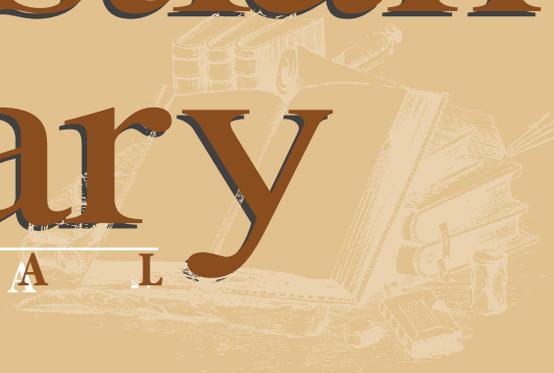


Christian Library

J O U R N A L



A SISTERHOOD *of*

FRIENDSHIP *and* FAITH

What Once We Loved

JANE KIRKPATRICK

AWARD-WINNING AUTHOR *of* ALL TOGETHER *in one* PLACE

This Issue Features:

- **Fantasy : How Shall We View It?**
- **On Summer Reading**
- **School Librarian's Corner:
Time Management**
- **Winter Wondering**
- **Silent Night**
- **The Navajo**
- **Editor : This and That**



A Letter from the Editor

Dear Readers,

Just a little of this and that, this issue.

Going online has been exciting. In September we had about 14,000 hits, which was really delightful; but since then hits have grown to 18,000-20,000 a month! Librarians, teachers, pastors, readers all across America and around the world have registered to use our free text version, while libraries still make up our largest group of subscribers.

Changes seem to happen frequently here at CLJ. In October, directly after putting our fall issue online, CLJ and I moved from the suburbs to downtown Florence. I had been renting a larger house south of town in a lovely wooded area about a block from a large lake. But after my great-nieces moved on, I no longer needed so much space, and the rent was excessive. After several months in a lovely modern duplex, I learned that it had sold, and so we're moving just a few blocks to an older, nicely kept three bedroom home; one for me, one for CLJ, and the third for CLJ and guests. Needless to say, moving takes it out of this old retired gal. I'll be glad to be settled later this month.

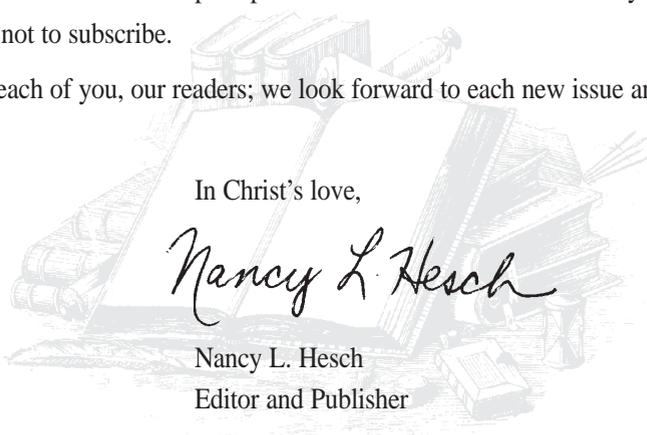
Other changes are happening on staff. Several former reviewers have rejoined us, for which we are thankful. Sylvia Stopforth, our YA editor who has been on leave, teaching at her university, is back as a reviewer. And we are losing an editor; Ray Legg, our adult nonfiction editor, finds he had too much committed, and this is his last issue with us. We'll miss him. His column this issue hints at a story "later." How about it, Ray?

And a very important change. When we began CLJ almost eight years ago, we rated the titles we reviewed on quality and acceptability. After several years, we dropped the rating system. Now we're trying it again, but with a difference. On page eight of this issue you'll see the new rating criteria. We have asked our reviewers to try to think like librarians, determining whether a book is a necessary library purchase, and if so, how necessary. Let us know what you think; is it helpful?

It's good to hear from so many of you; your suggestions are helpful. One addition to our website will be a "sample issue," much as we used to mail out when we were a print publication. Folks have asked if they could get a taste before registering or before deciding whether or not to subscribe.

Hope all is well with each of you, our readers; we look forward to each new issue and your responses.

In Christ's love,



Nancy L. Hesch

Nancy L. Hesch
Editor and Publisher

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

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Karen Brehmer Editor: Picture Books

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A Word from the Editor: Andrew M. Seddon



Silent Night

Another Christmas has come and gone. For some people this might have been a special celebration. For others—such as those who lost loved ones on September 11 and its aftermath—a hollow time, bereft of joy or happiness. For still others, it may have been simply an average Christmas, indistinguishable from many previous ones. What do we, as Christians, make of Christmas? Do we celebrate the birth of our Savior, or do we participate in the secular 'winter holiday' of our culture? How special is Christmas to us?

One very special Christmas occurred during the dark days of World War One. Christmas of 1914 saw the allied armies of Britain and France deadlocked with those of imperial Germany. A million lives had already been lost. The battlefields were networks of trenches, barbed wire, and machine-gun posts which neither side could penetrate. It was a stalemate... a senseless waste of life.

And yet, this early in the war, there was no great hostility or hatred between the troops on either side. When the Germans, to whom Christmas was important, started singing Christmas carols, the British (and some French) responded. When the Germans began erecting Christmas trees on their parapets, their opponents wondered.

When the Germans called to their British and French counterparts for a cease-fire, many offers were accepted by the men in the trenches, without official approval. Thus began the legendary Christmas truce, written about by Stanley Weintraub in his new book *Silent Night* (Simon & Schuster, 2001, ISBN 0684872811, \$25.00).

For two days, the war halted. In the devastation of no man's land, allied and German troops met, exchanged souvenirs, and even played soccer. The commanders on either side were horrified. How could war be fought if the men realized their opponents were just like themselves—men who, for the most part, only wanted to be home with their families, and who had no ideological stake in conflict? Could peace be brought about by average soldiers?

Unfortunately, the peace offered by the Christmas truce was unwelcomed by both governments, and the war would drag on and cost another eight million lives. But those two days in 1914 demonstrated the power of the birth of Christ. They demonstrated in an unmistakable way the promise of the Messiah to bring peace.

The symbols of Christmas still had meaning lost to our Christmases today. German troops risked their lives to erect Christmas trees. Would we? Would our celebrations today have the power to end conflict? The front line soldiers who had fraternized with the enemy had been changed by their Christmas—they

didn't want to resume fighting and so had to be transferred to the rear and new troops brought forwards so that the war could resume. The 'peace on earth' sung by the angels was able to overcome a war that ordinary men didn't want to fight. Can our Christmases say the same? Could our commercialized winter holiday do the same?

To be sure, not every soldier was happy to lay down arms. One who refused to be swayed by the message of Christmas was an undistinguished corporal named Adolf Hitler. But had the commanders on both sides embraced the offer of the Christmas truce, millions of lives would have been saved, and our world would be a very different place. World War Two and the Holocaust might not have happened.

If we, as Christians, fully embraced the meaning and message of Christmas, we too could make the world a very different place. I am glad my wife bought me *Silent Night* as a present for this Christmas. Read it. Ponder its message. And next Christmas, let's resolve to show our jaded, weary world what Christmas REALLY means.

Learning Native American Culture Through Children's Literature : The Navajo

by Jane Mouttet

Learning Native American culture is a continuous process. Whether Native Americans live in your community or not, they form a part of our nation's heritage and deserve a place in your library.

I've worked with Navajo students since 1983 both as a teacher and as a school librarian. One of my goals has been to provide books that help our students learn more of Navajo culture as well as that of other Native American peoples. I am looking forward to sharing with you children's books about Native Americans. I'd also like to hear some of your ideas.

The Navajo, one of the largest tribes in North America, lives on a reservation about the size of West Virginia, which lies in Utah, Arizona, and New Mexico. My favorite from this list of books is *The Goat in the Rug* by Charles Bood and Martin Link. My husband and I are missionaries, and have used this book many times in our presentations to children. I have yet to find a book that better explains the Navajo culture, at least in part, for children. We read the book with them and then show them some of our "artifacts" from Navajoland such as a model of a Navajo loom complete with wool and weaving. We have found this is the best way to introduce young children to the Navajo.

THE GOAT IN THE RUG by Charles L. Blood and Martin Link, illustrated by Nancy Winslow Parker. (Four Winds Press, 1976, 0-590-07763-5, HB, \$8.95, 32p.)

Grades Pre-3 This is an excellent book to use for teaching young children about the process of Navajo weaving. Mr. Blood and Mr. Link use Geraldine the goat to tell the story. *The Goat in the Rug* tells step-by-step how Glenmae, a weaver, makes a Navajo rug. From the shearing of the wool, to cleaning and carding, to collecting plants and dyeing the wool, the entire preparation is included.

Glenmae is even shown putting the loom together before starting to weave. Ms. Parker's colorful illustrations are accurate. The inside front and back covers contain black line drawings and names of many plants and items mentioned in the story.

BUILDING A BRIDGE by Lisa Shook Begaye, illustrated by Libba Tracy. (Rising Moon Publishing, 1993, 0-87358-727-8, PB, \$7.95, 32p.)

Grades Pre-K The first day of school is never easy. Anna is an Anglo getting ready for school. Juanita is a Navajo on the

reservation. They meet on their first day of kindergarten. Usually it is the non-Anglos who are in the minority. In *Building a Bridge*, Anna, the Anglo, is in the minority. The teacher encourages the two girls to play with blocks together. In doing so, they learn that color doesn't matter and they build a bridge to friendship. While this book doesn't contain much cultural information, Mrs. Begaye has written a good story for encouraging students to make friends with those who are different. Ms. Tracy's illustrations are realistic and add to the text.

COLORS OF THE NAVAJO by Emily Abbink, illustrated by Janice Lee Porter. (Carolrhoda Books, 1998, 1-57505-207-5, HB, \$19.93, 1-57505-269-5, PB, \$5.95, 24p.)

Grades 2-4 *Colors of the Navajo* is part of the Colors of the World series. Each color is translated into English and tied to part of the Navajo culture or history. Turquoise stands for silversmithing, an important industry and part of the tourist trade. The brown hogan is the traditional Navajo home. Red is tied to the red ants found on the reservation and the Red Antway Ceremony, a religious ceremony used when an ant or anthill is destroyed. School buses are yellow; forcing Navajos to go to boarding school in the early 1900s is discussed here. Black Mesa is famous for its coal, which is mined for heat and electrical power. Blue corn, which has been in the Southwest for hundreds of years, is still used for food today. Green plants grow in the desert; the Navajo use them for food, medicine, and other things. Canyon de Chelly, lined with tan sandstone, is where many Navajo hid to avoid "The Long Walk" (forced relocation). Gray is one of the natural colors used in rugs. Gold is the color of the medals worn by the Navajo war veterans who created a code during World War II. Janice Porter's illustrations are impressionistic in nature. Emily Abbink's text shows a good knowledge of the Navajo culture.

LITTLE MAN'S FAMILY by J. B. Enochs, illustrated by Gerald Nailor (Kiva Publishing, 1999, 188577214-9. PB, \$6.95, 48p.)

Grades K-2 Little Man's family consists of two daughters, two sons, and his wife. J. B. Enochs uses the older son to tell the story. Cultural items explained in the story include: cradleboards, hogans, sweathouses, ponies, sheep, goats and weaving. This easy reader is written in language an early reader will easily understand. One drawback of the book is that sentences do not start with capital letters. Gerald Nailor's black line drawings help the reader visualize

unfamiliar items. J. B. Enochs originally wrote *Little Man's Family* in the 1940s as part of a literacy project.

MY NAVAJO SISTER written and illustrated by Eleanor Schick (Simon and Schuster Books, 1996, 0-689-80529-2, HB, \$16.00, 32 p.)

Grades Pre-2 An Anglo (white) girl lives on the Navajo reservation for a short time and becomes close friends with a Navajo girl. In *My Navajo Sister*, she remembers things she did with her Navajo friend: riding horses, helping at a wedding, going on picnics. The colored pencil drawings beautifully portray life on the Navajo reservation.

NAVAJO ABC by Luci Tapahonso and Eleanor Schick, illustrated by Eleanor Schick (Simon and Schuster Books, 1995, 0-689-80316-8, HB, \$16.00, 0-689-82685-0, PB, \$5.99, 32 p.)

Grades Pre-1 For each letter of the alphabet the English or Navajo word for some part of Navajo culture is illustrated. In the glossary, the translation of the word is given as well as an explanation for the word. Luci Tapahonso is a Navajo and Eleanor Schick has lived in the Southwest United States for many years. The colored pencil illustrations beautifully show the different aspects of the Navajo culture. When the glossary is used along with the pictures, even preschoolers will learn something of the Navajo culture.

NAVAJO WEDDING DAY written and illustrated by Eleanor Schick (Marshall Cavendish, 1999, 0-7614-5031-9, HB, \$15.95, 40 p.)

Grades Pre-3 *Navajo Wedding Day* is told from the perspective of an Anglo girl. The cousin of the main character's best friend is getting married. She is having a Navajo wedding. Everything that happens is explained to the young girl, from the preparations to the actual wedding and the activities following the wedding. Ms. Schick has done an excellent job of explaining an aspect of Navajo culture that many non-Navajos do not get the chance to witness. Her beautiful colored pencil drawings do a good job of complementing the text.

OWL IN THE CEDAR TREE by Natachee Scott, illustrated by Don Perceval (University of Nebraska Press, 1975, 0-8032-8184-6, PB, \$9.95, 116 p.)

Grades 2-4 Haske is a Navajo boy living with his parents on the reservation two hours by wagon from the trading post. He rides a school bus to get to school, but his family's transportation is horse and wagon or walking. Haske dreams of owning the horse owned by the trader. He herds his mother's sheep and takes care of his younger sister. He is torn between the new Anglo way that his parents want him to follow, and the old Navajo way that his "old grandfather" (great-grandfather) wants him to go. Natachee Momaday has done an excellent job of capturing Navajo life the way it was in the 1950s and 1960s. Don Perceval's black line drawings show Navajo life as

it was before Navajos had automobiles.

RACING THE SUN by Paul Pitts (Avon Books, Inc., 1988, 0-380-75496-7, PB, \$4.95, 150 p.)

Grades 4-6 Brandon is a Navajo living in the Anglo world. At twelve, all he knows of Navajo ways are the glimpses he gets during the rare and very short visits to his father's family. Then word comes that Shinali, his paternal grandfather, is dying of cancer. Brandon's mother is the only one of the relatives who does not work so, against Brandon's father's wishes, Shinali comes to live with them. Because there is no extra bedroom, Brandon gains a roommate. Shinali smells of cedar smoke, chants himself to sleep at night, and wakes Brandon at 5:00 a.m. to race the sun. During the brief time he is with them, Shinali teaches Brandon much about the Navajo culture. Brandon becomes a bridge between his father and grandfather. Brandon helps Shinali "run away" back to the reservation where he dies. Paul Pitts knows the Navajo culture having taught on the reservation for many years. He not only shows the Navajo culture to his readers, he also shows a building relationship between generations.

SONGS FROM THE LOOM: A NAVAJO GIRL LEARNS TO WEAVE written and illustrated by Monty Roessel (Lerner Publications Company, 1995, 0-8225-2657-3, HB, \$21.27, 0-8225-9712-8, PB, \$6.95, 48p.)

Grades 3-5 In *Songs from the Loom*, Monty Roessel tells both the story of how his daughter learned to weave and also about weaving as part of the Navajo culture. His photographs illustrate the steps of weaving a rug, show examples of the different styles of Navajo rugs, and show the beauty of Navajoland. Traditionally, Navajo weavers tell stories and sing songs while weaving. A few of these traditional stories and songs are woven into the text. A word list is included with definitions of weaving and Navajo terms that will be unfamiliar to most elementary students.

THE UNBREAKABLE CODE by Sara Hoagland Hunter and illustrated by Julia Miner (Northland Publishing, 1996, 0-87358-638-7, HB, \$15.95, 32p.)

Grades 2-5 The Navajo played a vital role in World War II in the Pacific. In *The Unbreakable Code* Sara Hunter uses a grandfather talking with his grandson who is moving away from the reservation to tell the story of the Navajo Code Talkers. Julia Miner's oil paintings beautifully portray the reservation and show scenes from World War II without showing the horror of battle. The Navajo are proud of this portion of their heritage. Elementary students can now learn about World War II and the Navajo Code Talkers in a story written just for them.

Classroom Connections

The Goat in the Rug

1. If you have access to roots of a yucca plant, chop some up and mix them with water to see the suds form, just like Glenmae used yucca to wash the wool after shearing it from Geraldine.

2. Purchase some wool yarn in a white or natural color. Collect bark, berries and other natural items that could be used as a dye. Boil the items in separate pots of hot water and dip pieces of the yarn in the pots to dye it, just like Glenmae does in the book.

The Unbreakable Code

If your students are interested in the work of the Code Talkers, there are several web sites devoted to information about their work. The second site listed below contains the Code Talker's dictionary. Students can use this code to write their own messages.

www.history.navy.mil/faqs/faq61-2.htm. A site of the U.S. Marines containing a fact sheet on the Navajo Code Talkers of World War II.

www.history.navy.mil/faqs/faq61-4.htm Another site of the U.S. Marines. It is the Navajo Code Talker's dictionary as of June 15, 1945.

www.lapahie.com The son of a Navajo code talker developed this site. Here you will find information on the code talkers including a list of terms created by the original code talkers.

www.unink.com/passages/MonumentValley/Legends/CodeTalkers.html. -- contains information on and pictures of the code talkers.

www.gvsu.edu/mathstat/enigma/navajo/titl e.htm -- A well-done research paper on the Navajo and the Code Talkers. Pages 6-9 of this research paper contain information on the development of the code.

Song from the Loom

Give your students some weaving experience.

1. Check around in your community for a crafter's organization, you may have a weaver in your area who would be willing to come make a presentation to your class.

2. If you have access to several potholder loom kits or weaving kits commercially available, they can give students an idea of what weaving involves.

3. You can also make your own potholder looms with a square frame. Just place some nails evenly all around the frame. You can use the same materials from the purchased kits for weaving the pot holder.

4. Styrofoam trays can also be used for weaving projects.

Create your loom by cutting out an opening in a Styrofoam tray, leaving a 1" frame of Styrofoam around the opening.

Mark dots about $\frac{3}{8}$ of an inch from the inside edge and $\frac{1}{8}$ of an inch apart. You need to have an uneven number of dots. Do this along the top and bottom of your frame, making sure the dots are directly across from each other.

Thread a large-eyed needle with thin white cord or string. Knot one end of the cord. Insert the needle from back to front at the first dot and go across to the opposite dot. This time insert the needle from front to back. Go to the dot next to this one and come up from the back to front. Go back across to the opposite dot and again go from front to back. Repeat until all the dots have been used. These are the warp threads. They should be taut, but not tight enough to pull the frame out of shape or break the Styrofoam. Knot the end in back.

