

Children & Libraries

the journal of the Association for
Library Service to Children

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Lights, Camera, Cook! • Managing Storytime Behavior, Crowds
A Visit with Karen Cushman • Newbery Book Heroines

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Cover photo: Max and Savannah participate in a cooking program at the Upper Hudson Library System in New York. Photo by Mary Fellows.



Editor's Note Nighttime Reading and Repeats

By Sharon Verbeten

Okay, it's finally happened. I've grown tired of reading the same books over and over. In my years as a children's librarian, I never minded reading the same picture books at several storytimes. I enjoyed booktalking the same

middle-grade fiction book to numerous classes.

But now, as the mother of a three-year-old, my eyes have crossed at the sight of the same books my daughter hands me at bedtime. Once we get past the requisite books with Elmo in the title, we have a few other bedtime favorites—*Curious George* (her father's childhood favorite), *Hondo and Fabian* by Peter McCarty (love the illustrations!), and *Beautiful Moon*, a bilingual book by Dawn Jeffers.

To my daughter's eyes and ears, there is something comforting about the cadence of the words, the familiar illustrations, and the way she sits in my lap that makes storytime special. And I'm thrilled that she has shown such an avid interest in books at such an early age.

But do I really have to read the *same* books every night? I'm sure you can relate. You can buy or borrow all the books to fill your bookshelf, but somehow, the same ones keep coming back to the top. It's the curse, and joy, of being a bibliophile at any age!

It's time to dig out some of my childhood favorites next—*The Color Kittens*, anyone? 🐾



Executive Director's Note Spring Fever is Here!

By Aimee Strittmatter

I wholeheartedly agree with comedian Robin Williams' quote, "Spring is nature's way of saying, 'Let's party!'" It's time to shake loose all the flotsam and jetsam that have settled inside my head, office, and home. The sun's

rays are reinvigorating, and I find they help clear the cobwebs that formed during my hibernation over the dark days of winter. Now, I don't plan to actually party like it's 1999, but I will take this newfound energy and focus it on evaluating and organizing my work projects and home activities.

As a children's librarian, I loved spring storytimes. The children, no longer bundled in woolen coats and scarves, arrive with their own newfound energy, bedecked in colorful clothing and ready as always for a good story. A great springtime title to share as a felt-board story, inspired by Ieva Bates, creator of gorgeous felt stories and my mentor, is *Mushroom in the Rain* by Mirra Ginsburg. Do you know what happens to a mushroom in the rain? Magical!

We're pleased to present this spring issue of *Children and Libraries*, filled with stories and ideas to rejuvenate your spirit and provide inspiration for your programming and services. You'll find articles on managing behavior and large crowds during storytimes (*can you say ants in your pants!*), cooking with tweens, girl power with the heroines in Newbery Award books, and much more. Enjoy! 🐾

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Camping Out in the People's Palace

Public Library Space for Boston Children, 1895 to 1975

GALE EATON

Photos courtesy of the Boston Public Library, Print Department

A public library children's department occupies physical space in a physical building as well as administrative space, wedged into an organizational structure. It creates social space, facilitating or hindering transactions among children, books, and adults. It is a symbolic space, both in its decor and in its very existence.

To design a perfect children's room is impossible—there are too many demands on every square inch of space in a building; too many opinions about what kinds of transactions children should have with books and other readers; too many possible chains of command in an organizational structure; and far too many ideas about what a good children's room should symbolize.

Yet, imperfect rooms have served us well. We wrestle with the “layout, collection, lighting, and health and safety issues” that must be resolved to “nurture . . . emergent literacy skills;” we innovate; we consider how children incorporate our spaces into their own private geographies and “secret spaces.”¹

Children read in these environments to suit themselves, adapting whatever adult imagination has provided to create their own refuges, portals, secret spaces, and social launching pads. Within the physical, social, and administrative limitations of each place and generation, new possibilities have opened out from children's rooms as unexpectedly as new staircases in Hogwarts.

My Life in Boston

In 1970, fresh out of college, I worked in the magical children's room of the Boston Public Library at Copley Square. In 2009,

when research for a biography of pioneering children's librarian Alice M. Jordan took me back, that room was gone—a new wall sliced it into a seminar room and a stretch of corridor. Even the “new” children's room that opened in 1972 is different now, with lower shelves, softer colors, and space provided for computers with applications that we could barely imagine in the 1970s—let alone in 1940, when Miss Jordan retired.

The geography of children's services in the 1890s and early 1900s was very different from what it is today, but the archives show librarians tackling issues we still face.

Contrasts: 1970 (McKim Building), 1972 (Johnson Building)

The room where I began was not Miss Jordan's room, and it was far from perfect, although her spirit was still felt there. Over the picture book alcove, a lowered ceiling split the windows. The assistant director whose office sat just over us could hear every word of preschool story hour. (Both he and we wished he couldn't.) All around us, major construction projects filled the air with noise and grit. (One soon learned not to wear pastels to work.) The space was too small, the layout was inconvenient, and I loved it.

Gale Eaton, Professor and Director of the University of Rhode Island Graduate School of Library and Information Studies, began life as a children's librarian in Boston. Author of Well-Dressed Role Models: The Portrayal of Women in Biographies for Children, she is now working on a biography of Alice M. Jordan.

Two dioramas, housed in cases of wood and glass, dominated the room. To the left as one entered were seven scenes from *Arabian Nights*; to the right, three from *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*. The side sections of the *Alice* diorama, each about two feet wide and two feet high, showed the beginning and end of the story. The middle section, about four feet wide and

“The contrast between the old room and the new startled me into awareness of how the room itself shaped our work. One quickly becomes used to an environment, accepting what is possible and forgetting what is not.”

two-and-a-half feet high, was a “masterly interweaving of episodes”² and characters. The Caterpillar with his hookah, the Cheshire Cat grinning from a tree, and the mad tea party all appeared in miniature. The Rabbit’s brick house, just five inches high, had casement windows, hollyhocks, and a legible brass nameplate. Individual leaves of trees in the foreground were perfectly shaped. Paradoxically, these tiny details created a mysterious feeling of spaciousness—or perhaps it was the deepening blues of the forest background and the clever use of perspective that drew the viewer into a vast imagined space. A bench under the scenes allowed small children to kneel and peer in—there were usually nose marks on the glass. But it was a side panel of the *Arabian Nights* display that most fascinated one small boy. Every time he came in, he would gaze at the angry genii swirling over the merchant who had let him out of the bottle after so many centuries, and ask for the story again.

The creator of these treasures, Miss Louise Stimson of Concord, seems not to have been much known outside the Boston area. She created her first diorama while nursing a sister through a twenty-year illness, lent a “Dickens Village” to the Boston Public Library around 1938, and sold the *Alice* diorama about ten years later. The library still has her ambitious *Printmakers at Work* on permanent display in the Wiggins Gallery, demonstrating her artistry as well as her craftsmanship. As modest as she was meticulous, she came to the children’s room one day in the early 1970s with a surviving sister and a miniature vacuum to clean her work. Her sister told me they’d had the tiny DRINK ME! table made by a glass blower on the streets of Venice.

In 1972, we moved next door to the newly constructed Johnson building, leaving our dioramas behind. Instead of glassed-in worlds that invited the eye and the imagination on virtual journeys, the new children’s room had open space that invited physical engagement. The monumental granite and oak walls were relieved by Kelly green carpeting; the aisles were wide; and three sizes of hassocks in Mondrian red, white, yellow, and blue provided adaptable seating. The children quickly adapted them to create trains, forts, and projectiles. Administrators replaced

them with three sizes of soft, molded black chairs. Children co-opted these, too. An athletic eight-year-old could do cartwheels from the room’s entrance down the center aisle, land with his head in a small “mushroom” chair, and bounce up with the chair on his head, crowing, “See my new Afro?”

The contrast between the old room and the new startled me into awareness of how the room itself shaped our work. One quickly becomes used to an environment, accepting what is possible and forgetting what is not. But how did spatial arrangements affect the first children’s librarians, back in the 1890s, as they invented our profession?

The Gilded Age

Minerva Sanders opened the Pawtucket (R.I.) Public Library to children in 1876,³ and by 1887, many ALA leaders were interested “in making separate provisions for the use of books by younger children in public library buildings”⁴—or by public library outreach to school classrooms, settlement houses, home libraries, and other stations.

In 1890, the Brookline (Mass.) Public Library established a separate room for children, and by 1897, there were “either circulating libraries or reading rooms for children” in Boston, Brooklyn, Buffalo, Cambridge, Denver, Detroit, Kalamazoo, New Haven, Omaha, Pittsburgh, San Francisco, and Seattle.⁵

Boston’s population had grown from 362,839 in 1880 to 560,892 in 1900. Immigration fueled growth; in 1890, nearly two hundred thousand residents were foreign-born.⁶ In neighborhoods like the North End, the poor were crowded into tenements against the loud factories where they worked. The wealthy lived on Beacon Hill or in the new Back Bay neighborhood, where wide straight boulevards had been laid out on land created by filling in parts of the Charles River; or they moved out to the suburbs, now accessible by train.⁷

In spite of an international bank panic in 1893 and the severe depression that followed, Boston continued to build—new land was created around modern Kenmore Square and the Fens by 1900; a modern subway system premiered in 1897; and in 1895, the palatial new Boston Public Library opened in the Back Bay.

Boston’s wealthy may not have rivaled New York’s in the grandeur of their personal mansions, but their library was vintage Gilded Age. It had taken years to plan and build, and it had no children’s room. Children, especially grammar school pupils in their early teens, took possession. Mary Antin, a young immigrant from Russia, wrote:

It was my habit to go very slowly up the low, broad steps to the palace entrance, pleasing my eyes with the majestic lines of the building, and lingering to read again the carved inscriptions: *Public Library—Built by the People—Free to All*. Did I not say it was my palace? Mine, because I was a citizen; mine, though I was born an alien; mine, though I lived on Dover Street. My palace—*mine!*⁸

Children poured through doors with bas relief figures representing Music, Poetry, Knowledge, Wisdom, Truth, and Romance. They climbed broad marble stairs flanked by marble lions and passed between high murals where the Genius of Enlightenment met the nine muses, and they found their way to Bates Hall, the main reading room. They were a nuisance.

Without separate children's rooms, most public libraries saw friction between grammar school pupils and adult readers. Books were held in closed stacks, and readers of any age had to search catalogs, fill out and submit call slips, and wait to see if titles were available—and desirable. If not, the process had to be repeated.

In Boston, the average wait for a book was twelve minutes, but some borrowers waited much longer; each slip coming from Bates Hall passed through seven “pairs of hands before a book [could] be supplied.”⁹ Children at the delivery desk, even if perfectly behaved, competed for staff time. Segregation eased nerves, and one often-expressed reason for the creation of early children's rooms was simply to get youngsters out from underfoot. By the end of 1895, Boston's decisive new librarian, Herbert Putnam, had allocated space near Bates Hall for a children's room.

But the Gilded Age was also the Progressive Era, a time of social and educational reform. The Examining Committee—a group of citizens appointed annually to evaluate the Boston Public Library—sounded a progressive note when they called for improvements ranging from a “helpful and inspiring attendant” to a “fine modern globe.” They wrote:

The children's room should be the most important place in the city for the training of those readers without whom the library is a mere ornament, or at best a convenience for scholars, instead of the nursery of good citizenship which it was meant to be.¹⁰

Scholars, children, and average citizens competed for resources pinched by Depression budgets, and in their annual reports, the city's librarians, trustees, and examiners articulated ideals of service that struggled to include both the intellectual elite and the common reader. Children's needs were rhetorically allied with those of “the people” against those of scholars, and while librarians and trustees tended to imagine an inflow of scholars from the world over, they also imagined an outflow of popular library resources to city neighborhoods.

Spatial Challenges

Books flowed out from the children's room in rowdy, churning tides. Children, parents, and teachers took them—and so did personnel from the branch issues department, who pillaged the children's room to supply the library's eleven branches, its reading rooms, and stations in engine houses and settlement houses. Librarians distributed books on playgrounds; obliging teachers volunteered to circulate books from classrooms all over the city; and children circulated books to their



Boston Public Library Room for Younger Readers, soon after its creation in 1895.



After 1901, the spiral staircase on the left had been removed, bookcases replaced the framed autographs on either side of the door, and a strategically placed attendant monitored the exit and the remaining staircase.

neighbors from “home libraries” installed by the Boston Children's Aid Society, with occasional support from the Boston Public Library. Shelves were sucked bare. Books were read to tatters. Trustees complained that young readers brought dirty hands and careless habits to the library. Desperate children's librarians called for more books and better books, and for more consistent return of books from branches. At the very least, they begged for books to be returned from branches in the morning and not right after school, when the room was at its busiest.

The 1895 children's room was a hall with high windows, a fire-place, and low tables with spindle-backed chairs. The collection that lined the room at floor level comprised not only books written for children, but also adult materials considered likely to interest them, such as illustrated travel books. Many ten- to thirteen-year-old boys (and a few girls, too) began walking daily from homes in the Back Bay, the South End, or even further afield; Miss Jordan, in 1902, reported that most were “American



In 2009, after a restoration that replaced the missing staircase, the room is used for short-term computer access.

and Irish,” but “German, French, Irish, Greek, Jewish, Negro, and Armenian families” were represented, and weekends brought “a very large Jewish element from the West End.”¹¹ Their diversity struck a progressive-minded journalist in 1897:

The tables are surrounded by boys and girls, well dressed and poorly clad, foreign and native born, with a sprinkling of black faces, all meeting on terms of equality around the beautiful feast of literature provided for them. Faces and attitudes are a study.¹²

Prints hung above the bookcases, growing plants graced the room—but its location, spatial arrangement, and administrative oversight all conspired to make the area inconvenient. A steady stream of memos from Gertrude P. Sheffield, custodian of the Children's Room from 1896 to 1902, and her successor, Miss Jordan, document how hard it could be to work in a palace. Some of the most intractable issues involved traffic flow and climate.

Traffic flow

The room was a “thoroughfare.”¹³ Teenaged “runners” from Bates Hall dashed in to retrieve bound periodicals from its “galleries”—high narrow balconies reached by spiral staircases in the corners. (Sometimes the children's attendants were asked to run up for these heavy volumes, although they did not belong to the children's department.) Worse, the room provided the only access from Bates Hall or the main concourse to the patent and newspaper rooms, so adults had to go through it constantly. It held the registration desk for all borrowers, so they had to stop and do paperwork in it. And it offered a collection of easy-to-read books on open shelves—there were only two other open-shelf areas in the library. Some adults (especially out-of-work men) browsed and lounged for hours; one reporter actually recommended the practice in a glowing editorial.¹⁴ Mrs. Sheffield encouraged them to read their books elsewhere.

Changes in the first few years of operation eased some of these problems. The patent and newspaper collections were moved, and their former location was annexed to the children's room as a special reference room for educators. The adult registration

desk was removed—and so, by special permission of the trustees, was one of the spiral staircases. Eventually the bound periodicals found a home closer to their natural audience, and a collection of famous autographs was moved out to make more room for children's books.

Rerouting the grown-ups made the children's room more of a haven for the children. Engineering a more efficient flow of books proved more difficult; both the physical layout of the library and the department's place in the library hierarchy worked against it. The books originally stocking the room had been drawn from many parts of the library's stacks. They did not visibly belong to the children's room, and when borrowers and branch workers returned them to the issue department for processing, they did not always come back to the children's room. The stacks were far away and inconvenient (one reason the branch workers were tempted to grab requested items from the children's room in the first place), and retrieving books after use was a constant challenge.

Climate

Sunlight, striking the windows of the new teachers' room across Copley Square, baked it in the summer; Mrs. Sheffield begged the librarian for Venetian blinds to control the heat. The footsteps of eager young readers clattered on the children's room floor; Miss Jordan requisitioned cork flooring. Lamps were never quite right; table lamps might be upset by young children, but lamps hung from the ceiling were too high for adequate lighting on winter afternoons.

One dramatic disruption came during “the busiest school months” of 1901.¹⁵ Children and their reference questions were displaced by scaffolding, drop cloths, and hammering, while a new mural, *The Triumph of Time*, was installed on the ceiling of the teacher's room. The ceiling premiered on March 17, drawing flocks of admirers (and critics who pointed out that the artist, John Elliott, was the son-in-law of library benefactor Julia Ward Howe).¹⁶

Overall, problems arose from the physical and administrative location of the children's room within the library, but the most persistent difficulties were shared with other departments and many were unintended results of the building's splendid Gilded Age architecture. The trustees had worked with the architects, but had not consulted librarians (whom one trustee described as “inexperienced persons with bees in their bonnets”).¹⁷ The building was lovely in form, but in function it was not librarian-friendly.

How many of the problems could librarians have forestalled, had they been consulted? When it came to children's rooms, they were indeed inexperienced; there was no precedent when the building was designed. Moreover, the erratic traffic flows and competing uses of space were natural results of uneasily coexisting ideals of public library service. Elitists and populists, plutocrats and progressive reformers, all had their own ideas of what a library should be and how it should contribute to the life of the city.

Miss Jordan, gentle and serene in the midst of chaos, held to a moderately progressive ideal of children's service. In her first annual report for the department, she wrote:

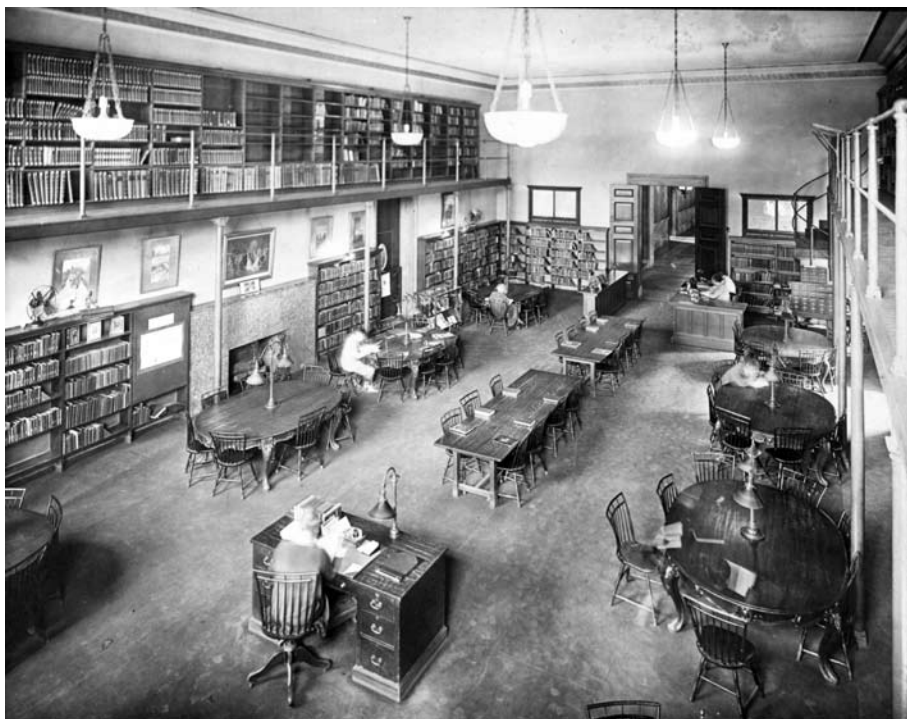
The Children's Room at the Library touches, at some point, all the work for children in Boston. There is no other place which belongs equally to children of every nationality, belief, section, and position; consequently, the problems which arise wherever children are in the city are of interest as affecting the work here.¹⁸

As additional children's rooms were established at branches, Miss Jordan lobbied for "cheerfulness and comfort," a "sunny location," appropriate furniture, and "pictures and decorations with warmth and color" to "make the surroundings more homelike." Above all, the children's room needed "an adequate supply of books in good editions and in good condition."¹⁹

This, at least, was a constant. The cramped children's room of 1970 invited the contemplative eye and the expansive spirit. The spacious children's room of 1972 invited physical engagement and developmentally appropriate (if socially inconvenient) activity. Today's room offers portals to virtual reality—but that is not really such a new thing. The children's room always opened into alternative realities. &

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A view from the balcony shows the children's room after years of use. At one of the oval tables by the fireplace, the New England Round Table of Children's Librarians had its first meeting in October 1906.

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Managing Children's Behavior in Storytimes

Two Librarians' Experiences

CARRIE ROGERS-WHITEHEAD AND JENNIFER FAY

Planning and conducting storytimes are two of the most beloved and enjoyable jobs that many children's librarians perform, but they can also be challenging. A librarian's role in storytime is to foster a love of books and literacy in children, to give families a welcoming and positive library experience, and to model and articulate good reading techniques to parents and caregivers.

These are essential goals that are important and beneficial to both the community and the library. However, they can also be difficult goals to accomplish when there are behavior issues among the children and parents in the audience. These tips, guidelines, and pieces of advice can help create a more pleasant storytime experience for everyone.

Set-up

Create a separate space for you and the children—designated by a rug or other objects. Parents should guide their children there and be able to sit with them. This will help curb behavior problems and keep the children engaged. If the children stray in other areas of the room, they cannot be managed as easily. When a child darts for the exit or approaches behind you,

parents should know to lead their child back to the group. You cannot interrupt a story to head to the back of the room to guide a wandering child back to the group. Expect some movement from active, excited children, but keep the movement contained in one area as much as possible.

Designate a formalized area for you to sit. This can be marked by a backdrop or simply a cloth draped over a dry erase board. A lamp or table can be added to complete the scene. Having a formalized section dissuades nonparticipating children from roving into your area and creates a storytime atmosphere. Also, the children in the group need to know to stay seated. You might try repeating phrases such as, "Put your flat bottoms on the rug," "Criss-cross applesauce," or "Sit on your pockets."

Managing Distracted Children

Prepare to have some rambunctious children; however, you will want to draw the line somewhere. Knowing each child's name is helpful in dealing with distracted children. Nametags can help with this. Reusable nametags that the child removes after storytime are recommended. If a child is overly excited in the middle of a story, address him and bring him into the story by

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asking a question such as, "John, what color is the dog?" When children know you are aware of them and their behavior, they will be less likely to act out.

There may often be one child who wants to test the rules, and frequently, that will be a boy. Boys can be more impulsive than girls and have more trouble sitting still.¹ Twenty to thirty minutes of sitting and listening to stories and songs will push many boys past their breaking points. They may deliberately act out because of boredom and frustration. This is why including movement and dramatics between stories and creating interaction with the audience is vital to keeping boys' attention.

It is important to keep a kind and patient attitude when interacting with children, regardless of their behavior. Use positive words and phrases when speaking to children. Instead of saying, "Don't talk," suggest, "Please listen."

Don't use the word "don't." Reinforce good behavior with your speech and actions. If you see a child who is clearly listening, point that child out and tell the group, "I like the way Maria is listening." You can also praise the entire group if they are behaving well by telling them, "You are all listening so well." A smile and gesture can also serve to support positive behavior.

Another way to manage children positively is to reward the group with small tokens, such as candy or stickers, which can be an inexpensive and easy way to demonstrate appropriate conduct. Tell the children at the beginning of the program that if they listen, everyone will get a sticker at the end of storytime.

You can remind them in the middle of the program if they get noisy or excited about the stickers. With bribery as a way to calm behavior, you run into the possible scenario that children will begin to *expect* a reward for their behavior in each storytime. When they do not receive this award, they may complain. Only provide material awards sporadically so children do not anticipate them in each program.

Positive reinforcement is vital because parents do not like to see others discipline their children. They may become upset to see their child singled out for negative attention. If a child continually causes distractions, it may be necessary to speak to the parent. Inform the parent of your expectations during storytime, and ask them to help their child meet those expectations.

Sometimes parents may not agree, believing that their child's



Engaging a large group at storytime.

behavior is under control. If this is the situation, go over your storytime rules and explain how their child is causing distractions to the other children. When you manage children positively or you focus your attention on the entire group, parents are less likely to be affronted.

Managing Large Storytimes

When dealing with a large group of thirty or more children, behavior expectations may need to be modified. Larger groups make it more difficult for children to pay attention and increase the likelihood of behavior issues. It is futile to expect everyone to be quiet; instead expect everyone to be *engaged*. If they are not, it is probably because your pacing is too slow or monotonous. Speed it up and mix it up to get their attention.

Although you will likely have a fan base that loyally returns each week just to see you, in a big group there are always some new faces. It is important to treat each storytime like it is the first one in the session, and go over your rules with everyone at the start. Do not expect anyone to already know how to behave.

Finally, encourage interaction during the stories, but make sure any questions you ask have an obvious short answer. This is not the time to encourage sharing about birthday presents or a visit to a zoo. If you allow a child to speak too much, the entire group will quickly descend into chaos.

Good Planning in Large Storytimes

- *First and foremost, choose fun books.* There are lots of lovely, sweet, interesting children's books that may be difficult to present with a large group. With a small group, you can occasionally get away with a sweet or interesting book, but with a large group, it may work best to read the *fun* books. Choose something with large, bold illustrations; a clear plot; great rhythm; lots of interaction and humor; and a bit of suspense. Some favorite old standbys are *Bark George* by Jules Feiffer and *Watch Out! Big Bro's Coming* by Jez Alborough.
- *Aim at the three-year-olds.* If you have a very large group, it may be because your audience has a broad age range. Of course, it is preferable to provide separate age-appropriate storytimes for infants, toddlers, and preschoolers, but the realities of staffing mean this is not always possible. With a two- to five-year-old age range, or even a zero- to six-year-old range, choose stories and activities for the listening level of the three-year-olds. A really fun book for them will still interest a five-year-old, but won't leave a toddler too far behind either. Start with your longest book and move toward the easiest or most fun book, with some kind of fingerplay or song in between each title. Ending with a pop-up book, a flannel-board story, a story with large props, or one told with puppets is a great way to capture the last dregs of their attention spans.
- *Resist the urge to sacrifice quality for theme.* Themes can be a lot of fun and are a good way to focus your planning, but they are also much more important to librarians than kids. Children do not care if you read a superhero book in the middle of your rainy day storytime, but you will lose them if you read a boring rain book just because it fits into your theme.
- *Make everything bigger.* Use big books and enlarge your visual aids so that everyone can see. Walk around with the book so even the kids on the sides and in the back will be included. Some libraries scan picture books and use PowerPoint to show them on the big screen. Microphones can also be used to make sure a large group can hear, but you'll want to invest in a hands-free model if you decide to go this route.
- *Repeat, repeat, repeat.* Repetition is always a good idea, but in a large group it becomes vital. Try to do each fingerplay and song two to three times to give the children a chance to absorb it. They especially love it if you use the same fingerplays and songs from week to week. When they know the words, they enjoy saying them along with you, which will draw their attention back to what you are doing and refocus their energy on you.
- *Stay focused on the mood of the crowd,* and make adjustments as needed. Do they just not like the book you are reading? Paraphrase it or skip to the end. Or just say, "If you want to know the rest of the story, you can check this out and take it home today." Are they only responding to the songs today? Sing every song you know.

