at their “place” in Maine. A more serious
objection arises from the authors make to the sensational trial of Sacco and Vanzetti which is mentioned sympathetically several times. The reader is obviously supposed to draw parallels between their situation and Mr. Dixon’s unfair trial and sentence. The fact that these men are never identified as anarchists dedicated to violence as the means to achieving their goals and that at least one of them was most certainly guilty, is glaringly dishonest. Another problem with *Luck* is that it glamorizes the movie and gangster culture of the era with never a word about the real moral and social dilemmas these influences were causing in American life and in America’s view of itself; and that, after all, is what this series purports to be about.

Pamela A. Todd, Librarian/English Teacher, Chalcedon Christian School, Cumming, Georgia


F. Horses—Fiction; Christian life—Fiction; Fear—Fiction. 154 p. High school.

It’s summer in the world of fifteen-year-old Darla Jean (DJ) Randall and this is the busiest one yet. Between finishing ceramics class with her beloved Gran, beginning drawing class with Isabella Gant, jumping lessons on her horse, Herndon, and shows almost every weekend, DJ barely has time to think. But she continues to dream about qualifying for the Olympic Equestrian Team and looks forward to the highlight of her summer: a week-long stay at the U.S. Equestrian Team’s training camp in New Jersey.

When she finds herself screaming uncontrollably at the candles on her little stepbrothers’ birthday cake, DJ realizes that an old fear has taken control of her life and she begins to doubt that God will deliver her. Meanwhile she is struggling to establish a connection with her new horse Herndon and learn all his tricks and habits. Upon returning from the training camp, a mysterious fire threatens not only their growing bond but the safety of all the horses in the barn. DJ must make a risky plan to prevent their growing bond from being threatened.


F. Christian life—Fiction; Divorce—Fiction; Marriage—Fiction. 166 p. High school.

New Christian Nikki Sheridan lives with her grandparents in Michigan and is preparing to celebrate her eighteenth birthday when her distant and distraught mother, Rachel, shows up on board. It’s apparent Crowe has lived in the Caribbean, while Molly’s mother wishes to take the boat back to Florida and sell it as quickly as possible. To prevent her mother from selling Emerald Eyes to the Carribbean, while Molly’s mother wishes to take the boat back to Florida and sell it as quickly as possible.

Author Carole Crowe weaves rich detail and vivid sensory description throughout *Waiting for Dolphins*. Told through the eyes of Molly, after her father’s accidental death, the reader feels the guilt and scheming Molly feels. Molly and her mother return to the family houseboat, Emerald Eyes, after the funeral. Molly’s under the assumption they’ll sail Emerald Eyes to the Carribbean, while Molly’s mother wishes to take the boat back to Florida and sell it as quickly as possible. To prevent her mother from selling Emerald Eyes to the Carribbean, while Molly’s mother wishes to take the boat back to Florida and sell it as quickly as possible. To prevent her mother from selling Emerald Eyes to the Carribbean, while Molly’s mother wishes to take the boat back to Florida and sell it as quickly as possible.

The narrative provides wonderful realism of life on a houseboat—bathing in the ocean with Joy dish liquid because it lathers in salt water, then rinsing off the saltwater using the fresh water shower on board. It’s apparent Crowe has lived in the Caribbean, while Molly’s mother wishes to take the boat back to Florida and sell it as quickly as possible.

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200’s—Religion

A walk on the wild side: walking with the master, by Dave Ens. (Devotions for youth.) LCCN 99189437. Winnipeg, MB: Kindred Productions, 1998. PAP, 0921788568, $6.95.


A Walk on the Wild Side, by Dave Ens, is written in a typical devotional style in that it has a suggested Scripture passage, a key verse, and an application. It differs in that Ens, who is a youth pastor in Winnipeg, Manitoba, writes directly to the reader using I-you point of view. For example, in “Listening to What Counts,” (pg 41) Ens writes, “Look at verse 12. Do you notice anything strange about it? Does anything about that verse bother you? What strikes me is….” Ens provides “journaling” space in each of the devotions for the teen reader to write down thoughts, ideas, or questions.

“A Walk on the Wild Side” is well written and clear. The author uses a didactic style, but never writes down to his reader. Also, he peppers his pages with typical teen words, but an adult, as well as a teenager, would enjoy Ens’ book.

A Walk on the Wild Side has 160 pages, divided into 50 devotions. The cover design by Makus Design of Winnipeg, Manitoba is attractive in sage-green with pink-red print and red and white, and brown and white photos.


Find Your Fit: Dare to Act on God’s Design For You, by Jane Kise and Kevin Johnson is a LifeKeys 4 Teens publication. What is so noteworthy about this book is that it is a mini-course on helping your teen to find their potential, to give wings to their dreams, and to help young people find their place in the world. Each section has several subtopics that are each designed to get the reader involved with the activities in the book.

In the section titled How to Locate a Life: Talents, the authors have included areas that challenge teens to seriously look at and examine the ideas they have for their future. There are six personalities described in this section: Realistics, Investigatives, Artists, Socials, Enterprisers, and Conventionalists. These different types are important because each personality has different interests that influence what careers they would seek.

If your teen is having a difficult time realizing what his/her talents are, this book will definitely help. In the back are perforated tear out cards with different scriptures, all chosen specifically to impart wisdom for discovering talents. To further enhance this book, a detailed teaching guide is available at www.thewave.org/fit.htm.

Jane Kise and Kevin Johnson have done an excellent job in creating a book that will surely help your teen, or a teen you know, discover God given talents and give them a head start on understanding where they fit. This book is a must have if you have teens in your home or your heart.

Debby Wilten, Teacher, Home School Parent, Canyon, Texas


242’633. Teenage girls—Prayer-books and devotions; Fruit of the Spirit—Prayer-books and devotions; Devotional calendars; Prayer-books and devotions. 209 p.

Developing inner beauty in young women is the subject of Andrea Stephens’ devotional book, True Beauty: The Inside Story. In the first of ten chapters, the author contrasts our culture’s concept of beauty with God’s definition of beauty, and intrigues the reader with nine beautiful qualities-fruit of the Spirit. Each of nine subsequent chapters offers five daily devotional points highlighting one fruit of the Spirit. Day one defines the beauty quality, while day two contrasts it. Days three and four portray the quality in the lives of Jesus and a female Bible character. Each day’s Beauty Builders challenge the reader to apply what she learned that week. On day five she will find an introspective quiz, a prayer to her Heavenly Father, and an invitation to write a letter to Him in her Weekend Journal.

Joy and happiness, for example, are different. Depression and sadness are its opposites. Jesus and His mother Mary exhibited great joy in their lives. We can rejoice! Then right actions follow. Am I building or blasting joy? How can I change my attitudes and habits to become a more joyful person? How can I praise my Heavenly Father?

Stephens soundly builds Christ esteem with personal encouragement and Scripture. Her section on “How do I change my habits?” provides six keys to cultivating positive habits in daily life. This is the most practical section of the book, by far, and could be used separately as a stand-alone book.

“True Beauty: The Inside Story” is written for the young reader. The book is divided into three parts containing blank pages for prayer requests and a short devotional for each day. The first section uses the Lord’s Prayer as a springboard to learning more about prayer. Huebert notes that Jesus didn’t say, “Pray this exact prayer.” He said, “Pray like this…….” and then gave the Lord’s Prayer as kind of an outline to pray from.” Working through the Lord’s Prayer a line at a time he uses additional scripture to help the young reader understand.

In the second section the reader learns to pray using the names of God such as, “The Lord is my Banner,” “I am…the truth,” and “I am the Lord who heals you.” Obviously a firm believer in healing, Huebert tells of times he has been healed and states, “Whether now or in glory, healing is God’s will for you.” He presents good material on the full armor of God and how to appropriate it. The third section, Tips and Truth, covers topics that don’t fit in the other two chapters. How to hear God, knowing when you have prayed through a situation, and the importance of praise are all included in this section.

While written to appeal to teen-agers, adults will enjoy taking the three-month plunge into prayer also. Using an interesting and challenging format Huebert discusses difficult concepts of prayer clearly and simply. In the first section there are pages to record your thoughts on the Lord’s Prayer. The second section has a page for the reader’s insights into the names of God. The cover and book design by Brian Kauste is excellent. The frog on the cover is used throughout the book to mark each devotional.

570.3. Astronomy—Dictionaries. 490 p.

The accuracy and usefulness of The Facts on File Dictionary of Astronomy by Valerie Illingworth and John O. E. Clark is attested by this publication in its fourth edition. A sizeable dictionary of over 470 pages, it provides brief but precise definitions for terms, objects, and theories as well as graphs and tables to enhance understanding. Mathematical formulae required for understanding of astronomical phenomena are also given along with a short explanation of the concept and its use. The definitions are self-referenced with those terms used within definitions and elsewhere defined in all capital letters.

As with all the Fact on File dictionaries, "see" and "see also" references are abundant, guiding the reader to the correct expression of the term or concept being sought. The appendix at the end of the dictionary might be considered a ready reference handbook of astronomy. Tables on the characteristics of planetary satellites, names of asteroids, meteor showers, constellations, famous people in astronomy, and more will be invaluable to the librarian as well as the student researcher.

Pamela A. Todd, English Teacher/Librarian, Chalcedon Christian School, Cumming, Georgia

500's—Natural Sciences & Mathematics

540. Chemistry—Handbooks, manuals, etc., etc. 223 p. (Adult).

A team of editors and contributors led by editorial director Moira Johnston wrote The Facts on File Chemistry Handbook. One of four books in the series, four categories divide the volume: glossary, biography, chronology, and charts/tables. The glossary defines more than 1,400 chemistry related terms. The biography section gives paragraph long profiles of individuals who have contributed to the field of chemistry. Chronology lists advances in the science of chemistry beginning with 7000 BC and ending in 1999. The final section is a compilation of charts and tables including the periodic table.

Black and white illustrations line one edge of each page in the glossary section. From molecular formulas to diagrams of chemical processes the illustrations are greatly simplified.

The illustrations in the biography section vary from crude sketches and ragged downloaded portraits to more skillfully drawn detailed likenesses.

Except for the biographies, most of the information can be found in a basic chemistry textbook. But this book is marketed as a quick reference, not a textbook, and with the other Facts of File handbooks students can quickly cross-reference information. Other books in the series include Physics, Earth Science, and Biology.

Joanne M. Huliff, Freelance Writer; Homeschool Mother, Gig Harbor, Washington

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500's—Natural Sciences & Mathematics

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As with all the Fact on File dictionaries, "see" and "see also" references are abundant, guiding the reader to the correct expression of the term or concept being sought. The appendix at the end of the dictionary might be considered a ready reference handbook of astronomy. Tables on the characteristics of planetary satellites, names of asteroids, meteor showers, constellations, famous people in astronomy, and more will be invaluable to the librarian as well as the student researcher.