Now thread the needle with some yarn. Go under and over the warp cords, alternating all the way across. When you are all the way across, go around the last cord and alternate the up and down motion as you go. If you went over a thread last time, you must go under it this time. Change threads as needed, making sure you continue the under and over pattern. When finished, loose ends can be worked into the finished weave. (This activity was adapted from one found in *The Complete Idiot's Guide to Crafts with Kids* by Georgene Lockwood, Alpha Books, 1998)

Internet Information

www.navajo.org -- the official site of the Navajo tribe. The site contains information on the Navajo government, the Navajo sacred mountains, the history of the Navajo and the Navajo Code Talkers.

www.thenavajotimes.com -- the online edition of the weekly tribal newspaper.

www.navajocentral.org -- an unofficial site, but contains much information. The sections on Navajo weaving and points of interest contain links to even more information. The FAQ section "Life with and among the Navajo people" is good; however, it states that it may not be printed without the author's permission, which may hinder its use in the classroom.

You will have to decide if how you use it fits within fair use guidelines.

SCHOOL LIBRARIAN'S CORNER

by Leslie Greaves Radloff



**Time
Management
in
School
Libraries**

As I write, the wind is howling, blowing leaves across yards and branches are pounding on the house. A night to cuddle up with a good book, cup of hot chocolate or tea, a comforter, and settle down to read or think. Thinking often leads me back to the media center and all the things that need to be done to keep it running.

All the things. Today, in addition to classes coming in at their scheduled time, three classes came in on the spur of the moment; there was a computer class to learn how the Scholastic Reading Inventory list of book titles matched titles in the school collection; a meeting with a book rep; the daily mail from three mailboxes (our library serves three schools in one building) to sort, then finally, a district media specialists' meeting after school. None of that would have been possible without a schedule, planning, and another set of hands to meet with students while I was in meetings. Does that resonate? You all have days like this.

Squeezing everything into a day is enough to make a person cringe, but strategies can help when the schedule is packed. Let me share them.

This fall I found a resource with lesson plans that can be tailored to fit individual

circumstances: *Teaching Library Skills in Grades K Through 6*. It's subtitled "How-to-do-it-Manual for School and Public Librarians.* Published by Neal-Schuman, it's been a life saver. The lesson plans have space to fill in details and the left margin gives all the areas that we cover in media skills. The authors give examples of how to use the plans and permission to duplicate pages, one for each grade level. This has worked better for me than a regular teacher's plan book where I never had enough room for all that had to be written down. Copy, punch holes in the pages and use a three-ring binder to keep these and to keep track of special days you want to observe: author's birthday, Book Week, Teen Read Week, Para-professional Appreciation Week, etc.; note when you want to change bulletin boards and displays; what subjects might make interesting book talks; special projects like the book fair dates; regularly scheduled meetings (I meet weekly with one principal, bi-weekly with another, and once a month with the third); books that you want to use for stories and booktalks (I'd pull them in advance because they might be checked out otherwise; if they are, put them on hold for yourself); and anything else that is done on a regular basis. Here's where to write down verbal requests from teachers and tape any written requests to the page before it should be filled. Those requests will help when ordering, or when discussing budgets.

Other helpful hints:

NEVER walk across the media center without something in your hands: Books to shelve, book ends, browsing sticks, trash. Book carts are great time savers but make the

most of your "travel time."

Consider carefully when asked to review books in bulk before purchase. Your time is valuable and the review tools might provide better feedback. This applies to the companies who ask you to review before purchase, not to review journals.

Choose sales representatives you want to work with carefully, do business with them and a jobber whom you trust, i.e., one who will go the extra mile for you when ordering books. Cultivate them and be loyal; it will pay off in the long run.

If you have an automated system and barcodes are designated for different publishers and a jobber, maybe even for different textbooks, try to consolidate as many barcode numbers as possible and TYPE IT OUT, save it to disc for safekeeping, and post it where you do your ordering. This will save an enormous amount of time, and headaches, when placing an order as you try to decide which barcodes.

Encourage your teachers and staff to model good behavior and library etiquette when in the library and around books. Post your rules/expectations. Don't be afraid to let students know when they aren't fulfilling them. You may even have to talk to some teachers, and that's okay.

Post your schedule so your teachers

can see when and what you are teaching. Do not be afraid to say "No" when staff members ask to rearrange their times. Suggest they send small groups of students, or trade times with another teacher. Go to the classrooms with a book cart and book talk there. (If you are lucky, you have flex schedules; mine is not.)

Public Librarians #10. New York: Neal-Schuman, 1993. 1555701264

Leslie R. can be reached at: radloff@pro-ns.net

Use a white board or chalk board to write out a basic schedule for the week with what you are teaching so that visitors can see what you are doing. Ex: Gr.2 Ms. Smith--parts of books/ book care; Gr.5 Mr. Smith--DDC-921; use Freedman's chant; Gr. 4--catalog basics; Ms. Brown--Kdg. check-out.

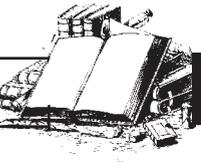
Use a bulletin board to display articles about children's books, authors, and anything pertaining to books close to the check out area.

Don't be afraid to rearrange materials so that you clients can find them quickly. We've put all our state materials on one shelf so classes writing state reports can find the state books easily. If they want other information, we show them to the regular 900's. We've also separated folk and fairy tales in 398.2 and put them near fiction so the younger children find them more easily.

Keep your work area and the AV area as orderly as possible. Just when you least expect it, visitors come. Organized chaos still looks messy.

While much of what I've written seems like common sense, our busy schedules sometimes keep us locked in one way of dealing with things. Take a risk and try one new thing this school year. If you have something that works well in your situation, and you think more people could benefit from it, contact me.

*Roach, Catharyn and Joanne Moore,
Teaching Library Skills in Grade K Through 6: How-to-do-it Manual for School and



Albert / Donna Jo Napoli; illustrated by Jim LaMarche. LCCN 97007089. San Diego: Silver Whistle, Harcourt, 2001. HBB, 0152015728, \$16.00. Small children. Rating: 3

E. Birds--Fiction; Birds--Nests--Fiction. unsp.

Each morning we are treated to a new day to be discovered. Albert started each day the same way, by placing stretching his hand through the grillwork in his window; and also found some reason not to go out for the day. Today, though, a twig falls into his outstretched hand, and causes Albert to change his routine. Two cardinals appear and build their nest with the twig, and lay their new eggs. Unable to retrieve his arm without harming the nest, he remains there, night and day, until the eggs hatch. While awaiting for the fledglings to gather their wings and fly, Albert is treated to the many possibilities that the outside world has to offer. After all the cardinals have finally abandoned the nest, it is a changed Albert that finally goes out for a walk and "spreads his own wings".

In her first picture book, Donna Jo Napoli invents a magical and inspiring tale that will capture the heart of any reader who has loved a pet. The introduction of the cardinals makes the story of an man afraid to venture out into today's

would easily accessible to children. Jim LaMarche creates an endearing character in Albert and a classic setting for the miraculous new world that unfolds around him. The use of colored pencils on textured paper creates a naturalistic scene where magical events seem perfectly possible.

Rick Estep, Media Director, HeavenBound Media Center

Box Turtle at Silver Pond Lane / by Susan Korman; illustrated by Stephen Marchesi. (Smithsonian's backyard.) LCCN 00022968. Norwalk, Ct.: Soundprints, 2001. HBB, 1568998600, \$15.95. Small children. Rating: 3

E. Box turtle; Turtles. 31 p.

Author Susan Korman and illustrator Stephen Marchesi have given parents an elegant and informative picture book about that wild animal which is the first one most children find on their own. *Box Turtle at Silver Pond Lane* gives a romanticized view of the lowly box turtle and it offers simple, unvarnished truth. The text speaks of the turtle as an animal and in a straightforward though pleasing way explains what turtles eat, how they protect themselves, their habits, and the dangers they face, in enough detail to satisfy the younger child. On the other hand, the

illustrations give the box turtle an almost magical glow in highlighting the beauty that God expends on even the lowliest of His creatures. *Box Turtle at Silver Pond Lane* is another in the Smithsonian's Backyard Series that describes the common wildlife found in close proximity to a child's home. For the five and under group, it should be the first book a parent reaches for upon hearing, "Hey, Mom, Dad! Look what I found!"

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

★

The Christmas cobwebs / by Odds Bodkin; illustrated by Terry Widener. LCCN 97025626. San Diego: Harcourt, 2001. HBB, 0152014594, \$16.00. Small children. Rating: 5

E. Christmas--Fiction; Spiders--Fiction; German Americans--Fiction. unsp.

A lowly shoemaker, his wife, and their three children make their home in a Chicago apartment, until a fire destroys everything except an old oak box containing blown glass ornaments from their home in Germany. When they look for another place to live, they find an old shack at the edge of town, filled with dust and cobwebs. They begin the necessary clean

R A T I N G S Y S T E M

- 5 The best you can find on this subject/area- buy even if you have a very small library/small budget
- 4 Very good, strong appeal - buy if you possibly can
- 3 Good, will be useful - buy if you have a bit more money
- 2 Pretty good, nice to add to complement other titles in an area - buy if you have a larger budget
- 1 Poor—Not necessary to purchase

★ Outstanding Book of Its Genre

A Note from the Editor: by Karen Brehmer



On Summer Reading

At the end of the school year, teachers are often asked, "What can we do over the summer, to help our child with reading?" Here I am with a couple, asking this question of me. I review the benefits of oral reading. I offer strategies to increase reading accuracy and comprehension. We discuss the importance of parent modeling and reading aloud to children. And then I stop, wondering why my head hurts and my heart aches.

I know the answer. My student, this struggling reader, is tired. Tired of feeling different, tired of fighting with himself to be better. He wants to be a good reader but he doesn't know why he has trouble. He thinks he might be improving but he knows he is still behind. These parents and I have persevered with him, and we've shared in the victories and defeats. We all want to find relief and joy for this child.

Joy of reading. That's it! My summer wish for struggling students

is that they will find excitement through stories; that they will develop a love of words, of books, of reading.

The better question for summer reading is "How can I get my child to love books?" The first step is to expose him/her to a variety of books.

This requires homework for the parents (or anyone recommending books to children). Using resources like the library catalog, this journal online, publisher or booksellers' summaries, readers can find a variety of interesting titles to match interests. Visits to the bookstore or library will clue parents in to what subjects their child enjoys.

Often older struggling readers reject books because stories matching their ability level seem too babyish. Thank goodness many publishers have non-fiction transitional reading series, presenting factual information in an easy to read format, leveled from preschool to about fourth grade.

Should parents allow children to read anything? Regarding offensive content, parents should trust their instincts and stand by their convictions when helping children pick books. Parents should read books before commenting on them. Restrictions must be made informatively; children need to know

the reasons a parent dislikes a book. This process helps teach children how use their own discretion when choosing books.

What if a child picks a book that is lacking in plot, or seems to have no literary quality? Or, what if it is obviously too easy for the reader? Should we allow these for summer reading? Yes, I say. Allow it, affirm it, but silently make it a goal to move that child on as quickly as possible! Find quality literature that has some of the same attraction as the lesser book, and introduce it to the child. If he has no interest in reading it on his own, read it aloud to him. He might be surprised, and he might just listen to your next book selection.

Teachers, parents, and librarians must see the struggle of matching books with children as a rewarding challenge. It is a hit or miss process, but when we make a connection, the child is never the same.

Summer is fast approaching - enjoy it! May you find a new joy in the books that are waiting for you.

up, but, when Mother goes to sweep the cobwebs from the rafters, Father stops her. He cannot bear for even a spider to be without a home. In preparation for Christmas, the family finds and cuts down a beautiful tree. Father must sell the precious ornaments to pay to replace the things lost in the fire. Although the children are sad that the only tree ornaments they will have are drops of melting snow, they are happy to be together for the holiday. Christmas Eve, as they sleep snug and cozy in their beds, the spiders descend from the rafters and begin to work on the tree. When the shoemaker and his family awaken Christmas morning, they are surprised and delighted to find softly woven angels, stars, and other ornaments decorating their tree.

The Christmas Cobwebs, written by Odds Bodkin, illustrated by Terry Widener, is a heartwarming fairy tale about an immigrant family who, despite adversity, make their home in a new country. The artwork, similar in style to Henry Hikes to *Fitchburg*, written and illustrated by D. B. Johnson (Houghton Mifflin Co., 2000), creates a comfy, old-fashioned story, using cutout figures and slightly muted shades. Although appropriate for preschoolers, first through third graders will more readily grasp concepts of working together and kindness repaid. Highly recommended for any collection.

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

***Cow in the dark* / Todd Aaron Smith. (Cow adventure series.) LCCN 2001273170. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2001. HBB, 0801044766, \$7.99. Small children. Rating: 4**

E. Cows--Fiction; Fear of the dark--Fiction. unip.

Lying in her stall, listening to the beginnings of a storm, Cow begins to get frightened. Finally she wakes up Pig. Unfortunately, Pig is no help; he thinks the noises sound like monsters outside the barn. Pig then wakes up Horse, who shrieks and wakes up Goat. As almost every animal in the barn wakes up, the noises grow scarier, the monsters become larger and more numerous. Finally, Cow is sent out of the barn with a lantern to locate the source of the noise. Gathering all of her courage (as the barn door slams behind her) Cow searches and discovers a gate rattling in the wind. There is no monster. When Cow returns to the barn to report her findings, the animals realize Sheep slept through the whole thing. Waking Sheep, they ask why she wasn't scared. Sheep informs the group, "God is bigger than anything that might be out in the dark."

Cow in the Dark by Todd Aaron Smith is part of the Cow Adventure Series. Fun illustrations work perfectly with the text to create an amusing story. Often, the story would not be as entertaining if the artwork did not so perfectly capture the look on the animals' faces. With "Eek, SLAM and BANG, BANG, BANG,"

filling the pages, this book is a great choice for reading aloud to a group of children. The message that we don't have to worry about scary things, because God is taking care of us, is always reassuring.

Elizabeth Coleman, Freelance Writer, Tumwater, Washington

***Cow makes a difference* / Todd Aaron Smith. (Cow adventure series.) LCCN 2001273167. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2001. HBB, 0801044758, \$7.99. Small children. Rating: 4**

E. Cows--Fiction; Zoos--Fiction. unip.

Standing by the fence and gazing out beyond her pasture, Cow is beginning to get some big ideas. Wanting to be more than just a cow, Cow decides to travel to the city zoo. Explaining her desire sends the zookeeper into gales of laughter.

No one comes to the zoo to see a cow, Cow is told. Sad, but not defeated, Cow disguises herself as various zoo animals in order to gain acceptance. Each time she dresses up like a different animal, Cow realizes she's not really cut out to be that animal. When she finally accepts God made her to be a cow, Cow's opportunity to make a difference is realized.

Part of the Cow Adventure Series, *Cow Makes a Difference* by Todd Aaron Smith will delight preschool and early elementary children. The colorful illustrations alone nearly sell the book. Smith has perfectly captured the expressions on each of the animals' faces, matching them exactly with the text. A solid Christian message, told in an easy to understand way. Learning that God made us and we can make a difference as ourselves is an important message for children.

Elizabeth Coleman, Freelance Writer, Tumwater, Washington

***Deena's lucky penny* / by Barbara deRubertis; illustrated by Joan Holub and Cynthia Fisher. (Math matters.) LCCN 98051117. New York: Kane Press, 1999. PAP, 1575650916, \$4.95. Small children. Rating: 2**

E. Money--Fiction; Birthdays--Fiction. 32 p.

While sitting on her front porch steps pondering the problem of not having money to buy her mom a birthday present, Deena finds a penny. She discovers that pennies add up to nickels and that nickels add up to dimes. She follows this process all the way to a dollar. At this point, Deena realizes she has enough money to buy her mom a present.

Deena's Lucky Penny, written for ages four to six, is colorful and clever. On the inside back cover readers will find a page entitled "Activities That Matter?" These activities support and extend both reading and math skills.

Author Barbara deRubertis and illustrators Joan Holub and Cynthia Fisher have filled *Deena's Lucky Penny* with practical math-related information and colorful, charming illustrations. Children will be drawn to Deena's dilemma and

will enjoy the trip to the Dollar Store with Grandma. Homeschool and classroom teachers will be impressed with the simplicity and clarity with which concepts are shared.

Dell Smith Klein, Writer, Teacher, Catalina, Arizona

***Ducktails* / rev. ed.; by Janette Oke; illustrated by Nancy Munger. (Animal Friend's Series) LCCN 000 11556. Minneapolis: Bethany House, 2001. PAP, 0764224506, \$5.99. Children. Rating: 5**

E. Ducks--Fiction; Parent and child--Fiction; Brothers--Fiction; Obedience--Fiction. 76 p.

***New kid in town* / rev. ed.; Janette Oke; illustrated by Nancy Munger. (Janette Oke's animal friends.) LCCN 00011554. Minneapolis: Bethany House, 2001. PAP, 0764224492, \$5.99. Small children. Rating: 5**

E. Skunks--Fiction; Friendship--Fiction. 75 p.

***This Little Pig* / rev. ed., by Janette Oke; illustrated by Nancy Munger. (Animal Friend's Series) LCCN 00011553. Minneapolis: Bethany House, 2001. PAP, 0764224484, \$5.99. Small children. Rating: 5**

E. Pigs--Fiction; Animals--Infancy--Fiction; Farm life--Fiction; Obedience--Fiction. 73 p.

Janette Oke's *Ducktails* relates the story from Quackery's point of view. The story follows Quackery and his brothers and sisters from their hatching and special name time through many stages of learning that help the baby ducks survive. The ducklings learn what water is, how to drink and eat, how to obey quickly, and how to avoid danger. They even learn how to swim underwater! Quackery, however, wants to learn everything as quickly as possible. One duckling brother, Zackery, decides that obeying is optional and tries to lead Quackery into thinking that disobedience is fun and shows independence and quicker learning. Should Quackery obey his folks or follow his brother and friends? What real danger is there in showing a little independence? This book gives a simple, but wise understanding of peer pressure, exploring questions like, "What happens when you give in?" and, "Why is obeying your parents best?"

New Kid in Town relates the story of Fuzzle the Skunk. Fuzzle's story begins with his learning to carefully follow Mom in a row with his brothers and sisters. But... poor Fuzzle is drawn away by all the good smells around and ends up exploring and becoming lost. Fuzzle ends up in a box that is carried far from his family and home. When an accident causes the box to break, Fuzzle escapes, but has to fend for himself. He finds a place to stay and finds food, but he cannot find friends. Everyone that sees young Fuzzle gets a strange expression on his or her face and backs away from him. Can Fuzzle overcome his loneliness? Can he be the kind of friend that makes others want to be his friend? Fuzzle finds out that God made him very special

and when he acts by instinct, he helps himself and others.

In *This Little Pig*, Janette Oke introduces Hiram the piglet. Hiram relates his story from his first remembrance, snuggling next to his mother and being pushed aside by a bully brother, Hawkins. From birth, Hiram and his bigger brother are in constant competition for food, adventure, and attention. No matter what Hiram does, Hawkins is the biggest pig of the litter. Then Hiram is chosen by the Little Girl as a special project, separated from his family, and fed special food, given training, and attention. Hiram feels special competing to be the best pig at the fair. But... Hiram still has to overcome the conflict with his brother. How can they learn to be friends? How can Hiram learn to get along with his family? This deals with one of the main problems children constantly experience, getting along with brothers and sisters. How can a child handle jealous feelings? Learn how Hiram accepts his brother as a friend, rather than a competitor.