Creating the Calm

Quiet and transition rhymes are a wonderful way to calm children down and focus their attention on storytime. They can be used at the start of storytime to signal that you are ready to go or after a physical activity such as "Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes" when the children are excited. If you do the same rhyme over and over again, it will teach the children that *now* is the time to focus. A few suggested quiet and transition rhymes are:

"I Wiggle My Fingers"

I wiggle my fingers,
I wiggle my toes,
I wiggle my shoulders,
I wiggle my nose.
Now all the wiggles
Are out of me
And I'm just as quiet
As I can be.

"Tommy Thumbs"

Tommy thumbs up and
(Thumbs up, both hands)
Tommy thumbs down,
(Thumbs down),
Tommy Thumbs dancing
(Thumbs up and dance to the right)
All around the town
(Bounce to the left in front of you)
Dance 'em on your shoulders
(Bounce them on your shoulders)
Dance 'em on your head
(Bounce them on your head)
Dance 'em on your knees and
(Bounce them on your knees)
Tuck them into bed
(Fold arms hiding hands)

Rhymes are taken from Jane Cobb, I'm a Little Teapot! Presenting Preschool Storytime (Vancouver, BC, Canada: Black Sheep Press, 1996): 11.

Addressing Problems in Large Storytimes

Even with the best planning, you may still have a child who will distract the other children. Maybe he just needs a nap, or maybe she is hungry, and no matter how fascinating a storyteller you are, you are going to have to stop and address the issue.

Knowing when to stop and talk to a child can be a bit of an art because you risk losing the attention of the other children each time. However, the situation needs to be addressed one way or another before chaos erupts.

Tips and Tricks to Managing Behavior

- **Have a code word to gain the children's attention and focus.** You can call out one half of a phrase and they can call out the other half. For example, you call out "SpongeBob" and the group calls out "SquarePants."
 - **Have a bag or box of your story "friends."** Fill a bag with colored paper characters. You can get characters from whatever book you are reading and put them in the bag. For example, if you are reading *The Napping House* by Audrey Wood, put a dog, cat, mouse, and granny in the bag. You could decorate a box and put stuffed animals or a puppet inside. Tell the children that you have friends in your bag and box but they have "tiny ears" and they cannot come out if it is too loud. Then slowly bring the friends out of the bag before the story, but if the children get too loud put them back in the bag or box.
 - **Say "Sssh."** If it is getting too noisy, tell the children to turn to their neighbors and say "Sssh!"
 - **Have the children participate in the story.** Say, "Every time I say the word 'dog,' I want you to put your hand on your head." Or you could have them make sounds if the book contains onomatopoeia. This will make them concentrate on the story more while they wait for you to say the specific word or phrase.
 - **Close your eyes and turn around in your chair.** Tell the children you're going to count to five and when you turn around you want them to be quiet and listening. When you hear that it's getting quiet and you reach "five," turn around and exclaim, "That was just like magic!" You probably cannot do this trick too many times, but if used sparingly, the surprise of your backside to the children may quiet them.
 - **Play a quiet game.** Try the game Stillwaters, where you count quickly to three and then exclaim "Stillwaters!" When you say this, the children must be completely silent and still. Another diversion is a copying game where you or a child picked from the group performs various moves in front of everyone. The group must imitate the individual up front. You can place your hands on your stomach, stand on one foot, and do a wide variety of poses. However,
- you must be completely silent. These are games you can play while you are waiting for everyone to come into storytime to calm the children down and entertain them at the same time.
- **Stop reading.** If you are losing the children's interest in the middle of the book, do not be afraid to stop the book or quickly paraphrase it to finish it faster. Sometimes you may make a selection that is too wordy or has a slow plot. The children will not notice if you skip a few words and neither will the parents. If the book is a total bust, stop it and say something like, "You can check out this book from the library and find out the end if you want," or you can simply make up an ending.
 - **Lower your voice.** To grab a group's attention lower your voice. By speaking in a quiet measured tone the children and parents will have to quiet down to hear you. They will receive the subtle message that since you are speaking softly it is time to listen and be quiet. You can do this in quiet and transition rhymes, while addressing the group, or in the middle of a story for added effect.
 - **Be prepared for anything.** Have a backup book, memorize quiet and transition rhymes and your own tricks to help manage behavior. The makeup of storytime groups continually changes and what works sometimes will not work another time. You must always be one step ahead.
 - **Treat storytime as an art, not a task.** As a concert pianist will play a piece many times before a concert, read your books numerous times before you perform them. One professional storyteller recommends reading a book a dozen times in order to really know it.* If audience members can sense your love of books and storytime, they will be more transfixed by the performance.
- Storytime can be the greatest joy or the greatest stress of a children's librarian's job, depending on how well the behavior of the audience is managed. With kindness, patience, experience, and a bag of storytime tricks, behavior issues will be handled gracefully and storytime will be a positive experience for everyone.
- *Rachel Hedman, interview by Carrie Rogers-Whitehead, June 2, 2009, Kearns Library, Kearns, Utah.*

If you think a child is old enough and mature enough, you can kindly but directly ask him or her to listen or to please sit down. If possible, however, it is best to ask the parent of the child to attend to the behavior. It should be the responsibility of the parents to manage their child's behavior, though sometimes

they do not. This can be because they are unsure what to do in these situations, and they will appreciate you letting them know what to do. Ask the parent to have her child sit in her lap, or in an extreme case, to step out of the story area until the child is calmer.

If a problem persists for several weeks, it is okay to talk to a parent after storytime. Approach the parent with kindness and patience, and try to find creative solutions to help the child have a positive storytime experience. Instead of saying, "Your kid is driving me crazy!" say, "How do you think we can help your child to be more engaged in storytime? Maybe if you sat on the floor with her in your lap?"

You could also suggest that the parent bring the child to another storytime held at a different time of day or for a younger age group. Or suggest to the parent that he offer the child a snack, drink, or restroom break before storytime begins.

Managing Parents

Parents can be just as big a problem as their children, whether they are dropping off the children and expecting the library to be a daycare center, chatting with friends in the back row, or answering their cell phones. While no parent comes to storytime with the intention to insult or take advantage of you, you may well end up occasionally feeling this way.

The best way to ensure that parents are actively engaged in storytime is to get them to sit on the floor with their child. Put out only a few chairs for exceptions (senior citizens, pregnant women, or those with injuries), and expect everyone else to sit on the floor. If necessary, put up a sign saying, "Parents are encouraged to sit on the floor with their children."

If a parent does not want to sit on the floor, explain that his or her doing so makes a huge difference in how much the children get out of the stories. Do not alienate the whole family by insisting on their compliance. He or she will probably feel awkward anyway and will sit on the floor next time.

Tell the parents your expectations before storytime starts. The children won't be listening until you address them, so this is a great time to have a word with the adults without worrying about maintaining the kids' attention.

Parents may not be sure how to behave when they first come into a storytime, so they will be looking to you to guide them. If you don't, they will look to the other parents in the room. Get to them before that happens. If you have just a few clear and simple rules, and make sure that you convey those rules, you will have much fewer problems with parents. Each librarian must determine his or her own rules, but they should all be clear, broad, few in number, and directed toward the parents (not the children).

For better or worse, librarians have a reputation for authority, so ask that both parents and children address you by your last name. Children are not likely to notice the implications of calling you by your surname, but it makes a big difference in the way their parents see you and treat you.

Finally, whether you are dealing with parents or children, one rule always holds true—if you act like you know what you are doing and you have the right to be doing it, people will believe you. Fake it until you make it. ☺

Reference

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Call for Referees

To make *Children and Libraries* a truly interactive publication, we're looking for ALSC members to serve as volunteer referees for journal articles. Unsolicited articles and those of a scholarly nature must be submitted to at least two referees to judge the submissions on accuracy, style, impact, importance, and interest. Specialists in particular genres (such as technology, literature, intellectual freedom, programming, and so on) are especially needed.

Referees make recommendations to the editor on whether or not manuscripts should be accepted for publication. Interested librarians should contact *Children and Libraries* Editor Sharon Korbeck Verbeten at CALeditor@yahoo.com for more information on the referee process.

Granting Wishes

ALSC/BWI Grant Fuels Ohio Library's "Fairy Tale" Summer Reading Program

MELANIE LYTTLE

Once upon a time, a librarian read her e-mail... While this does not seem like a promising beginning for a story, my fairy tale really started just this way.

In late 2008, about the same time I saw the posting on the ALSC discussion list for the ALSC/BWI Summer Reading Program Grant, our library director began making cryptic comments about program funding for 2009. She hoped we were looking for grants, particularly for summer reading, because that was our biggest and most expensive program of the year.

I had recently asked local businesses for summer reading support with only limited success, so I wasn't thrilled about going through that process again. Also, knowing that past grant winners had created some awesome programs, I wondered how our little library could ever compete. Even though Madison is forty miles east of Cleveland, it's a rural area. Madison has just 17,000 people, and our 15,000 patrons come from various communities in several surrounding counties. Grants like this just didn't happen to people like me or come to places like Madison.

Balancing these negative thoughts, however, was the realization of what \$3,000 could mean for the library. Normally we are thrilled to get \$3,500 to spend on supplies ranging from glue sticks and laminating film to snacks at storytimes for an entire year's worth of children's activities.

In addition, about two-thirds of this budget line is usually spent on summer reading prizes for the approximately seven hundred children between the ages of two and eleven whom we register each year. However, I believed the grant monies would be used for the program itself, not including prizes. So an opportunity to get items to use in programs all summer made the grant even more appealing. Our Friends group has paid for prizes in years



Chloe Keringer is all ready to start playing her rhythm sticks.

where we didn't have enough money to get what we needed, so I was hoping they would help us in 2009 if necessary.

Ohio participates in the Collaborative Summer Library Program, which meant that the 2009 summer reading theme, "Be Creative @ your library[®]," had been announced long ago. The children's services staff and I had been looking forward to this theme for several years; the arts focus would complement the strengths and passions of the department.

In considering how I would use the grant money, I wanted to create a program that would allow us to purchase materials we could use long after summer was over. Therefore, while the grant proposal focused on the use of musical instruments and art supplies in our summer program, I actually had a greater goal in mind.

Once I finally put my mind to it, everything came together fairly quickly. In my ideal summer reading program, I planned for the five-and-under crowd to explore music and dance, while the six- to eleven-year-olds would concentrate on art. With this in mind, I went to my favorite catalogs and started imagining what this program could be.

The library owned some instruments already, but I wanted to have enough of several different kinds of instruments so everyone in a class could play the same thing. Of course, the louder



Melanie Lyttle is Head of Children's Services at Madison (Ohio) Public Library.



Dylan Cmarik won't wear his belly bells, but he'll hold them.

the instruments the better! I included tambourines, maracas, rhythm sticks, and belly bells in my plan. What I wanted most were Boomwhackers, those brightly colored plastic tubes that are so much fun to use.

I will not say that the summer reading program was concocted to provide a reason for our library to acquire Boomwhackers, but I finally had a legitimate reason to purchase some! Once I found the instruments I liked, I then located books to go with them to create six different storytimes, one for each week of the summer reading program.

To prepare for the art programs, I considered art supplies I really loved, including Crayola Model Magic, boxes of wood bits, foam, and fabric paint. I even discovered you could get tacky glue in gallon bottles, which was fortunate because we would be using a LOT of glue! Once the art supplies were in place, I found books to go with them.

Designing the Programs

Designing two different six-week programs was a blast. One of our goals was to allow children to experience different artistic



Amia Martorana adds more glue to her sculpture which is made entirely from recycled materials.

forms. All the grant money would be spent on programming supplies. About 45 percent of the money was for musical instruments, and the rest was for various art materials. I had thought about budgeting money for a performer of some kind, but we don't typically get very good attendance for programs like that. We do best with our own "homegrown" activities.

The younger children had program topics like percussion, patterns, and movement. We read books including *Tanka Tanka Skunk!* by Steve Webb, *Jabuti the Tortoise* by Gerald McDermott, and *Wiggle* by Doreen Cronin.

The older children learned about recycling, culinary art, and architecture and we read *The Naked Lady* by Ian Wallace, *Metal Man* by Aaron Reynolds, and *Seen Art?* by Jon Scieszka.

When I had finally completed the first draft of what I thought was a very professionally written grant application, our assistant director suggested I add some of the excitement that I had expressed to her when talking about the program's possibilities.

As a result, the final application expressed my original thinking, "This is a program of participation, not observation. By

supplying children with gobs of glue and plenty of things that make loud noises, we are letting each child express himself his own way.” The most interesting and rewarding thing is that those were the two sentences quoted in the press release used by ALSC to announce the award!

Getting the News

It was just before 6 p.m. Eastern time Monday, January 26, 2009, when I got the call that we had won the ALSC/BWI grant. It is a good thing I work Monday nights, or I wouldn't have received the phone call!

This was huge news, but who could I tell? Most of the staff had already gone home, but there was a chance the director might still be around. While rushing to her office, I managed to plow into a corner of the reference desk, which left a huge purple-yellow bruise on my leg for weeks, but it was worth it because I caught the director right before she left for the day.

It seemed like forever before the grant money arrived. As many of my coworkers could tell you, I hate waiting for things to arrive in the mail. I checked the mail everyday to see if something had come for me. On February 10, the official ALSC press release indicated we had been awarded the grant. It was about two weeks after that when the check finally arrived. I suppose I could have started ordering supplies once I received the phone call or saw the official press release, but I didn't. Perhaps it was my reluctance to believe that we *had* actually been selected. This fairy tale would only seem real after the check was deposited in the bank!

The realization of the grant finally hit home with the library staff that day in the middle of March when most of the musical instruments arrived. By the time I was aware our shipment had come, I could hear the clanks, rattles, and bangs that meant many of our staff, from the circulation clerks and reference librarians to the director, were already seeing how they worked. In fact, the group was so enamored with the instruments that they were showcased in the library talent show in the beginning of June that kicked off our summer reading program. A rousing chorus of “Old MacDonald Had a Farm” played on Boomwhackers was a big hit!

Aside from the activities described in the grant application, the prizes and the reading program itself were pretty much as they had been for the past few years. It turned out we got most of our prizes paid for with a grant from Wal-Mart. We had applied for it



Emily Carroll paints her Greek temple-inspired building.

in early 2008 hoping it would fund that year's summer reading program, but instead it arrived for 2009. Our Friends group paid for the rest of our prizes and other incidental costs associated with the summer reading program.

While we did submit press releases to our local newspapers and included something in our library newsletters, we didn't pay to market our summer program. Instead we relied as we always have on our school visits and flier drop-offs. The Crabby Librarian, my alter ego, visited the elementary schools, as she does each year, to tell the children *not* to read or come to the library all summer. She tells them they don't deserve the wonderful prizes she has and they aren't cool enough to participate in the various activities she has planned. This reverse psychology approach has worked for a few years now. As I talked about the different art activities they would be doing, I could tell the children were very excited.

When it was finally time for summer reading to start, we knew the five-and-under programs would fill up no matter what. As we do every year, we had waiting lists for children wanting to attend. We had much greater attendance for the school-age programs than in past years. We ran two sessions of the same program as we always have. Most years we would have between forty and fifty kids total per week. Our previous “highest attendance at one time” was thirty-three children. Our best attended program this summer, which was about sculpture, had forty-seven kids at one time, and our smallest attendance for any session of a program was twenty. A few years ago that was a large program number! We consistently doubled the number of children attending each session of the art-themed programs as we had in past years.



From left to right, Ami Bray, teen librarian; Corrine Alldridge, assistant director; Melanie Lyttle, head of children's services; and James Lane, library page, perform "Old MacDonald Had a Farm" with Boomwhackers at the Madison (Ohio) Public Library talent show.

In addition, while not part of my original plan, we were able to get some instructors from the local Rabbit Run Community Arts Association to participate in some storytime programs. The instructors volunteered their time in exchange for publicizing their classes at the library, getting to use our fun new materials, and also getting to bring their children to participate in the already full classes. Their knowledge, as well as their passion, really made the summer special.

With so many children attending storytimes, we ended up scrounging for additional adults to help in the programs. Of course, we had multiple children's department members in programs, but we also had library pages, the head of technical services, our public relations person, and one week our BWI sales representative helped hand out supplies and corral the children for various activities.

Given the chance to do this program again, I would definitely make some changes. I would not do "only art" in one group and "only music and dance" in another. I had parents who commented that their child really loved art but wasn't old enough or their child really would have enjoyed the music storytimes but was too old.

Additionally, soliciting help from Rabbit Run during the planning stages of the program would have resulted in even more exciting activities. What I designed for the grant matched our existing storytime activities, so the Rabbit Run folks were just visitors. It might have been more beneficial to collaborate on the weekly topics right from the beginning so everyone's abilities would have been showcased.

We had a fantastic summer thanks to the ALSC/BWI grant. It was a shining part of an otherwise very somber time—just as summer reading was reaching its busiest point, our governor announced his plan to cut funding to all libraries in the upcoming state budget.

We could have lost up to 50 percent of our library's budget because state funding makes up a significant portion of our annual revenue. This happened in mid-June and it was just as summer reading was concluding at the end of July that we found out what the final funding cuts would be and how our library would be coping with them in the upcoming months. Having a positive grant experi-

ence gives me more confidence to apply for monies to support 2010 activities. If I thought we were short of money before, we sure are in 2010.

Taking a Chance on Grants

I learned a lot through the grant writing and receiving experience. My most important piece of advice? Show your passion. I am sure that there were equally creative programs submitted by other libraries last year, but somehow, we were able to express all the excitement in a concise fashion. I really loved my plan. I was proud of it, and I believed in it. I think that came through.

I also advise librarians to take a chance. I was absolutely, positively convinced that applying for the grant was a waste of time and nothing would come of it. However, my assistant director convinced me that applying for grants, even if you do not get them, is a good learning experience. It was, and I learned a lot.

Lastly, don't be afraid to solicit help. It may have been my name on the application, but several people helped me in the designing and polishing phases of the process. Applying for the ALSC/BWI grant was a team effort, and I was grateful for everyone's insights.

I encourage everyone to apply for grants for summer reading programs or any programs. What are you excited about? What would be perfect for your library? I found something that worked well for me, and I got my dream summer reading program. I really do feel like I am living happily ever after. ☺

An Alternative to “Duck and Cover”

Dealing with Large Storytime Crowds

STEPHANIE MIDDLETON

Frisco, Texas, is a rapidly growing city—located just north of Dallas—of more than one hundred thousand people, and it is a mecca for young families.

There is no shortage of full-time moms, dads, and caregivers looking to get their charges, and themselves, out and about. Though a bond has been passed for the first of four branches, the city has not yet broken ground.

As far as libraries go, the Frisco Public Library stands alone—and storytime there is indeed the hottest ticket in town.

What does this mean, besides perceived job security, for the youth services staff at the library? When we opened our new and vastly improved building in September 2006, our team was more than slightly overwhelmed. We had no idea what to expect in October when we first opened our program room doors to the toddlers and preschoolers of the area.

We had no shortage of questions, but we were not yet in a position to answer them. For instance, how many people could we comfortably fit inside the program room? If we set a limit, how would we keep count and make sure we didn't let in too many people? Would it be feasible to register patrons in advance? How many storytimes would we have to offer to satisfy all of our visitors? If our crowds were huge, how would we ensure that the programs would be engaging enough to keep everyone's attention?

It took us a while to get it right, but after some productive arguing, creative planning, and a lot of trial and error, the youth services team developed a system that works—at least for the time being.

If you are in a high traffic library that faces similar challenges, or if you serve a small community but are looking for some fresh ideas, hopefully you will garner something useful from our experiences.

Scheduling Storytimes

We schedule our storytimes in three seasonal sessions, determining our weekly themes and planning every storytime prior to the start of each new session. It's important for one's sanity, as well as for the quality of programming, to allow several weeks to a month in between sessions to plan, prepare, and even rest!

As for weekly scheduling, here's where it is especially important to evaluate your crowds. We found that we had many more toddlers coming to storytimes than preschoolers, so we ended up adding more toddler programs. This is what our storytime schedule originally looked like when we first started programming in the new building: toddlers (seventeen months to three years) on Tuesdays and Fridays at 10:30 a.m., followed by preschoolers (three years and older) at 11:30 a.m.



Stephanie Middleton is a former Youth Services Librarian at Frisco (Texas) Public Library.



Librarian Larissa Hammond conducts Toddler Time.



Librarian Donna Crane takes storytime tickets from young patron Jackson and his mother, Emily.



Librarian Claudia Wayland performs the Babies and Books program.

Though easy on us, it became quickly apparent that we were trying to cram in too many patrons and were still constantly turning visitors away (quite a few of them in tears).

Preschool storytime was also being overrun by toddlers who couldn't get into their own program. We eventually moved on to a much more intensive schedule, which currently looks like this:

- Toddlers (seventeen months to three years), Tuesdays and Fridays, 10, 10:30, and 11 a.m.
- Preschoolers (three years and older), 11:30 a.m. and 12 p.m.
- Bedtime Stories, Wednesdays, 7 p.m.
- Family Storytime, all ages, Saturdays, 10:30 a.m.

With this schedule, our programs aren't bursting at the seams, we are no longer alienating patrons by turning them away, and preschool storytime is actually comprised of mostly preschoolers.

Once weekly themes are set and planned, we simply repeat our programs for all storytimes that week. The patrons realize this, but the “double-dippers” aren't deterred; in fact, we encourage them to come back by reminding them that repetition is a good thing.

Crowd Control

Controlling crowds was one of our most challenging issues. The first week we weren't prepared for the massive crowds—more than two hundred patrons. It was uncomfortable, loud, hot, and unsafe. Keeping accurate attendance records was also a near

impossible feat; one of us would stand at the door and attempt to count heads using a clicker.

We knew we needed a solution and fast. After some debate, we decided that having attendees register in advance for storytime just wouldn't work, so we implemented a “ticket system.”

We determined that 125 people would be the maximum number of people allowed in the program room at one time, so we filled plastic sandwich bags with 125 tickets each, a different color for each time slot. Following is the wording we plastered all over our promotional materials and our website:

Free tickets are required to attend.

Tickets are available on a first come, first served basis on the second floor of the library the day of programming.

The tickets did surprise patrons at first, especially because, until our new schedule was instituted, there were not nearly enough to ensure a spot for everyone. However, most visitors understood the need for some crowd control and would either take tickets for the next program or make it a point to come earlier next time to ensure themselves admission.

The ticket system also gives patrons a chance to browse and enjoy the library before storytime. In the past, they would huddle outside the program room door for an hour, camping out to claim a much coveted spot inside. Now they just grab a ticket and are guaranteed entry to the program. Picking up tickets before a program is now second nature for all of our patrons, and putting a ticket into the basket at the program room door is one of the kids' favorite things to do!

For us, the system is invaluable, enabling us to easily keep our crowds in check and making our programs safer and more comfortable for everyone. We are also better able to keep statistics of

our programming numbers—both how many attend and how many are turned away. In the beginning, the turn-away statistics were especially important in helping us determine where more programs were needed.

Putting on the Show

I’m not using the term “show” in jest. When you’re dealing with a large audience, you have little choice but to entertain on a scale larger than most librarians are probably used to. Our team is amazingly talented at choosing appropriate, engaging picture books, gathering and creating flannels, rhymes, songs, and fingerplays, and developing puppet shows aimed at our youngest patrons. It’s important to honor and incorporate these tried and true building blocks of a good storytime, but for large crowds, it’s imperative to find a way to deliver on a larger scale.

PowerPoint Slides

Fortunately, our new building was well-planned and came equipped with the technology we soon discovered we would need to make our large storytime programs a success. Our first move to the “techie side” came when we implemented PowerPoint slides into our storytimes. We realized all too quickly that the flip-chart of song lyrics used in the old library building could barely be seen from the back of our new program room. Why not convert these lyrics to a colorful slideshow that we could project for everyone’s viewing pleasure?

The reaction was so positive that we began using PowerPoint to visually outline our storytimes. Slides now include special announcements, an introduction with the day’s theme, book cover images, and the words to each song, rhyme, and fingerplay. Having the words projected is especially beneficial because it allows the parents to read along with us and encourages everyone to become involved.

Another benefit is that the children immediately—and excitedly—recognize the slides to the songs we repeat often (such as “The Itsy-Bitsy Spider” or “Open Shut Them”). Eventually, we purchased a remote control, which gives us the freedom to move around at the front of the room. We always end with a slide thanking everyone for coming and reminding them of next week’s theme.

Aside from being well-received and effective in storytime, the slides are also useful for the staff, as we often find ourselves subbing for one another’s programs. With the slideshows

created in advance, it makes preparing for and implementing someone else’s program a much easier task.

Microphones

Projecting one’s voice to be heard over 125 people, three quarters of whom are under five, is yet another challenge. By the middle of our first session, we suffered from nasty bouts of laryngitis, and shouting week after week was only making things worse. Resistant at first, we finally busted out our dormant wireless microphone and—even though we felt a bit like Britney Spears or Hannah Montana—we were finally able to speak normally and be heard by all.

Everyone responded positively to the microphone because we were so much easier to hear; one or two parents actually commented that they liked the microphone because we commanded a little more attention from their children! Now, microphones are a standard in storytime, even for the loudest of us. In fact, we soon purchased a second one, which brings us to . . .

Partners in Storytime

If you have the staff to handle it, don’t go it alone. In the beginning, storytimes were a solo affair—I had toddlers, another librarian had preschoolers. However, while training new staff for storytimes, we realized that having two people run the show is a huge advantage.

It’s easy to get tired out when you have several programs in a row. Having a partner will enable you to feed off of each other’s energy, read books in tandem, interact with your host puppets if you use them, switch off when you need a mini-break, and deal with any issues that may arise without having to interrupt the program. In addition, with a full room, it’s easier for the audience to see our motions when there are two of us up there modeling them. Plus, it’s not the end of the world if you wake up sick and can’t drag yourself to work—you can always rely on your partner-in-storytime to step up and save the day!