Pamela A. Todd, English Teacher/Librarian, Chalcedon Christian School, Cumming, Georgia

After the inspired writing of the Apostle Paul, there are few works that have had the impact or wielded the influence in the Christian world than those of John Calvin. His defense of the fledgling Reformation against attack from both Roman Catholic and Radical anabaptist alike, through his monumental Institutes of the Christian Religion, gave Protestantism a solid Scriptural and philosophical base from which it has influenced religious understanding and politics from that day to this. In his book entitled simply John Calvin, William Lindner examines the family and cultural background into which Calvin was born and how, through God’s Providence, he was prepared to perform the immense task of systematizing the theology of the Bible and applying it to the social institutions of his time. Throughout this compact biography the reader is confronted with a real, vibrant man rather than the stiff icon of the perennially misunderstood theology that bears his name. Linder’s prose conveys the danger and excitement of the early Reformation
as Calvin slips out of France for safety in Switzerland only to be confronted with God’s unexpected call thundered upon his head by the voice of the great William Farel. From that point on, the quiet scholar was transformed into a bold defender, and from one city he changed the world.

Linder writes John Calvin with zest and an obvious affection for the man and his works. Readers will get a sense of the perils and controversies of the time as well as a taste of Calvin’s eventful life. An appendix at the end of the book gives a chronological listing of all Calvin’s writings and a select bibliography provides suggestions for further reading.

Pamela A. Todd, English Teacher/Librarian, Chalcedon Christian School, Cumming, Georgia


921.40 (940.53’18’092). Frank, Anne, 1929-1945; Jews—Netherlands—Biography; Holocaust, Jewish (a939-1945)—Netherlands—Amsterdam; Women—Biography. 176 p. (Adult). On Wednesday, April 5, 1944, Anne Frank addressed her diary, “I want to go on living even after my death!” To the hundreds of thousands of school children who read her story The Diary of a Young Girl, Anne gave her adolescent interpretation of the mayhem of her world. For anyone who has read the diary, author Mirjam Pressler provides further information about Anne’s family, the political climate of that era, and insight into the publishing controversies over the subsequent diary versions.

This book is a commentary of events prior to Anne Frank’s death and thereafter. Thus, the author tackles tough philosophical questions about the allied troops delayed response to the issue of mass extermination of ethnic groups by the Germans. She ties in Anne’s writings with events that occurred using resources such as The Diary of Anne Frank: The Critical Edition, Anne Frank Remembered, and The Diary of Anne Frank: The Definitive Edition (which Pressler co-edited with Otto Frank, Anne’s father).

In the earlier versions of the diary that Otto Frank controlled, he edited out entries dealing with Anne’s awaking sexuality and relationship with Peter, a boy who lived in the Annex with them. The author discusses Anne’s confusion over her feelings and speculates on the degree of petting that went on with Anne and Peter. These mature issues make the book more appropriate to readers in high school and above.

The book is fully indexed, footnoted, and contains two bibliographies. There is a foreword by a rabbi who personally knew Otto Frank, and a note by Otto Frank’s stepdaughter. The author adds a postscript discussing the controversial new unpublished pages of Anne’s diary and there is a Chronology section beginning with Anne Frank’s birth and ending in 1998 with the new discovery of those pages. The center of the book contains eight pages of pictures of Anne, her family, and members of the Annex. For those teaching about Anne Frank or who want more information about this young writer, this book is well worth the purchase.

Joanne M. Hyfey, Freelance Writer, Homeschool Mother, Gig Harbor, Washington


972.8. Central America—History. 326 p. With our eyes trained on our cultural or economic equals, we Americans of the United States rarely attend to the small countries sharing our continent which lie to the south of Mexico. Unless there is a revolution or an earthquake, the nations of Central America are largely ignored. Most of us are woefully ignorant of their past and have no real conception of their present.

Lynn V. Foster’s A Brief History of Central America is a good first stop in rectifying this potentially dangerous oversight. Foster’s book begins in the area’s ancient past, treating the region as a whole, and traces the succession of peoples who have gained hegemony over it. More than a history of conquests, the author also delves into the social and cultural aspects of the parade of civilizations that have arisen here and examines their influences on each other, and brings history into the present. Formative events which occurred in each of the seven countries of Central America are related, but within the context of the entire region. Sidebars containing snippets on interesting people, events, statistics, and discoveries in the region are scattered throughout, giving the reader a feel for the dynamic cultural, political and economic realities contained in these small countries. A Brief History...ends with a wealth of indexes, one on each individual country in which the expected statistics are given, a bibliography of works consulted, and a very generous suggested reading list that is helpfully divided by topics which correspond to the book’s chapters. The fourteen-page index is superb, as is the general layout of the book and its black and white graphics.

The distinct problem with any real examination of Central America is the role that the United States has played in the region. The truth of our involvement in the affairs of these countries is very uncomfortable even when examined objectively, but this can be exacerbated by the leftist point of view which dominates much of the scholarship in this area. An honest evaluation of the situation is probably impossible; but that being said, A Brief History of Central America comes close. Its language is measured and it allows Central Americans the dignity of responsibility for their own lives rather than couching every problem as a result of U.S. interference. Even so, readers should be awake to possible bias, especially in the books recommended for further reading. There are simply very few books available to high school students that cover the ground so amply and completely as A Brief History of Central America. It is highly recommended for high school libraries.

Pamela A. Todd, English Teacher/Librarian, Chalcedon Christian School, Cumming, Georgia

Nicki Towns has a dream of creating a homeland for her people, the Assyrians. She believes it is her destiny to bring about the fulfillment of prophecies in the Bible regarding Assyria. She uses her expertise as a nuclear physicist to steal top secret missile plans from the U.S. company where she is employed. Chuck Reynolds, the company's security chief, is sent to investigate the situation. Somehow he finds himself the target of Iraqi assassins, and Nicki manages to save his life. The same group is after her. Chuck and Nicki find it is unsafe to remain in the U.S., so they leave the country incognito. As they travel together, Chuck discovers secrets about his own country that chill him to the bone. Nicki discovers Christ, and realizes she has been wrong to try to fulfill prophecy on her own. Chuck and Nicki discover that they are falling in love. They begin to work together, hoping to escape the Iraqis forever and save the U.S. from the threat of nuclear holocaust.

Blood Moon Rising, by Eric E. Wiggin, tries to be a suspense-thriller but falls somewhat short of its goal. It does have some good moments. The love story is sweet, though the two characters don’t really seem to belong together. The technical explanations about the neutron bomb are clear and very understandable. Violence is prevalent and sometimes graphic, but always appropriate to the story. The technical explanations about the neutron bomb are clear and very understandable. Violence is prevalent and sometimes graphic, but always appropriate to the story. The historical connections to the prophet Daniel are interesting, if a little far-fetched. At times the story moves slowly and is almost a chore to read. Some surprising twists and revelations at the end of the book make it a worthwhile read.

Pam Webb, School Librarian, Sunpoinit, Idaho

Silver Moon by Sigmund Brouwer, is the continuing saga of Sam Keaton, cleared of all murder charges and the new marshall of Laramie. In this episode, Sam meets an old love, uncovers the double life of the sinister man in the snake-skin boots, and runs a suspicious circuit preacher out of town. Religious beliefs, presented in both books, form a natural progression of questions most people living on the edge of life and death ask about God and the universe. Very gracefully and unintrusively presented.

Evening Star and Silver Moon by Sigmund Brouwer, are the first and second books in the Sam Keaton: Legends of Laramie series. Fans of westerns will find both complete with a hint of the old Louis L’Amour charm, a splash of mystery, and a touch of romance, a delightful read. Well documented historical fiction, with characters that are fully developed and believable.

Kim Harris, Librarian, Newman Riga Library, Churchville, New York


Eden Derrington, nineteen-year-old daughter of missionaries to Hawaii, has a mystery in her past. Her relatives claim her mother drowned, but Eden can’t remember; neither can she remember the accident that left a scar on her forehead. No one is willing to answer her questions. Set in the late 1800’s, For Whom the Stars Shine tells the story of Eden’s preparations to follow her calling to work beside her father, seeking a treatment for leprosy, while her cousins, Zachary and Rafe, vie for her attention. It’s also the story of the legacy of the missionaries, and of the haole (white) plantation owners who came to dominate Hawaii’s economy and politics.


The Bridge by Lisa Tawn Bergren combines two searching hearts in a setting so appealing it causes the reader to get out the map and phone a travel agency. Jared, hoping to hop off the fast track for a while, takes his young son Nick to Montana. In his hopes to get to know his son better, and to recover from the pain of a failed reconciliation with his former wife, Jared uses his simple surroundings to sort out how complicated his life has become. Finding solace in the cabin his great-uncle left him, Jared also finds himself caught up in his past, for this was the place where his mother was headed when she died so tragically. As Jared gets his uncle’s cabin in order, his relationship with his son also shapes up. Enter Eden, a talented young potter who hides the pain of rejection in her clay works. The past of both these wounded hearts become bound together as Jared and Eden’s friendship develops into a reluctant relationship. Bergren writes a strong novel as she unfolds the drama of two searching souls who must reconcile their past hurts. The interwoven drama of Anna, Jared’s mother, adds a satisfying dimension to an already enthralling story. The author provides a credible storyline how God is the end to the search. Written with authenticity and generous detail, the author has widened her readership to beyond the Christian audience, as this is a book written for those who are looking for true reconciliation.

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The first two hundred pages are painfully boring. Despite the exotic setting, descriptions fall flat. Exposition abounds in the narrative and the dialog, including many details that serve no purpose in moving the story forward. Sentence structure is passive. The reader only gets to hear about what has happened; he never gets to see any action.

The characters lack depth. The scoundrels are unrelentingly obnoxious. Since for most of the book the characters don’t do much besides think about the history of the islands and evade each other’s questions, the heroine and the hero are uncompelling.

When the story finally picks up two thirds of the way through the book, it is as if Chaikin has

Good Literature -- Right Standards

If we avoid reading secular fiction, we miss the many fine works that reflect the very same conflicts and joys we face in our walk with God.

Good literature comes in all sizes, styles and subjects. From The Velveteen Rabbit to Ben Hur we can find amazing tales of love, care, and the lifting up of the human spirit. Sometimes we tend to reject what we consider "secular" writing, concerned that it will present standards that are different and objectionable to our personal beliefs. Yet, rejection of all secular reading just might result in missing powerful messages that teach and encourage us in the reality of life itself.

Deborah Rau’s article found in The Plain Truth Online states:

"While weighing sacred fiction against its more worldly counterpart, we should also consider this basic principle: a secular tale can teach a profound spiritual truth. Consider Christ's stories and parables. During his earthly ministry he used storytelling, also known as parables, as his primary teaching tool. The sacredness comes not so much from the tale itself as from the application, when the story is lifted onto a spiritual plane, when all its facets are studied through regenerated eyes.