These are charming tales, well-written, with lots of interesting details of animal life included. There is a moral dilemma included in each book and a positive conclusion reached by the animal characters. Each story's dilemma involves a problem that children are sure to face: peer pressure; making friends; sibling rivalry. Each book is written in the first person as if the storyteller is the baby animal explaining about his/her life. As a first chapter type book, the wording is kept simple enough to be easy to read, but not lose interest of the reader. Each book can be read separately, because the animal characters are different in each book. The books would also make superior read aloud books for kindergarten and first grade children. Nancy Munger's illustrations are colorful and expressive. Her animals look like something you would enjoy picking up to cuddle, somewhere between real and cartoon.

Paula Stewart Marks, School Principal, Bend, Oregon

★

***Elliot's bath* / written and illustrated by Andrea Beck. LCCN C009307656. Toronto: Kids Can Press, 2001. HBB, 1550748025, \$12.95. Small children. Rating: 5**

E. Toys--Fiction; Baths--Fiction. 32 p.

Elliot and Socks are excited about the big talent show tonight. They have rehearsed all week. The only thing left to do is paint the stage. Suddenly the show is in jeopardy. Socks falls off the ladder, splashing paint on both of them. Paisley immediately announces they need a bath and Beaverton encourages them to hurry, "before that paint dries." This is their first bath. They are surprised when they get so full of water they can't get out of the sink. With Beaverton and Paisley's help, Elliot and Socks finally escape the sink. But now they must get dry. First their friends roll them in towels. Then they

turn a fan on them, but that's too cold. They try a hair dryer, but that's too hot. Finally Elliot has a brilliant idea and they are hung on the clothesline to dry. The breeze and warm sun dry Elliot and Socks just in time to sing and dance in the talent show.

Elliot's Bath is another delightful tale of Elliot Moose and his friends by Andrea Beck. Young children will love Beck's colorful illustrations. A rubber ducky floats in the sink with Elliot and Socks. Beaverton dons a yellow slicker to push Elliot out of the sink. The little animals' wonderfully expressive faces convey their love and concern for one another. This is the fourth Elliot Moose picture book.

Barbara Bryden, Freelance Writer, Olympia, Washington

***The first bear in Africa* / Satomi Ichikawa. LCCN 99040061. New York: Philomel Books, Penguin Putnam, 2001. HBB, 0399234853, \$14.99. Small children. Rating: 3**

E. Lost and found possessions--Fiction; Grassland animals--Fiction; Toys--Fiction; Africa--Fiction. unp.

Meto and his family live in the African savanna with their animals. One day visitors arrive wearing lots of clothes, and carrying photographic machines. Meto shows the visitors his family and his goat and then the visitors leave. Suddenly, Meto realizes that the youngest visitor, a little girl, has left her animal behind. Meto does not know what the animal is, but he is sure that the little girl is missing the animal as much as he would miss his goat. Meto runs after the vehicle that took the visitors away. Taking shortcuts, Meto runs quickly through the savanna, meeting animal occupants of the savanna as he runs. First Meto comes upon the hippopotamus, then the lion, the elephant, and finally the giraffe. None of the animals recognizes this strange animal Meto is carrying with him, but all follow along as Meto races to find the young visitor before she leaves. Finally, Meto and the animals of the savanna reach the young girl just as she is about to board a plane to leave. The girl calls out, "My Bear, my bear." As the plane flies away, an old zebra wonders how a bear got to Africa because there are no bears in Africa. Meto is left with a red ribbon the girl has given him and a wonderful memory.

The First Bear in Africa is a story that illustrates that caring half way around the world is no different from caring here at home. The culture, location, and animals may be different but caring is the same. This book will help young children to see the similarities in different cultures as well as the differences. It is also a simply enjoyable story of animals that act like humans.

Satomi Ichikawa, though born in Japan, has lived and traveled all over the world including to Africa. Her familiarity with the African savanna shows in the detailed and colorful sketches that illustrate *The First Bear in Africa*. Satomi Ichikawa uses earth colors for the savanna, in

contrast with bright hues used for the clothing of Meto, his family, and the visitors.

Barbara Anne Wall, School Librarian System, Orange Ulster BOCES, Monroe, New York

***Franklin and Harriet* / written by Paulette Bourgeois; illustrated by Brenda Clark. LCCN C009316361. Toronto: Kids Can Press, 2001. HBB, 1550748742, \$10.95. Small children. Rating: 4**

E. Sharing--Fiction. 32 p.

Franklin the turtle likes to help his little sister, Harriet. He teaches her new things, plays games with her, and shares his toys most of the time. While playing outside, Harriet falls into the mud and begins to cry. To cheer her up, Franklin lets her play with his stuffed dog, Sam. At bedtime, Harriet doesn't want to give Sam up and begins to cry when Franklin tries to take Sam back. Giving in, Franklin allows Harriet to sleep with Sam, "only for tonight." When Sam's tail is pulled off the next morning, Franklin decides he does not like being an older brother and hides Sam in the back of his closet. Later, while out for a walk, Harriet begins to get tired and starts to cry. Franklin wishes he had brought Sam. Finally, Franklin has an idea. Wrapping his arm in a blanket and making noises, Franklin makes Harriet giggle. Franklin realizes it's not Sam that makes Harriet happy; it's her big brother.

Another in the series of popular Franklin books, *Franklin and Harriet* by Paulette Brougeois offers readers a good quiet time story with a lesson about sharing. Illustrator Brenda Clark's trademark drawings are warm and detailed. Readers already acquainted with Franklin will find the familiar characters comforting and will enjoy seeing how Franklin is adjusting to life as a big brother. Older siblings of every age can surely appreciate Franklin's reluctance to share his favorite toy.

Elizabeth Coleman, Freelance Writer, Tumwater, Washington

***Franklin's school treasury* / Paulette Bourgeois; Brenda Clark. LCCN C009322140. Toronto: Kids Can Press, 2001. HBB, 1550748777, \$15.95. Small children. Rating: 4**

E. Schools--Fiction. 128 p.

Previously published individually, *Franklin Goes to School*, *Franklin's School Play*, *Franklin's Class Trip*, and *Franklin's Neighborhood* are bound together in *Franklin's School Treasury*.

In *Franklin Goes to School*, Franklin the turtle is nervous about his first day at school; his tummy hurts, he can't write numbers like Rabbit and can't read like Beaver. However, with the help of his teacher, Mr. Owl, Franklin discovers he has a special talent.

Stage fright nearly gets the best of Franklin in *Franklin's School Play*. Preparing for the special performance, each student has a job. When Franklin keeps forgetting his lines, he

wants to give his part to Badger. Badger may know the lines, but she isn't loud enough to be heard in the back of the room. While trying to help Badger be louder, Franklin inadvertently solves his problem.

Mr. Owl's students are excited about touring the museum in *Franklin's Class Trip*. Franklin can't wait until Beaver informs him there are real dinosaurs inside. As excitement gives way to fear, Franklin has difficulty enjoying his field trip. Once Franklin realizes the truth about the dinosaurs, he relaxes and has fun.

The first project of the year is assigned in *Franklin's Neighborhood*. Each student must draw a picture of their favorite thing in their neighborhood. Franklin has so many favorites he has trouble choosing just one. Finally, Franklin realizes the best thing about his neighborhood isn't a thing at all.

Each pleasant story has a gentle lesson. Brenda Clark's distinctive color drawings are remarkably detailed. Nothing is overlooked, everything from the flies in Franklin's muffins to the gold braid on the costumes are part of each elaborate page. This volume by Paulette Bourgeois and Brenda Clark will provide preschoolers and early elementary age children with enough Franklin adventures to satisfy the biggest Franklin fans.

Elizabeth Coleman, Freelance Writer, Tumwater, Washington

***Freedom school, yes!* / Amy Littlesugar; illustrated by Floyd Cooper. LCCN 99049706. New York: Philomel Books, Penguin Putnam, 2001. HBB, 0399230068, \$16.99. Small children (Elementary). Rating: 5**

E. Mississippi Freedom Schools--Fiction; African Americans--Fiction; Schools--Fiction; Mississippi--Race relations--Fiction. unip.

During a time when Americans are standing united it's difficult to believe we once allowed prejudice and bigotry to divide us as a nation. This is why it's important books like *Freedom School, Yes!* by Amy Littlesugar need to get into the hands of our young up and coming decision-makers to ensure division will not happen again. The text flows well with Floyd Cooper's sensitive illustrations. Through Josie whose family boards the school's nineteen-year-old white teacher Annie, readers learn what it means to secure learning of the mind and of the heart. Josie learns of bravery: how stepping out of a comfort zone and stepping up to a challenge can change the world, one person at a time.

By compiling accounts of some who had participated in the 1964 Mississippi Summer Project, Littlesugar succeeds in capturing the thrill, awe, fear, and courage of that time. Without condemnation, without lecture, the author and illustrator gently reveal a history lesson that is both illuminating and revealing for young readers and adults alike.

Pam Webb, School Library Technician, Sandpoint, Idaho

***Growing like me* / Anne Rockwell; illustrated by Holly Keller. LCCN 99050548. San Diego: Silver Whistle, Harcourt, 2001. HBB, 0152022023, \$14.00. Small children. Rating: 4**

571.8. Growth. unip.

Growing Like Me is a factual book for young children, filled with simple and colorful illustrations sure to catch a child's eye. It is told through the voice of a small boy who explains that everything in the meadow, woods, and pond is growing and changing, just as he is. Caterpillars turn into butterflies, eggs hatch into robins, acorns become oaks, and lastly, his little brother will someday be a big boy—"just like me." As always, nature enthusiast Anne Rockwell's book is a delight to youngsters and provides valuable facts told in a way that can be easily understood. Highly recommended.

Ceil Carey, Public Librarian, Plainfield Public Library, Plainfield, Illinois

***Hello stars! : a sleepytime tale of God's loving presence* / by Sheila Walsh; illustrated by Deborah Maze. LCCN 2001026245. Euless, Tex.: WaterBrook Press, 2001. HBB, 1578563364, \$. Small children. Rating: 4**

E. God--Fiction; Stories in rhyme. unip.

When Sam's mommy tucks him in at night, she always talks to him about God and about how God watches over him and protects him. Sam is full of questions about God and sometimes, like the time he lost his teddy bear, he is not quite sure if God really loves him. One night he overhears his mother praying that God would show Sam that He does truly care for him. That night Sam realizes that God is like the stars overhead: even when hidden by clouds, they still watch over him.

Hello Stars! is a sweet and gentle book by singer and speaker Sheila Walsh that is perfect for putting a little one to bed. The illustrations by Deborah Maze are vibrant with nighttime colors and are a beautiful addition to the text. This book would be wonderful for beginning your own nighttime talks with your child and would be a springboard to many questions that youngsters (and adults sometimes too!) have about God and His love for them.

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

***I know the moon* / Stephen Axel Anderson; illustrated by Greg Couch. LCCN 99036027. New York: Philomel Books, Penguin Putnam, 2001. HBB, 039923425X, \$15.99. Small children. Rating: 4**

E. Animals--Fiction; Moon--Fiction. unip.

I Know the Moon is a captivating tale about imagination and remaining true to our unique visions. A group of nocturnal creatures gathers in a clearing to enjoy the beauty of the moon.

When the fox says, "I know the moon," and offers his interpretation of this beautiful nighttime feature (a swiftly running rabbit) the other animals disagree. One by one they state what the moon means to them. To the moth it is a cocoon; to the bullfrog, a lily pad—each creature relates the moon to what is important in his life, but none agrees that any interpretation is better than the next. When the owl suggests they ask the "Man of Science," the group journeys to his observatory on the hill. He explains what the moon really is. The night creatures are unwilling to accept this explanation, though, and head back to the clearing to consider what the moon really is.

Author Stephen Axel Anderson brings the story full-circle with the night creatures coming to terms with what the moon means to each of them. Greg Couch's bold illustrations, rendered in acrylic wash and colored pencil, nearly glow with moonlight as each spread features the unique vision of one of the night creatures. *I Know the Moon* celebrates imagination and individuality, but most importantly shows young readers the importance of considering someone else's view or interpretation. This title will make a welcome addition to story time collections, but is also a good story for one-on-one sharing.

Lisa Wroble, Library Assistant, Redford District Library, Redford, Michigan

***I wonder why* / by Lois Rock; illustrated by Christopher Corr. LCCN 00011438. San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 2001. HBB, 0811831698, \$14.95. Small children. Rating: 5**

E. Spirituality--Fiction; Stories in rhyme. unip.

I Wonder Why by Lois Rock celebrates the wonder every child feels when experiencing life. Christopher Corr's vivid, childlike, watercolor drawings create excitement, drawing the reader to turn the page. Questions like, "Do you think streams dream of going uphill? Does water get tired and just long to stand still?" appear on every page.

Each question is well thought-out and well written. Perhaps the book's weakness is that it does not answer the questions. However, a teacher or parent could use the book as a springboard to discussion.

I Wonder Why is suggested for ages 2 through 6. The illustrations are colorful and bring the story to life. However, some of the rhymes are difficult to read aloud. Even alone, a child would enjoy the bright drawings.

Dell Smith Klein, Writer, Teacher, Catalina, Arizona

***Kate can't wait* / Marilyn Eisenstein; paintings by Miranda Jones. LCCN C009322760. Toronto: Tundra Books, 2001. HBB, 0887765181, \$12.95. Small children. Rating: 3**

E. Patience--Fiction. 24 p.

Patience is not a virtue enjoyed by Kate Melinda Sue, who wants everything to happen right now. That is, until she moves to a new home in the country, where a friend helps Kate plant her very own strawberry plants. Through a variety of simple lessons reinforced by her mother and friend, and as she nurtures her plants, Kate discovers that patience is something she can cultivate, just like strawberries.

Kate Can't Wait, by Marilyn Eisenstein, is a simplistic moral tale illustrated with stylized, primary colored paintings by Miranda Jones. The tone of Jones' paintings change with the character's moods: from dark and stormy, to happy and cheerful. What the book lacks in quality of dialogue is made up for somewhat by the entertaining illustrations.

Virginia Schabel, *Writer, Shelton, Washington*

Meet the Barkers : Morgan and Moffat go to school / written and illustrated by Tomie dePaola. LCCN 00055355. New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, Penguin Putnam, 2001. HBB, 0399237089, \$13.99. Small children. Rating: 4

E. First day of school--Fiction; Schools--Fiction; Brothers and sisters--Fiction; Twins--Fiction; Dogs--Fiction. unip.

Twins Morgan and Moffat are excited for school to start. Moffat is the bossy sister, Morgan the quiet and observant brother. When school begins, they approach their first days quite differently. Morgie makes friends right away while Moffie receives gold stars for knowing all the right answers. Both end up loving school and before the story ends, the twins and the reader learn lessons about friendship and the importance of finding balance in life.

The illustrations in *Meet the Barkers* are typical for Tomie dePaola. Soft acrylic paintings with simple details bring charm to the all animal cast of characters. But, when compared to dePaola's *Strega Nona* and Bill and Pete series, the story line is weak, lacking direction. It is confusing, as scattered episodes are introduced on top of one another. In the end it does come together to make a point but the ride is somewhat tiring. Distracting too are the dogs names: Morgan and Moffat, abbreviated to Morgie and Moffie, being used repeatedly in the text. I had to keep stopping to remember who was who.

I needed a few readings to get comfortable with the story and like it for more than just the fact that Tomie dePaola was the author. The Welsh terriers are cute, as are all their animal friends, and the book would be a fun read aloud pick for young primary children. As it deals with sibling differences, friendship, and starting school, *Meet the Barkers* would be good as a springboard for student discussions.

There will be more Barker books, I am sure; time will tell if these lovable terriers are to become favorites like so many other dePaola characters.

Karen Brehmer, *Teacher, Sylvan Way Christian School, Bremerton, Washington*

Mim's Christmas jam / Andrea Davis Pinkney; illustrated by Brian Pinkney. LCCN 99006346. San Diego: Harcourt, 2001. HBB, 0152019189, \$16.00. Small children. Rating: 4

E. African Americans--Fiction; Christmas--Fiction; Family life--Fiction; Subways--New York (State)--New York--Fiction. unip.

Christmas is just around the corner, but spirits are low at the little house in Pennsylvania. Royce and Saraleen miss their father's whistling, they have no tree, and even thoughts of Mim's belly-hum jam don't animate the children for long. It just isn't Christmas without Pap.

Mim suggests they send a jar of her belly-hum jam to New York where Pap is working on the subway. She reminds the children that no one can make the jam sing inside your belly except for one's very own blood-kin, because the special ingredients include family pride and love for each other. Saraleen and Royce decorate the jar with a sprig of pine. It looks as fine as if it were store-bought at a mercantile.

Far away in New York City, Pap works hard swinging a pickax and lifting heavy rocks until his shoulders ache. But the pain in his heart is worse. He misses his family and longs to be with them for the holiday. Instead, the unwavering bosses assure Pap that he will be working as hard on Christmas. Just when it seems hopeless, Mim's belly-hum jam arrives and sweetens up the situation.

The award-winning husband and wife team of Andrea Davis Pinkney and Brian Pinkney have created a delightful holiday tale, rich with history and humor. Andrea Davis Pinkney's text charms with authentic dialogue that pleads to be read aloud. Brian Pinkney's scratchboard art illustrations are fluid and colorful – masterfully done.

An informative summary of the subway's construction is found at the beginning of the book. A recipe for Mim's Belly-hum Jam is included at the end. *Mim's Christmas Jam* offers a glance at an important historical moment, and the value of family love and support. It would be a good resource book for home or classroom.

Cathy M. Elliott, *Freelance Writer, Anderson, California*



The monster who ate my peas / written by Danny Schnitzlein; illustrated by Matt Faulkner. LCCN 2001021167. Atlanta: Peachtree, 2001. HBB, 1561452165, \$15.95. Small children. Rating: 5

E. Peas--Fiction; Food habits--Fiction; Monsters--Fiction; Stories in rhyme. unip.

In this first person account of a boy who will do just about anything to get out of eating his peas, a monster appears. Looking very much like an

oversized broccoli with octopus tentacles, he has several eyes, a tin can hat, shark teeth, and huge stinky feet. The monster offers to help... for a price. Each time he rescues the boy from having to eat his peas, the monster increases the price. When the fee becomes the boy's dog, he decides to brave the peas eating experience, and finds they aren't half bad. Monster defied, shrinks away into the trash can, until only a few eye-tentacles peek out from beneath the lid.

The Monster Who Ate My Peas, written by Danny Schnitzlein, illustrated by Matt Faulkner, resembles illustration styles of David McPhail (*Tinker and Tom and the Star Baby*; Little, Brown and Co., 1998) and Janet Stevens (*Tops and Bottoms*; Harcourt Brace and Co., 1995). Schnitzlein's first book, though nearly too Seuss-like in rhyme scheme, emerges full of action and fun. Faulkner's illustrations emerge in slightly drab and sinister colors that fit the narrow-escape-from-a-deal-with-the-devil theme. Most readers can relate to wanting to avoid dreaded experiences, until the avoidance becomes a greater dilemma than the original problem. Large characters with vivid expressions combine with the catchy story-rhyme to create an endearing tale for both reader and listener alike. Highly recommended for all libraries.