We hope there’s something to be learned from our experience in Frisco. Having massive storytime crowds is a “problem” that most librarians dream of having. Some days we long for those quiet, intimate mornings with just a handful of kids and ample space and time for a craft after every program. However, the challenges here in Frisco are exciting ones, and I’m thankful that our team members are constantly pushing themselves and tweaking their ways of thinking in order to offer the best free show in town. ☺

The Power of Books in a Children's Hospital

A Success Story

ELIZABETH WEIMER



Gilbert with his first teacher, Betsy Weimer.

Imagine the view from a child's hospital bed: medical equipment, harsh lighting, and unfamiliar faces. For a moment, imagine the sounds of beepers; phones; overhead pages; and nurses, doctors, and therapists talking. Then, imagine the sight of a colorful book and the sound of a reader's voice telling a story in that hospital room.

The hospitalized child needs to escape the stressful medical environment. When a child in discomfort is offered an opportunity to imagine, dream, or think, wonderful things happen. Pain abates. Fears subside. The mind is challenged and energized. Imagination is kindled.

In April 2008, two-year-old Gilbert arrived with his parents and five siblings to receive medical care at Cleveland (Ohio) Clinic Children's Hospital. The Cleveland branch of Catholic Charities sponsored the entire family, after learning of Gilbert's complex medical needs, which included severe respiratory problems. Catholic Charities provided housing, food, clothing, and educational resources to assist the family in transitioning to life in the United States. His family had previously lived in

a dirt-floor tent in an African refugee camp, where the parents tended crops.

After many months of medical care, Gilbert was admitted to Cleveland Clinic Children's Hospital, Shaker Campus—the rehabilitation unit of the hospital—for intensive therapy to learn to walk and speak. This patient was ventilator dependent and had a tracheotomy; his voice could be heard only with the occasional use of a speaking valve. When he cried no sounds were heard.

I began seeing Gilbert for developmentally appropriate cognitive and social interactions. I introduced books and toys, which he had never known. Gilbert initially did not understand how to mechanically manipulate a book. Gradually, pictures in books took on meaning as they related to words and he began acquiring comprehension. He began speaking in English! By the time Gilbert turned three, he eagerly turned pages to hear and see more of each story. He also selected favorite books when given choices. Books offered fun! Whenever I arrived in Gilbert's hospital room for school, he clapped and laughed with unbridled



Elizabeth "Betsy" Weimer is Director of Early Childhood Education, Director of Bibliotherapy, and Reach Out and Read Coordinator at Cleveland (Ohio) Clinic Children's Hospital. She started the hospital's Bibliotherapy Program, Children's Library and Family Resource Collection with grant and gift support.



Gilbert with his parents.

happiness. Books provided therapeutic comfort and joy to this medically fragile child. Books calmed fears. Books offered a way for Gilbert to explore and understand the world. Books provided a safe haven and an opportunity for emotional healing.

Fingerplays, rhymes, and songs that related to stories helped Gilbert make *connections*. Diversity in book characters was a way to escape his hospital bed and relate to his loving family. The book *Feast for 10* by Cathryn Falwell, in particular, allowed Gilbert to make that *connection*.

Gilbert's personality began to emerge as his health and communication skills improved. It was evident that this child had an inner resiliency and verve for life. His wonderful family constantly surrounded him with love and support, and they always enjoyed sharing books with him. Remarkably, the family became the recipients of Gilbert's energy. He motivated and inspired them as they observed Gilbert's determination that was coupled with enthusiasm, curiosity, along with a fun-loving spirit. They began learning the English language through the picture books we used during our school sessions.

A particularly magical moment happened while we read *The Very Busy Spider* by Eric Carle: we came to the image of the pig when suddenly Gilbert turned and pointed to a stuffed animal pig across the room. The teacher exclaimed, "Yes, yes, a pig, oink, oink!" Gilbert laughed with delighted exuberance at my astonishment; this was a *silent* laugh due to his tracheotomy. We laughed together many times in the days ahead. *Connections!*

We remained bonded from that moment on until Gilbert's discharge to home with his family in Cleveland nearly a year later. Many books were given from our hospital's Reach Out and Read early literacy program during Gilbert's admission to begin his home library. Gilbert left the hospital walking, talking, now free of his ventilator and tracheotomy. He left the hospital with books, his own books—all full of happy memories.

Books were the key to unlocking language comprehension. Books were the link to expanding his ability to focus attention as he listened to stories. Books were the vehicle to learning game-playing such as "peek-a-boo." Books were the path to making *connections*. Gilbert had learned to love reading! ☺

Recommended Reading

Here are some of Gilbert's favorite books:

Carle, Eric. *Papa Please Get the Moon For Me*. Illus. by the author. Picture Book Studio, 1986. Unpaged.

Carle, Eric. *The Very Busy Spider*. Illus. by the author. Philomel, 1984. Unpaged.

Christelow, Eileen. *Five Little Monkeys Jumping On the Bed*. Illus. by the author. Clarion, 1989. 32p.

Cousins, Lucy. *Maisy's Bedtime*. Illus. by the author. Candlewick, 1999. Unpaged.

Emberley, Ed. *Go Away, Big Green Monster!*. Illus. by the author. Little, Brown, 1992. Unpaged.

Falwell, Cathryn. *Feast for 10*. Illus. by the author. Clarion, 1993. 32p.

Hill, Eric. *Spot Goes to the Farm*. Illus. by the author. Putnam, 1987. Unpaged.

Martin Jr., Bill. *Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?* Illus. by Eric Carle. Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1967. Unpaged.

Marzollo, Jean. *I Spy*. Photographs by Walter Wick. Scholastic, 1997. Unpaged.

Mayer, Mercer. *There's an Alligator Under My Bed*. Illus. by the author. Dial, 1987. Unpaged.

Slobodkina, Esphyr. *Caps for Sale*. Illus. by the author. W. R. Scott, 1940. Unpaged.

Tafari, Nancy. *Silly Little Goose!* Illus. by the author. Scholastic, 2001. Unpaged.

Maven of Historical Fiction

A Chat with Karen Cushman

URSULA SCHWAIGER

Last fall, I had the opportunity to sit down, have a cup of tea, and talk with author Karen Cushman at her home on Vashon Island, Washington. Cushman is the author of *The Midwife's Apprentice* (winner of the 1996 Newbery Medal), *Catherine, Called Birdy* (a 1995 Newbery Honor Book), *The Ballad of Lucy Whipple* (winner of the John and Patricia Beatty Award), and several other novels for young people.

Your new book *Alchemy and Meggy Swann* is set in England during the Elizabethan period. I'm curious (maybe because I'm a librarian) how you researched this book. Were there any gold nuggets that you discovered in your research that really excited you, that you wanted to make part of Meggy's story? Or was Meggy more of a concrete character that you had in mind before you researched?

Cushman: I think Meggy herself was pretty much a concrete character before I started. The fact that she is lame came later. Her father is an alchemist and is in the business of transformation. And I wanted her to want him to transform her. So I started thinking, what does she want him to transform about her? What is about her that she doesn't like that she wants changed? And I started thinking about what they referred to as "being lame" at the time, and how if she thought he could turn base metal into gold, and also discover the secret to eternal life, that he could also fix or cure her—which of course he can't, and she has to come to terms with that.

The "nuggets" that I found had to do with my research into alchemy. Some of it was just fascinating. I would say about 90 percent of it I didn't understand, and that was deliberate because the writings were obscure and arcane; there were secrets, and they didn't want to spill any of those secrets and get

everyone involved, so they purposely wrote them that way.

A lot of the writings were spiritual or mythological, and I didn't understand that. I did find a couple of books that were very down-to-earth, including a book that was an introduction to chemistry, because a lot of the procedures and instruments that alchemists developed led to advances in chemistry—really the invention of chemistry. So a lot of that was really interesting. On that I had to go back and forth a lot, because I would write a page, and he would be doing some procedure and the chemicals would be turning a certain color, and then I had to go and find out what. Would there be smoke, would there not be smoke? Would it be hard, would it be liquid? There are amazing things online now, on the Internet, including reproductions of actual etchings and things, of sixteenth-century alchemists' laboratories. But also, people now who are involved with re-creation groups have painted pictures of what an alchemist's laboratory would have looked like, so that was interesting; I could get a visual idea of what this place would have looked like.

I also love the dialogue. Meggy has to stick up for herself, and she can let loose with some really funny curses. How did you come up with these phrases?



Ursula Schwaiger is a Supervising Children's Librarian for the King County Library System in Washington State. She is also the chair of the ALSC Children and Libraries Advisory Committee.

Cushman: That was really fun. I found a book called *Shakespeare's Insults*, and there is also something online called the *Shakespearean Insult Generator*. I started looking at different sixteenth-century lexicons, like dictionaries and glossaries, and finding lots of different words. I have a dictionary of all of Shakespeare's words. Unfortunately, the words are listed in the Elizabethan and then defined in modern English. I would love to find a book where you could look up the modern English word and then it would tell you the sixteenth-century version. It was a little more difficult the other way, but a lot of fun!

What is your personal library like? What books would people be surprised to know you own?

Cushman: I have a book called *The Illustrated Pig* because in my new book there is a pig that is a star character, so I have a whole bunch of books about pigs. I have a lot of paperback historical novels from the 1970s, when I started getting interested in that subject. I have my grandfather's 1911 *Encyclopedia Britannica* that you can barely open, the pages are so delicate. The newest book that I want to get, I am very excited about it, and I keep telling people in my family that this is what I want for my birthday is the *Oxford Historical Thesaurus*. It is just like Roget's, but the words are listed historically, or rather chronologically, and it tells you the date the word first appeared, and the last appearance, so you can date words to different periods. It's one of these "word nerds" kind of books, so I'm so excited!

What do you think are the challenges in writing for children and young adults? Many people have the misconception that it is easy.

Cushman: I think the kind of writing that I do is easier than picture books. To me, writing picture books would be the most difficult; it would be like writing a poem, so precise. I think I have a little more leeway in what I do. And I think what I do is easier than writing for adults. What I'm interested in is not necessarily what "grown-ups" want to read. So I've found a comfortable place for myself—that the issues that children's and young adult books deal with are issues that I'm interested in, and the idea of "coming of age" and figuring out who you are and your place in the world—that's all a very comfortable place for me.

I think historical novels have a built-in difficulty because "two years ago" is history to kids. When I started to write *The Loud Silence of Francine Green*, set in 1949–50, a schoolgirl asked me, "Are you ever going to write a modern book?" and I said "Yes, I'm writing one now!" and I told them about it, and there was silence . . . and then a kid said "another historical fiction."

So their definition of history and historical fiction is very different. I think there's a challenge in that parents often get over-involved (though it is good that they're involved with what their kids are reading), but I got a letter . . . today from someone who got a letter from a parent protesting about his book because in the first sentence (it's the first day of school) the kid said, "I hate school." The parent thought this was a terrible message to give to kids, so the parent is campaigning to get the book removed from the library and from the school.

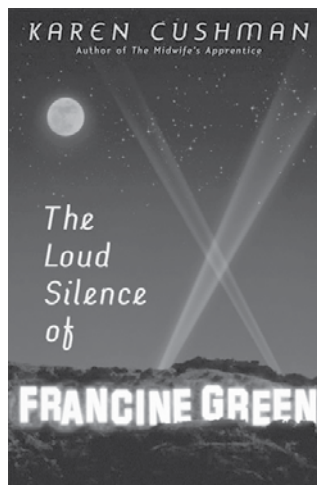
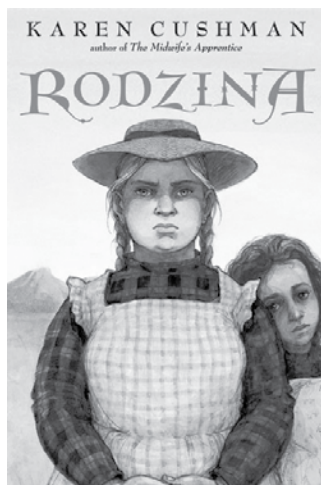
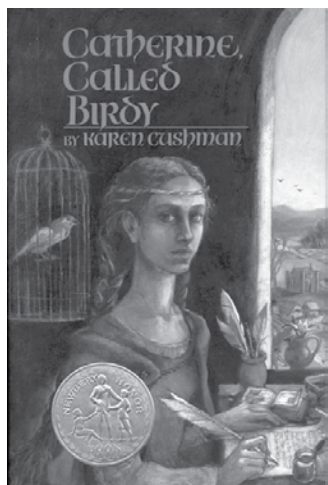
I think you don't find that nearly as much with adult books. I don't have too much trouble with it, though I did get a few letters after *Catherine, Called Birdy* from people protesting the use of the words "piss" and "privy." So I just told them, you should see the words I didn't use!

What attracts you to historical fiction subjects?

Cushman: I think there are a lot of psychological explanations that people have, like it's easier to look at modern problems and issues through the lens of the past and those relationships. I find the history that I write about, which is mostly medieval and Elizabethan England, very colorful and somewhat exotic—brutal at times—but I'm not there, I'm removed . . . so that makes it easier.

It's easier for me to begin to understand these people, than it would be if I were writing about Aztec children or Egyptians even. I think it's a chance to leave where I am and go someplace else and think about and demonstrate their lives. What I write about is everyday life; I'm not interested in kings and queens.

That was a real challenge when I was researching the Elizabethan period. I would say 99 percent of the books I found about the period, both fiction and nonfiction, were about Elizabeth or



Henry. It's really the ordinary people and ordinary life that I am interested in.

You won the Newbery Medal for *The Midwife's Apprentice*. What did that mean to you?

Cushman: Well, I won the Newbery Honor for my first book, so on one hand I was blown away, but on the other, I thought, "This is what happens when you write a book! Every time, I'm going to win a medal!"

I think what it did right away is help me carve out a place. I didn't spend years and years struggling to find a place in the children's book world. Right away, I felt like less of a beginner, though sometimes I felt like a charlatan—here I was a beginner and I was talking to people like I knew what I was doing. I felt like more of a professional; I had opportunities to go to conferences and to speak and to meet a lot of people, which I wouldn't have had without that. It means my books will stay in print; they are out there and that libraries buy them. It's a great thing to have the Newbery Medal attached to your work.

Do you have a favorite Newbery-winning book?

Cushman: *Sarah, Plain and Tall* (by Patricia MacLachlan). I think it's a nearly perfect book. I once taught a short class on writing for adults, and I used the first page of that book because she is doing everything that you have to do in a first chapter, or in a first fifty pages. Also, I love *Missing May* (by Cynthia Rylant).

If you weren't a writer, what career would you be in and why? I read that you have a background in museum studies.

Cushman: I think that would be interesting, but the way that museums really are as opposed to my fantasies, I don't know if I would . . . I think that I would probably be a librarian or work in a bookstore. It would probably have something to do with

books. I thought about being a teacher at one time. I went to education school but never finished.

Where is your favorite place to write? Has living in the countryside influenced you and your writing?

Cushman: I have this beautiful studio, but I found that that was not my favorite place to write. My favorite place to write is on a cold day, with the fire going, sitting right in this chair. I like to be in the middle of things, but I'm not in the middle of things as if I had four kids, and people coming and going. It's very quiet, very removed, which living in the

country does help. I can be in the middle of things without a lot of noise and interruptions.

What are you reading now?

Cushman: I am reading a book called *The Forgotten Garden* by Kate Morton, a book about three generations of a family, with alternating viewpoints. When I'm writing, I sometimes have a hard time climbing inside a big book and staying there because I'm inside another book! And I find I prefer to stick with one person, one viewpoint, rather than alternating viewpoints.

What topic would you love to write about at some point in the future?

Cushman: I will probably never do this, but I have thought about writing a book set right after the American Revolutionary War. I think we don't know about that period of time. We think that we won the American Revolution, and the next thing you know it's the war of 1812! Then the next thing is Lincoln! I guess it was a wild, brutal, difficult period; many people lost everything in the war, the economy collapsed, it was a very hard time, very interesting time.

Cushman's newest book, *Alchemy and Meggy Swann*, is due out spring 2010. ☺

“Well, I won the Newbery Honor for my first book, so on one hand I was blown away, but on the other, I thought, ‘This is what happens when you write a book! Every time, I’m going to win a medal!’”

You Go, Girl!

Heroines in Newbery Medal Award Winners

MARA L. HOUDYSHHELL AND COLEEN MEYERS MARTIN



Since its inception in 1922, the John Newbery Medal has been awarded to “the author of the most distinguished contribution to American literature for children published in the United States during the preceding year.”¹ Selected by a committee of the Association for Library Service to Children, a division of the American Library Association, guidelines specify that the content of winning books is appropriate for “persons of ages up to and including fourteen,” with one target audience being children in their adolescent years.²

Whether these books are read to children or by children, the Newbery’s principal audience is comprised primarily of readers in “pre-” and “early” adolescence, both important phases in emotional and social development.³ During these periods, “tweens,” as David Anderegg refers to them, are “trying on” roles for themselves as they form both cultural and personal identities.⁴ They emulate the behavior of others and begin to define their own role within their community.⁵ For this reason, research related to fictional characters and their portrayal is important. “Adolescents grapple with the question of who they will become as well as the question of who they are.”⁶ Due to this process of self discovery and role experimentation, role models encountered in the fictional world may become ones accepted or emulated in real life.

Several studies link the influence of positive gender portrayal to healthy development and self-esteem of both boys and girls.⁷ According to Judith Kinman and Darwin Henderson, “Children must see lifestyles like their own in the literature they read, since this is one way that they validate their own lifestyles.”⁸ Despite this finding, girls have historically been portrayed as possessing primarily stereotypical feminine traits: caring, weak, giving, sentimental, and so on.⁹ Such representations may raise questions in the minds of young readers of both genders as to how their identities compare with those of protagonists. Building on the earlier work of Myra Sadker and David Sadker, Janet Powell et al. noted that these portrayals may lead girls to think that they are “no more than spectators of action. . . . It isn’t enough for girls only to appear as main characters; they must also possess assertive and dynamic personality traits.”¹⁰

This article examines the positive characteristics related to resiliency of female protagonists in Newbery Medal winning books between 1997 and 2008. This article also revisits Mara Houdyshell and Janice Kirkland’s 1998 article, *Heroines in Newbery Medal Award Winners: Seventy-five Years of Change*, which discussed gender representation in Newbery Medal winners from 1985 to 1996.¹¹ Its reference within this article is to assist in the determination of the statistical change in the



Mara L. Houdyshell (far left) is a former Children’s Librarian and is currently a Reference and Instructional Services Librarian at California State University, Northridge’s Oviatt Library. Her subject specialization areas include Education and Child and Adolescent Development. **Coleen Meyers Martin** (near left), a former Children’s Librarian, is currently a Reference and Instructional Services Librarian and Coordinator of Outreach Services at California State University, Northridge’s Oviatt Library. She frequently works with area high school students teaching information literacy skills.

number of central female characters in Newbery winners in the twelve years following 1996.

Methodology

In order to evaluate the central female characters and their portrayal in Newbery winners in the years 1997 to 2008, and to compare them to the number of central female characters in the preceding twelve-year period, a two-step process was employed. First, titles with central female characters were identified, and second, three questions were posed addressing the portrayal of these lead characters.

Titles Identified

The four Newbery titles that fit the established criteria for discussion in this article are *Out of the Dust* by Karen Hesse (1998), *Kira-Kira* by Cynthia Kadohata (2001), *A Year Down Yonder* by Richard Peck (2005), and *The Higher Power of Lucky* by Susan Patron (2007).¹²

Questions Posed

1. Do the female protagonists possess positive characteristics related to resiliency?
2. Are the female characters assigned traditional or nontraditional roles?
3. Has the number of central female characters changed from the previous twelve years?

Table 1. Character Traits, Resources, and Portrayal of Newbery Female Protagonists, 1997 to 2008

Year of Award	Title	Character	Individual Traits/Resources	External Resources	Characteristics of Portrayal
1998	<i>Out of the Dust</i>	Billie Jo	Courageousness, Fortitude, Intelligence	Academic Success, Talent	Traditional, Nurturing, Caring, Sensitive
2001	<i>A Year Down Yonder</i>	Grandma Dowdel	Humor, Tenacity, Conviction	Family Cohesion, Support of Community	Nontraditional, Intelligent, Aggressive, Strong
2005	<i>Kira-Kira</i>	Katie	Optimism, Self Reliance	Family Cohesion	Traditional, Selfless, Comforting, Sensitive
2007	<i>The Higher Power of Lucky</i>	Lucky	Courageousness, Intelligence, Tenacity	Support of Community, Caring Adult	Nontraditional, Intelligent, Independent, Brave

Note: Chart format based on Jonathan Lathey, "Challenges Then and Now: A Survey of Protagonists in Newbery Award Books, 1950s and 1990s," *Children and Libraries* 3, no. 3 (Winter 2005), http://vnweb.hwwilsonweb.com/www/results/external_link_maincontentframe.jhtml?_DARGS=/hww/results/results_common.jhtml.29 (accessed May 17, 2008).

Question one, above, explores the portrayal or modeling of resilient characteristics in each female protagonist. Of the four identified protagonists, three—Billie Jo, Katie, and Lucky—are adolescents, and as such can be discussed in terms of their adolescent resiliency. Such resiliency allows individuals to flourish. According to Kimberly Gordon, adolescent resiliency "is the ability to thrive, mature, and increase competence in the face of adverse circumstances. These circumstances may include biological abnormalities or environmental obstacles."¹³ The fourth protagonist, Grandma Dowdel, can be discussed due to her behavior, modeling resilient characteristics, which influences her granddaughter, Mary Alice.

Howard Kaplan acknowledges the work of Suzanne Kobasa and notes that resiliency is evidenced through a person's sense of hardiness. "Individuals who are said to be characterized by hardiness have high levels of . . . [the] belief in the importance and value of oneself . . . the belief that change is normal and represents a positive rather than threatening circumstance."¹⁴

Research identifies that individual traits and external resources serve as protections against adversity and support resiliency.¹⁵ As such, lead characters were assessed for these factors. Among the character traits identified by Jonathan Lathey are courageousness, intelligence, tenacity, fortitude, conviction, optimism, and a sense of humor. External resources include: academic success, talent, family cohesion, supportive community, and caring adult.¹⁶ Craig Olsson et al. posited that individuals with strong personal, family, and social assets have a better support system, are more resilient, and are better able to cope.¹⁷ Such assets help present characters in a favorable light.¹⁸ The resources and traits selected for inclusion in table 1 represent each protagonist's predominant characterization within the context of the stories.

Research has shown that positive portrayal also is evidenced through realism in character and story. In their research, Zena Sutherland, Dianne Monson, and May Hill Arbutnot noted that realistic female characters and story lines provide an opportunity for positive role modeling.¹⁹ Similarly, Kinman and Henderson found that when readers recognize and identify with the character's feelings and situation they "can then accept that the character's experiences are similar to their own."²⁰

Question two addresses traditional versus nontraditional presentation of the characters. According to Powell et al., "traditional female roles include those who . . . are seen as primary caretakers of children and homes."²¹ Such characters are presented as being "sensitive, comforting,

dependent, passive, physically weak, selfless, happy, caring, nurturing, and helpless.”²² Conversely, nontraditional female roles present girls who are seen as being, “strong, brave, aggressive, independent, and intelligent and “actively involved in the story.”²³

While no single character discussed within this article is presented exclusively with all of the traditional or nontraditional traits noted, each can be assigned to either a traditional or nontraditional role. This determination is based upon their circumstances within each story as identified in the analytical summaries to follow, their predominant traits, and the characteristics of each portrayal as identified in table 1.

Examining the female protagonists using this approach will help determine how each protagonist is presented in the summaries and discussions. This format includes synopses and analytical summaries of each book.

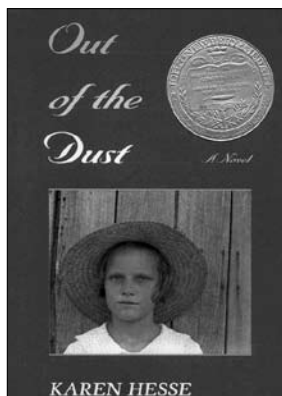
Out of the Dust

Set in the Oklahoma Dust Bowl, *Out of the Dust* by Karen Hesse is a fictional autobiography that unfolds through the diary entries of fourteen-year-old Billie Jo. Stark and vivid, the story tells of Billie Jo's struggles to understand her family relationships and to endure nature's unrelenting oppression.

In *Out of the Dust*, circumstance places Billie Jo in a caregiver role; she demonstrates how a character can be both traditional and resilient (table 1). Her diary entries reveal how she is challenged by the environment and the emotionally wrenching loss of her mother. In the same house where Billie Jo's mother taught her to play piano, the piano remains—a reminder of happier times and of her own scarred hands, burned in the same fire that injured her mother beyond recovery.

Despite the physical difficulty, Billie Jo struggles to regain her playing skills, courageously forcing herself to play through the pain. Her perseverance and determination allow Billie Jo to place third in a local talent show. As she describes it, “I dropped right inside the music and didn't feel anything . . . the applause made me forget the pain.”²⁴

The circumstances of the accident also lead a sensitive Billie Jo to adopt the role of caregiver as she tends to her mother, and then becomes homemaker, following her mother's death. The only female in the house, Billie Jo becomes responsible for most of the cooking and cleaning. I “took a good look at the steps and the porch and the windows. I saw them with Ma's eyes . . . with Ma gone, if the mud's to be busted the job falls to me.”²⁵ Given her young age, Billie Jo has little ability to change her situation



and is also challenged by her distant and withdrawn father.

Weary of the drought, unhappy with her father, and desiring more than a traditional life for herself, a conflicted Billie Jo runs away. It is an experience that is not altogether rewarding. “Getting away wasn't any better. Just different. And lonely.”²⁶ Ultimately, Billie Jo accepts, and becomes comfortable with who she is and returns home, writing, “And I know now that all the time I was trying to get out of the dust, the fact is, what I am, I am because of the dust. And what I am is good enough. Even for me.”²⁷

Billie Jo displays both sensitivity and intelligence to confront and eventually accept the role that she and her father played in her mother's accidental death. Despite her difficulties and the need to substitute for her mother as homemaker, Billie Jo exemplifies the courageousness and tenacity needed to move through her hardships.