And that’s the way a Christian should read everything -- penned by a fellow believer or not."

Three examples of such literature demonstrate a variety of styles, genres and view points, yet all reveal the vulnerability of human kind, and a similar soul-searching and need for rightness and truth.

(Owen Wister, The Virginian).

"Of all kicking against the pricks none is so hard as this kick of a professing Christian against the whole instinct of human man."

(Leo Tolstoy, Anna Karenina).

"'Lord have mercy on us! pardon us! aid us!' he repeated the words that for some reason came suddenly to his lips. And he, an unbeliever, repeated these words not with his lips only. At that instant he knew that all his doubts... did not in the least hinder his turning to God. "

(Oscar Wilde, The Picture of Dorian Gray)

"It was his duty to confess, to suffer public shame, and to make public atonement. There was a God who called upon men to tell their sins to earth as well as to heaven. Nothing that he could do would cleanse him till he had told his own sin."

And long after we've placed J.R. Tolkien’s Lord of the Rings back onto the shelf, the epic tale of good against evil stays etched in our minds.

"He bitterly regretted his foolishness and reproached himself for weakness of will; for he now perceived that in putting on the ring he obeyed not his own desire but the commanding wish of his enemies."

Here is a quick look at a well known Christian author that had a very startling background. C.S. Lewis was a staunch atheist, yet he had a sensitivity to truth and the human condition. This soul-searching at last brought him face to face with ultimate Truth. In C.S. Lewis’ autobiography, Surprised by Joy, he spoke of his conversion to Christianity as the "prodigal who is brought kicking, struggling, resentful and darting his eyes in every direction for a chance of escape." Despite his willful reluctance, his Christian walk became an example that is worthy of careful consideration.

"Christianity was not for Lewis a suitcase into which he crammed the facts of life, cutting here and snipping there until it all fit neatly into the preconceived package... Lewis didn't find God; God found him."

I mention this potpourri of literature for one reason, to show some possibilities that help us understand and sympathize with the human condition while seeing a higher purpose that promises escape and rescue. I repeat that studying a written work, or any other work for that matter, with the wisdom and discernment God allows us, promises rich reward.

* Editors, The Plain Truth Online

F. Afro-American--Fiction; Reconstruction--Fiction; North Carolina--History--Civil War, 1861-1865--Fiction; Historical fiction. 291 p.

The Civil War has just ended and the formerly wealthy southern Curtis family is struggling to begin again when surviving son Andy returns home to his family. Both of his brothers have died in the war and his father has made enemies of two local women, the Pucketts, whose family was wiped out by marauders set upon them by Judge Curtis to save his own kin. Former Curtis slave, Daniel McFee has also returned after the war. He and the Judge struggle to work through the feelings left behind by the system of slavery and war.

The Pucketts appeal to local official, Nahum Bellamy, whose semi-legitimate group of vigilantes includes Daniel's angry stepson, Hamby. He is fighting for Negro rights, and believes that he is "God's avenging angel" to punish the Curtises for their part in the war.

Andy contacts Oliver Price to testify, since he is a witness, but Oliver hates to leave his gentle, tubercular wife, Nancy. However, he feels honor bound, and reluctantly goes to help. Upon his arrival he finds that someone in the valley is killing former Confederate soldiers.

The story moves rapidly to some surprising results as the Curtis family, Daniel McFee, and Oliver Price struggle to move on and become better people, despite the price they must pay because of the war.

Charles F. Price has based *Freedom's Altar* upon actual historical events that involved his ancestor Oliver Price. The story is an engrossing portrayal of the complex time of Reconstruction that is too little discussed. Most readers will sympathize with the finely drawn and detailed characters who must deal with the results of their life choices. The reader will also benefit from the healing power of forgiveness and self-sacrifice that is portrayed.

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F. Texas Rangers--Fiction; Fathers and sons--Fiction; Texas--Fiction; Christian fiction; Western stories. 331 p.

*Heaven's Road* opens with a flashback of Micah Sinclair as a battle between Mexicans and Texans rages in 1836. As a child he witnessed the conflict that claimed the life of his beloved uncle. This event forged a desire for revenge against the Mexicans that would not be quenched through many years as a successful soldier and then as a thief, delighting in stealing from and killing Mexicans. When the current escapade of the band of robbers goes awry, Micah comes face to face with Lucie and the beginning of a change of heart.

The path of *Heaven's Road* is not as predictable as one might assume and keeps the reader intrigued and curious about what's coming next. The resolution of Micah's heart change is not immediate and there is an unexpected twist midway through the book that will truly surprise you. Judith Pella has done an admirable job of weaving history, relationships, and redemption into a compelling read.

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F. City and town life--Fiction; Quakers--Fiction; Clergy--Fiction; Christian fiction. 219 p.

Philip Gulley, with Garrison Keillor style, quickly draws readers into Harmony, a fictional town with familiar real-life people. Sam Gardner tells us the facts and foibles of this town where he grew up and to which he returns after time away. He unexpectedly ends up as pastor of the Quaker meeting. Some of his members aggravate Sam and everyone else, as well. Others endear themselves.

Dale Hinshaw, the leading opponent of "most everything new in Harmony," continually spouts negative comments and comes up with outlandish ideas. Dr. and Mrs. Neely refuse to sell their house to anyone who wants to paint the dining room wall behind the drapes. Bob Miles, Jr. wishes he lived somewhere else, maybe far away in Paris. His father, Bob Miles, Sr. thinks the church should buy him a bullhorn because "... this town is a powder keg. And when it blows, you'll wish you had a bullhorn." Vinnie Torcelli tricks Ellis Hodge when he plants his mounted swordfish alongside Ellis' pond. Frank, the church secretary, "wades in and gets things done," including explaining the birds and the bees to the young people. As Billy Bundle, the world's Shortest Evangelist, drives away, Sam prays he will never return.

This satire on small town people and church life picks up on the shortcomings of God's children, even pastors: Sam and two churchmen deral themselves by spending Friendly Women Circle money to attend a ball game and drink beer while on a mission. Although Gulley illustrates how their sins finds them out, he does not deal with the situation as seriously as such a lapse deserves. Throughout the book he also paints word pictures of good-hearted, sensible folks. Many chapters end with a solid truth. These short preachments do not intrude, but instead, they add a skillful touch. He sometimes changes viewpoints, taking readers out of Sam's head into that of other characters.

Gulley writes with restraint and humor, though some may accuse him of making fun of Quakers. *Home to Harmony*, his fourth book, causes smiles and at times, out-loud laughter.

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F. Historical fiction; Christian fiction. 246 p.

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**Publisher and publishing--Fiction; Ghostwriters--Fiction; Editors--Fiction; Christian fiction; Suspense fiction. 396 p.**

One day Senior Editor Jonathan Harper picks up the mansion envelope marked Requested Material. He notes it is addressed to him at his childhood home. Stamped across the front reads Addressee Not Known. The return address bears his name and the address of the publishing house. Jonathan pulls out the pages and begins reading *The Story of My Life*. Within the pages of *Ghost Writer*, the author Rene Gutteridge tells a tale of mystery and suspense and ultimately of the greatest love.

Jonathan Harper's career at a publishing house is dissolving. His last few books lost money for the company. His star Western writer Clyde Baxter comes out of retirement with one last manuscript, and an annoying ghost writer Francis Flowers hounds him to read his story. He barely speaks to his wife Kathy. He notices a charming attractive co-worker Sydney and they begin to flirt.

The manila envelopes continue to arrive. Someone is writing about Jonathan’s life as it unfolds. The mystery person is watching his every move, even what he eats for dinner. It scares Jonathan and he fears for his safety and the safety of his family. He looks closely at the people around him. Is it Clyde? Is it God? Soon the manuscripts say he must die.

The raw emotions of a fallen man catch the reader in the throat. I found myself pulled into his depths of despair and felt his cry of anguish. Although the ultimate ‘mystery’ of the ghost writer ends weakly, the strong development of the character and his reestablishment with Christ makes the book worth the read.

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F. Texas Rangers--Fiction; Fathers and sons--Fiction; Texas--Fiction; Christian fiction; Western stories. 331 p.

*The path of the Stars Shine* begins to act in a credible manner. Too bad she doesn't appear. Eden becomes mildly likeable as she finally determined the truth about Rebecca Derrington, Eden's mother. Hints suddenly appear. Eden becomes mildly likeable as she begins to act in a credible manner. Too bad she didn't go back and inject some life into the first two hundred pages.

Chakir is a veteran novelist, with at least seven previous series under her belt. For *Whom the Stars Shine* is book 1 of the Jewel of the Pacific series. One can only hope that subsequent volumes will be more forceful.


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Heavenly Daze, a tiny island off the Maine coast, is inhabited by a small group of quirky locals—and six angels. Given the task of overseeing, protecting, and assisting the residents of Heavenly Daze, the angels are sent by God to take on human form in response to a prayer request made by the founder of the island in 1798.

The aristocratic Olivia de Cuvier and her niece Annie, whom she reared to adulthood, have harbored misunderstandings and bitterness towards each other for years. Angel Caleb serves as their “butler,” and with his gentle encouragement helps them come to a point of reconciliation. Annie, a researcher, plants some experimental tomato seedlings on the island, hoping to develop tomatoes that flourish in cold weather. Her seedlings endure fierce storms, being dug up by the dog, and even some deliberate crushing on Caleb’s part. Despite the damage, some are salvaged for replanting and begin to grow again. The plants become a metaphor for the fragile feelings of Annie and Olivia, and the tentative growth of their new relationship.

Island resident Reverend Wickam also has some things to learn about pride. Upon overhearing part of a conversation, he mistakenly believes himself about to be ousted from his pastorate and replaced by a younger, flashier preacher. Wickam promptly buys a toupee to cover his bald head, and plans visual aids and special effects to spice up his sermons. When all these things backfire, Wickam is humiliated, but is also brought to the realization that he simply needs to be who he is, and allow himself to be used by God.

Lori Copeland and Angela Hunt have combined their storytelling skills to create a lighthearted tale in The Island of Heavenly Daze. Although the plot line seems rather divided, and the angels more insignificant than one would expect, the story combines humor, reminiscent of Liz Curtis Higgs, with a serious message.

Sherri Beeler, Teacher, Cascade Christian High, Medford, Oregon


F. Women soldiers—Fiction; Ireland—History—Fiction.

There’s been a reshuffling of the Powers of the Air and the new CEO, Lord Foulgrin, has taken on the oversight of Squaltaint and his assignments with vigor. Failure in Squaltaint’s pursuit of the human souls under his jurisdiction is not to be considered or there will be Heaven to pay. Therefore Lord Foulgrin brings all his experience and evil genius to bear in letters to his underling, coaching him in the finer points of human weaknesses and demonic temptation. Meanwhile, John Fletcher is living the American Dream but finding that it hasn’t brought him the happiness he deserves. His kids are strangers, his wife avoids him, and the secretary at work is very responsive. Little does he know that Heaven and Hell are poised over his shoulder in a battle for his very soul.