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

Mr. Putter and Tabby feed the fish / Cynthia Rylant; illustrated by Arthur Howard. LCCN 99050504. San Diego: Harcourt, 2001. HBB, 0152024085, \$14.00. Small children. Rating: 5

E. Cats--Fiction; Goldfish--Fiction. 44 p.

Mr. Putter and Tabby love visiting the fish store. Mr. Putter had fish as a child and watching the fish reminds him of when he was young. Tabby, his cat, loves excitement, and looking at fish makes Tabby feel twitchy and tingly. When Mr. Putter decides to bring home three goldfish, Tabby is so excited she can hardly stand it. Once the fish tank is set up, Tabby can't help but reach out a paw and bat at the fish. Mr. Putter tries many different things to get Tabby to stop batting at the fish. Nothing seems to help. Finally, Mr. Putter comes up with a solution. He offers the fish to his neighbor Mrs. Teaberry and her dog, Zeke. Fish do not make Zeke excited and Mrs. Teaberry is thrilled to help Mr. Putter.

Mr. Putter and Tabby Feed the Fish is the latest adventure in the Mr. Putter and Tabby series by Cynthia Rylant. Preschoolers and early readers will enjoy the amusing pencil and watercolor drawings by Arthur Howard. From Mr. Putter's exasperated expression to Tabby perched atop the bucket covering the fish tank, the drawings truly illustrate the text. A fine lesson in problem solving: Mr. Putter tries many different solutions before coming up with the one idea that really works.

Elizabeth Coleman, *Freelance Writer, Tumwater, Washington*

Oma's quilt / written by Paulette Bourgeois; illustrated by Stephane Jorisch. LCCN C009328580. Toronto: Kids Can Press, 2001. HBB, 1550747770, \$15.95. Small children. Rating: 4

E. Grandmothers--Fiction. 32 p.

It is time for Emily's Oma (grandmother) to say goodbye to the Maple Street house where she has lived most of her life. Boxes and boxes of her special things are stored in Mother's basement—Oma never threw anything away. When they arrive at Oma's new residence, Forest View Retirement Home, Mother and Emily take her on a tour of the grounds. But it seems they like it much better than does Oma.

When Emily comes to visit, she finds her grandmother sitting alone in her room. Oma doesn't like the food (lima beans twice a week), the flowers in the hall make her sneeze, and she is always too hot or too cold. She thinks the other old folks are nincompoops and nothing seems to make her happy.

Mother and Emily go through all the boxes and select what to keep and what to give away. Surrounded by the things that Oma loves, they reminisce about her life intertwined with their own. Suddenly, Emily has an idea to create a wonderful gift to remind Oma of Maple Street.

Oma's Quilt, by Paulette Bourgeois, is a poignant tale of an elderly woman's difficult life change and her family's caring attempt to provide comfort. Written in the present tense, the story is filled with rich description and is greatly enhanced by Stephane Jorisch's illustrations. Soft, whimsical watercolors dominate the mixed media artwork.

An obvious gift book for a quilter, *Oma's Quilt* would be a good teaching tool about change, family, and aging.

Cathy M. Elliott, Freelance Writer, Anderson, California

One lonely seahorse / [by Saxton Freymann and Joost Elffers]. LCCN 99033396. New York: Arthur A. Levine, Scholastic, 2000. HBB, 0439110149, \$15.95. Small children. Rating: 5

E. Counting; Friendship--Fiction; Sea horses--Fiction; Marine animals--Fiction; Stories in rhyme. 24 p.

Dr. Pompo's nose / written and illustrated by Saxton Freymann. LCCN 99059199. New York: Arthur A. Levine, Scholastic, 2000. HBB, 0439110130, \$15.95. Small children. Rating: 4

E. Nose--Fiction; Stories in rhyme. 24 p.

If Saxton Freymann and Joost Elffers were ever told, "Don't play with your food!" it didn't sink in. This may have annoyed their parents, but it's good news for those of us who have discovered this creative team and their unique approach to produce. Their first book, *How Are You Peeling?* introduces amazed readers to the idea that produce can be used to express feelings and emotions, using only their natural shapes and a

few cleverly placed black-eyed peas. Their next book, *One Lonely Seahorse*, uses an entire undersea world of coral, seaweed, fish, and other sea creatures, all made from produce, to teach children to count from one to ten. If you think counting books are a dime a dozen, be sure to take a look at this one. It even includes a pictorial index in the back, for those who want to try their hand at vegetable art!

The duo's most recent book, *Dr. Pompo's Nose*, has a plot reminiscent of many other picture books: main character Dr. Pompo finds an object and thinks it is someone's nose. Passersby make other suggestions—a gardening tool, a goat horn, a hearing aid—but in the end, Dr. Pompo is right—it is a nose. This may be a fairly common plot, but it's made interesting by its imaginative use of produce. This time, just in time for fall, the stars are pumpkins, whose bumps, wrinkles and deftly carved openings may cause you to forget by the end of the book that they are just vegetables. Whether you want to amuse a child, or creatively garnish your next relish tray, a book by Saxton Freymann and Joost Elffers will do the trick!

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

Our marching band / Lloyd Moss; illustrated by Diana Cain Blumenthal. LCCN 99037284. New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, Penguin Putnam, 2001. HBB, 0399233350, \$15.99. Small children. Rating: 3

E. Marching bands--Fiction; Bands (Music)--Fiction; Musical instruments--Fiction; Stories in rhyme. unpag.

When Mel Mackelroy wants to play the trumpet, and Belinda Blore (who lives next door) decides on a slide trombone, the reader knows there is fun around the corner. In *Our Marching Band* by Lloyd Moss, the neighborhood children team up to create their own marching band.

They understand that in order to become proficient, they must practice their instruments every day. And they do so, much to the chagrin of the complaining neighbors. The sounds are annoying, awful, and driving the neighbors insane. Still, the children continue to practice.

Little by little they improve until one day, the mayor herself proclaims they are simply grand and invites them to perform in the big Fourth of July parade. It seems not only the children have discovered practice makes perfect—the entire neighborhood has figured it out, too.

Lloyd Moss's charming story told in rhyme is a great vehicle to teach children about the various instruments in a marching band. It also teaches perseverance and the reward of accomplishing a goal. Diana Cain Blumenthal's illustrations are whimsical and full of movement. *Our Marching Band* provides a good resource for music instruction.

Cathy M. Elliott, Freelance Writer, Anderson, California

Pi-shu, the little panda / John Butler. Atlanta: Peachtree, 2001. HBB, 1561452424, \$15.95. Small children (Elementary). Rating: 4

E. Giant panda--Fiction; Pandas--Fiction; Animals--Infancy--Fiction; Endangered species--Fiction. unpag.

Pi-shu: the Little Panda combines facts with a fiction story to present both the infancy and the plight of the giant pandas. Pi-shu is born to Fei-Fei, his mother, in the Misty Mountains of central China. As he grows, his adventurous spirit brings him close to men who are cutting the forests to make more room for people. Pi-shu and his mother must then make a difficult journey to find a safer place.

Suitable for any type of library, the very readable text is good for reading aloud to younger groups, or for older children to enjoy by themselves. The luscious full-color paintings evoke feelings and well illustrate the facts that accompany the text. A Panda Facts page at the end gives more information on the Giant Panda and gives contact information for a conservation organization.

Pi-shu, the Little Panda is a quality piece artistically, textually, and ethically. As the book illustrates the mother-child relationship and the overcoming of obstacles, it provides an introduction for lessons on these ideas. An engaging and charming book, it should have strong reader appeal for children and those who work with them in any setting.

Betsy Ruffin, Librarian/Teacher, Cleburne, Texas

Polly Hopper's pouch / by Louise Bonnett-Rampersaud; illustrated by Lina Chesak-Liberace. New York: Dutton Children's Books, Penguin Putnam, 2001. HBB, 0525465251, \$14.99. Small children. Rating: 4

E. Kangaroos--Fiction. unpag.

Polly Hopper's Pouch by Louise Bonnett-Rampersaud tells the story of Polly Hopper, a curious kangaroo, who wonders about many things, especially what purpose her pouch could possibly serve. She notices that other animals: emus, rabbits, and dingoes, don't have pouches. She finds that it is not a good book bag, shopping bag, or flower basket. She is advised by an old kangaroo to wait and see. Eventually, Polly and her husband, Topper Hopper, have a baby, Minny Hopper. Now Polly knows exactly what her pouch is for— it is the perfect place to keep her baby safe and warm.

Illustrations by Lina Chesak-Liberace make this book special. The technique used is not indicated, but appears to be pencil drawings with watercolor painting. They contain action and detail, while remaining warm and inviting. The animals are anthropomorphized, as they wear hats, scarves, and carry handbags on shopping day.

The story and illustrations combine to make *Polly Hopper's Pouch* a charming book. Polly's

curiosity about everything is something with which all children will identify. The book portrays a traditional family unit and the loving care of parents.

Karla Castle, Public Services Librarian, Warner Pacific College, Portland, Oregon

Taking care of you / (Jay Jay the jet plane.)
Nashville: Tommy Nelson, Thomas Nelson, 2001. Vid, 0849977355, \$12.97. Small children. Rating: 3

E. Christian life--Fiction. 1 videocassette (35 min.): sd., col. : 1/2 in.

Taking Care of You includes three episodes of the popular Jay, Jay the Jet Plane video series. In "Wing Wigglin'," when Jay Jay realizes he'll have to do his exercises in front of his friends, he discovers that hiding what God wants us to be and do is wrong. In "Jay, Jay's New Wheels," when his old tires start wearing out, Jay Jay learns how important it is to take care of himself. Lastly, in "Dough-Nutty," when he's tempted by a box of doughnuts, Herky learns a lesson in self-control.

Taking Care of You continues the successful "Jay, Jay the Jet Plane" series with these fitting episodes. As in past videos, each of the stories not only shares an important insight into our relationship with God, but also backs those up with direct scripture reference. If your child enjoys "Jay, Jay" like mine, this video will offer hours of enjoyment!

Rick Estep, Media Director, HeavenBound Media Center, Middleburg, Florida.



The three little puppies and the big bad flea / by Ted Lish; illustrated by Charles Jordan. LCCN 00100359. Victorville, Calif.: Munchweiler Press, 2001. HBB, 0794000002, \$15.95; LIB, 0794000010, 16.95. Small children. Rating: 5

E. Folklore. unsp.

An outrageously fun parody of the Three Little Pigs, *The Three Little Puppies* by Ted Lish, illustrated by Charles Jordan, is a story brimming full of both laughter and lesson. A modernization of the classic folktale, we find three adorable girl puppies, leaving home with their mother's warning to watch out for the big bad flea. Of course the puppies pay no never mind to their mother's advice and each proceeds to build a home. And yes, predictably, two of the puppies are foolish in their selection of building material, while the wiser puppy builds a secure abode. However, this story's villain is pretty savvy, managing to easily enter the house and chase out the puppies. The ending is the true delight of the book, where the reader learns some valuable life lessons: there will always be adversity.

Pam Webb, School Library Technician, Sandpoint, Idaho

Too big, too small, just right / Frances Minters; illustrated by Janie Bynum. LCCN 98041010. San Diego: Harcourt, 2001. HBB, 0152021574, \$13.00. Small children. Rating: 4

E. English language--Synonyms and antonyms--Fiction; Rabbits--Fiction; Stories in rhyme. unsp.

Two rabbits meet such opposites as heavy and light, short and tall, many and few. The synonyms and antonyms with the story in rhyme help children understand the differences. Each opposite ends with a "just right" that is connected to friendship.

Chosen as a Children's Book-of-the-Month Club selection, *Too Big, Too Small, Just Right* is a book both children and parents will enjoy. Author Frances Minters lives with her husband in Florida, where in summer the weather is sometimes too hot. Janie Bynum's digital pen-and-ink and watercolor illustrations lend lots of color and vibrancy in creating a pleasant feeling as one moves through the opposites. She lives with her family in Michigan, where in winter the weather is sometimes too cold. A delightful title for all homes, this book is also a fine addition to preschools and libraries.

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

What's the time, Grandma Wolf? / written and illustrated by Ken Brown. LCCN 2001002263. Atlanta: Peachtree, 2001. HBB, 1561452505, \$15.95. Small children. Rating: 4

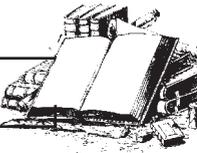
E. Wolves--Fiction; Animals--Infancy--Fiction. unsp.

Grandma Wolf has just moved into the forest, and all of the animals are curious about this mean, scary looking creature. As they creep closer to her home, they take turns calling out to inquire about the time. Grandma Wolf answers each of them, step-by-step, as she begins the preparations for the daily meal. Finally, when she is busy stirring the bubbling stew water, the animals gain the courage to stand just inside her doorway to inquire about the time. She turns toward them and yells, "It's dinnertime!" The reader prepares to see Grandma Wolf capture the animals and add them to her pot. In a surprise ending, the tables are turned. Instead of trying to devour the forest crew, Grandma Wolf invites them to join her for vegetable stew and reads them their favorite stories.

What's the Time, Grandma Wolf? written and illustrated by Ken Brown, is based on the game, *What's the time, Mr. Wolf?* where children begin to learn how to tell time through play. Other authors have published their version of this tale. In the popular account entitled, *What's the Time, Mr. Wolf?* (Houghton Mifflin, 1999), Mr. Wolf tries to lure the naive forest creatures into being his meal, but, in the end, is, instead, outsmarted by them. Brown's version, starring Grandma Wolf, becomes a delightful storytelling experience for preschoolers, either one-on-one, or in story time groups, with a wide

open opportunity for drama and voice play. The watercolor illustrations, a mixture of clear characters and murky backgrounds, provide a three-dimensional quality to the pages. Recommended for all preschool collections.

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



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Amelia Earhart : young air pioneer, rev. ed. / written by Jane Moore Howe; illustrated by Cathy Morrison. (Young patriots.) LCCN 98001655. Carmel, Ind.: Patria Press, 1999. HBB, 1882859011, \$14.95; PAP, 1882859049, \$9.95. Elementary. Rating: 5

F. Earhart, Amelia, 1897-1937--Fiction; Air pilots--Fiction. 112 p.

William Henry Harrison : young Tippecanoe, rev. ed. / written by Howard Peckham; illustrated by Cathy Morrison. (Young patriots.) LCCN 99047881. Carmel, Ind.: Patria Press, Patria Press, 2000. HBB, 1882859030, \$14.95; PAP, 1882859073, \$9.95. Elementary. Rating: 5

F. Harrison, William Henry, 1773-1841--Childhood and youth--Fiction; Presidents--Fiction. 112 p.

Lew Wallace : boy writer, rev. ed. / written by Martha E. Schaaf; illustrated by Cathy Morrison. (Young patriots.) LCCN 00012236. Carmel, Ind.: Patria Press, Patria Press, 2001. HBB, 1882859057, \$14.95; PAP, 1882859065, \$9.95. Elementary. Rating: 5

F. Wallace, Lew, 1827-1905--Childhood and youth--Fiction; Authors, American--Fiction; Statesmen--Fiction. 112 p.

Authors Jane Moore Howe, Howard Peckham and Martha E. Schaaf bring history alive to readers in this young patriot series. Amelia Earhart, William Henry Harrison, and Lew Wallace are shown as a young children full of life, curiosity, and spirit. They are portrayed as real people, facing many of the same temptations and predicaments that young people today face. However, morality and integrity shine through these characters as they choose to admit wrong or face consequences of negative behavior rather than dodge the truth and escape punishment. Amelia Earhart teaches young readers not to be limited by physical constraints. Despite being female, she follows her heart and does what matters most to her. The same is true with Lew Wallace and William Henry Harrison. These two began down different paths vocationally than where they eventually ended up. However, as with Amelia Earhart, they followed their desires on the inside and it made all the difference in their lives.

The authors interject historical fact with fiction, allowing the story to be interesting as well as educational for the reader. Young minds will be challenged to dream big, act with integrity, and follow their dreams just as Amelia Earhart, William Henry Harrison, and Lew Wallace did.

Illustrator Cathy Morrison uses pictures to fuel the imagination of the reader. Although not in color, each illustration does have a caption to correspond to the text. In the front of the book there is also a list of illustrations corresponding page number.

Each book is filled with interesting historical anecdotes that will teach as well as entertain. The moral fiber of the books is high with frequent references to God, patriotism, and devotion to family. These books fill a void by offering accurate, moral accounts of historical figures young people can learn about and emulate.

Eileen Zagarlicke, Freelance Writer & Editor, Grand Forks, North Dakota

Ben, king of the river / written by David Gifaldi; illustrated by Layne Johnson. (A concept book.) LCCN 00010522. Morton Grove, Ill.: Albert Whitman, Albert Whitman, 2001. HBB, 0807506354, \$14.95. Elementary. Rating: 5

F. Brothers--Fiction; Mentally handicapped--Fiction; Camping--Fiction. unpag.

Chad, the narrator of *Ben, King of the River*, tells the story of his little brother, Ben, who is disabled, and a camping trip. Ben, who loves videos, has never been on a camping trip. Chad worries that he won't have fun with Ben along, because Ben wears diapers, has allergies, and doesn't like new things. The family sets up camp and immediately problems begin. Ben wants to watch videos. He is afraid of bugs. Some boys make fun of him. Chad deals with each event, sometimes acting as protector, and sometimes acting annoyed or embarrassed.

Author David Gifaldi and illustrator Layne Johnson provide a realistic look at living with a developmentally disabled sibling.

At the end of the book, Gifaldi shares a note from thirteen-year-old Josh Keys, whose brother, Paul, is disabled. Josh writes about the disadvantages of having a disabled brother and about the advantages. He ends with the words, "Overall, I really like having Paul as a brother. And I love him very much."

Also, at the end of the book, the author provides a page containing tips for living with a disabled brother or sister. One of these tips even includes a web page for children with disabled brothers or sisters.

The book will appeal to families with disabled youngsters. Also, teachers, social workers, and children's workers will be able to use this book to teach kindness toward the disabled. It is well

written, clear, and would be a fine addition to any library.

Even non-readers will enjoy Layne Johnson's bright and colorful illustrations. The cover, showing Ben wearing his bright yellow towel "cape" while standing on a hill top overlooking a beautiful river, is especially poignant.

David Gifaldi and Layne Johnson have given children a realistic, compassionate look at living with the disabled.

Dell Smith Klein, Writer, Teacher, Catalina, Arizona

The biggest fish in the lake / written by Margaret Carney; illustrated by Janet Wilson. LCCN C009317937. Toronto: Kids Can Press, 2001. HBB, 1550747207, \$15.95. Elementary. Rating: 4

F. Fishing--Fiction; Grandfathers--Fiction. 32 p.

Every child who has ever wondered what it is like to go fishing will enjoy the fishing trip the girl in *The Biggest Fish in the Lake* takes with Grandpa.