A Year Down Yonder

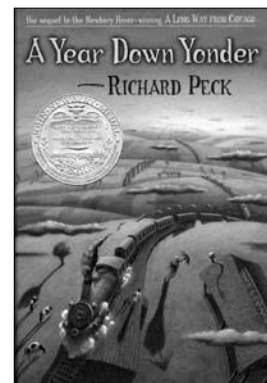
A sequel to Richard Peck's *A Long Way from Chicago*, *A Year Down Yonder* chronicles fifteen-year-old Mary Alice's lively stay with her Grandma Dowdel.

A nontraditional role model, entrepreneur Grandma Dowdel achieves her goals through conviction and humor. She is not above teaching a Halloween prankster a lesson, nor is she shy about doling out fairness where she sees that it is needed. Through her actions, she demonstrates how a character can be a resilient, nontraditional female (table 1).

Very much her own person, Grandma Dowdel's “bull-by-the-horns” approach to life, makes her a formidable force to be reckoned with. She is intuitive about what is right and is not hesitant to act on her beliefs. An instance of this includes her teaching one of her granddaughter's classmates—a class bully—a lesson by setting her horse free so that she is forced to walk home. This is one example of how she serves as a powerful role model for her impressionable granddaughter, Mary Alice.

Grandma Dowdel has an unconventional, larger-than-life personality, and her methods ultimately benefit everyone. One example of this is seen when she gathers pecans from a neighbor's yard after intentionally “bumping” their pecan tree with a tractor to free the pecans from their branches. She later uses the pecans to make pies for the local Halloween party. The well received pecan pies are supplemented with pumpkin ones, baked with pumpkins tenaciously foraged under the cover of darkness from the yard of a second neighbor.

Grandma Dowdel is not a thief without conscience, however. When Mary Alice initially questions the legality of purloining

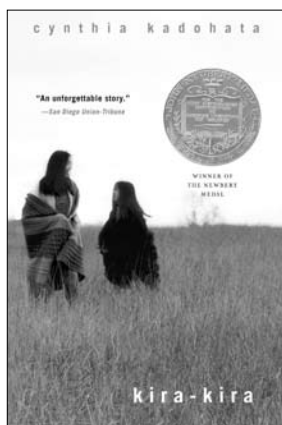


the pumpkins, Grandma Dowdel suggests the fairness of her actions by responding, "We'll leave a pie on their porch."²⁸ This illustrates how a homemaker by circumstance can be portrayed in a nontraditional manner.

Grandma Dowdel uses her spunk and intelligence at every opportunity, whether aggressively outwitting a privy-tipping prankster or demonstrating her more charitable side. This includes her creative way of raising funds at a community event. By establishing herself as cashier at the head of the food line, she yields extra money for the fundraiser's recipient, a severely disabled war veteran. To accomplish this, she charges well-to-do attendees meal prices appropriate to their income. It is through this take-charge action that she garners respect within her community.

Kira-Kira

Kira-Kira by Cynthia Kadohata is the first person narrative of Katie, a Japanese American girl growing up in Georgia. Accustomed to the protective guidance of her older sister, Lynn, Katie finds their roles reversed when Lynn becomes seriously ill.



The racially charged South of the 1950s is not an environment easily navigated, yet young Katie Takeshima's attitude, self reliance, and optimism ultimately allow her to succeed. Through her actions, she demonstrates how a character can be simultaneously traditional ("Everyday I sat by her bed and fed her")²⁹ and resilient ("When we first walked up to the Pacific Ocean, the tears welled up in my eyes. . . . But the water began to make me feel happy again. . . . I could hear my sister's voice in the waves: 'Kira-kira! Kira-kira!'"³⁰).

In *Kira-Kira*, both of Katie's parents work long, hard hours. It is a situation that forces them to leave their children to care for themselves. While initially Katie's older sister, Lynn, acts as their caregiver, it is a responsibility that will later fall to Katie.

Serving as a role model, Lynn teaches Katie to appreciate the kira-kira, "glittering," in life, "I used kira-kira to describe everything I liked: the beautiful sky, puppies, kittens, butterflies."³¹ The word also illustrates the special bond between Lynn and Katie. Over the course of the story, Lynn's protection and guidance set an example for Katie, who has always been the unassuming student of her older sister.

The shift in Katie's role and responsibilities begins when Lynn becomes ill. While she doubts her abilities, she knows that the welfare of Lynn, and their younger brother, Sammy, is hers to ensure. An example of this is seen when the three children play in a field and Sammy catches his foot in an animal trap.

Although Katie fears that she lacks the physical and emotional strength to take charge, she frees her brother's foot and runs to find help. This is an instance that requires a traditional, selfless Katie to draw upon her resilient traits in acting as decision-maker.

By the story's conclusion, Katie provides the kira-kira for the family and for her own future. She takes Lynn's advice to heart, "You have to try and get better grades. . . . You should go to college. . . . Take care of Mom and Dad and Sammy."³² It is a challenging request for someone who does not put her own interests first, but one that Katie works to fulfill.

The Higher Power of Lucky

The Higher Power of Lucky by Susan Patron tells the story of ten-and-a-half-year-old Lucky Trimble and her struggle to trust following her mother's accidental death. Living in a small desert community, Lucky searches for her "Higher Power," an inner knowledge that will enable her to have control over her life.



Lucky Trimble is a decidedly nontraditional female character, with a goal to "become a world-famous scientist like Charles Darwin."³³ She is inquisitive and insightful, qualities that allow her to cope with the unique challenges of her young life. Her parents divorce before she is born, her mother dies in a freak weather-related accident, and her father subsequently places her in the care of a guardian, Brigitte, who just happens to be his first ex-wife.

While coping with the death of a parent might, in itself, be overwhelming, Lucky displays great resilience and personal strength in her ability to adapt to her current circumstance. She also prepares for the unknowns of the future. This includes assembling a survival backpack that allows her to be self-reliant and prepared for anything, from a personal emergency to guardian abandonment while searching for her Higher Power.

Lucky learns of the usefulness of having a Higher Power through eavesdropping on her town's Twelve Step meetings. Her analytical instincts tell her that if she can discover her own Higher Power, it will enable her to gain control over her life. Her active, not passive, pursuit of such independence demonstrates the strength of Lucky's determination to overcome her past.

Lucky's traits also include intelligence, which is visible in her aspiration to emulate Charles Darwin. Her fascination with insects and snakes sets her apart from more traditional gender-driven depictions of young girls.

To her benefit, Lucky's early misfortunes are countered by the presence of a caring and supportive adult in her life, Brigitte,

and by the fact that she lives in a very tight-knit community.

Lucky's quest to find her Higher Power leads her to believe that showing courage is key to its discovery. As a result, she determines that running away is the best way to demonstrate such bravery. Indirectly, it is this decision, and her struggle through a severe desert sandstorm, that gives Lucky time to sort out the details of her life. Through keen self awareness, she comes to understand and appreciate the stability she has, stability made clear when the entire town of Hard Pan, including Brigitte, braves the sandstorm in search of her. Brigitte reassures Lucky that she has no intention of leaving her and even plans to adopt Lucky.

Discussion

The traits and external resources that influence resiliency and the success of characters can be identified in table 1. All female Newbery protagonists between 1997 and 2008 exhibit individual traits such as courageousness, intelligence, tenacity, fortitude, conviction, optimism, and a sense of humor.³⁴ While many of these traits can be found in each character, some were more dominant than others. Both Billie Jo's and Lucky's abilities to deal with the loss of their mother, for example, demonstrate courageousness and intelligence, particularly because they lack a traditional support structure within their immediate families.

Billie Jo has an emotionally distant father; Lucky, an absent one. Although the two handled their situations very differently, Billie Jo looking within herself to understand, and Lucky looking to her environment to make sense out of life, each possesses the fortitude to move forward. Grandma Dowdel uses her sense of humor to disarm her many detractors and the tenacity she demonstrates when caring for her family and community members cannot be overstated. Finally, Katie's growing optimism throughout *Kira-Kira* allows her to see the promise of the future.

External resources noted in table 1 reflect several, additional support structures available to the four protagonists. These structures indicate the potential for personal success and demonstrate that individuals with these resources are better able to cope with adversity.³⁵ Billie Jo's talent playing piano provides her with solace and a possible way to earn money. Lucky's caring adult, Brigitte, provides her with support to better deal with her hardships. While Katie possesses a cohesive family structure, a consistent caring adult and supportive community are absent. The social environments for Grandma Dowdel and Lucky, along with academic success for Billie Jo, contribute to their positive portrayals and optimistic outlooks.

In addition to individual traits and external resources, realistic characters in these stories help craft a positive image. In discussing the work of Albert Bandura and Richard Walters, Sutherland et al. assert that "children learn vicariously—that is, by observing the behavior of social models [and] learning may occur when a child observes the behavior of others."³⁶

When readers identify with Lucky's fear of abandonment or Katie's loss of her sibling, they connect to the story and make comparisons to their own lives. It is through such synthesis that literature can impact the reader in meaningful ways.

Traditional Versus Nontraditional Portrayal

The lead female characters under discussion here are assigned to either a traditional or nontraditional role based upon the following: their circumstances in the story, their predominant traits, and the characteristics of each portrayal. All four—Billie Jo, Grandma Dowdel, Katie, and Lucky—uniquely utilize their resources in ways that fulfill their situational needs. They demonstrate how female characters can be presented in traditional and nontraditional roles and also possess traits and resources that portray them resiliently.

In *Kira-Kira* and *Out of the Dust*, Katie and Billie Jo are portrayed traditionally. Both characters look after and care for family members as well as their households. Billie Jo substitutes for her mother, as evidenced through her constant cleaning and concern for her father's happiness despite the fact she desires more for her life. Katie acts as a parent and serves as caretaker to her terminally ill sister, Lynn, and much younger brother, Sammy. At times, Katie and Billie Jo demonstrate nontraditional traits for female protagonists, such as bravery and intelligence. But, due to their household circumstances and caring ways, Katie and Billie Jo are assigned traditional roles and can be viewed as nurturing individuals for much of their stories.

Table 2. Newbery Winners by Gender of Central Character, 1985 to 1996

Year	Title	Author	Category
1985	<i>The Hero and the Crown</i>	Robin McKinley	F
1986	<i>Sarah, Plain and Tall</i>	Patricia MacLachlan	F
1987	<i>The Whipping Boy</i>	Sid Fleischman	M
1988	<i>Lincoln: A Photobiography</i>	Russell Freedman	O
1989	<i>Joyful Noise: Poems for Two Voices</i>	Paul Fleischman	O
1990	<i>Number the Stars</i>	Lois Lowry	F
1991	<i>Maniac Magee</i>	Jerry Spinelli	M
1992	<i>Shiloh</i>	Phyllis Reynolds Naylor	O
1993	<i>Missing May</i>	Cynthia Rylant	F
1994	<i>The Giver</i>	Lois Lowry	M
1995	<i>Walk Two Moons</i>	Sharon Creech	F
1996	<i>The Midwife's Apprentice</i>	Karen Cushman	F

Note: F = Female, M = Male, O = Other (includes books with animals as central characters, biographical works, or poems).

In *A Year Down Yonder* and *The Higher Power of Lucky*, Grandma Dowdel and Lucky exemplify nontraditional roles. Even though Grandma Dowdel is a homemaker, she is a business woman at heart, making money for herself and charities whenever the opportunity arises. Lucky is a discoverer and a scientist in search of what the world has to offer. Both protagonists at times are depicted as caring, a trait associated with a traditional female character. However, overall, due to Grandma's entrepreneurial ways and Lucky's free-spirited ones, they are both assigned nontraditional roles and are portrayed as independent thinkers for much of their stories.

Female Central Characters: A Look at the Numbers

A change in the number of Newbery female protagonists did occur between the years 1985 and 1996 and between 1997 and 2008. As shown in table 2, Houdyshell and Kirkland identified six lead female characters between 1985 and 1996. This compares with four in the subsequent twelve-year period, 1997 to 2008 (table 3). This represents a decrease of two female protagonists, a drop of 33 percent. Analysis of the data (table 3) shows that the decrease in the number of female protagonists was not countered by an increase in the number of lead male characters for this same period. Instead, books featuring ensemble casts—including *A View from Saturday*, *Criss Cross*, and *Good Masters! Sweet Ladies! Voices from a Medieval Village*—increased, accounting for the remainder of award

Table 3. Newbery Winners by Gender of Central Character, 1997 to 2008

Year	Title	Author	Category
1997	<i>The View from Saturday</i>	E. L. Konigsburg	E
1998	<i>Out of the Dust</i>	Karen Hesse	F
1999	<i>Holes</i>	Louis Sachar	M
2000	<i>Bud, Not Buddy</i>	Christopher Paul Curtis	M
2001	<i>A Year Down Yonder</i>	Richard Peck	F
2002	<i>A Single Shard</i>	Linda Sue Park	M
2003	<i>Crispin: The Cross of Lead</i>	Avi	M
2004	<i>The Tale of Despereaux: Being the Story of a Mouse, a Princess, Some Soup, and a Spool of Thread</i>	Kate DiCamillo	O
2005	<i>Kira-Kira</i>	Cynthia Kadohata	F
2006	<i>Criss Cross</i>	Lynne Rae Perkins	E
2007	<i>The Higher Power of Lucky</i>	Susan Patron	F
2008	<i>Good Masters! Sweet Ladies! Voices from a Medieval Village</i>	Laura Amy Schlitz	E, O

Note: F = Female, M = Male, O = Other (includes books with animals as central characters or poems), E = Ensemble cast.

recipients. By contrast, no books featured an ensemble cast of characters for the preceding twelve years (1985 to 1996). This increase of Newbery winners with ensemble casts from 1997 to 2008 is perhaps a reflection of changes in cultural trends and warrants further study.

Conclusion

The children's publishing industry has vastly grown since the first Newbery Medal in 1922. The notoriety and expectations that accompany its recipients have also increased. While research findings indicate the number of female protagonists has grown since the Newbery's inception, a decrease occurred during 1997 to 2008 as compared to 1985 to 1996. This 33 percent decrease in these high profile books represents a dramatic change in the number of fictional female role models accessible to young readers. This decrease is significant as it limits the number of positive female protagonists whom children may choose to emulate in real life.

As previously noted, research indicates that girls need to appear as main characters and possess assertive and dynamic personalities in the literature they read as they explore the question of who they are and who they will become.³⁷ This serves as a reminder that children "must be taught to appreciate all that they can accomplish . . . Be it good or bad what we read affects who we are."³⁸

Further Reading

While the Newbery Medal is a significant indication of excellence in children's literature, there are many other awards that acknowledge outstanding contributions to literary works for children. Quality children's literature that may include lead female characters can also be found through other organizations that grant children's book awards, such as the International Reading Association, California Library Association, and other state associations, as well as through ALSC's other book awards. Readers will be able to identify additional lead female characters whom are portrayed positively by utilizing the criteria outlined in this article. 📖

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Garden State Book Awards Named

The Children's Services Section of the New Jersey Library Association has announced the following recipients of the 2010 Garden State Children's Book Award. Winners are chosen by popularity with readers in elementary grades. A three-year lapse from the original publication date is allowed to determine popularity.

Easy-to-Read Book: *Today I Will Fly* by Mo Willems

Easy-to-Read Series Book: *There Was an Old Lady Who Swallowed Fly Guy* by Tedd Arnold

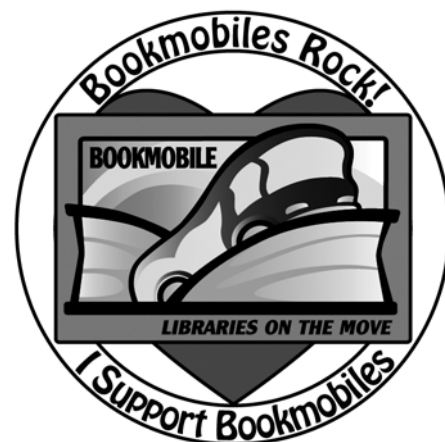
Fiction, Grades 2–5: *Diary of a Wimpy Kid* by Jeff Kinney

Non-Fiction, Grades 2–5: *Owen and Mzee: The Language of Friendship* by Craig Hatkoff, Isabella Hatkoff, and Dr. Paula Kahumbu, photographs by Peter Greste

On the Road Again

A Look at Bookmobiles, Then and Now

DIANE BASHAW



Convenience is a must-have these days. And one of the more historic conveniences in the library world—the bookmobile—is still a vibrant part of many societies today.

While the idea of traveling books was conceived hundreds of years ago by Dr. Thomas Bray in 1679, it wasn't until the late nineteenth century that it actually took shape and form in the United States.¹ And while the form has changed somewhat over the years, residents of various communities across the country can still walk to the corner stop and visit a bookmobile, ask the librarian questions, and borrow books to take home. Today, some patrons can even look up information on a computer, print a paper for school, and check out DVDs at bookmobiles. While some things change, many concepts of the bookmobile, such as bringing books and other information to the people, have remained the same.

There has been a noticeable decline in the use of bookmobiles in many communities, in part because of financial concerns. Fuel costs have periodically skyrocketed, causing some libraries to cease bookmobile services. Some feel that central libraries and their branches serve the needs of the people adequately and that bookmobiles and other outreach services are not as

critical as they once were. The question then remains—will bookmobiles continue to serve the people in the future, or are they simply an ancient relic?

The First Bookmobiles

Bookmobiles have been in the United States since at least 1905, when Mary Titcomb of Washington County Free Library in Hagerstown, Maryland, sent a book wagon to various locations to share the world of literature with rural residents who had limited access to libraries. The first horse-drawn carriage was driven by the library's janitor. This book wagon, or library wagon as it also was known, looked more like a horse-drawn hearse when it first set out in April 1905.²

Within the first six months, it was considered successful, delivering more than one thousand volumes to residents.³ A few years later, a train accident forced the wagon out of commission for a time. Eventually, though, a motorized traveling library replaced the horse-drawn vehicle, and the bookmobile tradition continued on its rounds to the delight of many families.

In 1915, with the onset of motorized bookmobiles, came more available space—not only for books, but also for people. Patrons could actually walk inside the vehicle to look at and borrow from the growing collection of books and magazines.⁴ Around the same time, in Plainfield, Indiana, vehicles were fitted with shelves made to “open like a cupboard and able to hold up to four hundred volumes” of books.⁵

The idea of libraries providing books to patrons who were



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unable to travel to the library was not new. As early as 1893, Melvil Dewey's idea of traveling collections was implemented; for instance, some libraries mailed books to patrons, and others took boxes of books to schools for distribution to students.⁶

Bookstores as well as libraries saw the need to provide books to the public in a similar manner. One in particular was the Bookshop for Boys and Girls, founded by Bertha Mahony in 1916. It carried many children's books and displayed some adult fiction books for sale in the New England area.⁷



A modern bookmobile in Dallas, Texas, touts the portable library's offerings. Photo by Charley Mitcherson, Library Associate, Outreach Services, Dallas Public Library-Central. Used with permission.

What's in a Name?

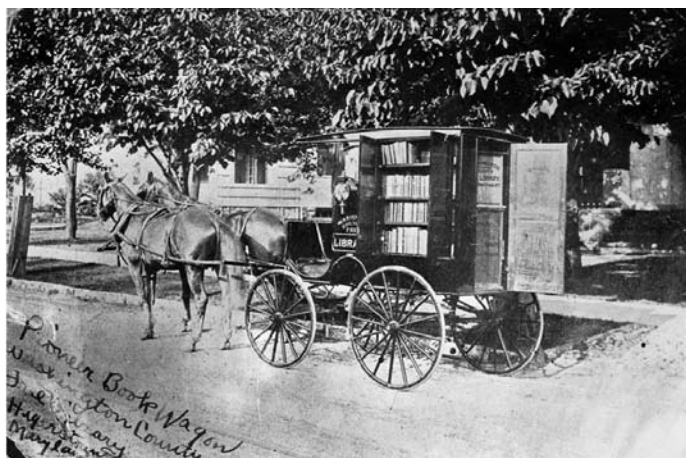
Bookmobiles have been known by many names over the years, including traveling library, library wagon, book wagon, book truck, book bus, book auto, library-on-wheels, bus mobile, library truck, book auto service, book contraption, floating library, and book boat.⁸

Whether by water, air, or land, or through deserts, mountains, islands, or jungles, books and other library materials have traveled by several means, including camel, horse, donkey, elephant, bus, boat, bicycle, wagon, motorbike, car, helicopter, and train.⁹

Bookmobiles of some form or other have been used in many parts of the world including not only the United States, but also places like Africa, Southeast Asia, South America, and Scandinavian countries like Norway, Sweden, and Denmark, to name a few.¹⁰

Librarians who were charged with bringing books to out-of-the-way places were often women—strong, independent, patient, and friendly. Traveling to the same locations, often every week, in many cases brought on a closeness between librarian and patron. Librarians came to know their patrons' reading needs and could select from their collection accordingly. Whether they were visiting children, the elderly, families, or prisoners, the librarians added titles on the basis of what they felt their readers would be interested in—whether it was by request, by instinctual knowledge, or through trial and error. They would vary the collection with new titles periodically, and many times patrons devoured them, demanding even more on subsequent visits.¹¹

There were often many children's books on board as well as popular fiction for adults. Bookmobiles carried both fiction and nonfiction books and materials for adults and children. Many distributed popular novels, Westerns, religious books, biographies, and romance books. Most brought along magazines, and some carried quilt patterns and homemade scrapbooks. Sometimes patrons shared with the librarians as well, offering everything from cookies to fresh vegetables from their fields.¹²



This Pioneer Library Book Wagon dates to 1905 in Hagerstown, Maryland. Photo courtesy of Cynthia Rowe, Bookmobile Manager at Washington County Free Library and Western Maryland Regional Library. Used with permission.

In Theresienstadt, a World War II concentration camp in which many educated Jewish professionals were held, there were collections of Jewish books and literature. The Ghetto Central Library in Theresienstadt was operated by fellow prisoners who transferred materials in traveling boxes to serve the prisoners' intellectual and emotional needs.¹³ Many of these books, which prisoners had brought with them as one of their few valuables allowed by the soldiers, were then given to the library by other prisoners.

Bookmobiles Today

In 1899, there were more than twenty-five hundred traveling collections in the United States. "Traveling collections" does not indicate what we typically consider bookmobiles, but instead boxes of books that were delivered to rural residents. New York, Massachusetts, and Minnesota were leaders in this endeavor, which led to subscription libraries delivering books and other libraries delivering boxes of books to schools.¹⁴

By the 1970s, there were approximately two thousand bookmobiles, but by 2004 there were only about 844 in the United States.¹⁵ The count varies from state to state depending upon the location and population. In 2006, there were 82 in Kentucky, 12 in Texas, and only 2 in Alaska. There were approximately 732 bookmobiles in the United States, including Washington, D.C., as of 2006.¹⁶

Not only rural or remote areas have bookmobiles. For instance, Texas has about 12 bookmobiles from all areas of the state, such as El Paso, Tyler, Beaumont, San Antonio, Baytown, and Irving.¹⁷ In fact, Baytown and San Antonio have more than 1 bookmobile running in their areas because of demand for their services.

Some of these Texan bookmobiles have a long history. For instance, Jefferson County, which includes Beaumont, began its bookmobile service in 1929, and it is still going strong today. This is partly due to one man, Chad Clark, who followed in his mother's footsteps. Clark makes about seventeen stops in a month, seeing about three hundred residents.¹⁸

Many of the bookmobiles in Texas and other areas still bring books to the rural population, but they also include stops at nursing homes, day care centers, prisons, hospitals, mobile home parks, summer camps, and businesses.¹⁹ Bookmobiles also are popular with special groups such as homeschooled children and the Amish community in some areas.²⁰ Many homeschooled children now have easy access to materials usually found in public schools. The Amish typically are a close-knit and geographically isolated community whose members may not venture into the city library but would probably welcome a visit from the local bookmobile.

The collection size and type have improved since the original horse-and-cart travel library, with many now using large buses or vans to carry their materials. Now most bookmobiles can carry about three thousand items.²¹ And today, there are often bookmobile guidelines and regulations. For example, the buses or vans must be equipped with wheelchair lifts to comply with the American Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) regulations. They must consider issues such as air conditioning, heating, special lighting, shelving, and storage space.²²

Today's bookmobiles are often even called by a new name—the cybermobile—since they now often have computers with Internet access as well as instant access to their online catalog and circulation data.²³

The Future of Bookmobiles

Some feel bookmobiles are a thing of the past, but others believe there is still a definite need.²⁴ Reasons for discontinuing bookmobiles include high costs, advanced technology, impracticality, and ineffectiveness.²⁵ But it can actually be more cost-efficient to run bookmobiles than to build more branch libraries. And it's been shown that use is high among bookmobile patrons, so it could be well worth the costs involved.²⁶

Keeping Bookmobiles Alive

Libraries and communities interested in starting up a bookmobile service can start their research with ALA's Office for Literacy and Outreach Services (OLOS). Guidelines from the Association of Bookmobile and Outreach Services (ABOS) are available online at www.abos-outreach.org.

OLOS and ABOS sponsored National Bookmobile Day on April 14, 2010, as part of National Library Week. For more information, call (800) 545-2433, ext. 2140, email olos@ala.org, or visit www.ala.org/bookmobiles.

The issue of transportation is a real problem for many, particularly the elderly, disabled, and homebound. With today's aging population, there will be less mobility for more people than in the past.²⁷ Bookmobiles can allow these individuals more independence as well as a social outlet.

Looking at research and practical applications, it would appear that bookmobiles are still viable entities today—at least in some capacity. The bookmobiles still in use serve many people and often have as high a rate of circulation per patron as do branches.²⁸

A 1997 survey found that users cited convenience as the main reason for using a bookmobile (90 percent of 1,080 responders). And 92 percent of responders mentioned borrowing books for pleasure and relaxation. Many lived less than a mile from a bookmobile stop, but five miles from another library. Many felt the bookmobile improved their lives and that of their children.²⁹

Funding should be allocated to sustain bookmobile services, including costs due to physical space for collections, vehicle and maintenance needs, staffing, and materials, among other pertinent details. Funds should be allocated equally for bookmobiles and branches. The guidelines from the Association of Bookmobile and Outreach Services (ABOS), an affiliate of ALA, include information on training, staffing, collections, marketing, outreach programs, and public service. The guidelines also include another section on the maintenance and construction of bookmobile vehicles to provide for safety, available space, lighting, and comfort of the patrons and staff using the bookmobile.³⁰

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Lights, Camera, Cook!