Randy Alcorn openly admits that Lord Foulgrin’s Letters is greatly indebted to C.S. Lewis and especially his book The Screwtape Letters, written during the 1940s. A comparison of the two reveals that Foulgrin is much wordier than Screwtape, a result, says Alcorn in his afterword, of the changes in the world since Lewis’ time. In addition, Alcorn has included a narrative of the events occurring in the lives of the demon’s human subjects as Squaltaint and Foulgrin work all their angles to keep them from coming to Christ. Readers who have been exposed to Lewis’ original will find Alcorn’s “update” disappointing and his writing style over-blown. What Lewis said so well in a few choice words, Alcorn repeats again and again and again in prose that neither delights nor intrigues. The human side of the story suffers from “evangelicalese” and the ring of formula piety when spiritual truths arise, a problem common to most “Christian” fiction. The demonic half of the book is overfull of invertebrate and unnamed asides whose only function appears to be to disgust the reader. Lord Foulgrin’s Letters, like Frank Peretti’s novels of demonic activity, is written on the premise that Christians need to be more aware of demonic attitudes and activities presenting as much of their horrific evil as can be acceptably published by a Christian press. Given that much of what passes for demonic in this book is conjecture, the reader must decide whether this is a premise he should pursue.

Pamela A. Todd, English Teacher/Library, Chalcedon Christian School, Cumming, Georgia


F. Women soldiers—Fiction; Ireland—History—Fiction.

Fifth century Ireland is a land only recently touched by the light of the Gospel. It is also a land of warring clans and rival kings and is under the sway of powerful druids. In this place, two warriors, Maire the queen of Gleannmara, and Rowan of Emrys, face each other in a conflict that can only be solved through surrender instead of force of arms. Captured in a raid upon his home, Rowan, a devoted Christian and skilled warrior, agrees to marry the young, pagan queen who has defeated him in single combat in exchange for the safety of his people. Both declaring the marriage no more than political, they forge an alliance that thwarts the designs of the High King’s druid upon Gleannmara and bring prosperity to Maire’s people. Puzzled by his strange religion and its effects upon her husband, Queen Maire is intrigued and repelled at the same time. On his part, Rowan finds that he is falling in love with his spirited and earnest wife in spite of their agreement and a vow he had made to God to dedicate his life to a priestly calling. When enemies strike, Rowan and Maire must come to terms quickly with their understanding of God and his claim upon their lives. In doing so, they find that victory lies in surrender to the One who does all things well.

In Maire, Linda Windsor does a credible job of creating the feel of ancient Ireland in her portrayal of the conflicting loyalties and treacheries of the island’s rival tribes and factions. The main characters of Rowan and Maire each have a history and a calling that work upon their consciences and challenge their actions. Refreshingly, Rowan’s Christian convictions are strong, but not pietistic; and his witness to his pagan wife is given in brief, pertinent moments that pique her interest rather than sermonize. Both characters grow and learn, the climax of Rowan’s trial before the High King testing his more mature faith as well as Maire’s new found one. The only flaw in Windsor’s story is an unfortunate decision to personify Ireland and give it the task of narrator at the beginning and end of the novel, complete with an attempt at Irish dialect and syntax whose result is tilted rather than charming. Otherwise the story is rounded out with a very helpful glossary of terms and a bibliography of recently published works on the history of Ireland.

Oliole Fontenot is a resident of the newly founded town of Cantrell, Montana. But she is not the typical homesteader. Oliole is single and a professional photographer. This independent woman does not seem to be in need of a man. She is involved in her small community and feels complete in her chosen career. Along comes a sweet-talking cowboy named Kaid. Kaid seems to fill the hole inside of Oliole that she didn’t know was there. When Kaid receives a job offer in Canada and asks for Oliole’s hand, she must decide if she is ready to give up her love for Montana and her independence.

Stephen Bly writes an interesting novel about the “old west” with a twist—an independent single woman. Many novels of this type have a widowed heroine, but rarely have I read about one that was single. The characters are well developed and colorful. Although this is number three in a series, it was fairly easy to follow the story line—even of previously written story lines. This quick-read novel contains some surprises and proves to be unpredictable.

Tammy Williams, Social Worker, Freelance Writer, Port Orchard, Washington

F. Mothers and daughters—Fiction; Humorous stories; Love stories; Christian fiction. 367 p. (High school).

Erroneously learning her daughter is married, Gayle Livingston miraculously recovers from a mysterious medical condition. Meghann Livingston must now invent a husband, and who better than her handsome supervisor, Bruce. Meghann feels she can pull off this little charade until Bruce appears at the wrong time and must be included in her little fabrication. Bruce and Meghann continue the lie by pretending, not only to Gayle, but also to Bruce’s family. However, when Meghann and Bruce are faced with their lies, they must determine if the obstacles can be overcome so they can be really married. Humor and much soul searching ensue in this romantic tale by Mary Davis, Newlywed Games is an entertaining love story for which two people are truly trying to live according to God’s will, but are realistically human. Bruce and Meghann are Christians who have real problems from which readers can see the downfall of a snowballing lie. Humor, sadness, pain and love are all quite nicely portrayed in this contemporary Colorado hotel setting.

Connie J. Weaver, Church & Reference Librarian, Newville, Pennsylvania


F. Reese, Ben (Fictitious character)—Fiction; Archivists—Fiction; Mystery and detective stories. 356 p.

In Pursuit and Persuasion, Ben Reese is asked by his former apprentice, Ellen Winter, to investigate the murder of her godmother, Professor Georgina Fletcher. Ms. Fletcher appears to have died of natural causes, but a mysterious letter written to Ellen the day before her death opens up the opportunity that her death was anything but natural. Ben finds, upon journeying to Professor’s estate, that the possible suspects are many. Will Ben discover the murderer, or are the clues too hidden in the mysterious past?

Sally Wright’s mystery is very detailed and somewhat confusing. The writings are a bit “dark” with little spiritual reference or significance. Throughout the story, there are references to Ben Reese’s past, but little information to fill in the blanks. I found the incomplete story line of Ben Reese more interesting than the murder investigation. Reviews included in the inset of the book state that she writes in the style of Dorothy Sayer and I must concur as I find Sayer novels too detailed and drawn out, also.

Tammie Williams, Social Worker, Freelance Writer, Port Orchard, Washington


F. Ambassadors—United States—Fiction; Ambassadors—Romania—Fiction; Christians—Romania—Fiction; Brothers—Romania—Fiction; Romanian—Fiction. Christian fiction. 349 p.

An inspiring story with an unusual twist and enough excitement to keep you turning pages until the end of the book—what more could you ask from Christian fiction? Alexander and Yuri, Romanian twins, are separated as young children. Years later their paths cross during the brutal reign of Nicolae Ceausescu in 1980s Bucharest. Alex is an ambitious U.S. ambassador, Yuri, a Romanian officer in the secret police, and clandestine member of the Underground church. Yuri suspects Alex is his long lost brother yet hesitates to confront him with this information. A friendship with the ambassador’s wife brings about changes in each of them and causes Alex to evaluate what really brings meaning to his life. When he has to make decisions regarding the lives of defectors; decisions that may not be politically correct and may cause him to lose his esteemed position, he chooses the ethical path and discovers strength and compassion that he did not know he possessed.

Besides the entertainment of a good story, Refiner’s Fire by Sylvia Bambola should alter the thinking of readers by making them aware of what Christians in other countries have suffered and continue to suffer for the cause of Christ. This book will be enjoyed by both men and women and will be a well-read addition to any church library fiction collection.

Ceil Carey, Young Adult Librarian, Plano, Illinois


F. Married women—Fiction; Alaska—Fiction; Historical fiction; Christian fiction; Love stories. 310 p.

Mary, an 18-year-old Aleutian, has her heart set on marrying her absent sweetheart Paul, but her parents think she should accept the proposal of Edward, a village minister, living simply and peacefully with his wife Catherine and their children. Years later their paths cross during the WWI era Alaska. But he just misses Nicole, who releases herself from a love affair, learns of her English roots, and leaves quickly to find her birth family. Struggling to know God and their need for Him, young Alex and Yuri are separated as young children. Mary, an 18-year-old Aleutian, has her heart set on marrying her absent sweetheart Paul, but her parents think she should accept the proposal of Edward, a village minister, living simply and peacefully with his wife Catherine and their children. Years later their paths cross during the WWI era Alaska. But he just misses Nicole, who releases herself from a love affair, learns of her English roots, and leaves quickly to find her birth family. Struggling to know God and their need for Him, young Alex and Yuri are separated as young children.

Teresa O’Donley, Library Media Specialist, Bayhmont Christian School, Scotts Valley, California


F. Acadia—Fiction; Canada—History—To 1763 (New France)—Fiction; Historical fiction; Christian fiction. 268 p.

Eighteen years before, an English family had exchanged babies temporarily with a French family to secure medical attention for the French infant, but before the babies and parents reunited, the British expelled and scattered the French Acadians from what is modern day Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. Little French Annie remained behind and little English Nicole fled with the French. The families lost contact with each other.

Now Lord Charles Harrow, rich and proud, makes a perilous transatlantic crossing to Halifax, searching for his estranged brother Edward and hoping to find a male heir for his English estate. Upon reaching the shore, he discovers his journey has only begun. Charles locates Edward, a village minister, living simply and peacefully with his wife Catherine and daughter Annie, who, he is startled to learn, is not a blood relative. He determines to find Nicole, his true niece.

Janette Oke and T. Davis Bunn weave Charles’ quest intricately with all other characters’ searches for identity or spiritual reality. Charles sails south, then treks overland to the Louisiana Bayou. But he just misses Nicole, who releases herself from a love affair, learns of her English roots, and leaves quickly to find her birth family. Struggling to know God and their need for Him, young Alex and Yuri are separated as young children.

The Sacred Place by Bonnie Leon transports the reader to WWI era Alaska. The constant love and patience of Sean in wooing his bride parallels the workings of the Holy Spirit upon Mary’s heart. The story is fast paced and exciting and the characters are intriguing. The realistic details about Aleutian life are a fine touch and really add to the story. The themes of love, forgiveness, repentance, and what makes a truly good marriage are well done. This is a story that will stay with you.

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comes home to the shore, sacred to each individual because of the nature of his or her quest. The reader wonders if the story has not yet ended.