She begins practicing with the new spinning rod she receives for her birthday. At last, spring arrives and she is ready. She and Grandpa set out on their fishing trip. They fish all day, but she doesn't catch a big bass. Early in the morning, she goes down alone to the dock hoping to catch a bass as big as the one grandpa caught the previous day. She casts out and something huge takes the bait.

Margaret Carney's tale of the girl and her grandpa is peppered with poetic phrases like, "through deep green woods perfumed with pine," "sending rings of ripples across the glassy surface," and "The lake was like smooth gray satin." Carney brings to life the thrills of fishing and the ideal closeness of grandchild with grandparent.

Janet Wilson's illustrations are so genuine, the reader is left feeling they could recognize those characters if they met them on the street. The illustrations enrich the story and make *The Biggest Fish in the Lake* a book that will be enjoyed by children, their parents, and grandparents.

Dell Smith Klein, Writer, Teacher, Catalina, Arizona

Escape from the forbidden matrix / Marshal Younger. (Adventures in Odyssey; 2.) LCCN 2001270433. Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale House, Tyndale House, 2001. PAP, 1561799289, \$4.99. Elementary. Rating: 5

F. Christian life--Fiction; Video games--Fiction. 74 p.

Adapted from the popular radio program, *Adventures in Odyssey*, *Escape from the Forbidden Matrix*, written by Marshal Younger, chronicles how two twelve-year-old boys become trapped in a video-game matrix. Like other adaptations of *Adventures in Odyssey*, this book entertains as well as teaches biblical principles in an area that consumes most young boys.

Bored with the mundane video games, Dylan Taylor is enchanted by the proposition to enter his favorite video game and play it in virtual reality. He talks his friend Sal into joining him and soon the two are swinging on vines and fighting off the deadly invasion of Insectoids. Once he beats the game, however, Dylan wants a greater challenge. Warned by Eugene Meltsner, the virtual reality creator, not to remove a certain sensor, Dylan does just that and the two boys find themselves plunged into the depths of a video game matrix. With the help of a prisoner of the video matrix, the boys do finally escape, but not without learning a valuable lesson of the danger of becoming absorbed in video game play.

Marshal Younger does a good job of bringing the radio drama to the printed page. The obvious theme of wasting time playing video games is reinforced continually through a series of adventures. The book, short enough not to overwhelm readers, uses humor and action to compel even reluctant readers to read quickly to see what happens next. Most young boys will relate to the plot and enjoy the opening pages of the text and the adventures of the Exterminator. This book will show young people there are alternatives to video gaming and encourage them to explore worlds outside the video arena.

Eileen Zygarlicke, Freelance Writer & Editor, Grand Forks, North Dakota

***In search of the great white tiger* / by Sheila Walsh; illustrations by Don Sullivan. (Gnoo Zoo; 1.) LCCN 00068523. Euless, Tex.: WaterBrook Press, WaterBrook Press, 2001. HBB, 157856333X, \$14.95. Elementary. Rating: 5**

F. Conduct of life--Fiction; Merry-go-round--Fiction. unip.

★

***Chattaboonga's chilling choice : a lesson about fear* / by Sheila Walsh; illustrations by Don Sullivan. (Gnoo Zoo; 2.) LCCN 2001023768. Euless, Tex.: WaterBrook Press, WaterBrook Press, 2001. HBB, 1578563347, \$9.99. Elementary (Small children). Rating: 5**

F. Conduct of life--Fiction; Merry-go-round--Fiction; Obedience--Fiction. unip.

The Gnoo Zoo carousel exists to delight any boy or girl who comes by and turns the golden key. However at night the carousel animals, led by Big Billy the Panda, are set free from the carousel poles and come to life. One night the evil and ugly Reptillion attacks and threatens to

enslave the Gnoo troop but they are all marked by the pawprint of the Great White Tiger and belong to him, so Reptillion kidnaps Boongachatta, one of the monkey twins, eats the golden key and leaves the dastardly Creepshaw to watch over the rest of the animals. Can they escape from Creepshaw, find the key to restore the carousel and rescue Boongachatta? Lou the Dog, an angel representative of the Great White Tiger, helps them but they must follow instructions to the letter to accomplish their mission. As they brave a sea voyage, a cliff, a cave, and a maze, will they trust the Tiger's instructions and believe that he is faithful to help them as they go in search of the great white tiger?

In *Chattaboonga's Chilling Choice* the Gnoo Zoo team is still on the trail of the golden key so that they can free the other animals who are stuck to the carousel poles where they are being terrorized by Reptillion. They have been told to follow the pawprints of the Great White Tiger, but they are leading into a dark forest. Chattaboonga, the other monkey twin, is fearful that Reptillion is being every rock and she does not want to go into the forest. She decides to head for a meadow instead. But her disobedience had led her to the very thing she feared and now she is in Reptillion's clutches. Will she be able to get free? Will the Great White Tiger help, even though she did not trust him?

Sheila Walsh has done a fantastic job of allegorizing a child's walk with Christ in this inventive and fun to read new series. Children will be guaranteed to be caught away by the fun storylines and will easily draw the parallels between the Great White Tiger and Jesus, thus seeing themselves in the situations in which the Zoo animals find themselves. The gorgeous illustrations by Don Sullivan are fanciful and full of eye-popping colors. They are a wonderful addition to the story. Note: two more episodes are due out in 2002 and there is a traveling production company with performs the stories for audiences of children, young and old.

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

Hitting glory : a baseball bat adventure / Robert Skead. (A baseball bat adventure.) Grand Island, Neb.: Cross Training Publishing, Cross Training Publishing, 2001. PAP, 1929478305, \$6.99. Middle school. Rating: 3

F. Baseball--Fiction; Gehrig, Lou--Fiction. 119 p.

When eleven-year-old Lou Gibson is kept after school for laughing at a teacher, he finds an old baseball bat in a dusty storeroom. The baseball-obsessed Lou, knowing that Yankees great Lou Gehrig attended the school, becomes convinced the bat is his.

Lou, a chunky, short, boy, is wistfully anxious to be popular, but most kids ignore him. Justin Rivers torments him. But then, Lou's easy to

tease. He's quiet, with little self-confidence. His mother works two jobs (Lou's father is dead), but Lou still wears shabby second-hand clothes. He longs to be great at baseball—but his nickname's "Foul Tip." Then he uses the Gehrig bat in a game... and gets hits at every at bat.

Robert Skead has created a likeable hero, and *Hitting Glory* is a fun read. Lou uses logic, persistence, (and a computer) to discover if the bat is Gehrig's—and valuable. But there's a dilemma. If it's Gehrig's bat and Lou breaks it, it becomes worthless. If he doesn't use it, he can't hit. Is the money more important? Is winning? And why, exactly, does Lou want to win? The dilemma is nicely portrayed, as are the consequences of Lou's disobeying his mother (she forbids him to use the bat), and his cocky rudeness during his hitting streak.

The book is simply written, suitable for the younger end of the eight to twelve group, and there are nice lessons on forgiveness, self-control, and trusting God. But Justin's bullying is intense, and the way Lou "tingles" when holding the bat, and his enormous successes with it, can be mistaken for magic. A more serious problem: the editing is sloppy. Some phrasings are awkward, and there are many typos. But overall the book is pleasant and engaging. Boys and girls should easily identify with Lou.

Rosemarie DiCristo, Freelance Writer, The Bronx, New York

***It's Justin time, Amber Brown* / Paula Danziger; illustrated by Tony Ross. (A is for Amber.) LCCN 99089396. New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, Penguin Putnam, 2001. HBB, 0399234705, \$12.99. Elementary. Rating: 4**

F. Clocks and watches--Fiction; Time--Fiction; Birthdays--Fiction; Best friends--Fiction. 48 p.

Amber is turning seven. She has learned to tell time and wants a watch for her birthday. Amber's friend Justin Daniels promises to come over to play ball in "three minutes," but arrives half an hour later. Amber places great importance on time and being on time, so Justin's tendency to not worry about time schedules irritates Amber. Amber gets the much desired watch for her birthday and learns that Justin was late because he was busy making her a birthday card. Amber learns to accept that Justin can be on "Justin Time" and she can be on Amber Brown Time.

It's Justin Time, Amber Brown by Paula Danziger is a "flash back" volume in a popular series about Amber Brown, a spunky and delightful girl. This story sets the main plot about time and acceptance of differences amid common aspects of life, such as Amber's affection for her stuffed gorilla, playing ball, anticipating her birthday, her Mom getting her hair dyed, and having pizza for dinner, which will help the reader to identify with Amber. The

illustrations by Tony Ross are action packed and add detail to the story.

Karla Castle, Public Services Librarian, Warner Pacific College, Portland, Oregon

Koala country : a story of an Australian eucalyptus forest / by Deborah Dennard; illustrated by James McKinnon. (Wild habitat series.) LCCN 00023166. Norwalk, Ct.: Soundprints, Soundprints, 2001. HBB, 1568998872, \$15.95. Children. Rating: 3

F. Koala--Fiction; Zoology--Australia--Fiction. 32 p.

Young readers will enjoy learning about life in a eucalyptus forest as they observe a day's activities along with a baby koala and his mother. Deborah Dennard uses a story quality to show how the koalas spend quiet, restful days and become more active at night. From the safety of a red gum tree, the joey rides piggyback on the mother koala's back and both watch as python scares wallabies, parrots, and an echidna as it chases a bush rat, which becomes its dinner. As night descends, the koalas watch a flying fox feeding, a possum family on the move, and two male koalas vying for territory. The joey slowly takes steps for independence, learning how to react to dangers lurking both night and day.

James McKinnon's illustrations are bold and detailed. Readers will enjoy studying the scenes to find all the facts mentioned in the text. The book concludes with factual notes on the setting for the story—New South Wales and the Eucalyptus Forest where koalas live. A visual glossary in the form of a foldout double spread includes fifteen plants and animals readers will enjoy finding in the glossary spread as well as throughout the book.

Lisa A. Wroble, Library Aide/Freelance Writer, Plymouth, Michigan

Loon summer / written by Barbara Santucci; illustrated by Andrea Shine. LCCN 00055097. Grand Rapids: Eerdman's Books for Young Readers, Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2001. HBB, 0802851827, \$16.00. Elementary. Rating: 3

F. Divorce--Fiction; Fathers and daughters--Fiction; Loons--Fiction; Birds--Fiction. unsp.

Rainie is spending the summer at the cottage with her father, like she's done every year. The only difference is that this year, Mom is not with them. In *Loon Summer*, Rainie learns what part of her life will be the same as when her parents were together, and which parts will be different. As she watches two loons and their offspring in the lake by their cottage, Rainie comes to understand the divorce of her parents and learns to move forward in building a life with her father.

Barbara Santucci tells a gentle tale that focuses on Rainie's feelings and how she parallels her life with the lives of the loon couple. The text is tightly written, getting to the essence of the

story—Rainie's emotions in coming to terms with a difficult time for any family. Christopher Award winner, Andrea Shine blends watercolor and cut paper for beautiful illustrations that add to the peaceful quality of the story. *Loon Summer* is a perfect book for sharing with a child trying to understand the changes resulting from divorce. The tone of the story is calming, and Rainie finds the loons a good example to compare and contrast her family's new life. Because the underlying message is that parents—whether together or apart—love their children, this book will be good to share even if divorce is not an issue.

Lisa Wroble, Library Assistant, Redford District Library, Redford, Michigan

★

My life as a cowboy cowpie / Bill Myers. (The incredible worlds of Wally McDoogie.) LCCN 00054628. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, Thomas Nelson, 2001. PAP, 084995990X, \$5.99. Elementary. Rating: 5

F. Dude ranches--Fiction; Ranch life--West (U.S.)--Fiction; West (U.S.)--Fiction; Interpersonal relations--Fiction; Christian life--Fiction; Humorous stories. 128 p.

Wally McDoogie has been nearly everything—but a cowpie! Yuck! Wally is spending part of the summer at a dude ranch with two of his friends, but he has just tripped into what a cow leaves behind. He is having a horrible summer. The owner of the dude ranch, Cowboy Roy, seems to hate him and "Charmin'" Chad Diamond is after Wally's friend Wall Street, and she is falling for the handsome teen. If it weren't bad enough already, now Wally's role in the Parents' Day Rodeo is that of clown. Wally is planning revenge on everyone! Soon, Wally learns to be more understanding of Cowboy Roy after a conversation with Mrs. Cowboy Roy, and he overhears Chad planning on breaking Wall Street's heart. Will he and his other friend Opera be able to stop Chad and will they stop short of vengeance?

Bill Myers scores once again with the constantly humorous and entertaining *My Life as a Cowboy Cowpie*. The book moves briskly along. The conversations are too realistic and funny for words and Wally's imagination will keep the reader laughing. Children will love the pace, the story, and the humor, while at the same time, master storyteller Myers brings home the message about not taking your own revenge but living every aspect of your life as a Christian.

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

The Rundelstone of Oz / by Eloise Jarvis McGraw; illustrated by Eric Shanower. San Diego: Hungry Tiger Press, 2001. HBB, 1929527047, \$24.95. Children (Middle school). Rating: 4

F. Fantasy.

Eloise McGraw brings her writing skills to her last novel, *The Rundelstone of Oz*. The Troopadoors, led by the blustering Maestroissimo, find themselves giving a performance at the Great Hall of Whitheraway Castle. The performance is the direct request of the mysterious Slyddwyn the Whitherd, who is certainly up to trickery of more than one kind. When Poco, the little marionette with more heart than brain, wakes up finding himself as a cuckoo in a clock, and his companions all gone, he knows that he must discover Syddwyn's intentions. And in his search for behind Syddwyn's secretive ways, Poco tries to discover what Syddwyn has done with his friends. The key to all is finding the Rundelstone. Yet it seems Poco isn't the only one searching for it. Who will find it first, and who will unlock its secrets will keep readers eagerly reading till the endpage.

Three time Newberry Honor author Eloise McGraw brings back the characters she created with her daughter, Lauren Lynn McGraw, in *The Forbidden Fountain of Oz*. This is the author's third Oz book, the other being, *Merry Go Round in Oz*. The author's love for Oz is evident as she captures the fun and fantasy of the land Frank L. Baum created so very long ago. Veteran Oz illustrator Eric Shanower liberally decorates the story's pages in true Ozian fashion. For those who don't wish Oz to end, then this is a certain addition to their collection.

Pam Webb, School Library Technician, Sandpoint, Idaho

The secret of Sagawa Lake / Mary Labatt. (Sam, dog detective; 6.) LCCN C009328572. Toronto: Kids Can Press, Kids Can Press, 2001. HBB, 1550748874, \$12.95; PAP, 1550748890, \$4.95. Elementary. Rating: 1

F. Dogs--Fiction; Mystery and detective stories. 128 p.

Author Mary Labatt creates a talking dog in her series Sam, Dog Detective. Only her owner Jenny can "hear" Sam's thoughts, a slight takeoff on the well-known Wishbone series. In *The Secret of Sagawa Lake*, Sam's owner, ten-year-old Jenny, Jenny's family, and her best friend Beth head for a vacation to Sagawa Lake where they are renting a cabin from Old Harry. As they get ready to cross the lake to their island cabin, Harry warns the girls to beware of the monster of Sagawa Lake.

After discovering an old diary that refers to the monster, the girls and Sam look for clues to the monster's existence. While searching the island by boat, they stumble upon a cave where they see web prints in the sand. Exploring the cave, the threesome sees froglike creatures in the water and illuminated streaks of light. Convinced they have found the monster, the three try to decide what to do about their discovery. After a series of misadventures, the trio realizes the monsters are really microbiologists studying the underwater regions of Sagawa Lake.

Mysteries are always intriguing, and author Mary Labatt has the formula for a winning mystery for children. However, one-dimensional characters and a weak plot work against that formula to produce a rather disappointing read. Sam, the main character, shows disregard for others and uses sarcasm freely. In a scene where the father puts a doggie life preserver on Sam, the dog responds with, "Do I look stupid or something? I should bite this guy." Rather than teaching children to honor parents and those in authority, the characters do just the opposite. Troy Hill-Jackson's small illustrations at various breaks in the book, though good, are merely an adornment rather than an enhancement.

Eileen Zygarricke, Freelance Writer & Editor, Grand Forks, North Dakota

★

Seeker's great adventure / by Dian Layton; illustrations by Al Berg. (Adventures in the kingdom; 1.) Shippensburg, Pa.: Mercy Place Ministries, Destiny Image Publishers, 2000. PAP, 0967740215, \$4.99. Elementary. Rating: 5

F. Dragons--Fiction; Adventure stories. 53 p.

★

Rescued from the dragon / by Dian Layton; illustrations by Al Berg. (Adventures in the kingdom; 2.) Shippensburg, Pa.: Mercy Place Ministries, Destiny Image Publishers, 2000. PAP, 0967740223, \$4.99. Elementary. Rating: 5

F. Dragons--Fiction; Adventure stories. 58 p.

Dian Layton writes two delightful fantasy tales about a child named Seeker who lives in an invisible kingdom ruled by the Great King. In *Seeker's Great Adventure*, Seeker resists attending the Celebration in the Great Throne Room hosted by the Great King. He does not yet know the Great King and would rather spend his time in Carnalville. Seeker's mom, Contentment, insists that Seeker attend the banquet. Seeker is in for a great surprise. On the day of the celebration, Seeker joins his friends Hopeso, Knowso, Yes, Giggles, Gladness, Glee, and Dawdle. At first, Seeker is bored... just as he expected. When, suddenly, the Great King looks him in the eye, smiles, and winks. That wink is the beginning of a great relationship.

In *Rescued from the Dragon*, Seeker and his friends notice that the Great King seems sad and distracted. When they question their friend, they find he is concerned about the village Greed, because the inhabitants have no relationship with the Great King as a ferocious dragon deceives them. Seeker and his friends tell the King to send a great army to conquer the dragon. The Great King smiles and agrees. Wait until Seeker "and company" discover that THEY are the army the Great King is counting on.

Children will find this series full of exciting adventures that easily hold their interest. Dian Layton writes in the style of C. S. Lewis, but a little more light hearted. The messages are clear and appropriate. The author does a wonderful job in portraying Jesus as a Great King that laughs, plays, and loves children. An accessible Jesus.

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

Stopping to home / Lea Wait. LCCN 00028373. New York: Margaret McElderry Books, , 2001. HBB, 0689838328, \$16.00. Elementary (Middle school). Rating: 3

F. Orphans--Fiction; Brothers and sisters--Fiction; Widows--Fiction; Maine--History--1775-1865--Fiction.

Spring comes to Maine in 1806, but this new season brings sorrow instead of hope to eleven-year-old Abbie and four-year-old Seth. They are now orphans, once their mother succumbs to smallpox, and with no word of their seafaring father they are without a home. They find themselves temporarily housed at Widow Chase's, where Abbie earns their stay as housekeeper. Despite the care and fine surroundings, Abbie and Seth are uncertain where home might be, especially when they learn of their father's fate. As the year comes to pass Abbie and Seth have grown in many ways, and find that a stopping place can often become a home, and a family can extend beyond just a mother and father.

Lea Wait has written a commendable novel about grief, grace, and growing in *Stopping To Home*. Through the combination of careful attention to detail and full characterization, the author provides a story rich in historical setting and emotional impact. Readers who like historical fiction with noteworthy characters should consider this novel.