Tweens Combine Reading, Cooking in Recipe for Success

MARY FELLOWS

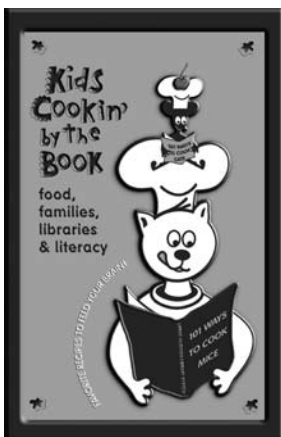


Classy cooks!

“In five, four, three . . .”

The director signals the last two numbers and points at the star as the cameras roll. Chef Gail Sokol, smiling in her maroon chef’s coat, welcomes viewers into the kitchen and the company of her three young friends, each sporting a white apron and a chef’s toque. Sound like a cooking show on Food Network? It’s a cooking show—and a library program.

Feed Your Brain with Chef Gail Sokol is a series of seven half-hour televised cooking shows pairing food from books with young chefs. Upper Hudson Library System (UHLS), which provides services to the twenty-nine public libraries in Albany and Rensselaer Counties in New York, created the show with our partners as part of a grant, Kids Cookin’ by the Book. Here’s our recipe for success.



Checking Our Cupboards

We had all the ingredients for a math, science, technology, and literacy experience targeting fourth and fifth graders when New York State announced the latest Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) grant. Census figures identified a growing number of adolescents in our communities, yet program statistics showed that the target age group was receiving short shrift.

Tweens are no longer young enough to come to storytimes, and usually not yet eligible for teen programs. They are busy with outside activities, developing strong friendships, and aware of what’s considered cool and not cool by their peers. The library is low priority in their busy lives.

As one librarian noted,

We know from our program stats that there is a direct correlation between program attendance and the age level, i.e., the higher the grade the lower the attendance. Families who were frequent users . . . tell me that they are just too busy to come in and they miss it. [Tweens] do come in for recreational reading material, but even then, it is just as apt to be Mom or Dad who comes in to pick it up . . . We actually deal much more with young adults than the upper elementary child.

Our libraries had identified a need for better service to tweens. As school partners were a strong part of the grant, we also looked at statistics and found a significant percentage of students in all nine partner schools needed improvement in the areas of English language arts, math, and science. In New York,



Mary Fellows cooks up ideas as Manager of Youth and Family Services at Upper Hudson Library System in Albany, New York.

a state infamous for “teaching to the test,” we predicted that any ancillary activity reinforcing classroom instruction with activity-based learning would benefit the student.

Last, we had strong resources close at hand. A community college with a strong hospitality program is nearby. A world-class cooking school is a few hours away. Food editors for major magazines live in the area. We have some great restaurants in our small capital city to satisfy the more sophisticated tastes of legislators from downstate. Best of all, we had a partner from previous projects willing to talk with us about the possibility of doing what, when conceived, seemed like a wild impossibility—a multi-segment kids cooking show.

Assembling the Ingredients

We had a number of goals for the Kids Cookin’ by the Book grant project, including:

- making a connection for students between food and basic science and math concepts;
- providing public libraries the means to attract middle grade patrons through yearlong programs;
- providing middle grade students additional incentives to visit their public library through knowledge of resources, increased comfort level in the building, and relationship with library staff; and
- helping students develop a lifelong habit of using the library.

A cooking show supported these goals by providing a rare and appealing opportunity for tweens. We anticipated that the show would involve tweens in getting to know their public librarian, reading books, visiting their library and other libraries, and learning some of the math and science of cooking.

The grant readers apparently also saw it that way, and the two-year grant was funded at \$83,352.

Mise en Place

Now the real work began. To use a culinary term often repeated during the cooking show, our next efforts were toward *mise en place*, the putting in place of all the ingredients and tools.

During the first year of the grant, libraries and their school partners got organized, purchased materials, and held eight programs together. Libraries and schools could use their programming money by choosing from a menu of presenters who had been pre-screened and whose fee had been negotiated, use local or regional expertise, or create their own program.

In the meantime, negotiations about the scope, timing, talent, and logistics of the cooking show were taking place. I had

identified an engaging local chef with television experience who also taught a popular summer kids baking series. She was very interested in being part of our project. In lieu of a portion of her fee, we agreed to include her name in the title of the show.

The next hurdle was the timing of the filming. School break and test schedules, librarian vacations, and the film crew schedule meant that the fall filming we had planned for was moved up to May. Time to scramble!

Our goal was to have the kids read books and then, in the cooking show, make recipes either from the book or relating to the story. Seven segments of the cooking show were planned, so we needed seven books. From earlier experience with a video storytime, I knew that permission was necessary to use the books on the shows. I contacted publishers, and most were fine with our use of the book itself, but we needed permission to show the cover, and the publishers usually didn’t hold the rights to the cover illustrations.

In the end, we received blanket permission from Roaring Brook Press for their titles, and for other titles, we displayed a generically covered book. It wasn’t the visual we were hoping for, but it worked.

Once we chose the books, Chef Gail developed accompanying recipes. The pairings:

- *Ruby Holler* by Sharon Creech: Get-Over-Homework Chocolate Cookies
- *Holes* by Louis Sachar: Giant Fried Onion Flowers
- *Granny Torrelli Makes Soup* by Sharon Creech: Minestrone Soup
- *The Conch Bearer* by Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni: Puris (deep-fried Indian bread)
- *Project Mulberry* by Linda Sue Park: Korean Lettuce Wraps with Beef and Tofu
- *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* by C. S. Lewis: Turkish Delight
- *A Pizza the Size of the Sun* by Jack Prelutsky: Cheesy Vegetable Pizza

Once the recipes were chosen, Chef Gail made a long list of kitchen equipment needed, and we went shopping. Nearly \$800 later, we were well-equipped. We also needed a beautiful, functional kitchen that would accommodate lots of camera equipment. By word-of-mouth, I learned that one of our member library friends Carolyn Fagan, had such a kitchen. She and her family generously agreed to be a part of the project and loan us their kitchen.

Meanwhile, the libraries were working with their partner classes



Chef Gail Sokol at work in the kitchen.

to get the tweens ready. Students were reading the books and talking about them. Teachers and librarians were asked to choose two or three students who weren't likely to be intimidated by a camera and who had a little sparkle to be on the cooking show.

More shopping, this time for food, was in order the evening before filming began. Like Santa Claus, we had a long list, and we checked it at least twice before being satisfied that we had everything.

The students were chosen, the equipment and groceries purchased; we were ready to go!

Let's Get Cooking!

The show was conceived in five parts—an introduction, a shopping segment, a cooking segment, a library segment focusing on the books, and a final tasting/conclusion. We learned that logistics and cost dictate the order of segments filmed, rather than the order in which they will appear in the finished show.

The film crew preferred to film the cooking segment first, so bright and early on the morning of May 8, we arrived at the filming site. The neighbors left their houses to gawk as two big Time Warner trucks pulled up and crew ran cables as thick as an arm into Fagan's house. In the kitchen, Chef Gail and her assistant set up the workspace and began to make the finished products that would be displayed in the final minutes of each segment's filming.

Soon the first of the students arrived, and for the next two days dozens of kids, parents, teachers, and a principal transformed a home into a studio. Excited kids sat in the makeup chair, giggling as pancake makeup was daubed on boys and girls alike. Teachers tied aprons and adjusted hats, while hovering parents snapped pictures and coveted the kitchen. Each young chef donned a neon green *Kids Cookin' by the Book* T-shirt covered by a white apron. Toques with their names on the front completed the look and made them look the part.

In each segment, the young chefs talked and answered questions, measured and stirred, sprinkled and shaped, and last of all, tasted. The tasting provided the most humor, as some of the kids did *not* like their creations. Most notably met with repugnance was the Turkish Delight. A sweet enjoyed in Britain but unfamiliar in the United States, Turkish Delight is a gelatinous, piggybank-pink candy studded with green pistachios. We wanted the kids to be enthusiastic about their creation for the cameras, but this was a hard sell!

Following the wrap-up of the cooking portion, we filmed the library segment in June. We would have liked to film each library segment at the library featured, but the travel and setup costs were too great. So we chose two of our larger libraries, and filmed one day in each, with the groups all coming to the library.

This segment of the show included two booktalks by students—one on the featured book and one on another food-related book. It also included conversation between Chef Gail and the tweens that became the opening and closing of the program, as well as tasting of the recipe prepared by the whole group.

The last segment, the grocery shopping spree, was filmed in August. We spent two days at the nearby Price Chopper grocery store filming seven groups of kids dancing down the grocery store aisles, juggling garlic, reading labels, and discussing the various kinds of onions. As with the other segments, while the logistics made it challenging for the adults, the kids had a blast.

Waiting for the Results

While we were waiting for our cable TV partners to edit the show, we moved from the filming business into the publishing business. With the recipes from the cooking show as the basis, we invited each library in UHLS to host a kids cooking program and then submit the recipes to us for a cookbook. Sixteen libraries participated. In addition to its recipes, each library submitted trivia about itself and a color photo that we included. We sent off the cookbooks to Morris Press, which specializes in printing cookbooks.

The Taste Test

In March, the shows were finished and ready to be aired. They were awesome! The camera work and editing were top notch,

and the finished product showcased our tweens and our project wonderfully. We had one hundred DVD copies of the shows made so that each participant, teacher, school, library, and librarian could have one. Many families wanted extra copies for grandparents and other family members!

Most libraries had a celebratory party—with food, of course!—and some even had a red carpet walk to laud the film stars in their midst. The cookbooks had also arrived and looked terrific. Libraries proudly publicized their accomplishments, and the young chefs got lots of local exposure.

Sweet Success

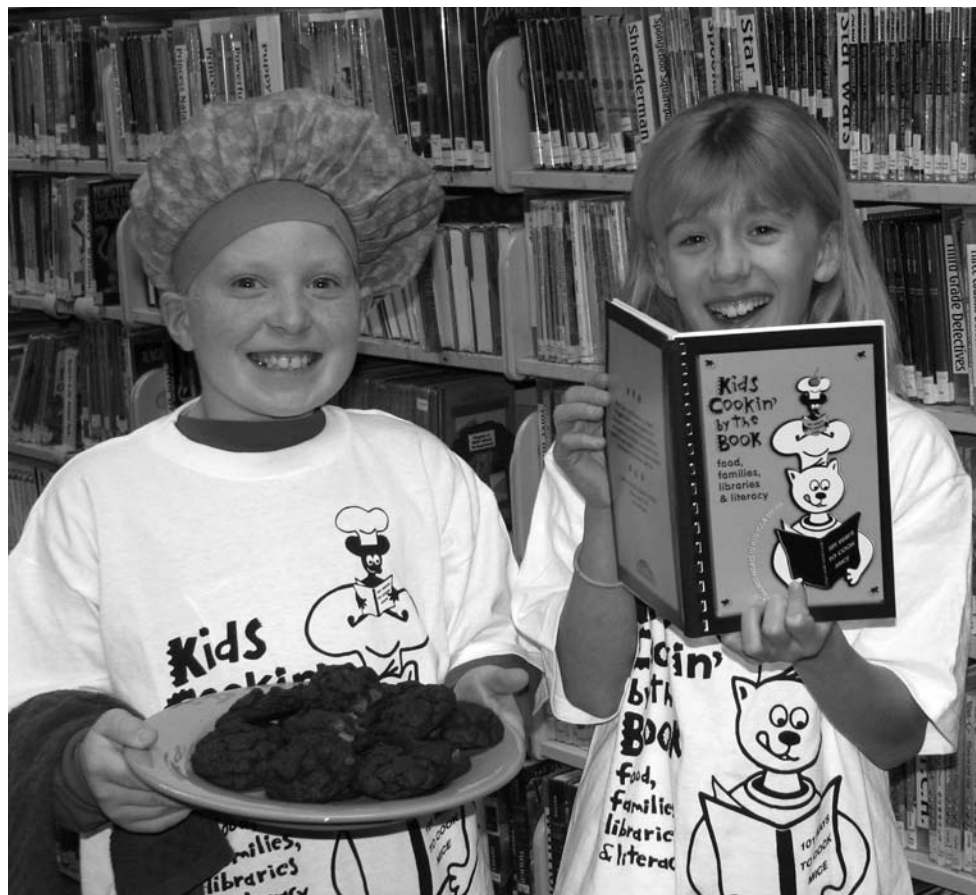
As with any cooking project, proof is in the pudding, or, perhaps in this case, the Turkish Delight! Everyone benefitted from this project.

The tweens involved read some great books, visited their public library and others, met and formed a relationship with the librarian, learned to booktalk, and had the fun of seeing how a TV show is filmed. Their teachers and parents got to be involved in a fun and worthwhile project that engaged and expanded their students.

The libraries developed partners within their communities that enhanced their reputation and reach. Since the conclusion of the grant, some libraries have built even closer relationships with their partners through new projects. One library used the project as a springboard to an intergenerational program by having the kids involved in the project cook an entire dinner for the residents of a senior housing complex. The participating libraries are doing more tween programming than previously, and have cultivated new users through the cooking programs.

The library system formed partnerships that offered benefit to our members beyond the scope of the grant.

An unexpected bonus of leftover money allowed us to negotiate with Time Warner Cable to film five- to seven-minute promotional videos for each of our participating libraries. These air regularly and libraries have used them to boost funding campaigns, informing elected officials, at schools, and as part of orientation for board members.



Food, books . . . who could ask for anything more!



Tasty treats! Korean lettuce wraps with beef and tofu

Kids Cookin' by the Book, and especially the cooking show, was a project that took our libraries in new and exciting directions. It gave tweens a meaningful and fun library experience—and at least a start on their fifteen minutes of fame! ☺

Of Oz, Pooh, and Peter Pan

Collectors Love Children's Book Rarities

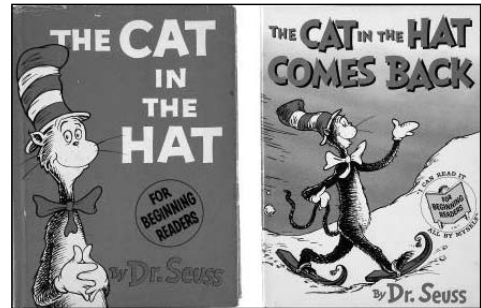
Sharon Verbeten

If you hosted an imaginary literary dinner party, which children's book icons would you invite? Winnie the Pooh? Harry Potter? The Cat in the Hat?

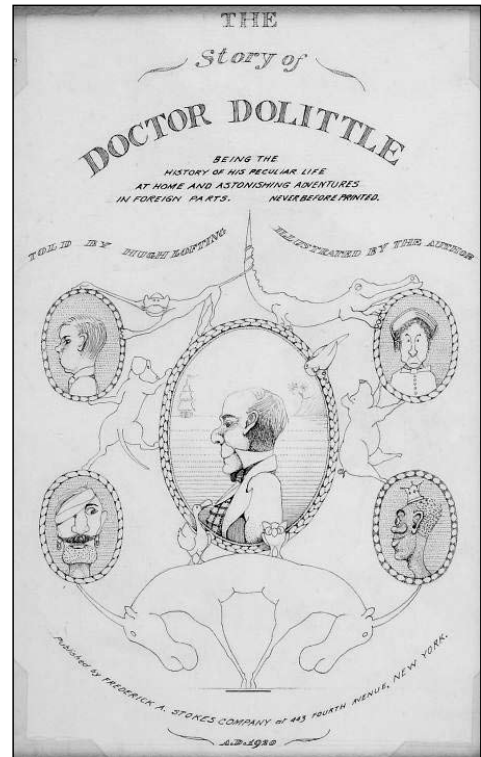
All librarians realize the power of these memorable characters for children. But they may not realize that adult book collectors clamor for rare editions of books by some beloved—historic and contemporary—children's book authors.

Last fall at an auction of rare books at Heritage Auctions in Dallas, some literary favorites scored big bucks. Here's a look at some of the prices realized.

- A set of the four first edition dust-jacketed Winnie the Pooh books, signed by A. A. Milne, topped the sale. The quartet—which included *When We Were Very Young*, *Winnie-the-Pooh*, *Now We Are Six*, and *The House at Pooh Corner*—sold for \$23,900, including 19.5 percent buyer's premium. According to James Gannon, director of Heritage's rare book department, "There are few children's books, if any, more universally beloved than A. A. Milne's classic tale of a 'silly old bear' and his boy, Christopher Robin. To have a complete set of first editions in near fine dust jackets is rare enough, but to have them all signed by Milne himself makes them an irresistible delight for collectors."
- A first edition in wrappers of J. K. Rowling's 1997 *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*, signed by Rowling, brought \$5,975. Advance reading copies of the first three American first editions of Rowling's series (*Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone*; *Chamber of Secrets*; *Prisoner of Azkaban*) brought \$956.
- A 1900 copy of L. Frank Baum's first and best known book in the Oz series, *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*, brought \$5,078.75.
- The most sought-after Arthur Rackham signed limited edition of J. M. Barrie's 1906 illustrated classic *Peter Pan in Kensington Gardens*, number 308 of only 500 limited edition copies signed by Rackham, sold for \$2,868.
- Hugh Lofting's original hand-drawn title page—the one page only!—for *The Adventures of Dr. Dolittle* sold for \$5,377.50.
- Two Dr. Seuss first editions—*The Cat in the Hat* and *The Cat in the Hat Comes Back* brought \$2,868 for the pair.



These two classic, yet scarce, Dr. Seuss first editions brought \$2,868.



One page alone was enough to bring \$5,377.50 for this original Hugh Lofting hand-drawn title page for *The Adventures of Dr. Dolittle*.

Photos courtesy of Heritage Auctions.

Natural Wonders

Implementing Environmental Programming in Libraries

EILEEN G. HARRINGTON AND HAYLEY BEALE



Children explore the “Skulls Tell It All” mystery box with Naturalist Center Staff.

The Naturalist Center is the public library and resource center of the California Academy of Sciences. Visitors come to find out more about the natural world, either on their own or with the help of our staff. This article describes some of the programming offered to help children engage with and increase their appreciation of the natural world, as well as their science literacy. It also describes ways in which these programs could be implemented in public and school libraries.

Environmental programming is crucial to giving children the knowledge and tools they need to work for change and to help them put into practice some of what they are learning. In addition, libraries can help fill the gap in science education that has emerged since the implementation of No Child Left Behind. Many of the environmental problems we face are complex and can appear onerous. With many scattered, small actions, however, we can achieve a more sustainable future.

A giant *Tyrannosaurus rex* greets you as you walk in the door of the California Academy of Sciences, a natural history museum, planetarium, and aquarium all under one living roof. You then make your way to the heights of a rainforest canopy, taking in the sights, sounds, and smells that

surround you. Later, you dive into the depths of a Philippine coral reef filled with brilliantly colored fish and an array of uniquely shaped corals. A safari through Africa, including a peek at some playful penguins, is the next part of your visit. Then, you decide to go even farther afield taking a journey to the stars. After all of this stimulation and excitement you come to a quieter, but no less engaging, spot—the Naturalist Center.

The Naturalist Center is somewhat of an anomaly for most museums. It is a library on the public floor, geared toward naturalists, teachers, and children. Often museum libraries are located in the administrative areas of the museum and can only be accessed by appointment for outside researchers. Their collections tend to include more scholarly or technical publications and archival materials, and they serve researchers, curators, scientists, and college-level students from the institution or elsewhere.

The California Academy of Sciences has just such a library, with a collection that focuses on natural sciences. In addition, however, we have the Naturalist Center, a sort of branch library to our main Academy library and liaison for the general public to it. Our collection focuses on the same areas as the main library,



Eileen G. Harrington (far left) is Naturalist Center Manager and Reference Librarian and **Hayley Beale** (near left) is Naturalist Center Library Assistant at the California Academy of Sciences in San Francisco.



Citizen scientists collect data on the number and types of plants growing on the Academy's Living Roof.

but with a different user focus. In addition, we have expanded our collection on sustainability and green architecture coinciding with the opening of our new LEED Platinum-certified building.

Not only do we have a library of books and media, but we also have a library of natural history specimens, which represent the different research departments at our institution. Many people do not realize that the Academy has scientists on staff doing research, so we act as a liaison between our researchers and the public as well.

The mission of the Naturalist Center is to promote lifelong learning by creating a welcoming environment that offers individualized, in-depth inquiry about the natural world and inspires people to play a role in sustaining life on Earth. We serve as a space where people can go to learn more about an animal they saw in our aquarium or delve deeper into an issue that was briefly presented in one of our exhibits. We can help people identify that unusual bird they saw or a dazzling rock they found. We are also a lending library for Academy members, staff, volunteers, and California teachers.

In addition to traditional library services, the Naturalist Center

offers a variety of programs, many of which seek to engage children, foster their appreciation of and desire to protect the natural world, and increase their scientific literacy. Although a library within a science museum possesses innate qualities and resources to undertake scientific activities, many of these programs could be implemented at public or school libraries as well. Indeed, given the realities of science education in the United States and the many environmental problems the nation faces, the need for science programming becomes even more imperative. Hopefully, the programs described here will inspire other librarians to incorporate activities about the natural world and sustainability at their libraries.

Environmental Programming in a Library?

Before describing our programs, we would like to discuss briefly why librarians might consider incorporating environmental education into library programs. Today we face myriad environmental problems both locally and globally, including global warming, deforestation, desertification, and the pollution of air and waterways. People have turned to environmental education as a means to deal with these many problems, in particular targeting programs at children.

With the evolution of environmental education, however, it became apparent that teaching people about environmental issues was not enough, in most cases, to lead to changes in behavior or to impel people to take action. Often teaching children about the environment led to gloom-and-doom scenarios, leaving children feeling powerless to change anything. Therefore, various authors have stressed that people also need to learn the skills and values necessary to act.¹ Children need to be given opportunities to see how they can work for change and actually have the experience of implementing some of what they are learning. This led to educators stressing the need for a more action-oriented environmental education.² Certain types of library programming, such as our Living Roof Project described below, can adopt this approach to environmental education.

A look at the state of science education in the United States also makes the case for increasing science programming in libraries. With the implementation of the No Child Left Behind program, many elementary schools shifted their focus heavily to reading and math often to the detriment of science education.³ Here in the San Francisco Bay Area, a 2007 study found that “80 percent of K–5th grade multiple-subject teachers who are responsible for teaching science in their classrooms reported spending sixty minutes or less per week on science, with 16 percent of teachers spending no time on science.”⁴

The effects of this lack of time spent on science can be seen in California’s ranking on standardized tests. The 2007 fifth grade California Standards Test showed that only 37 percent of California students scored proficient or above in science.⁵ Libraries can be one venue to help fill this gap in science education. In addition, another study demonstrated that early exposure to science and encouraging an interest in it at a young age led to a higher percentage of students going into a career in science as an adult.⁶ With the many environmental problems the nation faces, we need future scientists to help solve them.

Another reason for science programming in libraries is to combat what the author Richard Louv refers to as “nature-deficit disorder.”⁷ Our children live in an ever-increasing digitized world. Many live in urban environments and might never have swum in a lake or seen a deer in the wild. Even the wildlife that exists in urban environments might go unnoticed by today’s youth.

Louv ties this distancing from nature to many childhood ills, such as obesity and depression. At a more fundamental level, however, one can argue that we cannot protect what we do not know. If we do not instill a sense of wonder and appreciation for the natural world in our children, where does that leave our environment in the future? The programs described next provide one step towards a more sustainable future.

Science Story Adventures

Most libraries have storytimes, and the Naturalist Center is no different. However, in keeping with our mission, our storytimes

are themed around the natural sciences and focus on active learning. Although we initially called the program Story Time, we felt that title did not provide the true flavor of the hands-on activities that the children would get involved in, so we renamed it Science Story Adventures. These Sunday afternoon programs are targeted at younger elementary school-aged children and their families.

Each Science Story Adventure is thematically linked either to an exhibit in the Academy, such as the Rainforest, or to a larger Academy theme, such as evolution or recycling. Taking this theme, we then set some learning outcomes, usually drawn from the California Education Science Content Standards.

Once we have these, we then devise the content of the adventure. We usually have two stories, split by an activity, and finish with a craft. Finding stories to read is particularly challenging, as a book needs to be scientifically accurate and thematically linked as well as being a good read-aloud. We have some suitable books in our collection, but we often find additional books in the San Francisco Public Library collection and sometimes purchase them for future use.

“If we do not instill a sense of wonder and appreciation for the natural world in our children, where does that leave our environment in the future?”

Rather than relying solely on nonfiction, we use a mixture of fiction and nonfiction books. Often introducing a scientific topic can be more fun and easier to understand in the form of a story. Stories can provide a context and characters with which children can relate making the environmental issues or concepts seem more real and pertinent to their lives.

Our activities vary week to week but always include an active element. We have touched sea otter pelts and skulls, played recycling bingo, plotted the solar system on a roll of toilet paper, experimented with water, and looked at germinating seeds through microscopes. Although libraries and schools may not have access to actual specimens, it is relatively easy to find simple science activities through the Internet.

Our crafts are linked to the day’s theme and are usually very simple, as our guests need to take them at the end of their adventure. Some examples include bat paper-bag puppets, recycled holiday ornaments, climbing spiders, and frog finger puppets.

For each Science Story Adventure, we have a handout that is available on the Naturalist Center blog, “The Naturalist Notebook” (www.calacademy.org/academy/exhibits/naturalist_center/nnotebook). In addition to the details of the books, activity, and craft, this also includes the learning outcomes and a list of further resources for those who want to pursue the topic.

These are available as well for librarians who would like to use them or adapt them for their own Science Story Adventures.

Mystery Boxes

Does chocolate really come from that odd-looking fruit? What can an animal skull's teeth tell me about what they ate? What is the difference between hard and soft corals? Each of these questions can be answered by delving into one of our Mystery Boxes.

We have several of these fun-filled activity boxes on tables in the Naturalist Center. Each box is centered on a different theme—such as chocolate, animal skulls, corals, tide pools, butterflies, human evolution, and seeds. In each box are natural history specimens, scientific models, photographs, books, and other objects, as well as cards that contain more information about the items and self-guided activities to do while exploring them.