The authors pen a masterful account of people facing the storms of life and realizing they mirror the storms within them. Readers will learn that their quests begin with the voids within as they identify with characters' personal and physical sufferings, fears of rejection, and spiritual growth. In The Sacred Shore's historic account of the French Acadians, readers glean a deeper appreciation of the sacrifices these colonists made for all of us in the settling of our great nation.

Shadow of Legends is set in Deadwood, South Dakota, during the Gold Rush. Todd Fortune is trying to live up to the reputation his father made during his first few years in the Deadwood gulch. When the elder Fortune goes hunting and prospecting in the Big Horn Mountains of Wyoming, Todd and his family are left to cope with swindlers, stage robbers, and murderers. In addition, Todd is worried about his wife Rebecca’s dissatisfaction with life in the shadows of the Deadwood gulch. He is also concerned about Dacee, his sixteen-year-old sister who is quickly becoming a woman, but who rides and shoots like a man. When two stage robbers escape from custody and come back for revenge on those who captured them, the whole family gets involved in a fast-paced adventure that not only risks their lives, but also tests their faith and commitment to God’s will.

Shadow of Legends follows Under a Dakota Cross in the Fortunes of the Black Hills series. Although reading the books in order would be helpful, Shadow of Legends stands by itself fairly well. It is filled with action and good Christian values. In this book Stephen Bly also demonstrates that God only expects each person to do his best, and not to try to be someone else.


Taylor Delaney, Sonsee’s best friend, has just been framed for her father’s murder. Believing in his innocence, and loving him with all her heart despite the fact that he does not return her love, Sonsee agrees to hide him from the police until the true killer is found. Sonsee suspects that one of her half-siblings is responsible for the murder; there has been little love lost toward formulaic resolutions of conflicts. Sonsee also learns to embrace a relationship with the Lord as her ultimate fulfillment.

Two years into the War, the Highwood family of Kentucky has been pulled apart by death and the destruction of much they had held dear. Jesselynn Highwood has promised her dying father that she will take the family wealth, their stock of blue-blooded Thoroughbred horses, to a Richmond hospital, but the supply of much needed pain-killing morphine has run out. The only source is in Washington, D.C., the capital of the enemy. A soldier might not get through, but perhaps a woman could. Against her brother Zachary’s better judgment, Louisa and he set out to acquire the medicine that will save their charges’ lives. In Sisters of the Confederacy, both Highwood women face situations that they had never expected to encounter, Louisa with faith, but Jesselynn with bitter unbelief.

Sisters of the Confederacy continues Lauraine Snelling’s A Secret Refuge series about the Highwood Family of High Oaks, Kentucky, examining the effects of the War Between the States on a Confederate family. Sisters is most concerned with Jesselynn’s trek west in search of a safe place for her horses and her former slaves and her struggle with the God she no longer recognizes. Although dependent upon her as a shield against capture or prejudice, it is the witness of her former slaves/friends that shows Jesselynn the way back to faith. Snelling’s story is an interesting, if rather sensational, premise, but it suffers from uneven writing, a reliance on caricature, and a tendency toward formulaic resolutions of conflicts. Specific incidents, such as Daniel’s arrest and trial due to false identification, are intense and well drawn; but Jesselynn’s inner conflicts are predictable and their resolutions prosaic. Most
of the book’s secondary characters are little more than stereotypes, and those of the broadest sort. In short, it is a readable escape, but not a compelling or particularly accurate excursion into the past.

Pamela A. Todd, English Teacher/Librarian, Chalcedon Christian School, Cumming, Georgia


F. Philippines—Fiction; Legacies—Fiction; Suspense fiction; Christian fiction. 217 p.

Jacob Levine is the very successful Jewish partner of a New York law firm. One day he receives a message that will change his life forever. His older sister Sarah has just died in the Philippines. This brings many questions to Jacob’s mind, since he thought his sister had died during the Japanese invasion of the Philippines in 1941. He travels to the Philippines, where he is given her journal. As he reads through her account of what really happened in 1941, his own ideas about life and faith are challenged and changed forever.

Sarah Levine arrives in the Philippines as an ambitious young diplomat, ready to make her mark on the world. The unexpected attack by the Japanese causes her to face the worst emotional crises of her young life. Separated from the other diplomats and surrounded by the horrible realities of war, she comes to terms with her own crushing need for a savior. For herself and millions of other Jews, that Savior has not yet come. A young soldier she meets tries to convince her that He has come. But she cannot possibly believe that Jesus, whom she has been taught is the worst blasphemer ever to live, is the Savior she searches for. Or can she?

South Pacific Journal is a beautiful, poignant love story. Not a romance novel, it instead captures the tender sweetness one experiences when coming to Jesus for the first time. This picture stands in sharp contrast with the story of Sarah’s flight across the war-torn island, trying to stay ahead of the Japanese army. David and Nancy French do an excellent job of describing the conditions of war without being too graphic.

Even minor characters are well developed. The devastation of the refugees as they see their home destroyed is very real. The reader feels the hopelessness of soldiers who march to a battle they cannot win. The characters live in constant fear of discovery and death. Sarah’s encounter with Christ set against this backdrop gives a perfect picture of the peace we have in Christ during even the worst circumstances in our lives.

Rhonda Marie Lackey, Writer, Substitute Teacher/Former Librarian, Tukwila, Washington


In Nancy Moser’s novel The Temptation, characters with diverse personal histories stumble into temptation while trying in their own strength to fulfill vows made to the Lord when they dedicated their lives to Him at Haven, where they had all been mysteriously invited several years before. Each one’s struggle is a mini-plot within two larger ones.

Ben Cnoa, bitter from former campaign work with Julia Carson-now president of the United States-succumbs to Ham Spurgeon’s evil plot to assassinate her. Father Del, homeless man turned priest, collides with their sinister plan while organizing a reunion of all Havenites. Everyone’s passionate, selfless devotion has cooled to lukewarm complacency and pride in self-achievement. Natalie Pasternik is tempted to give up her writing. Walter Prescott is selfish with his bonus and gloats over his successful TV program. Crediting herself for artistic success, Kathy Bauer hides treasures in her closet and longs for an expensive home. God gave Julia her talents, but now she handles things very well, thank you. When Art Graham emerges from jail he must choose whether to join in Ben’s schemes. Spiritual warfare forces clash in the climax of the Reunion, with good triumphing over evil.

Third novel in the Mustard Seed Series after The Invitation and The Quest, The Temptation is suspenseful, yet delightful reading, built on a sturdy framework of biblical truth. The story line moves at a fast pace. Moser invites readers to chuckle and think introspectively while observing private, emotional parleys between very real people. Each chapter begins with a Bible verse appropriate to upcoming action. Replete with Scripture, the text weaves Truth into the characters’ growth in their battles against temptation. The author reminds readers that God has placed them in unique circumstances in life, with unique companions and purposes to fulfill in the face of spiritual warfare.

Readers become alert to how quickly their thinking can change, how subtly they can be tempted with success, greed, or pride. They learn with the characters that they are not better people because of what they have done, but because of their relationship with God.

Rhonda Marie Lackey, Writer, Substitute Teacher/Former Librarian, Tukwila, Washington


F. Israel-Arab War, 1948-1949—Fiction; Jews—Palestine—Fiction; War stories; Christian fiction. 311 p.

F. Thunder from Jerusalem—second in the Zion Legacy Series after Jerusalem Vigil—promises a thrilling read in historical fiction. From Bodie and Brock Thoene, authors of bestselling series The Zion Chronicles and The Zion Covenant, the five-day saga unfolds on Wednesday, May 19, 1948. Beseiged for months with a lack of food and water, Israel has just declared her independence. Jewish patriots fight against Syria and Egypt to the north and south, and against Jordanian King Abdullah’s Arab Legion. Who will control the city of Jerusalem, holy to both Jews and Muslims?

Jacob Kalner has just broken through Zion Gate with eighty Palmach troops, carrying precious ammunition and medical supplies for the hospital where his wife Lori tends the wounded and dying with Rachel, wife of Moshe Sachar, Haganah commander. God has arranged the arrival of the Arab Legion’s armored column and infantry is imminent. What he doesn’t know is that American pilots coming to their aid are being tortured and killed. Nor does he know that a former Nazi SS lieutenant has infiltrated his ranks to assassinate him. An obstinate and collaborating mayor complicates matters.

The Thoenes communicate superbly the strong faith of the Jews, who “see the Almighty’s hand of protection with their hearts” and know that as long as one of them remains alive, God will not break His promise to Abraham. The authors preserve the truth of the Nazi holocaust, and emphasize God’s promises to save and provide for a remnant of His people.

Almost breathtaking is the authors’ narrative of fierce fighting between hundreds of armed Arabs and Peter Wallich’s Gadna Youth Brigade. This small teenaged band detonates petrol bombs, hurls antitank mines, and valiantly hurls petrol bombs, molotov cocktails, and grenades at the enemy. Some graphic details of violence and suffering permeate the fast-paced story. In sharp contrast, quotations from the Bible and the Amidah parallel the occasional appearance of a mysterious rose gardener, whose palms bear the marks of crucifixion. The garden is surrounded by large scars, and who encourages characters on their spiritual journeys. A few Old Testament prophecies (i.e., Daniel) are clearly explained.

Thunder from Jerusalem, a timely novel for both Jews and Gentiles, is a gripping tale of wartime adventure, historic truth, pain and heartache, romance, and spiritual strength. Readers will understand that the true eternal battle is about faith in God, and will wait eagerly for the next installment, Jerusalem’s Heart.

Rhonda Marie Lackey, Writer, Substitute Teacher/Former Librarian, Tukwila, Washington


F. Russian-Americans—Fiction; Brothers and sisters—Fiction; Immigrants—Fiction; Russia—Fiction. 309 p. (High school).


F. Russian-Americans—Fiction; Brothers and sisters—Fiction; Immigrants—Fiction; Russia—Fiction. 309 p. (High school).

F. Russian-Americans--Fiction; Brothers and sisters--Fiction; Immigrants--Fiction; Russia--Fiction. 309 p. (High school):

Tatyana Letinov and her brother Yuri live on a small farm in the Russian in 1930. They don’t own much but life is good. Their parents, extended family, and neighbors form a close bond where God is honored. Into their lives comes Stalin.

Where Freedom Grows follows the horrors, atrocities, and terror of living under Stalin’s regime. All are dealt with realistically and not softened to make a “nice” story.

Shortly after Tatyana’s parents are taken from the farm by Russian troops, Yuri convinces Tatyana that she must try to escape to America. Alone and afraid, Tatyana catches a train to a Leningrad where she can board a ship sailing to America. It is dangerous to talk to strangers or to admit a belief in God, especially since NKVD men, Stalin’s agents, are everywhere. On the ship one of Tatyana’s cabin mates is Flora, an older Russian woman going to live with her sister in New York. Tatyana and Flora get through the inspection on Ellis Island and finally meet Flora’s sister, Augusta. Beside Augusta is her son, a large, blond man named Dimitri.