Pam Webb, School Library Technician, Sandpoint, Idaho

Westward to home : Joshua's diary / by Patricia Hermes. (My America.) LCCN 00044666. New York, Scholastic/Scholastic, 2001. 0439112095, HBB, \$8.95. Elementary. Rating: 2

F. Overland journeys to the Pacific--Fiction; Frontier and pioneer life--West (U.S.)--Fiction; West (U.S.)--Fiction; Diaries--Fiction; 108 p.

Joshua is so excited he can hardly contain himself as he prepares to leave St. Joseph, Missouri in March of 1848 to cross the continent to a new home in Oregon. But will Oregon really seem like home? Finally the day arrives and Joshua, his parents, sister Becky, Grandpa, and his Uncle's family all join the wagon train heading west. The first few days are exciting, but as the monotony of the trail and weariness set in Joshua begins having second thoughts about whether Oregon will ever seem like home.

Author Patricia Hermes has chronicled Joshua's trip *Westward to Home: Joshua's Diary The*

Oregon Trail, 1848 in this her latest addition to the popular My America series of diaries. Her focus is unusual in that rather than an account of the chores and sights of the trip west, she zeroes in on Joshua's concerns and his relationships with the travelers around him. Readers who are hoping for a detailed description of the trail in the 1840's and the supplies and skills needed to cross the plains may be disappointed. However, for those who are more interested in how a young boy might react to humdrum life on the trail *Joshua's Diary* will be a pleasant surprise.

As with others in this series, the book is written in diary format, easy to read for young readers, and contains some historical notes and pictures at the end.

Judy Driscoll, retired teacher, Poulso, Washington

What a trip, Amber Brown / Paula Danziger; illustrated by Tony Ross. (A is for Amber.) LCCN 99055555. New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, Penguin Putnam, 2001. HBB, 0399234691, \$12.99. Elementary. Rating: 4

F. Vacations--Fiction. 48 p.

The Brown and Daniels families are going on vacation together. Amber and Justin can hardly wait to have fun. They find a tire swing, a swimming pool, and a tree house. Justin plays too rough in the swimming pool and makes Amber angry. She tries to stay mad at Justin, but he apologizes and he is so much fun that she can't stay mad. Amber and Justin plan to have a "sleep-out" with their dads. The "sleep-out" involves a campfire, singing, ghost stories, and sleeping in a tent. Danny, Justin's little brother is too young to be included. Danny solves that problem by sneaking out to join them in the night. The mothers join them, too, and everyone is "sleeping-out."

What a Trip, Amber Brown by Paula Danziger is about being kids and having fun. It is about friendship and family togetherness, too. Fans of the A Is for Amber series will enjoy this book as well.

Karla Castle, Public Services Librarian, Warner Pacific College, Portland, Oregon

Wired wonder woof / by Robert Elmer. (AstroKids; 3.) LCCN 2001001323. Minneapolis: Bethany House, Bethany House, 2001. PAP, 0764223585, \$4.99. Elementary. Rating: 4

F. Space stations--Fiction; Dogs--Fiction; Christian life--Fiction; Science fiction. 109 p.

Wired Wonder Woof is the third book in the AstroKids series by Robert Elmer. It is a humorous adventure story that combines science, faith, and fiction.

Vladimir "Mir" Chekhov wants to fit in with the Astro Kids. But it's not easy. Even though his father is the space station commander, Mir finds himself playing pranks, telling jokes, and even fibbing to fit in. The problem is, when the

trouble begins, the kids don't believe him anymore.

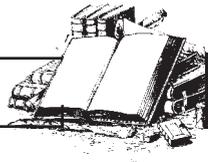
Then there's DeeBee, the genius kid, who invented a M2V collar so she can know what her dog, Zero-G, is thinking. That's the good news. The bad news is that space pirate Long John Sliver tries to steal the dog. Mir is on his own to rescue Zero-G and capture the pirate.

Of course, by story's end, Mir saves the days and, in so doing, realizes that it's not what he does that makes people like him, it's who he is; a valuable lesson for young readers.

Whimsical sketches accent the story, proper pronunciation and explanations accompany the narrative in a kid-friendly fashion. A final "Debrief" chapter from the author explains the realities of today's science. Therefore, children who like science and children who like fiction will enjoy this story.

Wired Wonder Woof would be a great addition to any library.

Ginger McGrath, Freelance Writer, McMinnville, Oregon



Family funstuff Bible stories : elementary / written by Mary Grace Becker and others. Colorado Springs: Faith Kids, Cook Communications, 2001. HBB, 0781435471, \$19.99. Elementary. Rating: 3

220.9. Bible stories. 415 p.

This 415 page hardback book has 102 four-page devotional/family activities. They each contain:

- * an illustrated story
- * "Go for the Godprint" -describing how the children can apply the lesson to their lives
- * "What Digby Dug Up"-a cute dog, Digby, gives interesting Bible facts
- * family activity related to the lesson
- * "God Talk"-a reference to another similar Bible verse

These are presented with colorful, kid-friendly graphics and can be read in about ten minutes, just right for early elementary schoolers' limited attention spans and wiggly bottoms! The family activity can be completed at another time, since they are a bit more complicated often involving cooking or kitchen activities.

Some concerns:

- * typographical errors are sprinkled throughout the book
- * esoteric ingredients in the family activities—for example, an activity calls for "bluing" which I believe is an old fashioned laundry product but is not commonly used now. Others call for waterproof tape and golden raisins.

While this is a fair devotional book, our family has enjoyed others with puzzles, mazes, and the like more.

Anita Goldman Homing, Freelance Writer, Lawrenceville, Georgia

Before I dream Bible storybook / Karyn Henley. LCCN 00059918. Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale Kids, Tyndale House, 2001. HBB, 0842334742, \$14.99. Elementary. Rating: 5

220.9'505. Bible stories. 137 p.

Karen Henley wrote these bedtime stories for children because she remembered her sons having trouble sleeping or having nightmares. She wanted them to have pleasant dreams; therefore in the *Before I Dream Bible Storybook* she adapted sixty stories from the Bible especially designed for small children. Written in non-violent language, the stories are very short (in most cases only two pages in length) and contain colorful illustrations. The stories

range from Adam and Eve to a description of Heaven based upon the book of Revelation.

The stories are not threatening nor are they as wordy as those found in the *The Illustrated Children's Bible* (Grosset & Dunlap, 1976), which is more appropriate for older children. Educator Karen Henley, who also wrote *The Beginner's Bible* and *God's Story*, has very simply portrayed each biblical story. Each story begins with a cute title and then lists the corresponding Bible verses where the full length story can be located in a regular Bible. The book begins with stories from Genesis and continues through to Revelation

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

The loving arms of God / written by Anne Elizabeth Stickney; illustrated by Helen Cann. LCCN 00023829. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Books for Young Readers, Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2001. HBB, 0802851711, \$22.00. Elementary. Rating: 3

220.9'505. Bible stories. 164 p.

Using the familiar Bible story book format in a different way, *The Loving Arms of God* tells of the relationship between God and his children, beginning at Creation and ending with the prophecy of Jesus' second coming. Paired stories present God's work among his people and their response to him in a way that encourages children to better understand what the Bible says about the Father.

Each story begins with an introduction that applies the theme to everyday life. The main story is then given, with scripture reference under the title. A Meeting God section at the end of each selection gives a Bible promise, discussion-starting questions called Grow in God's Love, and a prayer.

Each of the stories is well chosen for the characteristic it is portraying, and the writing is good and appropriate for the age group. A full color illustration heads each selection, and though small (approximately a quarter page) these are beautifully done and enhance the text. The paired story approach is interesting and brings out the relationship of God and mankind nicely. The introduction and Meeting God portions encourage application of the Bible truths presented. The book would be particularly nice as a parent-child read together volume.

Betsy Ruffin, Librarian/Teacher, Cleburne, Texas

The Creation story / illustrated by Norman Messenger. LCCN 2001028159. Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale Kids, Tyndale House, 2001. HBB, 0789479109, \$15.99. Elementary. Rating: *5

222.110520834. Bible. O.T. Genesis--Illustrations; Creation. 28 p.

The story of Earth's creation in seven days is not an uncommon one. First day yields light, second divides waters of sky and sea, third divides sea from land and decorates land with plants and vegetation, fourth divides day from night, fifth fill seas with fish and skies with birds, sixth populates land with animals and Adam and Eve, and seventh day is set aside for rest. Most of us know the liturgy of daily events, yet, this is one of those rare finds that delight children and adults of all ages. As if there is not enough drama in the creation itself, each illustration is formed with clarity and subtle contrast that invites the reader to discover new secrets with each consecutive reading. A festival of plants and flowers, berries, bananas, pears, apples, citrus fruits, tulips, peonies, lilies, and Johnny-jump-ups appeal to the senses of touch, smell, and taste, as they respond to God's call to "burst forth." Fish, birds, and animals form multitudes of characters, clearly displaying both dignity and charm.

The Creation Story, illustrated by Norman Messenger, is a stylistic feast. Prepared for pre-school age children, all ages can appreciate the quality and personality found within the pages of this book. *The New Living Translation* (NLT) of the Bible, used to tell the story, is presented, without over or undertones of religious doctrine. Published first in London by Dorling Kindersley (DK), well-known for their quality illustrations and information, Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., also enjoying a reputation for quality output for all ages, publishes this version. Text is large print, easily understood, and blends well with illustrations. Highly recommended for all libraries.

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

The prayer of Jabez for kids / originated by Bruce H. Wilkinson; adapted by Melody Carlson; illustrated by Dan Brawner. LCCN 2001031269. Nashville: T. Nelson, Thomas Nelson, 2001. HBB, 0849979447, \$9.99. Elementary. Rating: 3

222'.6309505. Jabez (Biblical figure); Bible stories--O.T.; Prayer; Christian life. 89 p.

The prayer of Jabez for little ones / Bruce H. Wilkinson and [adapted by] Melody Carlson. LCCN 2001130540. Nashville: T. Nelson, Thomas Nelson, 2001. PBB, 0849979439, \$5.99. Elementary. Rating: 3

222'.6309505. Jabez (Biblical figure); Bible stories--O.T.; Prayer; Christian life. unsp.

Melody Carlson has written an excellent adaptation of Bruce Wilkinson's bestseller, *The Prayer of Jabez* (Multnomah, 2000). If you are looking for a book to read as a family devotion for elementary and middle-school children, this book has an extraordinary message. The Jabez prayer spotlights a little known Old-Testament person hidden in a bunch of "begets" in I Chronicles. Jabez, whose name means "Pain," asks God to bless him, and enlarge his territory. Further, he asks for God's hand to be with him, to keep him from evil and from causing pain. A short prayer, but..."God granted him what he requested." This book expands that special prayer to show how God wants to meet ordinary people and young people and turn their lives around by filling them with power and blessings. If read alone, this book seems to be designed for middle-school students, even though the title says "for kids," because it contains a higher vocabulary and reading level. The well-done illustrations are small black-line cartoon-type figures that will appeal to all ages. Bible "Snapshots," two-page stories of more familiar Bible characters who God also blessed, are interspersed throughout. Although excellent, they would fit better if skipped and read at the end, rather than allowed to break the flow of the story. This book would be an excellent addition for any Christian family or church library.

Melody Carlson has also written a fun rhyming adaptation for pre-school children. If you are looking for a short (sixteen-page hardboard book) to read to little ones, this book has an excellent message. This book shows how God wants to help little ones by answering their prayers and by surprising them with good things. Furthermore, God's hand will be with them to overcome their fears and help them. The book ends with four questions that can be used to get little ones thinking about the good things God has done for them, how they can help others, and how they can obey. Alexi Natchev's colorful illustrations can be used as discussion starters to expand the ideas presented in the book. Parents and grandparents will enjoy sharing this book with their preschoolers. The special power and blessing of the original doesn't quite translate to this level, but the wisdom presented is worth sharing and talking about.

Paula Stewart Marks, School Principal, Bend, Oregon

Which came first, the chicken or the egg? / written by Leslie Eckard; illustrated by Judy Sakaguchi. LCCN 00049808. Nashville: Broadman & Holman, Broadman & Holman, 2001. HBB, 080542167X, \$11.99. Elementary. Rating: 4

231. God; Creation. 32 p.

"Which came first, the chicken or the egg; the hole or the peg?" Page after page, this delightful rhyming book poses fun-to-read questions that are also fun to discuss with young children. Soft watercolor illustrations add dimension to each possibility on double-page spreads, inviting reflection on giggles and smiles, the inch or the mile. The final question leads gently to creation, "Which came first, the stars or the sky? Which came first, the 'how' or 'why'?" The conclusion leads to the sovereignty of God: "The answer's easy, so plain to see—God came first, before you and me. God made everything work just right, whether night follows day or day follows night." The 9"x9" shape is easy to hold, the inside paper is sturdy and glossy, and the book comes with a dust jacket for protection.

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

The Easter story : from the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John / illustrated by Cathy Ann Johnson. LCCN 00048050. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, Thomas Nelson, 2000. HBB, 0849976049, \$6.99. Elementary. Rating: 3

232.97. Jesus Christ--Passion; Jesus Christ--Resurrection; Easter; Bible stories--N.T.. 32 p.

Cathy Ann Johnson presents the all-important Easter story to very young readers. Her bright, colorful illustrations express both the joy and sorrow of this event. Using straight biblical passages, young readers follow Jesus from the triumphant entry to Jerusalem to his ascension to Heaven. This indeed tells the true story of Easter without having to rely on cute props or gimmicks. Johnson's format demonstrates how the Scripture is sufficient in itself to proclaim the meaning of Easter to young readers. The ellipsed text leaves opportunity to fill in the gaps such as Judas' death and the disciples' fearful hiding, should further discussion be warranted.

The soft, friendly illustrations are inviting, and the text derived from the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John provide an uncluttered explanation of Easter, making this a considerate purchase for those involved with the very young.

Pam Webb, School Library Technician, Sandpoint, Idaho

Are angels real? / Kathleen Long Bostrom; illustrated by Elena Kucharik. LCCN 00059916. Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale House, Tyndale House, 2001. HBB, 0842339590, \$9.99. Elementary. Rating: 4

235'.3. Angels. 80 p.

This new title in the "Little Blessings" series continues to bring God's love and truth to little hearts. The inviting illustrations of children by well-known Care Bear artist, Kucharik, gives evidence of her many years of experience in illustrating. Each open two pages have a refreshing border on one side of the page, and this hints at and blossoms into a profusion of delightful illustration. Colors chosen are both eye appealing and soothing. Bostrom's clever rhymes give parents and adults reading with children a fun time, and the rhymes call to the reader to remember some of them. The closing twelve pages offer Bible verses that relate to the rhymes and offer biblical answers to the questions posed in the poems. Highly recommended for use in Sunday school, preschools, and by parents as they read with their children.

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

Blessings every day : 365 simple devotions for the very young / written by Carla Barnhill; illustrated by Elena Kucharik. (Little blessings picture books.) LCCN 00054476. Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale House, Tyndale House, 2001. HBB, 0841254107, \$14.99. Elementary. Rating: 5

242'.62. Prayer-books and devotions; Devotional calendars. 384 p.

Want a book that can be used with toddlers often? Desire a title that offers a biblical message in a practical way with pictures to direct the attention of a little one? *Blessings Every Day* meets that need. Colorfully illustrated by Kucharik, each of the 365 day reflections by Barnhill combine truths of the Bible with lighthearted verse and inviting examples. Children, ages two through five, are treated to truths about creation, getting tired, prayer, fear, and imagination just to mention a few.

Each day's reflection centers around a Bible verse in a easy-to-understand translation followed by a simple reflection about the day's topic, e.g., Jesus never changes, or the wise choice, and then ends with a whimsical rhyming verse or prayer.

Barnhill has two young children and is one of the general editors of Zondervan's *Teen Devotional Bible*. Freelancer, Kucharik, known as lead artist and developer of the Care Bears, has two grown children.

Recommended for Christian homes, in preschools, and in church daycares. It is an asset in public library collections offering titles for parents to use with children, or for grandparents to use with children.

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

What does the sky say? / written by Nancy White Carlstrom; illustrated by Tim Ladwig. LCCN 00056010. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans' Books for Young Readers, Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2001. HBB, 0802852084, \$17.00. Elementary. Rating: 4

242'.62. Nature--Religious aspects. unsp.

A nameless little girl encounters different aspects of the sky throughout this entire story. Tim Ladwig's colorful illustrations depict the little girl who sees a snowy night, an evening autumn sky, a rainy day, a bright summer day, and a starry summer sky. During each of these beautiful sky events, the little girl may be experiencing happy or sad events. But God helps her to appreciate the beauty even if she just fell off her bike or the rains ruin her sand castle or she is gazing out the window at her newly created snowman.

Based on Psalm 19:1-4a, Nancy White Carlstrom explains that no matter what happens, God has created a beautiful world. Simply told, this picture book is greatly enhanced by the realistic illustrations of each of the sky's wondrous displays. Carlstrom is the writer of the very popular Jesse Bear stories and Ladwig is the illustrator of *Morning Has Broken. What Does The Sky Say?* will delight not only children, but will also captivate adults.

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

Fins, feathers, and faith / William L. Coleman. LCCN 00012156. Minneapolis: Bethany House, Bethany House, 2001. HBB, 0764224611, \$12.99. Elementary. Rating: 4

242'.62. Animals--Religious aspects--Christianity; Christian life; Prayer books and devotions. 160 p.

With chapter titles like "Nature's Clowns," "The Zoo on Your Skin," and "The Twelve-Inch Tongue," who could resist reading about these interesting creatures? Part nature book, part devotional, *Fins Feather and Faith* reads like an entertaining Sunday science show. Author William Coleman includes an amazing amount of information on each of the sixty animals, weaving character qualities or spiritual lessons through each. Each chapter ends with a theme verse, three questions for discussion, and a quote, and are brief enough to read in less than five minutes. Highly recommended as a family night-time devotional, or excellent for use in a Sunday school or Christian classroom. The publisher opted to print in navy blue ink rather than full-color and did not include an illustration of each animal, but the drawings are wonderfully appealing and quite attractive.

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

Birthday blessings / Dandi Daley Mackall; illustrated by Elena Kucharik. (Little blessings picture books.) LCCN 00041808. Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale House, 2001. Small childrenB, 0841229574, \$6.99. Small children. Rating: 4

242'.62. Christian children--Religious life; Birthdays--Religious aspects. 29 p.

In *Birthday Blessings* by Dandi Daley Mackall, a simple rhythmic poem encapsulates all of the sights, sounds, and expectations of a young child's birthday, but also teaches children to stop and thank God for all He has given and made.

Bright, colorful illustrations by Elena Kucharik compliment the sing-song text, and depict children who are happy, helpful, and full of prayer. This board book uses high quality materials that are easy to wipe clean and sturdy enough for the youngest child to handle.

Virginia G. Schnabel, Freelance Writer, Shelton, Washington

Christmas blessings / Dandi Daley Mackall; illustrated by Elena Kucharik. (Little blessings picture books.) LCCN 2001023465. Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale House, Tyndale House, 2001. PBB, 0841254034, \$6.99. Elementary. Rating: 4

242'.62. Christmas; Christian life. 29 p.