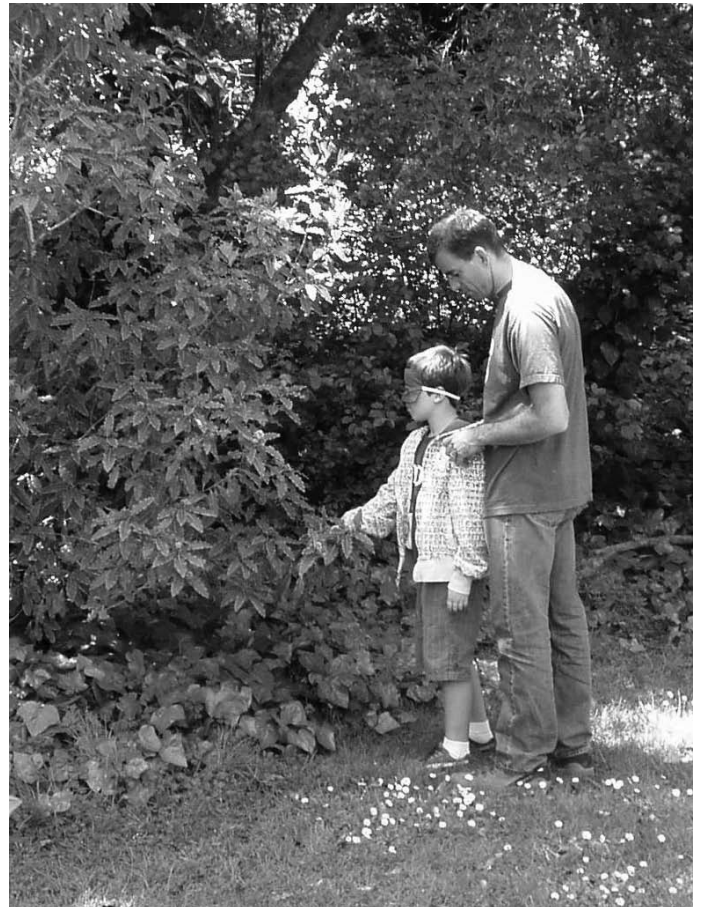
For example, one activity might have you match photos of living corals with their skeletons found in the box, or you might put on a pair of special glasses to see the world like a prey animal does. The boxes are completely self-contained, and visitors can go through them on their own; however, our staff sometimes enriches the experience by going through the box with a child or pointing out something unique about the specimen that he or she might not notice right away.

Creating your own Mystery Boxes in a public or school library would not be difficult. Several online stores sell natural history educational materials and scientific models such as Acorn Naturalists (www.acornnaturalists.com), Carolina Biological Supply (www.carolina.com), and Bone Clones (www.boneclones.com). You might even be able to find some of the contents on your own, such as seeds for a botany box. These simple boxes develop both science and literacy skills in a fun and engaging manner.

Explore Golden Gate Park with Naturalists

The Academy has the good fortune of being situated within Golden Gate Park, so for Earth Day last year and throughout the summer, we developed programs that took us outside of the museum and into the park. We offered two programs, Water Wonders at Stow Lake and Wild Woodlands. Each program lasted three hours with a limit of thirty participants, and anyone seven years or older could attend. Many family groups came, which was a nice way for parents and children to learn together. The programs were interactive and hands-on, not a traditional walk with a guide doing much of the talking.

In Water Wonders at Stow Lake, we explored aquatic ecosystems at a nearby man-made lake. We began with an activity that demonstrated how little fresh water is actually available for human consumption using our participants as human percentages. After this, we divided into two smaller groups. One group learned some birding basics and then did some bird watching



Using senses other than sight to examine a tree during a Wild Woodlands program.

around the lake. San Francisco is actually a birdwatcher's paradise, with nearly four hundred recorded species. The other half of the group did some plankton trawls on the lake and looked more closely under microscopes at some of the smallest organisms of a lake ecosystem.

For Wild Woodlands, we went to an oak woodland area in Golden Gate Park. Oak woodlands were one of the most predominant ecosystems in Northern California, and many of the oaks in this area are some of the oldest ones in San Francisco. We began this program by talking about the importance of oak woodlands in California and the many different layers of a forest. We also explored the importance of trees in preventing soil erosion by playing a game where participants got to be trees and soil particles. We then learned about native versus invasive plants and looked at some examples of both in the park. Finally, we did a series of activities to hone our observation skills and learn more about tree identification and the different parts of a tree.

In both programs, we always ended with a “web of life” activity where all of the participants formed a circle. Each person said one thing he or she learned or liked the best about the program before throwing a ball of yarn (while holding on to a piece of it) to someone else in the group. This continued until everyone had a chance to share, and we had formed a web. We noted that the web represented the importance of all of us in maintain-

ing a balance in the environment. What we had learned would make us stronger in keeping this web together, and if one of us were to drop out or not do our part, the web would be broken.

Programs similar to these could be replicated at parks or nature reserves close to other libraries. Even urban libraries could develop programs that look at how animals and plants adapt to urban environments. Raccoons, crows, and peregrine falcons are just some of the many animals that have quickly learned how to take advantage of the new conditions created in cities.

Partnering with university students, Audubon Society groups or other nature groups can also be a great way to develop workshops like these. Several of the participants in our programs were families that homeschool their children; programs like this can also be a great way to serve this population in your community.

Citizen Science Programs

Citizen science programs involve the general public in collecting data that are used in scientific research. They often allow scientists to carry out experiments that might not otherwise be feasible due to logistical and time constraints. In the Naturalist Center, we act as a liaison for two citizen science projects—the Bay Area Ant Survey and the Bay Area’s Most Wanted Spider. In addition, we oversee a third citizen science project, the Living Roof Project, which will be discussed in more detail in the next section.

The Bay Area Ant Survey and the Bay Area’s Most Wanted Spider both track the spread of invasive species in the Bay Area. The first one was started to survey what species of ants are actually found in the Bay Area, as well as to look at the spread of the invasive Argentine ant. Visitors can pick up an ant collecting kit from the Naturalist Center. They collect ants, fill out a data sheet about them, and send it back to the Academy. Our entomologists then identify the ants and add the names to a database of the distribution and population of all ants in the Bay Area. If visitors want to, they can also bring their ants to us in person, and we can work on identifying them together. Distribution maps of ants collected so far in this project can be seen on our website (www.calacademy.org/science/citizen_science/images/map_ants_all.gif). To date, more than eight hundred citizen scientists have participated in this program.

The Bay Area’s Most Wanted Spider looks at the distribution and spread of the invasive spider *Zoropsis spinimana*. The spider, native to the Mediterranean coastal countries and northern Africa, somehow migrated to Northern California, probably by hiding inside someone’s suitcase or inside shipments. Although harmless to humans, this spider is considered invasive, as it competes with local species. With the help of citizen scientists, we can study how the *Zoropsis* spider population is spreading in the Bay Area. Visitors can pick up a data sheet from the Naturalist Center and either send us photos of spiders or actual specimens for our Academy entomologists to identify. This is a



Some of the natural history specimen collection in the Naturalist Center.

more recent project, so we do not yet have distribution maps, but we hope to soon.

Many citizen science projects exist across the country, and libraries could easily become involved in any number of them at a range of levels. The Cornell Lab of Ornithology has created a website called Citizen Science Central (www.birds.cornell.edu/citscitoolkit). It is a clearinghouse of various citizen science projects, and it also includes a toolkit for designing new projects. You might find a project that your library patrons could hook into, or you may become inspired to start one of your own.

Living Roof Programs

Renzo Piano, the architect who designed our new building, envisioned lifting up a piece of the park and slipping a building underneath it. Out of this grew our Living Roof, which consists of 2½ acres of 1.7 million native plants. Living roofs provide myriad environmental benefits, from decreasing the amount of rainwater runoff to moderating the temperature of the building and thereby decreasing the energy needs for heating and cooling.⁸ They also provide habitat for plants and animals and allow us to have a natural classroom and laboratory. Two programs we deliver are Explore the Living Roof with Naturalists and The Living Roof Project.

We offer Explore the Living Roof with Naturalists as a weekly drop-in program for all ages. On our roof observation deck we talk about the design of our living roof and the benefit of living roofs in general. We then look more closely at the plants and briefly introduce some of the terms botanists use to identify plants. This is followed by a scavenger hunt to find various plants on the roof. We also go over some basic birding techniques, and then visitors can do some bird watching using binoculars they checked out from the Naturalist Center.

Many different bird species visit our roof daily, including Brewer’s blackbirds, dark-eyed juncos, red-tailed hawks, and

Anna's hummingbirds. With some groups we do activities related to honeybees and bee communication. We have four, soon to be five, honeybee hives on our roof, and many bumblebees and other native bees also visit our roof. This program usually lasts about an hour, and visitors appreciate getting the chance to learn about our roof in greater depth.

The Living Roof Project is a citizen science program. The major goals of this program include

- monitoring the plant, bird, and arthropod diversity on the Living Roof over time;
- educating the public about green roofs, native flora and fauna, and the scientific process;
- promoting community involvement in real, hands-on science at the Academy; and
- utilizing the educational/research potential the Living Roof offers.

Visitors who are twelve years old or older can participate in this project. They attend a three-hour workshop where they become acquainted with project procedures and the plants and birds that they will encounter on the roof. As part of this initial workshop, they also go to the roof to collect data on plant, bird, and arthropod diversity. Because this is part of actual Academy research projects, young participants learn about the scientific method and the correct procedures for collecting scientific data, beginning their training as possible future scientists. Once participants are trained, they can come back monthly to assist with further data collection. The data they collect will help us monitor trends on our roof over time and observe how native fauna utilize our roof. To date, we have had fifty-one visitors become Living Roof citizen scientists, and they have identified seventeen arthropod orders, twenty bird species, and thirty-five plant species on our roof.

Most libraries probably do not have a living roof, but it is possible that they have a native plant garden on their grounds. These could be used as classrooms for similar programs as those described above. You could talk about native plants in your area and how patrons could grow them at their own houses. It might also be possible to do studies on what insects, birds, and other animals frequent the gardens.

Concluding Thoughts

The programs we described align with the mission of the California Academy of Sciences—to explore, explain, and protect the natural world. This is a mission we cannot undertake on our own, though, especially given the many environmental problems we face and the current state of science education in our country. Hopefully, this article has planted some seeds for ways to incorporate environmental programs at other libraries. With each of these seeds, eventually, we will harvest the fruits of a more sustainable future. ♻️

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And the Answer Is . . .

One Librarian's Jeopardy Moment

STEVEN ENGELFRIED



Photo courtesy of Jeopardy Productions Inc., used with permission.

The answer is: *A bank robbing puppet and Alexander Calder.*

The question: *What are my favorite moments from my appearance on Jeopardy?*

When I finally got to appear on *Jeopardy*, more than two years after I took the online test, I wanted things to go well for many reasons, including the chance to make some money while showing off my knowledge of useless facts.

But I also knew I was representing children's librarians and didn't want to let the profession down. Librarians usually do well on the show, and at least a couple of notable children's authors—Lois Lowry and Linda Sue Park—have been contestants as well, so I would be in some lofty company.

While I wound up finishing in third place, it was a close game. In *Jeopardy*, you have to come up with quick responses and time your buzzer just right, which means you can wind up looking like you don't know the answers to some easy questions.

The worst case for me was a Harry Potter question. I knew the answer ("What is the sorting hat?"), but one of my opponents rang in faster, possibly ruining my reputation as a children's librarian—one who both loves fantasy and has read the series twice.

Then my puppeteer stature took a hit when I wasn't quick enough to get an easy question about the Muppets. Even my reader's advisory skills may now be questioned, since I didn't fill in the Sue Grafton novel that starts with "I" ("What is *I is for Innocent?*"). I missed the chance to impress my animal loving children by being too slow on a question about "invertebrates," and someone beat me to a "Simpsons" question, disappointing my niece and nephew who had taken me to see the movie.

The fact that I knew that "immunity" was an element of some reality shows may not be something to brag about (yes, I watch *Survivor*). I hoped in vain for a pop music category, which is one of my strengths, but at least there was one question and I got it right—"What is *Something Stupid* by Frank and Nancy Sinatra."

On the other hand, I don't think I would have known the very last answer in Art ("Who is Alexander Calder?") if I hadn't recently read *Sandy's Circus*, the excellent picture book biography by Tanya Lee Stone. And I got my Final Jeopardy question right, though it was far easier than most of them are—everyone knows that the physical force which most often plagued Wile E. Coyote was "gravity."

The most common compliment I got after the show had nothing to do with the questions, though. We're all required to share an amusing anecdote early in the telecast, and I mentioned the time I was walking home after a storytime and was stopped by a plainclothes police officer looking for a bank robber.

I had just finished storytime and was carrying my sack full of puppets, which he was hoping might be loot from the robbery. When he checked, though, all he found was Mr. Bear and some of his puppet friends. *Jeopardy* host Alex Trebek actually cracked up a bit at the story, which doesn't happen often. So although I didn't become a *Jeopardy* champion, I answered a bunch of questions and told a story that made people laugh, and that's good enough for this children's librarian. ☺

Steven Engelfried is a youth librarian and the Raising A Reader Coordinator at the Multnomah County Library in Portland, Ore. His new least favorite song of all time is Weird Al Yankovic's "I Lost on Jeopardy."

The Accidental Manager

Try These Skill Sets for Competent Managing

Jennifer Schultz

What made you decide on a career in children's librarianship? Perhaps you took a course in children's literature or storytelling. Perhaps you realized you were destined for preschool storytimes, science experiments with third graders, and tie-dye crafts with middle schoolers. Or maybe a part-time job at the local public library opened your eyes to the world of youth services librarianship. Any number of things could have led you to this rewarding profession.

From the time I was in high school, I knew I wanted to work with children. I struggled with math and science throughout my entire school career, so any kind of medical, engineering, or computing career was out. Theater and journalism were fun, but I didn't want to pursue them as a profession. However, I knew I had a talent for working with children and families, thanks to myriad babysitting jobs and volunteering at the local children's hospital for four summers, where I had direct contact with children and families. Teaching and social work were my options—or so I thought, until I took a part-time job at the local public library and discovered the world of children's librarianship.

With great reluctance, I endured a management course as part of my MLIS studies (nothing wrong with the professor;

it was just my attitude). Management theories, case studies, disaffected employees? Feh! That's not what I was there for! The courses in storytelling and children's services and literature . . . now that's what I was there for! Learning how to tell folktales, making notecard reviews for ten to fifteen children's books every week, and learning how to manipulate puppets was what I really needed to do. And when I graduated, my days would be filled recommending books to grateful parents and book-hungry children, running fun-filled programs brimming with excited families, and leading toddlers in "Five Little Monkeys Swinging from a Tree."

Reality set in two years after I graduated. Wanting to find a new place of employment, I eventually found myself in my current position, the youth services manager of a three-branch system fifty miles from Washington D.C., in the northern Virginian countryside.

Instead of supervising a single part-time person as I had in my previous job, I was now the supervisor of three part-time employees and in charge of most system-wide programming. Quite a different situation! Having a clear idea of how I did *not* want to manage, I muddled through the first few months, largely helped by a staff who had been there for a number of years.

I didn't have much experience with timesheets, staff scheduling, and dealing with unexpected situations with staffers. If you are a new manager, or think you may be a manager some day, or even if you think you will *never, ever, ever* get into management, here are some tips I've picked up along the way.

1. **Do not go into your new job with a savior complex.** Of course, if you have protesters outside your door, the local

*Jennifer Schultz has been a Youth Services Librarian with the Fauquier County Public Library (Va.) system for three years. She is a member of the **ALSC Managing Children's Services Committee**, which also includes Sarah English (chair), Tina Frolund, Cary Meltzer Frostick, Amy Godfrey, Ginny Gustin, Kathleen Jarombek, Anne Leon, Deanna Romriell, Angelique D. Simmons, and Anitra Steele.*

news media setting up cameras on your lawn, and you're the lucky new hiree for a managerial position, you probably do need to be Superman. However, if you're like 99 percent of all other libraries, your new colleagues have gotten along fine without you for this long. If you barge in with new ideas and changes, your staff will very likely be resistant. Ask them about the community. Ask them about programs that went over like gangbusters and which ones flopped. Poke through old files and manuals—there's sure to be a wealth of information in them.

2. **Be assertive and confident about your choices.** Make your choices clear and immediate. Very often, it's not the actual choices and changes with which people have problems, but it's the attitude and behavior in which they are made.
3. **Try not to take comments about how things used to be done personally, and don't get defensive about your decisions.** This was one of the things

“Give concrete praise, and never forget to thank them for doing a favor or doing something above and beyond what they were asked to do.”

I really had to work on, until I realized that that's just what they were—comments. Once my colleagues got more comfortable with me, the comments ceased (not that there were many of this nature to begin with).

4. **Conversely, don't constantly comment on how things were done at your former branch.** Make enough comments like this, and staff will wish you had stayed at your previous library. On the other hand, don't trash your previous library/community/supervisor/staff/colleagues. No one really cares, and they'll wonder if you'll say the same things about them behind their back.
5. Although there are distinctions between you and your staff members, **look upon you and your staff as a team working toward a shared goal**

of exemplary customer service within reference transactions, readers' advisory, and programming. Ask for your staff's input, and implement it if it works within your library's mission and goals.

When scheduling weekend shifts, ask them if there are any dates for which they would not like to be scheduled (if possible). If a staff member happens to be around during a readers' advisory interview, ask him or her for additional recommendations. Give concrete praise, and never forget to thank them for doing a favor or doing something above and beyond what they were asked to do.

Dealing with performance evaluations, juggling schedule requests, and being the bearer of unfortunate news is not something most of us looked forward to when starting our careers. However, if you have clear ideas of what you do and do not want to do as a manager and treat your staff as you would like to be treated, then your “accidental” career as a manager will be much more pleasant and, *dare I say*, manageable? ☺

Keats Mini Grants Available

Mini grants of \$500 are available through the Ezra Jack Keats (EJK) Foundation.

Dr. Deborah Pope, executive director of the EJK Foundation, said, “Because they use the money creatively, many mini grant winners make the award look like thousands rather than hundreds of dollars.”

This will be the twenty-third annual call for grant proposals by the EJK Foundation, founded by Ezra Jack Keats, author and illustrator of such well-known books as

The Snowy Day and *Whistle for Willie*. The EJK Foundation has awarded more than half a million dollars in grants to public schools and libraries in all fifty of the United States since the program was started in 1987.

The deadline for submission of proposals is September 15, 2010. Proposals are read directly after the September deadline, and announcements will be mailed out in mid-November. Applications are available exclusively online at the foundation's website, www.Ezra-Jack-Keats.org.

Coloring a New World of Librarianship

Participating in the 21 Tools Program

Gretchen Caserotti and Kelley Beeson

We've all heard that there's a new type of librarian on the block, but what's more interesting is the new parent on the block.

Children's librarians work hard to provide essential library service on tight budgets, tight staffing, and tight schedules. Has the definition of what is "essential" changed while we weren't looking? What are essential library services for children and parents in the twenty-first century?

Today's parents are armed with BlackBerrys and iPhones and can instantly upload photos and videos of their kids participating in storytimes. But don't be intimidated by this new parent—be inspired! Before we can meaningfully connect with these new twenty-first century families, children's librarians need to dive into the virtual sandbox . . . and play!

The ALSC Children and Technology (C&T) Committee would like to invite you to engage in *play* as a form of learning and continuing professional development through a new program called 21 Tools for 21st Century KidLibs, June–August, 2010.

This self-directed discovery program is modeled after the 23 Things project created by Helene Blowers in 2006 while at the

Public Library of Charlotte and Mecklenburg County. It has since been implemented at more than five hundred libraries worldwide. Our committee felt it was time to construct an initiative specific to children's librarians that would return us to our roots and remind us that being children's librarians allows us to play, laugh, and explore.

“Our committee felt it was time to construct an initiative specific to children’s librarians that would return us to our roots and remind us that being children’s librarians allows us to play, laugh, and explore.”

Over the course of eight weeks this summer, registrants will engage and connect online using free Web 2.0 tools. It takes about sixty to ninety minutes each week to participate in the program, and you can do it whenever and wherever convenient for you.



Gretchen Caserotti (far left) is the Head of Children's Services at Darien (Conn.) Library. She previously worked as a Children's Librarian at New York Public Library. **Kelley Beeson** (near left) is Youth Services Coordinator for the Allegheny County (Pa.) Library Association. They are members of the **ALSC Children and Technology (C&T) Committee**, which also includes Amber Cregger (chair), Lauren Anduri, Natalie Arthur, Jill Bickford, Jeannie Chen, Patricia Havrin, Allison Kaplan, and Patty Saidenberg.

Interested in joining us in this adventure? Registration is open and available at <http://21things4kidlibs.eventbrite.com>, but space is limited to the first one hundred registrants.

“Think of the box of crayons you got in kindergarten. There were no rules, just tons of colors, blank paper, and the chance to have fun! We hope that you’ll play with us and find your own ways of coloring in a whole new world of librarianship.”

Too busy? Not enough time? The emergence of electronic tools empowers us to solve problems on our own. Many of these tools have leveled the playing

field. You don’t need to have a degree in computer science to contribute to your library’s Web presence. Free tools like Blogger, Facebook, Google, and PBworks have made getting the spirit of your department online easy.

With libraries facing budget cuts all around the country, learning how to engage in these online communities is a free way of supporting your professional development. Can’t make it to a conference? Talk with attendees on Twitter and share in all of their discoveries for free.

The 21 Things Program is about connecting with other librarians, but more importantly connecting with our communities. No matter the size, population, building, collection, hours, or degrees, we all are in the business of helping people make connections. The C&T Committee is passionate about these new digital tools that bring people closer to others and the information they need in easier, faster, and more meaningful ways.

The kind of exploration that 21 Things for 21st Century KidLibs encourages and

allows us to realize is that *play* is one of the best ways to learn.

Think of the box of crayons you got in kindergarten. There were no rules, just tons of colors, blank paper, and the chance to have fun! We hope that you’ll play with us and find your own ways of coloring in a whole new world of librarianship. ☺

For More Information

If you have questions about this exciting opportunity, the C&T Committee will host a KidLibs 2.0 hands-on workshop and demonstrate the program at ALA’s Annual Conference in Washington, D.C. This workshop will be held Saturday, June 26, from 1 to 3 p.m. in the Membership Pavilion on the exhibits floor. Take a break from the hustle and bustle of the exhibits and explore the 2.0 world with us.

Asian/Pacific American Awards Selected

The Asian/Pacific American Librarians Association (APALA), an affiliate of the American Library Association, has selected the winners of the 2010 Asian/Pacific American Awards for Literature. The awards promote Asian/Pacific American culture and heritage and are awarded based on literary and artistic merit. Here are the winners of the 2010 awards for children’s literature.

Picture Book

Cora Cooks Pancit by Dorina K. Lazo Gilmore and illustrated by Kristi Valiant, published by Shen’s Books.

Honor book: *Tan to Tamarind: Poems about the Color Brown* by Malathi Michelle Iyengar and illustrated by Jamel Akib, published by Children’s Book Press.

Youth Literature

Everything Asian by Sung J. Woo, published by Thomas Dunne Books.

Honor book: *Tofu Quilt* by Ching Yeung Russell, published by Lee & Low.

Winner and honor books were chosen from titles by or about Asian Pacific Americans published in 2009. APALA was founded in 1980 by librarians of diverse Asian/Pacific ancestries committed to working together toward a common goal: to create an organization that would address the needs of Asian/Pacific American librarians and those who serve Asian/Pacific American communities.

Simmering Joins ALSC Staff

Kirby Simmering joined the ALSC staff in November as Deputy Executive Director. He comes to ALSC and ALA with a broad range of association experience and most recently served as director of education at the Chicagoland Apartment Association, where he developed and implemented classroom and Web-based training and certification programs. Additionally, Kirby has served as association manager for the National Association of Healthcare Access Management and was responsible for the day-to-day operations including meetings, exhibits, educational and certification programs, membership, and financial management. Kirby holds a BS in Business Management and Administration from Bradley University in Peoria, Illinois.

At ALSC, Kirby will be responsible for the day-to-day management of the division in addition to expanding, developing, and implementing a portfolio of continuing education programs. His oversight responsibilities include membership, communications, publications, and ongoing implementation of the ALSC strategic plan.

Board Major Actions

The following actions were recently taken by the ALSC Board of Directors.

Electronic Actions

VOTED, to approve O&B's motion on the language to appear on the 2010 ALSC

ballot, changing the wording in Bylaws Article II. Object from "library service to children from preschool through" to "library service to children from birth through . . ." (January 2010)

VOTED, to approve O&B's motion on the language to appear on the 2010 ALSC ballot, changing the wording in Bylaws Article II. Object from "through the eighth grade of junior high school age" to "through and including age 13" (January 2010)

VOTED, to direct the Organization and Bylaws Committee to craft a proposed bylaw change to state that no individual may serve on the Batchelder Award, Caldecott Award, Geisel Award, Newbery Award, Sibert Award, Wilder Award, or Notable Children's Books Committees more often than once every four years. The four year period shall begin from the last year of the term of service regardless of length of term. This guideline will not apply to the selection of nominees for Chair. This guideline will not apply to ALSC's other joint award committees. *(The language O&B created was not discussed and voted on in time to appear on the 2010 spring ballot for membership vote, and action upon O&B's motion will take place at the 2010 Annual Conference.)* (January 2010)

Midwinter Meeting 2010 Actions

VOTED, to approve the recommendation of the Scope of Attention Task Force to change the word "preschool" to the word "birth" in Bylaws Article II. Object.

VOTED, to approve the recommendation

of the Scope of Attention Task Force to change the words "the eighth grade of junior high school age" to the words "through and including age 13" in Bylaws Article II. Object.

VOTED, that no individual may serve on the Wilder Award Selection, Geisel Award Selection, and Batchelder Award Selection Committees more than once every four years.

VOTED, to accept the budget as proposed by the Budget Committee.

VOTED, to accept the Budget Committee's recommendation to create a task force to look into the restructuring of the Newbery Caldecott Banquet fee schedule.

VOTED, to approve the consent agenda.

VOTED, to support "21 Things for the 21st Century KidLibs" with funds from the Library Services Endowment in the amount of \$620.

VOTED, to award an annual ALSC Spectrum Scholarship from the Melcher Endowment.

2010 ALSC Institute

Join ALSC in Atlanta September 23–25, 2010 for our biennial National Institute. The Institute is devoted solely to children's and youth library services—you will go home with new ideas and proven solutions for tackling the issues that directly affect you and your children's and youth services' departments. This event will leave you feeling reinvigorated

about the profession and more connected to others in the field.

Why should I attend?

- With just 225 attendees, the Institute offers an intimate setting to participate in programming and brainstorm in small breakout groups;
- more than thirty-five hours of educational programming will be offered; and
- numerous networking opportunities will provide time to meet and share ideas with colleagues from across the country.