Meanwhile Yuri lives on his uncle’s farm. But here too there is no escaping the soldiers, and soon Yuri and his uncle are forced into the back of a truck with other prisoners. Instead of a prison, Yuri finds himself getting out of the truck near a forest. A group of the prisoners are marched away and soon the sound of rifle fire breaks the silence.

The first seven chapters of In Fields of Freedom are devoted to Tatyana and Demitri. Seeking a new job in the depression era isn’t easy. But Demitri has been accepted by a logging company in Washington State. He heads west promising to send for his bride, Tatyana as soon as possible. A voided timber order cancels Dimitri’s promised job. Then he learns that the coal mines are hiring. The danger Dimitri faces when working in the mine is multiplied for Tatyana when she becomes pregnant.

In Fields of Freedom picks up Yuri’s story where he has just entered a prison complex where there seems to be no escape. His faith has all but deserted him. Then he meets Alexander, imprisoned because he was caught teaching a religious class. Yuri faces starvation, isolation pits dug in the frozen ground, and the haunting fear that God has forsaken him. While he and Alexander are being transferred to another prison, a train wreck sets them on a 2000 kilometer trek across Russia.

Harvest of Truth finishes the story of Yuri and Tatyana. This third book in the trilogy does not keep the same fast-paced action as the first two. Yuri joins his old friends from the underground and begins handing out Scripture portions. His promise to Tatyana to join her in America weighs heavily on him so he makes the decision to get false papers and try to leave Russia. Tatyana struggles with her desire to return to her homeland. She wants her child to understand his heritage. She unrealistically believes she would be returning to a pre-Stalin Russia she remembers from her childhood. Problems are solved by returning to a strong faith in God and the help of fellow Christians.

Bonnie Leon shows the struggle of keeping one’s faith amidst the evil of a communist government. Her characters are believable. Even those who, because of their strong faith, work in the underground do not take the danger lightly.

This trilogy will be enjoyed best by reading the books in order as number two and three pick up where the previous book leaves off. The life style of 1930’s Russia includes the drinking of vodka and other ligarons. Smoking a pipe is treated as a pleasant past time, and dancing is the way to celebrate when people get together. A glossary in books two and three help to identify some of the Russian words.

Myrtle May P. Crane, Freelance Writer & Editor, Alderwood Manor, Washington


F. Homeless families--Fiction; Brothers and sisters--Fiction; Pennsylvania--Fiction; Christian fiction. 159 p.

This enchanting sequel to Snow continues the story of the lives of the inhabitants of King of Prussia, Pennsylvania, during the Great Depression. It is the spring of 1929 and spring is blowing in from the east. To Isabel McCaslin, considered the town looney by her married brother Peter, this portends not only the end to a cold winter but to “good news” being on the way.

The wind “blows” Otto Mueller and the indigent Pitovsky family her way. The relationship between Isabel and Otto deepens and he helps her to view herself and others from a different vantage point. But Otto has a secret adopted daughter, as well as trying to recover from personal wounds and financial woes himself. Meanwhile Otto’s mother Ingrid and Isabel work surreptitiously on behalf of the Pitovskys whom the miserly Peter is trying to throw off his property.

Calvin Miller proves once again his genuine giftedness as a master storyteller. Isabel and Otto are flawed but appealing personalities who not only develop a new strength of character but who change in fundamental ways. The unfolding interpersonal relationships catch one’s attention and carry the reader along for an enjoyable ride. The only disappointment is that one has to wait until later this year for the story to continue in the sequel, Summer.

Teresa O’Donley, Library Media Specialist, Baymonte Christian School, Scotts Valley, California
00’s—Generalities


Connecting kids and the Internet is a comprehensive handbook designed to assist adults in directing children through high school in the use of the Internet for school and for fun. Among the subjects covered in this book are safety-passwords, protection from viruses, and filtering software for computers accessible by children. Activities for younger children, and fun and learning activities for all ages, are followed by more advanced activities for teens which include UNIX shell accounts and telnet and ftp activities. Several chapters end with a list of resources, some include lesson plan ideas. The final section includes the text of fourteen lesson plans dealing with web addresses, evaluating web sites, bookmarking, copyright, e-mail addresses, mailing lists, creating web pages, etc.

Benson and Fodemski are educators who have worked with K-12 children on Internet projects. Their well-designed handbook is loaded with information for the beginner and more advanced Internet surfer. Although both Internet Explorer and Netscape are described, many of the black-and-white screen shots are from Netscape. The index does not refer to all of the many web sites discussed in the text, but the accompanying CD-ROM includes in “The Link Farm” annotated listings of web site addresses (Uniform Resource Locator, URLs) in twenty-eight different categories. The CD-ROM may be accessed through a web browser, and if the browser is connected to the Internet, clicking on these URLs connects directly to the Internet web site. The CD-ROM also includes the text of the fourteen lesson plans, with their Internet URL links. As the Internet changes, many addresses change, and more gopher and ftp sites are moving to the World Wide Web. The Library of Congress new web-based Voyager catalog now provides advanced online searching.

Donna W. Bowling, Library/Educational Consultant, Dallas, Texas


025.04. Internet (Computer network)—Handbooks, manuals, etc.; Online data processing—Handbooks, manuals, etc.; Microcomputers—Handbooks, manuals, etc. 322 p.

In Going Online @ Home, Baptist pastor Ken Reaves presents a simple, down-to-earth

A Note from the Editor: by Ray Legg

Renewed Vigor

I am in the midst of an interesting time in my life. No, it is not a mid-life crisis or anything disastrous like that—I plan those to coincide with the yearly vacation to the Outer Banks of North Carolina—going wind surfing and the like (this year, a student who lives near, wants to teach me to surf!). That should be interesting!). No, what makes this time interesting is that I am rediscovering reading. For some unexplainable reason, I find myself

drawn to the printed word with renewed enthusiasm. That may not seem strange to those of you who know I am a teacher, but it is. There came a time during which, precisely because I was a teacher, that reading lost its appeal. It was part of the job. Things are different now.

I am not sure why it has happened. Maybe I have been out of school long enough to look at books as entertainment, adventure, and the like rather than texts for a course. Maybe my confidence in my skill as a professor is increasing, or maybe it’s the effect of the passage of time—who knows? What is sure is that I have books open everywhere: in the office, at home, in my briefcase—everywhere. And during class the students must endure the rabbit trails I get off on as I share connections between stories I have read. My hope is they will catch some of my enthusiasm and want to read the materials for themselves.

As I write this, my attention is drawn to a poster displayed in my office which I got at the Civil Rights Institute in Birmingham, Alabama. It depicts the major figures responsible for bringing about the Harlem Renaissance. On it are musicians, artists, and writers, some of whom I have not read or seen or heard before, but who, because of the enthusiasm I feel of late, I will know soon. And many of whom the students will get to know as we interact in and out of the class. Who knows? Maybe some of them will actually want to go to the library to discover these people for themselves. Maybe they will catch a renewed vision for reading for themselves. Maybe we all can help them catch that vision through our enthusiasm.
introduction to the Internet geared to Christian families. Beginning with basic terms, he lays out criteria for initial selection of computer hardware and software, and then Internet Service Providers (ISP) to get connected to the Internet. Safety—protecting personal privacy, protecting children from inappropriate content, and protecting the computer from viruses—is the first major topic. Other sections provide simply expressed detailed instructions on browsing, e-mail and mailing lists, searching online, downloading and updating, and communicating, and joint activities with family and friends.

The layout is comfortable and the text is easy-to-use, with wide margins, a number of pull-out lists, and frequent black-and-white screen shots throughout the book. Illustrations include both Netscape and Internet Explorer screens. Although Reaves makes passing reference to Apple’s Macintosh, he consistently assumes PC equipment with MS Windows software.

He describes and recommends many web sites within the text. (He also mentions that the Internet is constantly changing, and some of his Internet addresses have already changed.) Although this book is geared to the newcomer to the Internet, several hints along the way reward the more experienced reader. Appendices include additional terms and a useful classified listing of more than 300 Web sites to visit (URLs—Uniform Resource Locators), including many specifically Christian sites. Includes a few bibliographical end notes and a skeletal index. Accompanying free CD-ROM provides access to LifeWayonline, an ISP affiliated with the Southern Baptist publisher.

The Christian focus of this book will appeal to many and it is more appropriate for the beginning Internet user than the more comprehensive Connecting Kids.

Donna W. Bowling, Library/Educational Consultant, Dallas, Texas

100’s—Philosophy & Psychology

★


155.4’1315. Learning, Psychology of; Learning—Physiological aspects; Social aspects; Learning—Psychological aspects; Neuropsychology. 384 p.

"Kids’ brains must be different ... ," she remarked as she graded student essays. After several years of examining results of cutting edge brain research and many conversations with teachers, educational psychologist Jane Healy has documented factors she thinks have contributed to the differences in student thinking that teachers have noticed in more recent years. In Endangered Minds, Healy points to several of those factors related to children in the areas of language-related learning, sustained attention, and problem solving. Beginning with the plasticity of the brain, and the impact that environment has on its development, she addresses the way language influences how children think. Lifestyles in the home and the school climate affect and are affected by children’s learning disabilities and attention difficulties. Modern cultural features such as video games and TV (even Sesame Street) may divert the developing child’s brain away from the analytical and reflective thinking skills needed in schools. Haley writes that even some school practices may be counterproductive to meaningful learning.

In this wake-up call for parents and educators, Healy warns against potential hazards to children’s developing brains. Among them are toxic substances and foods, noisy environments, sedentary lifestyles, and attempts by adults to force “learning” on children who are not developmentally ready. She balances those with positive suggestions for parents and teachers, pointing out the value of physical play for growing brains and the necessity of conversation with adults to foster thought, imagination, empathy, and reflection. When Endangered Minds was originally published in 1990, Healy received the Delta Kappa Gamma Society International Educator’s Award. The 1999 edition has a new introduction with a progress report on current research and changes in the culture, plus a reading group guide at the end of the volume. Includes extensive bibliographical end notes and index. [See also in this issue Healy’s Failure to Connect.]

Donna W. Bowling, Library/Educational Consultant, Dallas, Texas

200’s—Religion


More than just an update of the Eerdmans Bible Dictionary (1987), the Eerdmans Dictionary of the Bible has been totally revamped, using 600 contributors from all over the U.S. and a few other countries as well. All the main denominational perspectives are considered. The 3000 entries cover the Old Testament (including the Apocrypha) and the New Testament. Many terms not found in the Bible are covered if considered important to Bible study such as Trinity, Gnosticism, and Apostolic Fathers.