The Little Blessings book line releases this *Christmas Blessings* as its holiday edition for children birth to age five. Using the sights and smells of the season, children are filled with the wonder of the season, and the reason for celebrating--the birth of Jesus.

The rhyming words will catch both children and parents. Mackall, who has authored four other board books in the Little Blessings line, and some nineteen other titles, conveys the sense of what is special about this season. Combined with playful illustrations from Care Bears artist, Kucharik, children will linger on the pages.

Recommended for preschool nurseries, for public library seasonal collections, and in public libraries offering titles for parents and grandparents to use with children, for Christian libraries, and for homes with toddlers.

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

God loves you / Dandi Daley Mackall; illustrated by Elena Kucharik. (Little blessings picture books.) LCCN 2001027222. Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale House, Tyndale House, 2001. PBB, 0841253704, \$6.99. Elementary. Rating: 3

242'.62. God; Christian life. 29 p.

One of the greatest promises that God has given us, is that he will always love us. In *God Loves You*, children are treated to various examples of when God loves us. Children are shown that from good to bad, happy to sad, no matter what, God will always be there to love us.

Kathleen Long Bostrom uses light rhyming phrases to deliver assurances to children that throughout different times in their life God is always there to offer love to them. The illustrations by Elena Kucharik are wonderfully done, and allow the reader to follow along with the story. The writing is fresh and airy, which will provide the children with hours and hours of enjoyment (and the parents much needed parent/child time).

Rick Estep, Media Director, HeavenBound Media Center, Middleburg, Florida.

Sticky situations 2 / Betsy Schmitt. LCCN 2001027221. Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale Kids, Tyndale House, 2001. PAP, 084234232X, \$9.99. Elementary. Rating: 5

249. Family--Prayer-books and devotions--English; Children--Prayer-books and devotions--English; Christian education--Home training; Christian education of children. unsp.

Take 365 everyday situations that children will face, throw in multiple choice solutions to those situations, add in appropriate scripture, and you have the latest installment of sticky situations in *Sticky Situations 2* by Betsy Schmitt. Following in the footsteps of *Sticky Situations*, this book revisits the situational devotional format that made it so successful.

Betsy Schmitt has once again captured the essence of the child, and situations that they come face-to-face with daily in the next book in the Sticky Situations series. Any child reading these devotionals, or sharing them with their parents, will easily identify with each and every situation. The situations are so common that they provide the family with plenty of discussion material which opens that all important communication channel between parent and child. On a personal note, this book has added so much to my family's devotion time, that my children now look forward to bed time, because they know we are going to read from *Sticky Situations 2* again.

Rick Estep, Media Director, HeavenBound Media Center, Middleburg, Florida.

Our place in space and 59 more ways to see God through his creation / by B. J. Reinhard. LCCN 2001002351. Minneapolis: Bethany House, Bethany House, 2001. HBB, 0764222635, \$12.99. Elementary. Rating: 5

261.5'5. Creation; Physical sciences--Religious aspects--Christianity; Prayer books and devotions. 152 p.

Each of the sixty chapters of B.J. Reinhard's *Our Place in Space* describes something from science and life that reveals God. Also, each chapter includes a scripture, a "Thought to Remember?", lists of vocabulary words, and experiments or word search puzzles that center on the theme and create interest in the topic.

While this book could be used as a science text for homeschoolers, that certainly would not be its only use. Elementary school children will

find *Our Place in Space* fun to read. Their parents will appreciate the book's informative style. Readers can open to any chapter and discover well thought-out, factual material.

Though clever, the illustrations are dime-size. On the other hand, the colorful cover, showing a youthful space-suited person smiling from above a spinning earth ensures children will reach for it on library shelves.

It's rare to find a fresh approach to science and the Creator in the same book. Reinhard has created a work that may well become a classic.

Dell Smith Klein, Writer, Teacher, Catalina, Arizona

***Hero Tales, vol. 4* / by Dave and Neta Jackson. LCCN 96025230. Minneapolis: Bethany House, Bethany House Publishers, 2001. HBB, 0764224255, \$12.99. Elementary. Rating: 5**

270'.0922. Christian biography; Missionaries--Biography; Missionaries. 192 p.

In volume 4 of Dave and Neta Jackson's *Hero Tales*, the authors continue their admirable effort to both acquaint children with their "fathers and mothers in the faith" and inculcate in them those virtues which distinguished these faithful lives. Presented in alphabetical order by their last names, each "Christian hero or heroine" is introduced with a short biography and portrait sketch which is followed by two stories concerning a particular incident or conflict in that person's life that illustrates a character quality worthy of imitation. The table of contents lists the virtue addressed in each story, or a list of "Character Qualities" arranged in alphabetical order in the back of the volume may be consulted for the appropriate story. Each story ends with a statement summarizing the lesson, an applicable Bible verse, and several "Let's Talk About It" questions for discussion.

Hero Tales, Volume 4 continues a unique and thoughtful collection of real life stories that are short and pointed enough in content for children to grasp and remember. Too many books for children, which claim inspirational value, are preachy and boring, or are transparent imitations of secular flashiness. *Hero Tales* is solidly "real life" and more likely to accomplish the formidable task of giving children true "heroes" to want to be like.

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

***A voice from the wilderness : the story of Anna Howard Shaw* / written & illustrated by Don Brown. LCCN 00033482. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, Houghton Mifflin, 2001. HBB, 0618083626, \$16.00. Elementary. Rating: 3**

324.6'23'092. Shaw, Anna Howard, 1847-1919; Suffragists; Women--Biography. unip.

A nearly drowned pioneer by the time she was five years old, Anna Howard Shaw learned early in life to cope with problems. In 1851 she

emigrated with her family from England to New York and then to the wilds of Michigan, where she, with her mother and siblings, carved a farm out of the bleak forest. This biography, *A Voice from the Wilderness*, gives a child's eye view of Anna's life and how her struggles formed the woman she became. We accompany Anna as she tastes her first banana, cries in the inhospitable wilderness, makes fish snares from hoop skirt wires, and plants seed with an ax. Using her hard won lessons, Anna becomes a teacher, a seamstress, and, with further education, a minister, a doctor, and a worthy proponent of women's rights, a prime mover in the fight for women's voting rights.

Don Brown illustrates *A Voice From the Wilderness* with both words and pictures. Unlike the bright illustrations found in such picture biographies as Lester's *From a Slave Ship to Freedom Road*, Brown's subdued watercolors give depth to the sense of history and the efficacy of life's struggles. Words and pictures blend, sympathetically presenting Anna's endeavors and a well rounded, simplified characterization of her. This book closes with an Author's Note providing a bit more information about Anna Howard Shaw as well as a web site for obtaining her autobiography. *A Voice...* lends itself to reading to young children as well as being read by older children. It contains just enough information to pique the interest of all ages of readers, child - adult.

Donna J. Eggett, Freelance Writer, Radford, Virginia

***Helen Keller : facing her challenges, challenging the world* / by Janet and Geoff Benge; illustrated by Kennon James. (Another great achiever.) LCCN 99033410. Houston: Advance, Advance, 2000. LIB, 1575371057, \$14.95. Elementary. Rating: 4**

362.41'092. Keller, Helen, 1880-1968; Sullivan, Annie, 1866-1936; Blind-deaf women--United States--Biography; Blind; Deaf; Physically handicapped. 48 p.

Is there an elementary student anywhere who has not watched *The Miracle Worker*? While most children have thrilled to the story of Helen Keller and how she learned to talk, not many can tell how Helen felt, or what happened to her in later life. Janet and Geoff Benge have added new insight to the story of Helen Keller by exploring her life from Helen's point of view. In the pages of *Helen Keller : Facing her Challenges, Challenging the World*, the reader becomes acquainted with new characters in Helen's life, her Aunt Evalina, one of the first to realize how bright Helen really was in spite of her disabilities, and Alexander Graham Bell who shared his pocket watch with Helen and told Helen's father about the Perkins Institute.

The Benges could have easily sub-titled this book, *Helen Keller Beyond Herself*, as Helen's life beyond *The Miracle Worker* is unfolded before readers who may have never known that

Helen went on to college, and was known world-wide as a traveler, inspiring writer, and speaker. Her fast friendships with both Annie Sullivan and Polly Thompson are shown as great examples of what friendship can really be.

Written in picture book format with colored illustrations by Kennon James, and author's notes footnoting some events and terms used in the book, this edition of Helen Keller's life may look like it is for the young child, but the depth of the information imparted makes it an excellent choice for the elementary age student.

Judy A. Driscoll, Retired Teacher, Poulso, Washington

***Excuse me!* / poem by Cathy Drinkwater Better; illustrated by Nancy Johnston. LCCN 99055253. Nashville: Broadman & Holman, Broadman & Holman, 2001. HBB, 0805421661, \$11.99. Elementary. Rating: 4**

395.1'22. Etiquette for children and teenagers; Etiquette; Conduct of life. 32 p.

Young children will roar with delight at the good manners book, *Excuse Me!*, written by Cathy Drinkwater Better and illustrated by Nancy Johnston. Omitting the usual "please and thank you" approach, Better focuses on a few areas parents and teachers struggle with: What to do when you need to sneeze? When someone's in your way? When you have a candy wrapper? When Mom's on the phone? When you can't get your way during play?

A question introduces each concept, which is followed by several unacceptable behaviors, and then by the proper response. "Do you suck on your toes and put spoons on your nose-or wait patiently and play with your toys?" Absurd behaviors are hilariously exaggerated to help a child understand good manners by contrast. Large, brightly colored illustrations reminiscent of Pippi Longstockings dominate hand-printed, rhyming text. Characters of various ethnic backgrounds-dressed in T-shirts, baggy shorts, and baseball caps-provide high reader identity. A Bible verse accompanies each mini lesson.

Excuse Me! is replete with children engaged in comical activities, from jumping on the bed to swinging from the chandelier. The book becomes dear upon rereading. Cathy Drinkwater Better communicates two clear messages: that good manners are easy to use and make life more pleasant for everyone, and that God's love is what helps us to show the good manners that prove we really care about people.

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

***Three teeny tiny tales* / retold by Marilyn Helmer; illustrated by Velelina Tomova. LCCN C009321055. Toronto: Kids Can Press, Kids Can Press, 2001. HBB, 1550748416, \$10.95. Elementary. Rating: 3**

398.2. Fairy tales. 32 p.

"The Elves and the Shoemaker," "The Gingerbread Man," and "Thumbelina" are presented in a quite traditional way in this book, *Three Teeny Tiny Tales*. Young children, either preschool or early elementary, will delight in these stories that most have heard time and again but always find charming. The stories could be read in school or at home and most likely will be enjoyed repeatedly.

The book is also filled with illustrations, rather sharp and almost primitive looking, not necessarily the most appealing to children. Notwithstanding the drawings, *Three Teeny Tiny Tales* would be a good addition to the fairy tale collection of a church or school library.

Ceil Carey, Young Adult Librarian, Public Library, Plano, Illinois

The giant book of space / by John Farndon. LCCN 00034071. Brookfield, Ct.: Copper Beach Books, Millbrook Press, 2000. HBB, 0761312064, \$17.95. Elementary. Rating: 3

520. Astronomy; Space sciences. 32 p.

For those interested in the universe around us, *The Giant Book of Space* will be of definite interest. The oversized book is full of facts, figures-and good pictures-of our solar system and beyond. It covers many aspects of the universe around us.

Beginning with our own system, the book talks about the nine planets, sun and moons, comets and asteroids nearest earth. Stars, constellations, and sky gazing are discussed, as are spacecraft, space flight, and living in space. Special boxes give amazing space facts and discuss astronomical mysteries. A glossary and index are included at the end of the book.

The book gives a good overview of beginning astronomy concepts, and the full color pictures are helpful and well done. The scattered picture-text arrangement is one younger readers seem to like, and quiz-games at the end encourage a closer look. A few of the facts are presented on an evolutionary time-line, but the book is primarily well-researched current knowledge. It contains much good material for young star-gazers.

Betsy Ruffin, Librarian/Teacher, Cleburne, Texas

Will you sting me? Will you bite? : the truth about some scary-looking insects / by Sara Swan Miller; illustrations by Rick Chrustowski. (Curious little critters series.) LCCN 2001020896. Owings Mills, Md.: Stemmer House, Stemmer House, 2001. HBB, 0880451440, \$18.95; PAP, 0880451459, \$9.95. Elementary. Rating: 4

595.7. Insects; Insect pests; Bites and stings. unsp.

As bizarre as a praying mantis might look, or as frightening as dragonfly appears, they are really not such scary insects after all. At least that's the point Sara Swan Miller gets across to young insect watchers in her book *Will You Sting Me?*

Will You Bite? She covers several insects such as the paper wasp, mosquito, katydid and earwig, and not-so-common ones like the flower fly and ichneumon. Combining fact with prose, the author explains enough about each featured insect to calm, or alert readers to what this particular insect is all about. Rich Chrustowski's vivid, bold illustrations complement the text nicely. Budding young scientists will be interested in this book, and adults will appreciate its simple, fact mixed with fun approach.

Pam Webb, School Library Technician, Sandpoint, Idaho

Sharks! Strange and wonderful / by Laurence Pringle; illustrated by Meryl Henderson. LCCN 00101643. Honesdale, Pa.: Boyds Mills, Boyds Mills, 2001. HBB, 1563978636, \$15.95. Elementary. Rating: 4

597.3. Sharks. 32 p.

Thirty-two colorful pages open the world of sharks for elementary age children. Many different sharks are pictured along with their dimensions. Facets of sharks from their skeleton and skin to teeth and electro sensitive pores portray the shark world in illuminating diversity.

Pringle, as author of more than ninety children's books, attests to his interest in the natural world and studies in wildlife conservation. Henderson, as illustrator of more than fifty children's books, enlivens the text with beauty and inviting color combinations. The sea world is presented in its magnificent array, and facts such as white sharks sometimes kill people, or that few shark pups grow to adulthood as they are eaten by other creatures are presented in a non-scary manner.

Recommended for use in Christian school classes, for purchase in public and school libraries, and a title parents can share with their children.

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

Seahorse reef : a story of the south Pacific / by Sally M. Walker; illustrated by Steven James Petruccio. (Smithsonian oceanic collection.) LCCN 00023208. Norwalk, Ct.: Soundprints, Soundprints, 2001. HBB, 1568998694, \$15.95. Elementary. Rating: 3

597.679817789458. Sea horses. 32 p.

Young readers will find plenty to explore between the pages of *Seahorse Reef*. Author Sally M. Walker follows the life of a male seahorse as he lives in the water surrounding Danajon Bank, a double barrier reef in the South Pacific near the Central Phillipines. The narrative begins with a description of the seahorse's home, the return of his mate, and how the male seahorse nurtures their brood. The story continues as the seahorse focuses on

finding food to help the babies grow and describes the variety of sea life he encounters as he lives and eats among the reef until the seahorses are born. The story comes full circle with his mate returning with another bellyful of eggs ready for nurturing.

Walker does a fantastic job describing how a seahorse moves, how its gills filter oxygen from the water, and how it holds onto different parts of the reef to keep from floating away on the current or uses the reef for protection from danger.

Steven James Petruccio's vivid illustrations capture the vibrant color of life among a barrier reef. Readers will enjoy finding in the illustrations the rich details described in the text, such as the arrival of a parrotfish which poses no threat to the seahorse but crunches up nearby coral as it feeds, or the octopus that shoots from its hiding place to pursue prey.

The book concludes with a page of facts about seahorses, a few glossary words, and points of interest in the illustrations. Various sea life, complete with description and page number, are highlighted. This informative book is a lovely introduction to nonfiction with illustrations that offer more detail with each reading.

Lisa A. Wroble, Library Aide/Freelance Writer, Plymouth, Michigan

Rolling along : the story of Taylor and his wheelchair / by Jamee Riggio Heelan; illustrated by Nicola Simmonds. LCCN 99087580. Atlanta, Ga.: Peachtree, Peachtree, 2000. HBB, 156145219X, \$14.95. Elementary. Rating: 5

616.8'36. Cerebral palsy; Wheelchairs. unsp.

Written by occupational therapist Jamee Riggio Heelan, this story of a boy who learns to use a wheelchair is good story for teaching children about disabilities. *Rolling Along* helps fill a need experienced in many libraries as it presents a well-rounded and objective view of a child with a physical handicap. Taylor has cerebral palsy. He has braces and a walker, but these are tiring to use, so he is given a wheelchair. The rest of the story tells of how Taylor is learning to use the wheelchair and his appreciation of the device. A point is also made about the difficulty he faces when buildings do not meet ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) standards and how it helps when they do.

The tale is simply, but well told, so it could be used with a good range of ages. Based on a true story and the author's experience in the area, the details, of course, are vivid and realistic, aiding learning and promoting understanding. The full color illustrations use real faces (those of the people involved, I assume) with the rest drawn in. Part of a series from the Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago, this book would be an especially worthwhile investment for schools.

Betsy Ruffin, Librarian/Teacher, Cleburne, Texas

Quilting / written by Biz Storms; illustrated by June Bradford. (Kids can do it.) LCCN C009329676. Toronto: Kids Can Press, Kids Can Press, 2001. HBB, 1550749676, \$12.95; PAP, 155074805X, \$5.95. Elementary. Rating: 3

746.46. Quilting. 40 p.

This book gives children ages eight and up basic understanding of quilting techniques. It starts with a general section, and progresses through ten easy to moderately challenging projects.

The book is lavishly and colorfully illustrated by June Bradford, making it very attractive. The step-by-step pictures benefit visual learners.

However, quilting is an art best learned through observation and mentoring. The best way to use this book would be for a knowledgeable adult to work with the child. A child could learn how to make reasonably well-constructed quilted items using this book as a guide, but there is no substitute for a concrete example.

The book assumes that the child has some knowledge of sewing and quilting. There is very little defining of terms. For example, in the intro, the paragraph about batting begins "Cotton batting is better than polyester, because it is easy to cut and the edges don't fall apart..." It is unlikely the average eight-year-old has ever seen batting and would even recognize it without help.

Some of the projects have very limited value. For example, the pincushion is essentially a pillow filled with batting. Without a rigid bottom, the pins are likely to poke all the way through. The crazy quilt pins are tacky—what child would actually wear one?

The "Other Ideas" suggestions at the end of each project are good, except that children need more guidance than is provided. For example, after the pencil case directions is the idea "Change the size or shape of the fabric to make a change purse..." It's hard for children to construct a three dimensional item from flat material without a pattern or at least measurements. They can't visualize how something will turn out before they make it. Even adults have to experiment, sometimes wasting materials.

I recommend this book as a resource for parents, teachers, scout leaders, and others who teach children traditional arts, but not for a child without guidance.

Andrea R. Huelsenbeck, Freelance Writer and Quilter, Tempe, Arizona

The kids winter handbook / written by Jane Drake and Ann Love; illustrated by Heather Collins. LCCN C20019005318. Toronto: Kids Can Press, Kids Can Press, 2001. HBB, 1553370333, \$18.95; PAP, 1550749692, \$12.95. Elementary. Rating: 4

790.1'922. Amusements; Outdoor recreation; Winter. 128 p.