What Educational Opportunities Will xBe Available?

- Three specific tracks of programming will be offered including: The Technology Factor; Children's Literature—You Have to Read This; and Programming and Partnerships Make the World Go Round.
- A few specific program titles include Transforming Gamers into Readers, Digital Natives: How Technology Affects Their Learning, Diversity in Children's Literature, Collection Development, Storytelling: Alive and Well, and All for One: Community Partnerships.
- Multiple keynote addresses, three extended workshops, book signings, author receptions, and museum tours will also be featured.
- Award-winning authors and illustrators scheduled to speak include Ashley Bryan, Carmen Deedy, John McCutcheon, Brian Selznick, Walter Dean Myers, and Christopher Myers.

This star-studded event is sure to dazzle and inspire! The Emory Conference Center in Atlanta, Georgia, on the campus of Emory University, will host the Institute. Specifics regarding registration and programs are at: www.ala.org/alscevents.

Questions? Contact Kirby Simmering at ksimmering@ala.org or (312) 280-2164.

Bush Honored with DSA

Margaret (Maggie) Bush is the 2010 recipient of the Distinguished Service Award. This prestigious award honors an individual who has made significant contributions to library service to children and ALSC.

Beginning as a children's librarian at the New York Public Library, Bush has devoted almost fifty years to the provision of high-quality library services to young people. As a public librarian, library education professor, and advocate for children's library services, Bush has designed and implemented standards of service for libraries on many levels. As professor emeritus at Simmons College Graduate School of Library and Information Science, a position which she still holds, she has inspired generations of library school students and provided consistent advocacy for libraries and the needs of young people.

Bush worked with children at the New York Public Library for seven years before becoming the head of the Children's Department at the Oak Park Public Library in Illinois. Following her time at Oak Park, she held a variety of positions including children's literature specialist, curriculum librarian and instructor at the National College of Education in Evanston, Illinois, assistant professor at Simmons College GSLIS, bibliographer and reference librarian for the Children's Literature Center at the Library of Congress, and network consultant for the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped at the Library of Congress.

For more than forty years, Bush has reviewed books for multiple journals, including the *Horn Book* and *School Library Journal*. Her service in ALA includes four years on ALA Council and numerous ALSC positions such as president, priority group consultant, and committee member. Her ALSC committee service spans across the organization and includes the prestigious Newbery, Caldecott, and Wilder award committees, among others. She is an active member of the Massachusetts Library Association, and was honored by being entered into the Massachusetts Library

Association Hall of Fame in 1998; she has also received leadership awards from the Illinois Library Association and Boston's Foundation for Children's Books. Bush was also on the board of directors for The League for the Advancement of New England Storytelling.

When Bush retired from Simmons College this year, a youth service scholarship was established in her name. This is the first time that Simmons College has had a scholarship to support youth services, a field that has grown at Simmons tremendously thanks to the help of Bush. Donations for the scholarship are always welcome; checks can be made out to "Simmons College" with "Margaret Bush Scholarship" as the memo. Please send to: Graduate School of Library and Information Science, Simmons College, 300 The Fenway, Boston, MA 02115.

The 2010 Distinguished Service Award Committee includes: Cynthia K. Richey, Mt. Lebanon (Pa.) Public Library; Joan L. Atkinson, University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa; Theresa (Terry) M. Borzumato-Greenberg, Holiday House, N.Y.; Peggy Sullivan, library consultant, Chicago; Roger Sutton, Horn Book, Charlestown, Mass.

2010 Award Winners

In addition to the Distinguished Service Award, ALSC confers numerous other grants and awards each year. We are pleased to announce our 2010 recipients!

Bookapalooza Award: Sara Phang, Foundation School of Montgomery (Md.) County; Odette Batis, Richmond (Calif.) Public Library; Ruth Paget, Monterey (Calif.) County Free Libraries

ALSC/BWI Summer Reading Program Grant: Faith Brautigam, Gail Borden Public Library, Elgin, Illinois

Bechtel Fellowship: Christina H. Dorr, Ridgewood Elementary School, Hillard, Ohio

Maureen Hayes Author/Illustrator Award: Mary Elizabeth Land, Abbeville County (S.C.) Library System

Light the Way: Library Outreach to the Underserved Grant: Shawna Thorup, Fayetteville (Ariz.) Public Library

Penguin Young Readers Group Award: Elizabeth Dalton, San Antonio (Texas) Public Library; Marisa Galviano, Westerville (Ohio) Public Library; Kathleen Houlihan, Austin (Texas) Public Library; Susan Ridgeway, Streetsboro (Ohio) City Schools

For more information on the winners and how to apply for 2011 awards, please visit: www.ala.org/alsc, click on Awards & Grants—ALSC Professional Awards.

Summer Online Ed

Join ALSC this summer for one of our four exciting online education courses beginning July 19. Lasting four to six weeks, depending on the course, these classes are a great way to learn something new or brush up on an old skill without having to travel or adjust your summer schedule.

Courses include: Introduction to Graphic Novels for Children, taught by Janet Weber; Out of This World Programming, taught by Angela Young; Children with Disabilities in the Library, taught by Katherine Todd; and Reading Instruction and Children's Books, taught by Katherine Todd.

Registration opens June 1 and course space is limited; please register early to reserve your spot. Courses are taught asynchronously using Moodle, an online learning community. A certificate of completion will be sent to participants upon successful completion of the course. Detailed descriptions and registration information are available at www.ala.org/alsced. Questions? Contact Kirby Simmering at ksimmering@ala.org or (312) 280-2164.

Stead, Pinkney Win Newbery, Caldecott

Rebecca Stead, author of *When You Reach Me* (Wendy Lamb Books/Random House Children's Books), and Jerry

Pinkney, illustrator of *The Lion and the Mouse* (Little, Brown), are the 2010 winners of the John Newbery and Randolph Caldecott Medals, respectively.

In *When You Reach Me*, twelve-year-old Miranda encounters shifting friendships, a sudden punch, a strange homeless man, and mysterious notes that hint at knowledge of the future. These and other seemingly random events converge in a brilliantly constructed plot.

The screech of an owl, the squeak of a mouse, and the roar of a lion transport readers to the Serengeti plains in *The Lion and the Mouse*, a virtually wordless retelling of Aesop's classic fable. In glowing colors, Pinkney's textured watercolor illustrations masterfully portray the relationship between two very unlikely friends.

Four Newbery Honor Books were named: *Claudette Colvin: Twice Toward Justice* (Melanie Kroupa Books/Farrar/Macmillan) by Phillip Hoose; *The Evolution of Calpurnia Tate* (Holt) by Jacqueline Kelly; *Where the Mountain Meets the Moon* (Little, Brown) by Grace Lin; and *The Mostly True Adventures of Homer P. Figg* (Blue Sky/Scholastic) by Rodman Philbrick.

Two Caldecott Honor Books were named: *All the World* (Beach Lane Books), illustrated by Marla Frazee, written by Liz Garton Scanlon and *Red Sings from Treetops: A Year in Colors* (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt), illustrated by Pamela Zagarenski, written by Joyce Sidman.

Members of the 2010 Newbery Committee are: Chair Katie O'Dell, Multnomah County (Ore.) Library; Joel Bangilan, San Antonio Public Library; Meaghan M. Battle, Berkley, Mich.; Nancy Baumann, Albany County School District, Laramie, Wyo.; Francesca Burgess, Brooklyn (N.Y.) Public Library; Steven Engelfried, Multnomah County (Ore.) Library; Lori Faust, Warren-Trumbull County (Ohio) Public Library; Diane Foote, Chicago; Elva Garza, Southeast Austin (Tex.) Community Branch Library; Maria E. Gentle, Arlington (Va.) Public Library; Linnea Hendrickson, Bandelier Elementary School, Albuquerque, N.M.; Holly Jin, Skokie (Ill.) Public Library;

Alison O'Reilly, Austin (Tex.) Public Library; Maria Salvadore, Washington, D.C.; and Deborah Stevenson, Center for Children's Books, Champaign, Ill.

Members of the 2010 Caldecott Committee are: Chair Rita Auerbach, New York; Zahra M. Baird, Cineaste/Librarian, White Plains, N.Y.; Christy B. Estrovitz, San Francisco Public Library; Christi Showman Farrar, Woburn (Mass.) Public Library; Suzanne Harold, Multnomah County (Ore.) Library; Merri Lindgren, Cooperative Children's Book Center, University of Wisconsin-Madison; Gene Nelson, Provo (Utah) City Library; Julie Ranelli, Queen Anne's County (Md.) Free Library; Julie Roach, Cambridge (Mass.) Public Library; Brandy Sanchez, Daniel Boone Regional Library, Columbia, Mo.; John P. Scott, Friends School of Baltimore; Henrietta M. Smith, SLIS-University of South Florida, Tampa; Joanna Ward, County of Los Angeles Public Library; Jan S. Watkins, Skokie (Ill.) Public Library; and Lucinda Whitehurst, St. Christopher's School, Richmond, Va.

Batchelder Goes to Delacorte Press

Delacorte Press, an imprint of Random House Children's Books, is the winner of the 2010 Mildred L. Batchelder Award for the most outstanding children's book originally published in a language other than English in a country other than the United States, and subsequently translated into English for publication in the United States for *A Faraway Island*.

Originally published in Swedish in 1996 as *En ö i havet*, *A Faraway Island* was written by Annika Thor and translated by Linda Schenck. The book tells the story of two Jewish sisters from Vienna, Austria, twelve-year-old Stephanie and her younger sister Nellie, who are sent by their parents to Sweden to escape the Nazis. Nellie adapts easily, but Stephanie faces painful challenges. This engaging novel explores the importance of family, friendship, and personal growth.

Three Batchelder Honor Books also were selected: *Eidi* (Farrar), originally

published in Danish as *Eidi: Børnene i Kragevig 2*, written by Bodil Bredsdorff, and translated by Kathryn Mahaffy; *Big Wolf and Little Wolf* (Enchanted Lion Books), originally published in French as *Grand Loup et Petit Loup*, written by Nadine Brun-Cosme, illustrated by Olivier Tallec, and translated by Claudia Bedrick; and *Moribito II: Guardian of the Darkness* (Arthur A. Levine Books/Scholastic), originally published in Japanese as *Yami no Moribito*, written by Nahoko Uehashi, illustrated by Yuko Shimizu, and translated by Cathy Hirano.

Members of the 2010 Batchelder Committee are: Chair Annette Goldsmith, Florida State University College of Information, Tallahassee; Catharine Bomhold, University of Southern Mississippi, Hattiesburg; Rosemary Chance, Sam Houston State University, Huntsville, Texas; Gwen Taylor, Lewis-Clark State College, Lewiston, Idaho; and Natalie Ziarnik, Ela Area Public Library, Lake Zurich, Ill.

López and Alvarez Win Belpré

Rafael López, illustrator of *Book Fiesta: Celebrate Children's Day/Book Day; Celebramos El día de los niños/El día de los libros* (Rayo/HarperCollins), and Julia Alvarez, author of *Return to Sender* (Knopf) are the 2010 winners of the Pura Belpré Illustrator Award and Author Award, respectively.

In *Book Fiesta: Celebrate Children's Day/Book Day; Celebramos El día de los niños/El día de los libros*, written by Pat Mora, Rafael López utilizes vibrant colors and applies magical realism to show that the love of reading is universal. Through a series of fanciful images, the author depicts Latino children inviting children of other cultures into their book fiesta, leading the reader on a visual journey that shows that reading sparks the imagination across all cultures and has the power to unite us.

Julia Alvarez explores the thin line that separates American citizens and undocumented persons in her brilliantly told novel, *Return to Sender*. After Tyler's father is unable to maintain the family farm,

he hires undocumented workers, resulting in an interdependent relationship that mirrors current social and political conditions in the United States. Alvarez humanizes a situation by giving a voice to millions of immigrants experiencing similar hardships. This outstanding novel about the solidarity between two children of different cultures will resonate in the hearts of readers of any age.

Three Honor Books for illustration were named: *Diego: Bigger Than Life* (Cavendish), illustrated by David Diaz, written by Carmen T. Bernier-Grand; *My Abuelita* (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt), illustrated by Yuyi Morales, written by Tony Johnston; and *Gracias Thanks* (Lee and Low), illustrated by John Parra, written by Pat Mora.

Two Honor Books for narration were named: *Diego: Bigger Than Life* (Cavendish), written by Carmen T. Bernier-Grand, illustrated by David Diaz; and *Federico García Lorca* (Lectorum), written by Georgina Lázaro, illustrated by Enrique S. Moreiro.

Members of the 2010 Belpré Committee are: Chair Lucía González, In Other Words, LLC, North Miami Beach, Fla.; Rebecca Hickman, Alvin Sherman Library at Nova Southeastern University, Fort Lauderdale, Fla.; Judi Moreillon, Texas Woman's University, Denton; Freda Mosquera, Broward County (Fla.) Library; Patricia Montiel Overall, The University of Arizona, Tucson; Maggie Sepulveda, Houston Public Library; and Roberto Zapata, San Antonio Public Library.

Carnegie Honors Weston Woods

Paul R. Gagne and Mo Willems of Weston Woods, producers of *Don't Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus!* are the 2010 recipients of the Andrew Carnegie Medal for excellence in children's video. The video is an animated delight, as Pigeon tries to cajole his way into achieving his long held dream of driving a bus.

Pigeon wants desperately to be behind the wheel of a bus, but when a bus driver leaves one unattended, he asks the children to make sure that the pigeon doesn't drive the bus. The pint-size watch guards

chorus emphatic "NOs" when Pigeon begs for his big chance. Thwarted at every turn, Pigeon decides that a bus is not the only vehicle he sees himself operating. Narrated by Mo Willems with the help of Jon Scieszka, this video will tickle the tail feathers of anyone who watches it.

Members of the 2010 Carnegie Committee are: Chair Joan Kindig, James Madison University, Charlottesville, Va.; Winnie Awarski, Cuyahoga County Public Library-Warrensville Heights (Ohio) Branch; Amanda L. S. Murphy, Warren-Trumbull County (Ohio) Public Library; Martha Perry, Princeton (N.J.) Public Library; Lisa Schwandner, Cuyahoga County Public Library-North Royalton (Ohio) Branch; Jennifer M. Smith, Suffern (N.Y.) Free Library; Rose Sonnier, Houston Public Library System; Madeline Walton-Hadlock, San Jose (Calif.) Public Library-Alum Rock Branch; and Steve Zampino, The Ferguson Library, Stamford, Connecticut.

Geisel Goes to Hayes

Author and illustrator Geoffrey Hayes is the 2010 recipient of the Theodor Seuss Geisel Award for *Benny and Penny in the Big No-No!* (TOON BOOKS/RAW Junior).

Benny and Penny in the Big No-No! is a perfect example of a graphic novel designed just for young readers. Siblings Benny and Penny encounter trouble when curiosity about a mysterious neighbor leads them into unexpected adventures. The characters' emotions are revealed in the rich artwork within each panel. Children will connect with the realistic dialogue and page-turning appeal of the story. They will be thrilled to enter the world of graphic novels.

Four Geisel Honor Books were named: *I Spy Fly Guy!* (Scholastic), written and illustrated by Tedd Arnold; *Little Mouse Gets Ready* (TOON BOOKS/RAW Junior), written and illustrated by Jeff Smith; *Mouse and Mole: Fine Feathered Friends* (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt), written and illustrated by Wong Herbert Yee; and *Pearl and Wagner: One Funny Day* (Dial), written by Kate McMullan, illustrated by R. W. Alley.

The members of the 2010 Geisel Committee are: Chair Susan Veltfort, King County (Wash.) Library System; Roxane Bartelt, Kenosha (Wis.) Public Library; Jennifer Duffy, King County (Wash.) Library System-Kingsgate Library; Sarah Hagge, Park Ridge (Ill.) Public Library; Gaye Hinchliff, King County Library System-Foster (Wash.) Library; Debra Marshall, Wilson Elementary, Coppell, Tex.; and Deborah Wright, Newport News (Va.) Public Library System-Grissom Branch.

Live Oak Media Wins Odyssey

Live Oak Media, producer of the audiobook, *Louise, the Adventures of a Chicken*, written by Kate DiCamillo, narrated by Barbara Rosenblat, won the third annual Odyssey Award for Excellence in Audiobook Production.

Louise, a French chicken with wanderlust, finds adventure in Kate DiCamillo's comical picture book. Whimsical sound effects, playful background music and Barbara Rosenblat's impressive repertoire of voices combine in this tour-de-force listening experience.

Three Honor Audiobooks were chosen: *In the Belly of the Bloodhound: Being an Account of a Particularly Peculiar Adventure in the Life of Jacky Faber*, produced by Listen and Live Audio, Inc., written by L.A. Meyer, and narrated by Katherine Kellgren; *Peace, Locomotion*, produced by Brilliance Audio, written by Jacqueline Woodson, and narrated by Dion Graham; *We Are the Ship: The Story of Negro League Baseball*, produced by Brilliance Audio, written by Kadir Nelson, and narrated by Dion Graham.

Members of the 2010 Odyssey Committee are: Chair Sharon Grover, Hedberg Public Library, Janesville, Wis.; Necia Blundy, Marlborough (Mass.) Public Library; Lee Catalano, Multnomah County (Ore.) Library; Diane Marie Colson, Alachua County (Fla.) Library District; Shari Melisa Fesko, Southfield (Mich.) Public Library-David Stewart Memorial Library; Lizette (Liz) Hannegan, Easton, Md.; Chrystal Carr Jeter, Cleveland

Public Library; Sarah M. McCarville, Grand Rapids (Mich.) Public Library; Denise Schmidt, San Francisco Public Library; and *Booklist* consultant Sue-ellen Beauregard, Chicago.

Stone Selected for Sibert

Tanya Lee Stone, author of *Almost Astronauts: 13 Women Who Dared to Dream* (Candlewick), was named the winner of the 2010 Robert F. Sibert Medal for the most distinguished informational book for children published in 2009.

Women in space—not a big deal now, but it took more than twenty years for NASA to recognize that women have the “Right Stuff.” *Almost Astronauts* tells the story of the women aviators and aspiring astronauts known as the “Mercury 13,” who in the early 1960s repeatedly proved themselves capable but could not overcome prevailing prejudices. Meticulously researched and handsomely illustrated with archival materials, Stone's insightful, passionately written chronicle is sure to inspire.

Three Sibert Honor Books were named: *The Day-Glo Brothers: The True Story of Bob and Joe Switzer's Bright Ideas and Brand-New Colors* (Charlesbridge), written by Chris Barton, illustrated by Tony Persiani; *Moonshot: The Flight of Apollo 11* (Richard Jackson/Atheneum), written and illustrated by Brian Floca; and *Claudette Colvin: Twice Toward Justice* (Melanie Kroupa Books/Farrar/Macmillan), written by Phillip Hoose.

Members of the 2010 Sibert Committee are: Chair Vicky Smith, Kirkus Reviews, South Portland, Maine; Toni Bernardi, San Francisco Public Library; Rebecca (Becki) Bishop, Campbell Court Elementary, Bassett, Virginia; Jane Claes, University of Houston Clear Lake; Kathryn Fredrickson, Rolling Meadows (Ill.) Library; Sharon L. Ledford, Fayette County (Ky.) Schools; Kristy Raffensberger, New York Public Library; Edward T. Sullivan, Rogue Librarian, Oak Ridge, Tenn.; and Denise Vallandingham, Boone County (Ky.) Public Library.

Lowry to Deliver 2011 Arbuthnot

Lois Lowry, two-time winner of the Newbery Medal, will deliver the 2011 May Hill Arbuthnot Honor lecture. The internationally acclaimed author's career spans more than thirty years, and she has reached audiences from preschool to young adult.

“We are thrilled to honor Lois Lowry, who has made a brilliant and lasting contribution to the field of children's literature and who is a dynamic and vital member of the children's book community,” stated Arbuthnot Chair Carol Edwards. Whether writing picture books, historical fiction, autobiography, or fantasy, Lowry explores human connections with wit and grace. She is a master at creating evocative scenes and settings that draw readers into the everyday lives of her flesh-and-blood characters.

Members of the Arbuthnot Honor Lecture Committee are: Chair Carol Edwards, Denver Public Library; Dean Schneider, Ensworth School, Nashville, Tenn.; Luann Toth, *School Library Journal*, New York; Sylvia M. Vardell, Texas Woman's University, Denton; and Caroline Ward, The Ferguson Library, Stamford, Conn.

2010 Notable Children's Books

Younger Readers

Arnold, Tedd. *I Spy Fly Guy!* Illus. by the author. Scholastic.

Brown, Peter. *The Curious Garden*. Illus. by the author. Little, Brown.

Brun-Cosme, Nadine. *Big Wolf and Little Wolf*. Illus. by Olivier Tallec; trans. by Claudia Bedrick. Enchanted Lion.

Cousins, Lucy. *Yummy: Eight Favorite Fairy Tales*. Illus. by the author. Candlewick.

Crum, Shutta. *Thunder Boomer*. Illus. by Carol Thompson. Clarion.

Gerstein, Mordicai. *A Book*. Illus. by the author. Roaring Brook.

Hayes, Geoffrey. *Benny and Penny in the Big No-No!* Illus. by the author. TOON.

Henkes, Kevin. *Birds*. Illus. by Laura Dronzek. Greenwillow.

Johnston, Tony. *My Abuelita*. Illus. by Yuyi Morales. Harcourt.

McMullan, Kate. *Pearl and Wagner: One Funny Day*. Illus. by R. W. Alley. Dial.

Meschenmoser, Sebastian. *Waiting for Winter*. Illus. by the author. Kane Miller.

Mora, Pat. *Book Fiesta!: Celebrate Children's Day/Book Day; Celebremos El día de los niños / El día de los libros*. Illus. by Rafael López. Rayo.

Mora, Pat. *Gracias / Thanks*. Illus. by John Parra. Lee and Low.

Mortenson, Greg and Susan L. Roth. *Listen to the Wind: The Story of Dr. Greg and Three Cups of Tea*. Collages by Susan L. Roth. Dial.

Newbery, Linda. *Posy*. Illus. by Catherine Rayner. Atheneum.

Newman, Lesléa. *Mommy, Mama and Me*. Illus. by Carol Thompson. Tricycle.

Patricelli, Leslie. *Higher! Higher!* Illus. by the author. Candlewick.

Scanolon, Liz Garton. *All the World*. Illus. by Marla Frazee. Beach Lane.

Sidman, Joyce. *Red Sings from Treetops: A Year in Colors*. Illus. by Pamela Zagarenski. Houghton.

Smith, Jeff. *Little Mouse Gets Ready*. Illus. by the author. TOON.

Yee, Wong Herbert. *Mouse and Mole: Fine Feathered Friends*. Illus. by the author. Houghton.

Middle Readers

Barton, Chris. *The Day-Glo Brothers: The True Story of Bob and Joe Switzer's Bright Ideas and Brand-New Colors*. Illus. by Tony Persiani. Charlesbridge.

Bernier-Grand, Carmen T. *Diego: Bigger Than Life*. Illus. by David Diaz. Marshall Cavendish.

2010 Notable Children's Recordings

The Alvin Ho Collection: Books 1 & 2. Listening Library.

Chasing Lincoln's Killer. Scholastic.

The Chicken Chasing Queen of Lamar County. Recorded Books.

The Chosen One. Macmillan Audio.

Diamond Willow. Recorded Books.

A Dog on His Own. Full Cast Audio.

Don't Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus. Weston Woods .

Emperors of the Ice: A True Story of Disaster and Survival in the Antarctic, 1910–13. Brilliance Audio.

European Playground. Putumayo Kids .

Field Trip. Monkey Mama.

Heart of a Shepherd. Listening Library.

Henry's Freedom Box: A True Story from the Underground Railroad. Weston Woods.

The Jesus Storybook Bible. Zonderkids.

Knuffle Bunny Two: A Case of Mistaken Identity. Weston Woods.

Leviathan. Simon and Schuster Audio.

Louise, The Adventures of a Chicken. Live Oak Media.

Mañana Iguana. Live Oak Media.

Music for Abraham Lincoln: Campaign Songs, Civil War Tunes, Laments for a President. Enslow Publishers.

Nelson Mandela's Favorite African Folktales. Hachette Audio.

Peace, Locomotion. Brilliance Audio.

Picnic Playground. Putumayo Kids.

The Red Blazer Girls: The Ring of Rocamadour. Listening Library.

Riot. Listening Library.

The Scrambled States of America Talent Show. Weston Woods.

Songs from the Garden of Eden: Jewish Lullabies and Nursery Rhymes. Secret Mountain.

A Soup Opera. Jim Gill Music and Books.

The Tapestry Book 1: The Hound of Rowan. Recorded Books.

We Are The Ship: The Story of Negro League Baseball. Brilliance Audio.

Wild Girl. Listening Library.

The Witch's Guide to Cooking with Children. Brilliance Audio.

For the annotated list, visit www.ala.org/alsc.

Members of the 2010 Notable Children's Recordings Committee are: Chair Janet Weber, Tigard (Ore.) Public Library; Sharon Levin, Redwood City, Calif.; Susan Melcher, Jefferson County (Ky.) Schools; Linda Plevak, Northeast Lakeview College, University City, Tex.; Lynda Poling, Long Beach (Calif.) Public Library; Sara Saxton, Tuzzy Consortium Library, Barrow, Alaska; Kathryn Shepler, Aurora School, Oakland, Calif.; Tracy Sumler, D.C. Public Library, Washington, D.C.; Linda Zeilstra-Sawyer, Skokie (Ill.) Public Library.

2010 Notable Children's Videos

Abraham Lincoln Comes Home. Spoken Arts.

Crazy Hair Day. Weston Woods.

Don't Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus! Weston Woods.

Duck on a Bike. Weston Woods.

Los Gatos Black on Halloween. Weston Woods.

Getting to Know Thomas Jefferson. Getting to Know, Inc.

The Gym Teacher from the Black Lagoon. Weston Woods.

Henry's Freedom Box: A True Story from the Underground Railroad. Weston Woods.

Knuffle Bunny Too: A Case of Mistaken Identity. Weston Woods.

Teen Truth: An Inside Look at Body Image. Human Relations Media.

Those Shoes. Nutmeg Media.

Wipe Out. National Film Board of Canada.

For the annotated list, visit www.ala.org/alsc.