Reflecting the latest scholarship in many areas, previous Eerdmans’ users may be surprised at what has changed. For example, the concept of Gnosticism is now defined somewhat differently than what many of us have been taught. Some entries, such as the one on Hell, may seem a bit academic, but are still understandable. By academic, I mean that the Greek and Hebrew words are used repeatedly and the language is abstract. The inside cover has a Transliteration and Pronunciation chart opposite The Archaeological Periods of Palestine on the first page. On the review copy, these are also on the inside back cover and last page, only upside down.

To promote additional understanding of biblical events and concepts, there are twenty maps, most in color; limited bibliographic works cited after some of the definitions; and a few photographs.

Lydia E. Harris, Freelance Writer & Educator, Seattle, Washington


223. Psalms; Bible. O.T.—Psalms. 406 pp. Henry M. Morris, author of numerous books and founder of Institute for Creation Research, wrote Treasures in the Psalms to share blessings he’s experienced from studying Psalms. He views the psalms as “far more than mere devotional poems for pious reading.” Thus, he offers a scholarly verse-by-verse exposition of selected psalms and incorporates entire passages from the King James translation for those discussed.

Not a quick read, this meaty but understandable resource covers half the psalms and is divided into nine parts. Each part groups psalms by theme rather than numerical order. Morris begins with the message and method in the Psalms followed by themes such as prophecies of Christ in the Psalms and events of His Second Coming. One section discusses the thirteen Maschil Psalms that provide instruction, encouragement, and guidance while another portion relates to areas of the Christian life such as prayer and faith. Morris skillfully includes background information and new insights and links verses from Psalms with other Bible verses. Chapters 54-59 of the commentary, covering psalms of encouragement and blessing, were written by his oldest son.

Known as an advocate for biblical creationism, Morris’ strong view is evident throughout the book. For example, when remarking on Psalm 139:13-18 that discuss the creation of the human body, Morris writes, "The absurd notion that such a marvelous organism could have developed slowly over the ages by random process of evolution is a graphic commentary on man’s desire to escape from God at all costs."

Beloved psalms such as the 23rd and 100th are included. The reference concludes with triumphant thoughts from Psalm 150 and other psalms of praise. Believers who wish to deepen their understanding of Psalms will appreciate this volume. Although more of a commentary than devotional book, it makes a useful companion when reading Psalms.

Lydia E. Harris, Freelance Writer & Educator, Seattle, Washington

Associate minister of preaching, Philip Ryken (Heart of the Cross) has devoted this entire book to one prayer: The Lord’s Prayer. Ryken writes that The Lord’s Prayer is the most perfect prayer available to anyone since Jesus gave it to us. Discussion is on each phrase and sometimes on one particular word in this perfect prayer.

The first three chapters cover praying like a hypocrite, praying like an orphan, and praying like God’s child. Basically, when we pray we should: go into a private space, keep the prayer simple and pray to our Father in Heaven. The remaining ten chapters are exclusively dealing with the individual phrases of The Lord’s Prayer.

When You Pray can be read by new Christians, mature Christians, or those who just wish to learn about prayer. Ryken does challenge the mature Christians, or those who just wish to learn about prayer. Ryken does challenge the

C H R I S T I A N  L I B R A R Y  J O U R N A L  6 1  S U M M E R  2 0 0 1


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events portrayed in Thomas’ book were dependent solely on these apocryphal sources. Second, some of Thomas’ reconstructions or conclusions would be historically questionable to many Jesus scholars. Examples include the idea that Jesus was born in 12 BC and the suggestion that Pilate may have been a secret Christian who thought he was performing a service for Jesus by having him crucified. Particularly troubling to evangelical scholars may be the idea that the gospel stories cannot be trusted with regard to their portrayal of Judas.

Third, The Jesus Conspiracy is a revision of a book Thomas wrote in 1987 called The Trial. While the introduction makes reference to recent works in the field of Jesus studies, the bibliography that Thomas says he relied on for his study of Jesus, contains nothing written after 1985. A significant amount of historical Jesus research has occurred since 1985.

For those interested in an imaginative historical reconstruction of Jesus’ life, Thomas book is recommended. For those who want the historical background to Jesus’ life without the fiction or the occasional reliance on questionable sources, I would recommend Jesus and the Rise of Early Christianity (IVP, 1999) by Paul Barnett.

Don S. Otis approaches these and other questions concerning child rearing from his personal experiences as a dad of three sons. He lays down your rights, so that He can have His? I find it difficult to walk away with a single, clear idea from the text.

Still the words burn in the heart. What have I given over to Christ lately? What have I relinquished for His purpose? Am I willing to lay down my rights, so that He can have His? I pray that readers are up to the challenge of serving an eternal Lord.

Kirk Hunt, Instructor, Pima County Community College, Business & Industry Division, Tucson, Arizona


248.8.35. Children--Conduct of life; Children--Religious life; Child rearing--Religious aspects--Christianity; Child rearing--Moral and ethical aspects; Moral education; Moral development. 191 p.

Should I be my child’s best friend, or merely police his/her life? Is there any way to simplify parenting? How do I help my children to make lasting connections with God?

Don S. Otis approaches these and other questions concerning child rearing from his personal experiences as a dad of three sons. He sets out guidelines for biblical parenting and points out that God’s truths are simple, not complex. Spending both quantity and quality time with our kids is not an option but a necessity. We need to find ways to work with our kids to build courage and conviction to prepare them for the daily struggle against the cultural flow of disposable lifestyles. Parents need to be living examples to their kids of what God expects of His followers. What our children see us do will make a much bigger impression on them than what we tell them they need to do. Where there are no clear limits, or ‘fences,’ the word ‘no’ may mean ‘maybe’ or even ‘just don’t get caught.’ Confusion chips away at stability, so it is urgent that we build a firm foundation, early, in our children. There are consequences for our actions. Bad choices consistently bring about penalties; whereas good choices should consistently produce rewards. Balance between mercy and discipline is crucial to the process of healthy character development.

We need to teach kids to feel good about doing right.

In his book, Teach Your Children Well, Don S. Otis reminds the reader of the grave importance God attaches to raising children. Though the tone tends to be a bit preachy at times, there is much sage advice given by one who has obviously been in the throes of child rearing. These basic concepts would be most useful in a group study.

Kim Harris, Librarian, Newman Riga Library, Churchville, New York

In Arts, Entertainment, and Christian Values is a series of articles which pose some challenging ideas for the reader who wants to understand the impact that Christians should have on their culture. Beginning in chapter 1, readers are told, “Fill your mind with biblical precepts; be careful that you don’t respond to the surrounding world with cultural biases; be interactive but not accommodating; develop a positive, revolutionary mind-set; and glorify God in all of life.”

These are not easy directives to fill. Solomon and his fellow authors point out questions and solutions that may help those who want to try to impacting their society. Part 1 is a general overview of philosophical questions and comments and includes chapters such as Christians and Culture, Culture Wars, and The New Absolutes. In Part 2, the authors become more specific, covering such leisure activities as Art and the Christian, Music and the Christian, Television and the Christian, and The Games We Play.

Part 1 may be a bit dry, but for anyone who has ever wondered if rock and roll music is inherently ungodly or argued with other Christians about what if anything to do about television and video games in the Christian home, Part 2 is fascinating reading. What is more, it is bound to spark some interesting
The theurgic power of prayer in the modern era. Author Prayer. The first chapter gives the case for, and the description of a current era "Concert of Prayer."

The Power of Extraordinary Prayer

Bowling Green, Ohio


John Piper's The Legacy of Sovereign Joy covers a lot of ground in a few pages. Augustine saw God's grace as "sovereign joy," hence the title. Piper does not hide the flaws in the men he covers. Rather, he uses their weaknesses, as they did, to glory in the grace of a God who overcomes. The chapters are basically biographical sketches that Piper uses to illustrate how each man perceived God's grace and how it was exemplified in their lives. Adapted from a series of lectures delivered at a pastors' conference, The Legacy of Sovereign Joy is an interesting and thorough discourse on the doctrine of grace. After demonstrating how Augustine laid the ground work for the Reformers, he moves on to Luther, an Augustinian Monk, and then proceeds to Calvin. Piper shows how the study of the Word became Luther's focus while the preaching of the Word was Calvin's passion.

This is the first book in the series The Swans Are Not Silent. The name of the series comes from the humble pastor that took over after Augustine. He said, "The crucer chirps, the swan is silent."

The Legacy of Sovereign Joy continues to provide a rich understanding of the history of Christianity, but this book takes it a step further by exploring the personal stories behind the hymns themselves. The author's research is extensive, and his writing style is engaging and easy to follow. The book is a valuable resource for anyone interested in the history of Christianity and the role of the Church Hymn in that history.
As a homeschooling parent and an enrichment teacher in the local school district, I was eager to read *Kids, Classrooms, and Contemporary Education*. Unfortunately, the title promised something different from what it delivered. The book is divided into two parts: "Contemporary Issues" and "Education Issues." The first section contains eight chapters prepared by different authors affiliated with Probe Ministries (of which Don Closson is Director of Administration). These chapters do indeed cover contemporary social issues: abortion, environmentalism, human cloning, teen drug abuse, and more. They read like a collection of well-positioned articles by experienced writers, and as such, are interesting in and of themselves. The weakness, if any, is that the authors in this first section do not relate their chosen topics to the book’s overview of "kids, classrooms, and contemporary education," nor do they mention any news stories related to each.

The second section is more directly related to the book’s title, written entirely by Don Closson. His chapters include worldviews and education, education reform, public, private, or home education, and others, including a discussion on outcome-based and self-esteem curricula. This second half is strong indeed, with Closson’s clear writing backed by statistics and other verifiable facts. If you wrestle with arguments between whole-language vs. phonics, or values clarification vs. character building in classrooms, this book is for you. Closson also explains in very clear language the differences in outcome-based education goals, dividing them into two categories: traditional (focused on course content) vs. transformational (focused on issues, attitudes, and behaviors). This chapter alone is worth reading the book.

A Judeo-Christian worldview is presented throughout and is laid as the challenge facing parents of school-aged children who may be exposed to other views or philosophies.

Unfortunately, you won’t find discussions or even references to news stories such as the teen who strangled her baby in a bathroom so she could attend the prom, or any of the recent school shootings, although these are headlines that clearly impact families and dovetail with chapters on abortion and violence. Detailed end notes include sources for statistics or quotes appearing in each chapter.

Robert M. Lindsey, Associate Library Director, Hannibal-LaGrange College, Hannibal, Missouri

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**ADULT NONFICTION**

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**300’s—Social Sciences**


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are age-appropriate and foster the development of reflective thinking and creative problem-solving skills. Mere fancy graphics or intense excitement, as vehicles for a superficial layer of information or a lower level drill and practice activity, do not meet these criteria. If children spend too much time at the computer, even with useful educational programs, at the expense of time for other more worthy activities geared to their developmental level, it can inhibit stimulation of important connections within their brains.