Members of the 2010 Notable Children's Videos Committee are: Chair Sue Rokos, Mohawk Valley Library System, Schenectady, N.Y.; Patricia Clingman, Kettering-Moraine (Ohio) Branch Library; Marisa Conner, Baltimore County (Md.) Public Library; Stephanie Farnlacher, Trace Crossings School, Hoover, Ala.; Vivian Landfair, DeBary (Fla.) Elementary School; Anna McKay, Darien (Conn.) Library; Grace Shanahan, Brooklyn (N.Y.) Public Library; Martha Simpson, Stratford (Conn.) Library Association; Mary D. Wilson, Rochester Hills (Mich.) Public Library.

Bond, Rebecca. *In the Belly of an Ox: The Unexpected Photographic Adventures of Richard and Cherry Kearton.* Illus. by the author. Houghton.

Bredsdorff, Bodil. *Eidi.* Trans. by Kathryn Mahaffy. Farrar.

DiCamillo, Kate. *The Magician's Elephant.* Illus. by Yoko Tanaka. Candlewick.

Jenkins, Steve. *Down, Down, Down: A Journey to the Bottom of the Sea.* Houghton.

Kajikawa, Kimiko. *Tsunami!* Illus. by Ed Young. Philomel.

Kelly, Jacqueline. *The Evolution of Calpurnia Tate.* Holt.

Lázaro, Georgina. *Federico García Lorca.* Illus. by Enrique S. Moreiro. Lectorum.

Lin, Grace. *Where the Mountain Meets the Moon.* Illus. by the author. Little, Brown.

Lowry, Lois. *Crow Call.* Illus. by Bagram Ibatoulline. Scholastic.

Metselaar, Menno and Ruud van der Rol. *Anne Frank: Her Life In Words And Pictures from the Archives of the Anne Frank House.* Roaring Brook.

Mills, Claudia. *How Oliver Olson Changed the World.* Illus. by Heather Maione. Farrar.

Nelson, Vaunda Micheaux. *Bad News for Outlaws: The Remarkable life of Bass Reeves, Deputy U.S. Marshal.* Illus. by R. Gregory Christie. Carolrhoda.

O'Connor, Barbara. *The Small Adventure of Popeye and Elvis.* Farrar.

Phelan, Matt. *The Storm in the Barn.* Illus. by the author. Candlewick.

Philbrick, Rodman. *The Mostly True Adventures of Homer P. Figg.* Blue Sky.

Ruddell, Deborah. *A Whiff of Pine, A Hint of Skunk: A Forest of Poems.* Illus. by Joan Rankin. Simon and Schuster/Margaret K. McElderry.

Ruelle, Karen Gray and Deborah Durland DeSaiz. *The Grand Mosque of Paris: A Story of How Muslims Rescued Jews during the Holocaust.* Illus. by the authors. Holiday.

Stead, Rebecca. *When You Reach Me.* Random/Wendy Lamb.

Sturm, James, Andrew Arnold, and Alexis Frederick-Frost. *Adventures in Cartooning.* Illus. by the authors. First Second.

Talbott, Hudson. *River of Dreams: The Story of the Hudson River.* Illus. by the author. Putnam.

Thor, Annika. *A Faraway Island.* Trans by Linda Schenck. Delacorte.

Turner, Pamela S.. *The Frog Scientist.* Photographs by Andy Comins. Houghton.

Weitzman, David L.. *Pharaoh's Boat.* Illus. by the author. Houghton.

Wing, Natasha. *An Eye for Color: The Story of Josef Albers.* Illus. by Julia Breckenreid. Holt.

Winter, Jonah. *You Never Heard of Sandy Koufax?!* Illus. by André Carrilho. Random/Schwartz and Wade.

Older Readers

Allen, Thomas B. and Roger MacBride Allen. *Mr. Lincoln's High-Tech War: How the North Used the Telegraph, Railroads, Surveillance Balloons, Ironclads, High-Powered Weapons, and More to Win the Civil War.* National Geographic.

Alvarez, Julia. *Return to Sender.* Knopf.

Baskin, Nora Raleigh. *Anything But Typical*. Simon and Schuster.

Carmichael, Clay. *Wild Things*. Front Street.

Datlow, Ellen and Terri Windling, eds. *Troll's Eye View: A Book of Villanous Tales*. Viking.

Hoose, Phillip. *Claudette Colvin: Twice Toward Justice*. Farrar/ Melanie Kroupa.

Fleming, Candace. *The Great and Only Barnum: The Tremendous, Stupendous Life of Showman P.T. Barnum*. Random/ Schwartz and Wade.

Hardinge, Frances. *The Lost Conspiracy*. HarperCollins.

Lawrence, Iain. *The Giant-Slayer*. Delacorte.

Magoon, Kekla. *The Rock and the River*. Aladdin.

Marrin, Albert. *Years of Dust: The Story of the Dust Bowl*. Dutton

Murphy, Jim. *Truce: The Day the Soldiers Stopped Fighting*. Scholastic.

Nelson, Marilyn. *Sweethearts of Rhythm: The Story of The Greatest All-Girl Swing Band in the World*. Illus. by Jerry Pinkney. Dial.

Partridge, Elizabeth. *Marching For Freedom: Walk Together, Children, and Don't You Grow Weary*. Viking.

Russell, Ching Yeung. *Tofu Quilt*. Lee and Low.

Smith, Hope Anita. *Mother Poems*. Illus. by the author. Holt/Christy Ottaviano Books.

Stone, Tanya Lee. *Almost Astronauts: 13 Women Who Dared to Dream*. Candlewick.

Tan, Shaun. *Tales from Outer Suburbia*. Illus. by the author. Scholastic/Arthur A. Levine.

Uehashi, Nahoko. *Moribito II: Guardian of the Darkness*. Illus. by Yuko Shimizu.

Trans. by Cathy Hirano. Scholastic/ Arthur A. Levine.

Walker, Sally M. *Written in Bone: Buried Lives of Jamestown and Colonial Maryland*. Carolrhoda.

Westerfeld, Scott. *Leviathan*. Illus. by Keith Thompson. Simon Pulse.

All Ages

Bryan, Ashley. *Ashley Bryan: Words To My Life's Song*. Photographs by Bill McGuinness. Atheneum.

Chin, Jason. *Redwoods*. Illus. by the author. Flash Point.

Floca, Brian. *Moonshot: The Flight of Apollo 11*. Illus. by the author. Atheneum/ Richard Jackson.

Hughes, Langston. *My People*. Photographs by Charles R. Smith Jr. Atheneum/ Ginee Seo.

Pinkney, Jerry. *The Lion and the Mouse*. Illus. by the author. Little, Brown.

Rosenthal, Amy Krouse. *Duck! Rabbit!* Illus. by Tom Lichtenheld. Chronicle.

Rotner, Shelley and Sheila M. Kelly. *Shades of People*. Photographs by Shelley Rotner. Holiday.

For the annotated list, visit www.ala.org/ alscl.

Members of the 2010 Notable Children's Books Committee are: Chair Eliza T. Dresang, of Seattle; Beth Gerall, NoveList, Durham, N.C.; Sue C. Kimmel, Gillespie Park Elementary School, Greensboro, N.C.; Kathie Meizner, Montgomery County (Md.) Public Libraries; Marie Orlando, North Shore Public Library, Wading River, N.Y.; Michael Rogalla, Champaign (Ill.) Public Library; Ed Spicer, *Michigan Reading Journal*, Allegan; Sally Anne Thompson, Paradise Valley, Ariz.; Tanya Tullos, Region 4 Education Service Center, Houston, Tex.; Andrea Vaughn, Brooklyn (N.Y.) Public Library; Mary R. Voors, Allen County (Ind.) Public Library.

2010 Conference Schedule

(as of April 8, 2010)

See www.ala.org/alscevents for the complete list, including room locations and speakers.

* Denotes a closed meeting.

Thursday, June 24

2-4 p.m.

Executive Committee

4:30-6 p.m.

AASL/ALSC/YALSA Jt. Executive Committee

Friday, June 25

8 a.m.-6:30 p.m.

ALSC Preconference: Drawn to Delight: How Picture Books Work (and Play) Today. Whether it's the pictures that draw you in or the colors that catch your eye, there's a reason that we're attracted to picture books. Join ALSC for this inspirational preconference, looking beyond surface stories to uncover the deeper meanings and aesthetic connections that exist in today's picture books.

Attendees will explore diverse media, styles and approaches to design; the format's relationship to graphic novels and illustrated books; and international and digital horizons. Attendees will observe studio demonstrations from a variety of award-winning illustrators such as William Low, Kadir Nelson, Yuyi Morales, Jerry Pinkney, Laura Vaccaro Seeger, Brian Selznick, and David Small. There will also be opportunities for hands-on experiences for attendees.

3-4 p.m.

ALSC 101. If you're new to ALSC or if this is your first conference as a children's librarian, then this program is for you! We'll provide you with information about the perks of ALSC membership, tips on how to get involved in the organization, and tricks of the trade for navigating Annual Conference.

7:30-9 p.m.

2011 Award and Notable Chair Orientation

Saturday, June 26

8–9 a.m.

Priority Group Consultants

8–10 a.m.

Notable Children's Videos/Carnegie; 2011 Belpré*; 2011 Geisel*

Listen Up! Using Audiobooks to Motivate Boys to Become Readers. Current research indicates that boys are not reaching their potential as readers in today's school environment. As educators, we must explore more varied avenues for meeting their literacy needs. Using audiobooks maximizes auditory learning modalities and provides an appealing, affordable alternative for experiencing quality literature for all students, particularly boys. A panel featuring a librarian, publisher, and author will discuss theoretical as well as practical issues related to the use of audiobooks with boys.

Taking Libraries into the Community: Beyond Brick Borders. Learn practical ways to forge rewarding library/community alliances with limited resources of time and money. Hear a range of real-world examples, discuss suggested tools, and receive program take-aways. The Kids! @ your library® online toolkit is just one of many resources that will be explored. Find out what simple measures you can take to economically and efficiently collaborate with other agencies to better serve the entire community.

8 a.m.–12 noon

2011 Caldecott*; 2011 Wilder*

9:30 a.m.–12 noon

Division Leadership

10:30 a.m.–12 noon

2011 Sibert*; Notable Children's Books (Procedural)*

Move Over Dick and Jane: Reconsidering Books for Beginning Readers. What constitutes a book for beginning readers? Do they come in one form or many? The Geisel Award books are bold departures from the leveled series. Many of these books signal a new era of innovative writing and book design. Prepare to

change your perceptions of what makes a great book for early readers. Meet the authors and editors of Geisel Award-winning titles and see what the future holds. Learn how to match these innovative books to the developmental needs of early readers.

1:30–3:30 p.m.

Deepening Young Patron's Literary Experiences: A Readers Theatre Performance in Five Acts. Katherine Paterson, Christopher Paul Curtis, Jacqueline Woodson, and Ifeoma Onyefulu will give a Readers Theatre performance using scripts they have developed from their own award-winning children's books. Children's literature specialist Elizabeth Poe will share ways librarians can help children create their own Readers Theatre productions using this collaborative model. A panel, comprised of Poe and the authors, will discuss ways Readers Theatre can help children become more deeply involved and personally responsive to quality literature.

Finding the Balance: Kids' Rights, Parental Demands, and Librarian's Role. How do librarians achieve harmony between their commitment to strongly advocate for a young person's intellectual freedom rights and their duty to address parental concerns over what a young person reads, views, or checks out? How does this attempt at balance influence a librarian's role in the community? Come hear a panel discussion from those who have grappled with these questions and who have struggled to make different forces in their communities understand the librarian's role in these issues.

1:30–4:30 p.m.

Notable Children's Books

1:30–5 p.m.

Notable Children's Recordings

1:30–5:30 p.m.

2011 Newbery*; 2011 Odyssey*; Board of Directors I

4–5:30 p.m.

2011 Arbuthnot*; 2011 Batchelder*; 2011 Geisel*; 2011 Sibert*; 2012 Arbuthnot*; Jt. Intellectual Freedom

Trail Blazers: What We can Learn from Our ALSC Leaders. ALSC leaders helped map today's children's library services. Join us as we reflect on our story and chart an exciting future. Panelists include Lillian Gerhardt, former editor-in-chief of *School Library Journal*; Spencer Shaw, professor emeritus, University of Washington; Anita Silvey, former publisher at Houghton Mifflin/former editor of the *Horn Book*; Henrietta Smith, professor at University of South Florida and leader/historian of the Coretta Scott King Award; and Carole Fiore, former children's consultant for the State Library of Florida, current library consultant, and former President of ALSC, will moderate the panel.

Back to the Future: Comics and Graphic Novels in Special Collections. This program will present the value of collecting and maintaining comics and graphic novels as a special collection. Art Spiegelman, artist and author, will provide an overview of the genre's history. Georgia Higley, a librarian at the Library of Congress, will describe her institution's collecting policy and the genre's use by researchers.

8–10 p.m.

Stories for a Saturday Evening. You have had a long day of meetings, programs, and exhibits. Take a little time for yourself, kick off your shoes, sit back, and relax. Nothing is more relaxing than a good laugh, and we have some great storytellers who will share original and traditional stories that will entertain and delight! Bring a friend—it is FREE!

Sunday, June 27

8–10 a.m.

2012 Arbuthnot*; 2011 Geisel*; Nominating I*; 2011 Wilder*

Sit, Paws, Read: Animal Programs in Libraries. Animal programs, including reading to dogs, have proven to be popular methods for fostering reading fluency in school and public libraries. Programs that feature animals draw children to the library and encourage humane education. Participants will learn about best practices in library programming with animals from two librarians and an author, as well as learn about

animal-themed books that support humane treatment of animals.

Children's and YA Book Blogs: Enhancing Library Services. Enhance collection development, keep current on trends and titles, and provide better readers' advisory using the collective, valuable resource of book reviews, industry news, and author interviews of children's and young adult literature blogs. Learn how to utilize this dynamic, online world of fiction and nonfiction, poetry and prose, picture books and teen titles, authors and illustrators, writing and reading, publishing insight, and programming ideas

8 a.m.–12 noon

All Committee; 2011 Arbuthnot*; 2011 Belpré*; 2011 Caldecott*; 2011 Newbery*; 2011 Odyssey*; 2011 Sibert*

10:30 a.m.–Noon

Budget I

Grassroots 2.0: New Technologies. Are state and local budget shortfalls threatening the services your library offers, perhaps even your job? Never has it been more important (or easier) to be an advocate for libraries! Learn to create messaging that will capture the attention of policy-makers, find out how to build powerful coalitions that affect change, and discover Web 2.0 and social media techniques that make advocacy easier than ever and ensure your voice is heard from townhall to Washington!

Celebrating the Spoken Word with Poetry for Young People. This program celebrates the oral quality of poetry for young people by showcasing the current Children's Poet Laureate, Mary Ann Hoberman, who will speak about her life, work, and creative process; inviting participants to join in on interactive reading aloud of children's poetry using a variety of practical strategies, and concluding with a performance by young winners

of the new Poetry Out Loud National Recitation Contest, a program for fostering children's confidence and public speaking.

1:30–3:30 p.m.

All Discussion Groups

Pura Belpré Celebración. Join ALSC and REFORMA in celebrating the 2010 Pura Belpré Medal winners and honorees as they receive their awards and deliver their acceptance speeches. The Celebración is a free, joyful event featuring musical performances by the Los Quetzales Mexican Dance Ensemble and book signing by the winning authors and illustrators.

1:30–4 p.m.

Great Interactive Software for Kids; Notable Children's Books

1:30–5 p.m.

Notable Children's Recordings

4–5:30 p.m.

2011 Batchelder*; 2011 Geisel*

Good Comics for Kids: Building a Collection of Graphic Novels for Young Readers. Graphic novels are moving out of the teen section and into the rest of the library. With so many new titles released every month, building a graphic novel collection for kids can be a daunting task. Join comics experts from *School Library Journal's* Good Comics for Kids blog as they discuss what comics and graphic novels are, why they are important to include in children's libraries, where to find them, and how to evaluate them.

Growing Learners Together: Successful School and Public Library Partnerships.

Learn the secrets behind successful school and public library partnerships. Ideas that can be implemented in individual libraries as well as system-wide will be described, including resource sharing,

reading promotion, and much more. Links to successful partnerships will be shared. Be inspired by this showcase of programs adaptable for your library.

6–11 p.m.

Newbery Caldecott Banquet. This gala event celebrates the Newbery and Caldecott Medalists and Honorees, authors and illustrators of the year's most distinguished books for children. Cash bar before dinner; doors open at 6:45 p.m.

Monday, June 28

8–10 a.m.

Youth Council Caucus

Charlemae Rollins President's Program

with Dr. Patricia Kuhl. To help you serve your youngest patrons, Dr. Patricia K. Kuhl, PhD, Co-Director of the University of Washington Institute for Learning and Brain Sciences, will discuss her research and findings on infants' early language and later reading skills. Dr. Kuhl is internationally recognized for her research on early language and brain development, and studies that show how young children learn. Her work has played a major role in demonstrating how early exposure to language alters the brain. It has implications for critical periods in development, for bilingual education and reading readiness, for developmental disabilities involving language, and for research on computer understanding of speech.

10:30 a.m.–12 noon

ALSC Awards Presentation and Membership Meeting. Join your colleagues for the annual presentation for the Batchelder, Carnegie, Geisel, and Sibert Awards. The ALSC Membership Meeting will immediately follow where Thom Barthelmess, ALSC president, will recognize the 2010 professional award winners and share the past year's accomplishments and new initiatives.

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University of Illinois Graduate School of Library
and Information Science..... Cover 3

1:30-3:30 p.m.
Nominating II*

Developmentally Appropriate Practice. Librarians, managers, and administrators will learn how to incorporate best early childhood practices into services and programs for young children. NAEYC has recently revised its key position statement Developmentally Appropriate Practice in Early Childhood, and Dr. Jerlean Daniel will discuss the key concepts that inform how best to work with young children and their families. Dr. Marna Elliott will give concrete ideas and examples of how the concepts can be incorporated into library services and programs.

Día Is Diversity in Action. Explore a world of resources to engage many ethnic groups in one celebration. The presenters will focus on Día as a tool in dually reaching the Spanish and international community for literacy as well as promoting multicultural authors and artists. Resources, strategies, and

background will be provided so that any library system can begin to create their own Día program and reach out to the diverse community. Ideas for promoting the program, a plan of action, and collaborating with local agencies to successfully promote the program will be included in the presentation.

1:30-4:30 p.m.
Great Interactive Software for Kids;
Notable Children's Books

4-5:30 p.m.
Budget II

Odyssey Award Presentation and Program. Celebrate the spoken word at the 2010 Odyssey Award Presentation, featuring the 2010 Odyssey winner, *Louise, the Adventures of a Chicken*, written by Kate DiCamillo, narrated by Barbara Rosenblat, and produced by Live Oak Media. Three honor titles will also be recognized for their excellence in audiobook production for children and young adults. A reception sponsored by

the Audio Publishers Association with light refreshments will follow the award presentations and program.

5:30-7:30 p.m.
7th Annual Poetry Blast. Poetry should be heard and not just seen. Poetry Blast celebrates the wonder and excitement of this aural tradition, featuring contemporary North American poetry for children by poets both new and established. The audience will find this enlightening and energizing event a perfect way to end a conference day. Ten to twelve poets will read. Hosted by Barbara A. Genco and Poet/Writer Marilyn Singer. Information about current and forthcoming books of poetry will be available.

Tuesday, June 29

10:30 a.m.-12 noon
Board Orientation

2-5:30 p.m.
Board of Directors II.



Register by June 30 to receive the ALSC Early Bird rate and save!

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Children and Libraries (CAL) is the official publication of the Association for Library Service to Children (ALSC), a division of the American Library Association (ALA). CAL is a vehicle for continuing education of librarians working with children, and showcases current research and practice relating to library service to children and spotlights significant activities and programs of the association.

Manuscript Consideration

Submit manuscripts that are neither under consideration nor accepted elsewhere. Send one copy of the manuscript to the CAL editor at the address below. Editor will acknowledge receipt of all manuscripts and send them to at least two referees for evaluation. Accepted manuscripts with timely content will have scheduling priority.

Manuscript Preparation

For information on formatting your manuscript, editorial style, guidelines for text and art, and copyright forms, contact the editor at the address given.

For citations, use endnotes as described in the 15th edition of *The Chicago Manual of Style*, sections 16–17.

Submit manuscripts and text (including references, tables, notes, and bibliographies) to the editor by e-mail as a Microsoft Word file attachment, copy the text directly into the body of an e-mail message, or send on a CD. Illustrative material (such as high-resolution digital images) MUST be sent via CD. CDs must be PC-formatted.

Full length features (e.g., scholarly, research and “best practice” articles): fifteen to twenty pages, double-spaced.

Short features (e.g., interviews with authors, librarians, or others involved with library service to children): three to ten pages, double-spaced.

The Last Word: 350–500 words, double-spaced.

Long and short features should be well researched with themes relevant and of interest to children’s librarians and all those involved and interested in library service to children.

“The Last Word” is an end-page feature that will run in each issue and highlight brief,

light, or humorous essays from children’s librarians, such as a humorous story about a library experience; a short trivia quiz or puzzle about children’s literature; a brief, creatively written insight on library service, children’s literature, or programming; a very short question-and-answer interview with a popular author; a funny story about what kids are overheard saying in libraries. “The Last Word” will be a place for children’s librarians to share these stories and get their names in print. Please send your ideas or finished stories to the editor.

Attach a cover sheet indicating the title of the article and the full name, title, affiliation, phone number, fax number, e-mail address, and complete mailing address of the first author. Include a 200-word abstract.

Place tables on separate pages. Notations should appear in text for proper table and figure placement (e.g., “insert table 1 here”). Provide a title and caption for each table and figure.

Supply charts and graphs as spreadsheet programs or as graphics (TIFFs or high-resolution JPEGs). Camera-ready copy is also acceptable. You need not provide graphs in final form. If you prefer, you may provide a rough version, or even a sketch. If so, please mark all data points clearly. We will create the graphic. You will have a chance to review the graphic when you review your typeset pages during the proofing stage.

Photos can also be included with manuscript. Color or black-and-white photos are acceptable. We also can accept digital images of at least 300 dpi resolution.

(Pictures from the Web are not of sufficient quality for printed material because their resolution is too low.) Photos will be returned to author(s) after publication.

Submit Microsoft Word files. Double-space the entire manuscript, including quotes and references. Insert two hard returns between paragraphs. Number all pages.

Use a minimal amount of formatting in files.

Specialized formatting may be lost in translation from one program to another; mark specialized formatting with text instructions, such as <extract>. Do not use the automatic footnote/endnote feature on your word processing program; create endnotes manually at the end of the article.

If sending a disk, label it with the first author’s name and all file names.

Writing and Bibliographic Style

Children and Libraries follows the 15th edition of *The Chicago Manual of Style*. Authors are responsible for accuracy in the manuscript, including all names and citations. Editor may revise accepted manuscripts for clarity, accuracy, and readability, consistent with publication style and journal audience.

Address

Send correspondence and manuscripts to Sharon Verbeten, CAL editor, via e-mail to CALeditor@yahoo.com.



THE LAST WORD

A Grandfather, a Grandson, and Fond Library Memories

In 2002, our son, Bill, and his family lived in suburban Philadelphia, only two blocks from the Penn Wynne Library, which was a hive of neighborhood activity.

We were pleased that Bill introduced his two boys to the vitality of this library when they were very young. It recapitulated fond memories of long ago Sundays when I took “little Billy” to the Tulsa County Library; moreover, it validated for me that at least I did some parenting right!

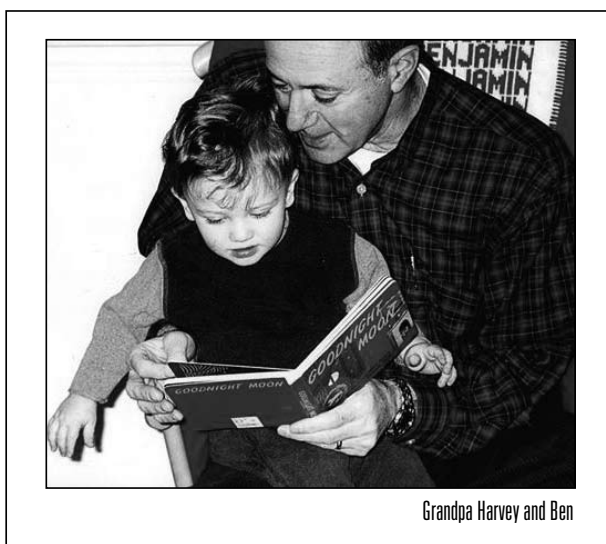
During this visit, while five-year-old Stevie and Grandma Sandy played on the computer, three-year-old Ben asked me to take him to the library.

Upon entering the library, Sara, the young librarian, recognized Ben and called him by name. I think Ben liked visiting the library because his daddy encouraged it and made it fun, but certainly being warmly greeted by the librarian reinforced the positive experience.

Immediately, Ben ran to the large aquarium, stepped up on the stool and exclaimed excitedly about the fish. Next, he pulled a few books off the shelves in the children’s section—all with yellow covers, his favorite color.

After some gentle coaxing, Ben settled down, and I found a book he and his daddy had previously checked out, *Choco-Louie* by Jeff Kindley.

Bill had told me how much Ben loved having this book read to him again and again, probably because the main character,



Grandpa Harvey and Ben

Louie, had a big brother named Ben. I read the first words of each sentence and then paused, allowing Ben to recite the rest from memory.

After we finished reading, Ben climbed onto a stepstool to drink from the water fountain; the water dripped down his chin onto his shirt, and I used my handkerchief to wipe his chin.

Ben then ran between the shelves in the children’s section, playfully waving the hanky, laughing and looking back to see if I was following. When he hid the hanky

behind some books, it dropped down, and I had to get down on hands and knees to find it. Ben laughed at me stretching to retrieve it, and when it was time to leave, he insisted on keeping my hanky.

We had some great grandfather–grandson bonding that day, and Ben still remembers that visit; he especially recalls with delight how he had me on all fours searching under the bookshelves.

Subsequent visits to the Penn Wynne Library were more conventional, and a bit less boisterous, and I am pleased to report that Ben, now almost ten, is an avid reader. He is currently enjoying *The Happy Hollisters* series, recommended by Sara, the children’s librarian; and Bill reports that Ben appears buoyed up by her friendliness and encouragement. ☺

Harvey Blumenthal is a retired physician who now enjoys books and writing anecdotes and memoirs, especially about his grandchildren.

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