In spite of her earlier enthusiasm for the potential of educational computer use, Healy’s extensive anecdotal report details possible risks—physical, social, emotional, as well as mental—from excessive or inappropriate computer use by children. Because much current “research” is flawed, she calls for solid research in this area. Drawing on the way the brain develops its neural connections as the child grows, Healy advocates physical play and language interaction with adults as more valuable for preschool children than computer activities. She endorses the recommendation that elementary children spend no more than one or two hours of screen time (TV and computer) per day. Applying the principle of language as interaction she advocated in Endangered Minds, she encourages adults to discuss with children what is happening during their computer activities. Healy presents age-appropriate types of computer software and activities for children through high school. This timely wake-up call for parents and educators includes suggested reading, end notes, index, and reading group guide.

Donna W. Bowling, Library/Educational Consultant, Dallas, Texas

500’s—Natural Sciences & Mathematics

Creation, evolution, and modern science: probing the headlines that impact your family, Ray Bohlin, general editor. (Probing the headlines.) LCCN 00035734.


Creation, Evolution, and Modern Science is full of details to help the Christian family understand the current scientific culture regarding creationism and Darwin’s theory of evolution. Author Ray Bohlin is well-qualified—holding a B.S. in zoology, an M.S. and Ph.D. in molecular and cell biology; coauthor of the book Natural Limits to Biological Change; and named a 1997-1998 Research Fellow of the Discovery Institute’s Center for the Renewal of Science and Culture. He’s also published several journal articles. In spite of these academic credentials, Bohlin remembers his audience and writes in a way that reaches the average reader. He presents the information in four parts: 1) The Different Faces of Evolution; 2) Intelligent Design; 3) Evolution and Society; and 4) Evolution and the Bible. In Part 1, we read about the five crises in evolutionary theory, documented fossil fraud, and Bohlin’s critique of a book by a popular evolutionist. Part 2 continues the commentary on other books, both by Christian scientists and secularists, perhaps to enlighten us on what these books have to say on this complex subject. Part 3 is a brief but well-done section on sociobiology, which “explores the biological basis of all social behaviors, including morality (p.112),” and the Pope’s view of evolution. Part 4 includes “How to Talk to Your Kids About Evolution and Creation” in a question-and-answer format between Ray Bohlin and his wife, Sue. Subjects include natural selection, racial differences, cavemen, dinosaurs, Noah’s flood, Genesis 1, the problems with evolutionary theory, and lots more. The book concludes with an overview of the debate by Christians on the age of the Earth, explaining the three prevailing schools of thought—a young-earth creation in which the universe is less than 10,000 years old; a day-age creation in which the six creation “days” were thousands, millions, or billions of years long; and theistic evolution, a theory that life and the universe evolved in God-ordained processes in nature. An additional view not mentioned by Bohlin but which deserves consideration is presented in The Age of the Universe: What are the Biblical Limits? by Gorman Gray (ISBN 0-9655942-0-3), posing the theory that God created the universe at some undefined time in the past (Gen. 1:1), and spent six days preparing life on Earth (Gen. 1:2-31). Overall, however, this book by Bohlin is extremely helpful, offers lots of facts, and all sources are listed in the end notes.

Kimm Swenson Gollnick, Writer, Speaker & Teacher (Marion Independent Schools), Marion, Iowa

600’s—Technology (Applied Sciences)


Hide or Seek, Dr. James Dobson’s classic bestseller first published in 1974, has been revised, updated, and released as The New Hide or Seek. “This book is dedicated to the proposition that all children are created worthy and must be given the right to personal respect and dignity,” writes Dobson. He sees inferiority as a big problem in our society and offers strategies for parents and teachers to develop worth in children.

Written with warmth and passion, the book is divided into three parts. Part one discusses the epidemic of inferiority and the false values of beauty and intelligence used to measure human worth. Part two develops comprehensive strategies to build self-esteem in children from infancy onward, with particular emphasis on helping teens develop self-worth. Part three focuses on self-esteem problems in adults plus six methods used to cope with self-doubt and personal inadequacies. In the final chapter, Dobson states the most valuable contribution parents can make is “to instill in the child a genuine faith in God.” Nothing can bring greater ego satisfaction than knowing the Creator of the universe knows and cares about him or her.

Combining spiritual and psychological insights, this resource brims with wisdom and practical help to raise self-confident children. Examples and illustrations make it interesting and easy to read. Chapters end with questions and answers pertaining to topics covered. End notes are included.

This new edition reorganizes the content of the earlier book without renumbering the strategies. Thus, readers may be confused, as I was, to find strategies eight and ten missing. Evidently this is a publishing error. Nonetheless, parents and teachers will benefit from this helpful, much-needed book. It belongs in every home, church, and public library.

Lydia E. Harris, Freelance Writer & Educator, Seattle, Washington


649' 124. Parenting; Child psychology. 90 p.


649' 124. Parenting; Parent and child; Child psychology. 1 videocassette, 112 mm, color.

Your Child 6 to 12 by John M Drescher is full of folksy, anecdotal humor while providing much needed practical advice on the nurturing of children the middle years. The volume is divided into six sections. The first section is about the important ways parents can have input into kids that will probably not be available later, such as instilling values and reading aloud. The second section covers the characteristics of middle childhood, what makes those years special, and what traits are common to children of those years. Part three deals with imitation and how to be a better role model which is followed by a discussion on conscience, always an important area of concern for the Christian parent. Next, the book takes a look at developing dependency in children, which is followed by preparing children for the teen years.

The video very much parallels the book with the author addressing a room full of young parents. The main points appear as bulleted subtitles on the bottom of the screen. Drescher has an excellent resource for parents with children in
middle childhood or for those about to have children enter those years. It would also be a good teaching tool for small groups.

Teresa O’Donley, Library Media Specialist, Baymonte Christian School, Scotts Valley, California


66'9, 153. Parent and teenager—United States; Problem children—United States; Parenting—Religious aspects—Christianity. 185 p.

Many Christian parenting books seem to assume that, if parents do everything right, the results will always be godly kids. This overlooks sin, nature, and free will and can also cause Christian parents of rebellious children to look at their own behavior for answers, instead of to God. Miles McPherson’s book, Parenting the Wild Child, does not make this assumption.

McPherson states that his purpose is to encourage parents to realize that their children’s troubles are the direct result of being engaged in, and possibly losing, a spiritual battle based on well-designed lies, aimed not only at their children, but also at the parents themselves. He wants to expose the lies and provide help to fight the battle, and his book does just that, from the subtitle that sets the tone, to the appendices that end the book by listing all the lies covered in the book.

Chapter by chapter, McPherson deals with lies that are aimed against both rebellious children and their parents, discusses behavior that may result from them, and salts each discussion with appropriate scriptures. He then asks searching questions such as “Are you praying for a change in your child’s behavior, or for his or her faith in God?” Comparing rebellion to cancer, he ends each chapter with ‘chemo-prayers’ that come against the lies already discussed.

Most parents occasionally need to be reminded that prayer and God’s Word are their most well-designed lies, and up to discuss not only the issues mentioned above but what it is to truly be a disciple and to give your life for Jesus.

Teresa O’Donley, Library Media Specialist, Baymonte Christian School, Scotts Valley, California


Rachel’s Tears by Beth Nimmo and Darrell Scott is a book that centers on the journal writings of Rachel Scott, one of the Columbine shooting victims. Only seventeen when she died, Rachel’s life reflected her middle name of Joy, for she was a happy, loving person who embraced life. The title comes from one of Rachel’s drawings—a rendering of her eyes with a stream of thirteen tears cascading down on a rose. As her parents recovered Rachel’s journals, some many months of the shooting, they discovered Rachel somehow sensed this was to be her last year on Earth. This book is a moving account Rachel’s spiritual journey as witnessed through her journal entries. The book intertwines parental agony with joyful discovering. That discovery was how deeply committed Rachel was to God. She died expressing her belief in God.

In the book’s forward, Rachel’s father writes of how he believes Rachel has a powerful message that survives her tragic death. And her message does need to be heard by everyone. What is that message: that message is hope. There is hope in Christ.

Pam Welsh, School Librarian, Sandpoint, Idaho


David Sox, quoting from Harold Loukes, says “John Woolman has been described as ‘the purest and sweetest flowering of the Quaker spirit’ ... ” John Woolman: Quintessential Quaker puts flesh on that statement. Woolman’s ‘well-honed’ conscience empowered him to take firm stands against slavery, war, paying taxes to the military, and cruelty to animals. He preached fair treatment of Indians, as well. On his journey to England, where he died in 1772, he took pity on the young seamen. Woolman noted their surroundings as “unpeasably bad, and their habits were coarse and brutal beyond belief.” Living with them he gained the seamen’s confidence.

Not a solitary prophet, Woolman “worked within the framework of Quaker organization and discipline,” and became noted as their spokesman. He gained a fine reputation as a tailor, tradesman, orchardist, and schoolmaster while traveling extensively. His speech in 1758 opened wider the door to freeing slaves.

Sox takes a scholarly approach, quoting often from Woolman’s journal and also from other Woolman biographers. He documents his resources. An index helps locate specific people and places. He puts Woolman’s life into the context of life at that time while also connecting with other contemporaries, such as William Penn. Diverging from John Woolman, Sox closes his book with a chapter about his own ancestor, Daniel Boone.

Betty M. Hockett, Writer/Speaker/Teacher, Newberg, Oregon

900’s—Geography, History, Biography


The true story of the final years in the life of Dietrich Bonhoeffer, renowned German theologian and author. As the story opens, Bonhoeffer, who is already celebrated for his writings, most notably The Cost of Discipleship, is traveling in the United States. His friends urge him to remain but he feels that God is calling him to return to his native Germany to make a stand against the Nazi party and its part in the war raging in Europe.

Immediately upon his return, the Gestapo are harassing him and ordering him not to teach or write anymore. Bonhoeffer, because of his international standing, is induced by a friend to work with a secret department in the German military. But instead of helping the German cause, Bonhoeffer and the other conspirators are smuggling Jews out of the country and are involved in a doomed plot to assassinate the Führer.

While in jail awaiting trial and execution Dietrich has a crisis of conscience and must struggle with how a believer justifies deceit and civil disobedience even in a “righteous” cause. In the depths of his despair he finds usefulness through ministry to others and a kind of peace as he realizes that God is bigger than his boxes and that the Father is not only full of unending mercy and compassion but is a true fountain of peace and rest.

This is an extremely thought provoking story—well told and well acted. Even the most mature believers will want to examine themselves and throw themselves humbly on the mercy of an omniscient and gracious Lord. Would also be a wonderful film to watch with middle schoolers and up to discuss not only the issues mentioned above but what it is to truly be a disciple and to give your life for Jesus.

Betty M. Hockett, Writer/Speaker/Teacher, Newberg, Oregon
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