If you're a teacher, parent, student, or home schooling family, this book bursts with an abundance of winter activity ideas that offers a surprising range for many ages and learning styles. The smorgasbord of choices range from very easy "Cool Candles" to the more involved "Rughooking" and "Fleece Fun" (making a scarf). Food, crafts, games, and simple experiments abound. The book is divided in four sections filled with approximately ten activities each, complete with materials lists, step-by-step instructions, and shaded pencil illustrations. "Welcome Winter" includes snow science and fireside stories; "Outdoor Winter Fun" includes snow games, making snowshoes, and feeding squirrels; "Indoor Winter Fun" includes table games and building snow flakes with toothpicks and mini-marshmallows; and "Celebrate Winter" includes making maple syrup and organizing your own Winter Olympics. All activities are highly appealing, but many are best done with adult supervision depending on the child's age. All are neutral but includes how to make a Navajo dream catcher and a brief description of the legend. A detailed index is provided in the back and the book comes with a dust jacket.

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

The grapes of math : mind stretching math riddles / by Greg Tang; illustrated by Harry Briggs. LCCN 00030062. New York: Scholastic, Scholastic, 2001. HBB, 043921033X, \$16.95. Elementary. Rating: 4

793.7'4. Mathematical recreations; Word problems (Mathematics). unsp.

Greg Tang may have several degrees in economics and math education, but his interest in and enthusiasm for math have been part of his life from very early days. He has long believed that, with a little guidance and success, all kids are capable of doing well in math, and he puts his money where his mouth is in his book, *The Grapes of Math*. Instead of the usual approach to learning math that uses memorization and formulas, he takes a different route, encouraging kids instead to use creativity and common sense to get to the correct answers.

Through the use of non-threatening, kid-friendly riddles, he teaches young readers to solve math problems quickly and easily by using a few simple but effective problem-solving techniques: being open-minded, looking beyond the obvious for solutions, using a variety of skills to save time, and organizing information by identifying patterns and symmetries. The bright, cheery illustrations by Harry Briggs, generated on the computer, add up-to-the-minute eye appeal to the whole process and all of the riddles are answered in the back of the book. Also included in the back is an encouraging letter from Greg Tang himself, sharing his belief in the ability of every kid to master math with no problem.

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

Hank Aaron : brave in every way / Peter Golenbock; illustrated by Paul Lee. LCCN 00008855. San Diego: Harcourt, Harcourt, 2001. HBB, 0152020934, \$16.00. Elementary. Rating: 3

796.357'092. Aaron, Hank, 1934-; Baseball players--United States; African Americans--Biography. 32 p.

Hank Aaron : Brave in Every Way is a gentle picture book that highlights the growing-up years of the baseball legend for young children. Peter Golenbock's text emphasizes Aaron's close relationship with his mother and respect for his father, as well as presenting the reader with the proverbial kid-with-a-dream story. The last third of the book consists of Aaron's quest to best Babe Ruth's record and the problems and challenges he encountered due to prejudice. When homerun 715 is finally struck, it is Aaron's mother who welcomes him to home plate. The ballplayer's acclaim is nation-wide, but Golenbock doesn't neglect to finish the story. When the crowds has gone home and Aaron is alone, his greatest thanks is expressed on his knees.

Peter Golenbock's straightforward prose and Paul Lee's rich illustrations make for a fine story about a current baseball legend that is accessible to young children. The character qualities of strength, perseverance, and humility are strongly emphasized, and a dependence upon God is lightly but firmly included. A fine book to read to a youngster whose home lives and breathes baseball, *Hank Aaron : Brave in Every Way* will inspire.

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

Storm coming! / poems by Audrey B. Baird; illustrated by Patrick O'Brien. LCCN 00103737. Honesdale, Pa.: Boyds Mills, Boyds Mills, 2001. HBB, 1563978873, \$15.95. Elementary. Rating: 4

811'.54. Weather--Poetry; Poetry--Collections. 32 p.

Poetry and weather, a natural pairing of two phenomena that elicits strong emotions in child and adult alike, are the twin elements that are explored in *Storm Coming!* by Audrey B. Baird. Although bright, sunny days are well represented in poetry for children, the stronger power of storms is not as commonly offered. The twenty-two short poems by Baird explore feelings and images associated with the approach, experience, and dispersal of stormy weather in poems that are sometimes quirky and questioning, other times silly, and occasionally pensive. In like manner, the sometimes stark and other times dreamy watercolor illustrations by Patrick O'Brien follow the text to assist the young reader in visualizing the setting of a poem or the metaphors the poet employs.

Storm Coming! is a poetry collection that will help make a stormy or rainy day a little brighter and certainly more interesting by helping to direct childish boredom or fears connected with bad weather into happy, imaginative channels.

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

Mommy poems / compiled by John Micklos, Jr.; illustrated by Lori McElrath-Eslick. LCCN 99063912. Honesdale, Pa.: Boyds Mills, Boyds Mills, 2001. HBB, 1563978490, \$15.95. Elementary. Rating: 4

811'.54. Mothers--Poetry; Mother and child--Poetry; American poetry--Collections. 32 p.

Daddy poems / selected by John Micklos, Jr.; illustrated by Robert Casilla; with a foreword by Jim Trelease. LCCN 99063735. Honesdale, Pa.: Wordsong, Boyds Mills Press, 2000. HBB, 1563977354, \$15.95. Elementary. Rating: 4

811. Children's poetry. 32 p.

In *Mommy Poems*, John Miklos has compiled eighteen tributes to mothers. Each of the poems included in this large format picture book grasps one of the many aspects of mothers. In "Mother, May I?" by Janet Wong, the poem ends with, "It's the way of the world: Mothers rule." As children each of us most likely thought of our mothers as rulers of the universe, at least as we knew the universe to be. And, in "The Keeper of the Dreams," John Miklos portrays the mother as the one who encourages us to be whatever we want to be, what we dream we can be. Each of these poems continues to highlight some aspect of motherhood that mothers and children both will recognize—caring for the sick child, putting the child down for a nap, saving all the items created by a child so that his/her name will never disappear. These poems are truly homage to all that is best in motherhood.

Lori McElrath-Eslick's illustrations are full-page paintings opposite a page of poems. Each illustration is done in bright, attractive, and eye-catching colors. The paintings are visual poems with only enough detail to complete the visual poem. Readers will enjoy the illustrations as much as the poems. Following the poems, John Miklos has included a brief page About the Poet and another page of acknowledgements indicating where the poems were originally published.

Daddy Poems, also selected by John Miklos, Jr., includes twenty-two poems dedicated to the fathers of our lives. These poems are intended to be read by fathers to their children as is emphasized by Jim Trelease in the Foreword of the book. Poems and illustrations share the pages together in somewhat muted but still bright colors when compared with *Mommy Poems*. All kinds of fathers are represented in the twenty-two poems—weekend fathers, birth fathers, stepfathers, and the traditional father.

What each of these fathers has in common, though, is love for and by their children. Illustrative of the feeling behind *Daddy Poems* is this line from "Kitchen Waltz,"

"...dancing Daddy please don't quit; the world is big but I belong to Daddy's kitchen waltzing song."

John Miklos has included an Index of Authors, and Index of First Lines and Biographical Notes About the Poets.

Robert Casilla's illustrations contain colors somewhat more subdued than those in *Mommy Poems*. The illustrations have undertones of earth colors combined with the brighter colors. Children and adults alike will find the pictures attractive and pleasurable. The only reservation about this book, however, is its illustrations. Although very well done and appropriate to the text, virtually all the illustrations are of families and fathers that are non-white. This is also the only reservation about *Mommy Poems*, though for the opposite reason: virtually all the mothers and children are of white heritage. Both books might benefit from a more balanced approach.

These two volumes of poems will make a nice addition to a school or library with the aforementioned note.

Barbara Anne Wall, School Librarian System, Orange Ulster BOCES, Monroe, New York

Lucy Maud Montgomery : a writer's life / written by Elizabeth MacLeod. LCCN C009316838. Toronto: Kids Can Press, Kids Can Press, 2001. HBB, 1550744879, \$14.95. Elementary. Rating: 5

813'.52. Montgomery, L. M. (Lucy Maud), 1874-1942; Novelists, Canadian (English). 32 p.

Elizabeth MacLeod's book, *Lucy Maud Montgomery*, is an interesting biography of a beloved writer, a very entertaining, informative read. It is also the story of following one's dream and hard work resulting in amazing success. Montgomery's life is presented from her beginnings on Prince Edward Island through her final days in her cherished home, Journey's End.

The format works well for the young reader using the book for research. The left side contains biographical information and photographs relevant to the content. The colored page on the right is filled with photos, graphics, maps, quotes, excerpts from letters and articles, book covers, and pictures of items important in Montgomery's life. There is so much intriguing information on each page, it is a banquet for the eyes.

Throughout the book, a cartoon character of Lucy Maud Montgomery playfully presents little commentaries, appearing on either side of the page. A helpful timeline called Maud's Life at a Glance is included. In addition, her books are listed in chronological order from 1905 through 1995. An extensive index and

suggested web sites make a ready reference help.

This is a must have addition to a library's biography section for the age group and would be a valuable teaching tool for the classroom or homeschool. Montgomery's life story is an uplifting example of a woman living her dream in spite of great odds. The book is charming enough to make a welcome gift to any admirer of *Anne of Green Gables*. Highly recommended.

Cathy M. Elliott, Freelance Writer, Anderson, California

The distant talking drum / poems from Nigeria by Isaac Olayeye; paintings by Frae Lessac. LCCN 94060260. Honesdale, Pa.: Wordsong, Boyds Mills, 2001. PAP, 1563979411, \$8.95. Elementary. Rating: 3

896'.69. Nigerian poetry (English). 33 p.

I doubt many Americans, children or adults, have tasted the spicy wild pig soup "that makes our lips smack and our eyes water." Nigerian poet Isaac Olayeye invites children to his forest village in this book of fifteen prose poems. The distant talking drum calls the people to dance. We learn about the grinding stone, weaving cloth, washing clothes in a stream.. Children play hide and seek. They also go to school.

"The Village Tales-Teller" tells stories that may frighten or amuse the children. We visit "My Father's Farm" and a "Village Market." Half of the poems describe the rainforest, the rain, and storms. "A walk through my rain forest is haunting," writes Olayeye. "Its greatness makes me feel very small."

Illustrator Frane Lessac's primitive-style paintings in brilliant colors are an excellent accompaniment to the poems. This collection of poems does an excellent job of introducing children to the different way of life found in one small village in a distant land. There is ample reference to the various animals, vegetables, and fruits found around the village. Some will be familiar, others not. We read of goats and sheep and chickens, as well as smoked snake.

Librarians, teachers and parents will find this a useful poetry collection.

Jeanette Hardage, Freelance Writer, South Carolina

On my way / written and illustrated by Tomie dePaola. (a 26 Fairmount Avenue book.) LCCN 00038229. New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, Penguin Putnam, 2001. HBB, 0399235833, \$13.99. Elementary. Rating: 5

921 (813'.54). DePaola, Tomie--Childhood and youth; Authors, American; Illustrators. 75 p.

On My Way is the third book in Tomie dePaola's autobiographical 26 Fairmount Avenue series. Tomie is finishing his kindergarten year and looking forward to first grade, when he will finally learn to read. His baby sister Maureen comes down with pneumonia and recovers; his family recalls a trip to the 1939 World's Fair; he

takes dancing classes and stars in the recital; his father tries to pave the driveway at their new house all by himself; the family goes to the beach. The book is charmingly illustrated with dePaola's drawings, which add detail and emotion to the story.

Unlike the quintessential autobiographical series for children, the Little House books by Laura Ingalls Wilder, there is no sense of history in these stories. For example, in the inaugural book of the series, *26 Fairmount Avenue*, the dePaola family has a car and a telephone and is building a new house—in 1938, when most American families were worrying if they'd be able to eat the next day. Wilder took care to clearly describe differences between the times in which she grew up and the times in which she wrote. DePaola's stories could be set in the early twenty-first century. Perhaps that's intentional—a ground of commonality with his readers.

Part of the second book in the series, *Here We All Are*, deals with the birth of Tomie's sister. However, his picture book, *The Baby Sister*, also tells that story, and much more engagingly.

In the interest of impartiality, it must be pointed out that *26 Fairmount Avenue* is a Newbery Honor Book. Apparently, some readers enjoy these books despite their shortcomings. However, I find this series bland in comparison to dePaola's picture books, which are undeniably delightful.

Andrea R. Huelsenbeck, *Freelance Writer, Tempe, Arizona*

Gold Rush fever : a story of the Klondike, 1898 / written by Barbara Greenwood; illustrated by Heather Collins. LCCN C009330615. Toronto: Kids Can Press, Kids Can Press, 2001. HBB, 1550748521, \$18.95; PAP, 1550748505, \$12.95. Elementary. Rating: 4

971.91'02. Klondike River Valley (Yukon)—Gold discoveries. 160 p.

Gold Rush Fever: a Story of the Klondike is a fictional account of a torturous journey to the Yukon featuring thirteen-year-old Tim and his older brother, Roy. The brothers face blinding snowstorms, raging rapids, and many dangers as they leave Seattle and head toward paydirt. Roy dreams of great riches and budding writer Tim hopes he'll find the story of a lifetime. Their hardships during the first year only fuel the bitter feuding between them and put their family tie at risk.

The insertion of factual material lends authenticity to this novel by Barbara Greenwood. Little historical snippets, maps, and photographs are placed strategically within the text and remind the reader of the reality of the Klondike Gold Rush. A provision list is interesting and additional activities like Climbing the Chilkoot or Diamond Hitch Knot are great teaching tools.

Tim's diary entries are present from the beginning of the book and interjected

throughout—giving the feeling of fact over fiction. One such entry records a lesson in biscuit-making from Mrs. Carter in the next tent, followed by a recipe and illustrated guide to creating Sourdough Biscuits.

Wonderful illustrations by Heather Collins vividly enhance the story and the activities provided. Her sepia-toned drawings merge well with the like-tinted historical photographs. The artwork and photos are plentiful, making it a book that is rich in supportive media as well as text.

Greenwood's account is more palatable to the sensitive reader than *Jason's Gold* by Will Hobbs—which contains more scenes of horror. *Gold Rush Fever* is a gripping story including plenty of factual information that might be used as teaching tools. Helpful biographies of Jack London and Robert Service should give this book a valued place among the great yarns of the Yukon. Glossary and index included. Highly recommended.

Cathy M. Elliott, *Freelance Writer, Anderson, California*

The presidents of the United States / Simon Adams. Princeton, N.J.: Two-Can Publishing, Two-Can Publishing, 2001. HBB, 1587280922, \$16.95; PAP, 1587280930, \$. Elementary. Rating: 5

973. Presidents—United States. 96 p.

Which president was the first to use "Hail to the Chief" upon entering a room? Which president was the only one to marry while in office? Which president was the first to ride in an airplane, a submarine, a car, and the first to visit a foreign country? (Answers below.)

This well-organized book dedicates a full-color, two-page spread to each president, from George Washington to George W. Bush. A handy timeline stretches across each page, noting important events in these men's lives and our country. A photograph along with a personal quote appear, accompanied by a chart listing political party, dates in office, terms served, names of the vice president and first lady, and the number of states in America at that time. Additional trivia appear in small boxes or circles, and the text is highly informative. It's rare to find a book about politics without an obvious bias, but here it is. The cover promises, "Follow the careers of America's greatest leaders; learn how presidents are elected and what they do; discover the facts about the election campaign." This book delivers. Included are a glossary and index. By the way, the answers to the questions above are James Polk, Grover Cleveland, and Theodore Roosevelt.

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

Maine / Margaret Dornfeld. (Celebrate the states.) LCCN 00042917. Tarrytown, N.Y.: Benchmark Books, Marshall Cavendish, 2001. LIB, 0761410716, \$24.95. Elementary. Rating: 4

974.1. Maine. 139 p.

North Carolina / David Shirley. (Celebrate the states.) LCCN 00031847. Tarrytown, N.Y.: Benchmark Books, Marshall Cavendish, 2001. LIB, 0761410724, \$24.95. Elementary. Rating: 4

975.6. North Carolina. 143 p.

Georgia / Steve Offinoski. (Celebrate the states.) LCCN 99054073. Tarrytown, N.Y.: Benchmark Books, Marshall Cavendish, 2001. LIB, 0761410627, \$24.95. Elementary. Rating: 4

975.8. Georgia. 144 p.

Oklahoma / Guy Baldwin. (Celebrate the states.) LCCN 00036099. Tarrytown, N.Y.: Benchmark Books, Marshall Cavendish, 2001. LIB, 0761410678, \$24.95. Elementary. Rating: 4

976.6. Oklahoma. 144 p.

South Carolina / Nancy Hoffman. (Celebrate the states.) LCCN 99058984. Tarrytown, N.Y.: Benchmark Books, Marshall Cavendish, 2001. LIB, 0761410651, \$24.95. Elementary. Rating: 4

977.57. South Carolina. 143 p.

Missouri / Michelle Bennett. (Celebrate the states.) LCCN 99055969. Tarrytown, N.Y.: Benchmark Books, Marshall Cavendish, 2001. LIB, 0761410635, \$24.95. Elementary. Rating: 4

977.8. Missouri. 144 p.

Utah / Rebecca Steffoff. (Celebrate the states.) LCCN 99055534. Tarrytown, N.Y.: Benchmark Books, Marshall Cavendish, 2001. LIB, 0761410643, \$24.95. Elementary. Rating: 4

979.2. Utah. 143 p.

Nevada / Rebecca Steffoff. (Celebrate the states.) LCCN 00057967. Tarrytown, N.Y.: Benchmark Books, Marshall Cavendish, 2001. LIB, 0761410732, \$24.95. Elementary. Rating: 4

979.3. Nevada. 143 p.

Looking for an overview of particular states that captures the unique qualities and everyday aspects of the state? Titles in Celebrate the States Series fit the bill. Each volume devotes chapters to the geography, history, government and economy, the people of the state, achievements, landmarks, and a state survey (seal, flag, flower, state song with musical notations, timeline, etc.). In case the chapters don't yield the treasures, a helpful index delineates where to look. The overview is overwhelming positive, and at times, including more discussion of serious challenges within the

state would have rounded out the discussion better.

Closing pages called "Find Out More" offer a listing of books, newspapers, films, and websites that can take the reader further into the state. Colored photos, quotes from state residents and illustrations add heightened interest to the exploration.

Libraries having the *From Sea to Shining Sea, Second Series* (Childrens Press, 1999) which was geared to grades three to five might consider *Celebrate the States* for content more satisfying and challenging for grades four to six. Libraries having the *America The Beautiful Series*, 2nd edition (Childrens Press, 1999) do not need to add *Celebrate the States*, for many volumes overlap the essentials. *Celebrate the States* is unique in that it includes more actual participants of the individual state under consideration in its discussion and presentation—many youth will find it easier to relate to this personal, non-almanac approach.

Recommended for juvenile public and school libraries. Teachers wanting students to probe a state beyond an almanac listing will enjoy using this series as it encourages thinking while providing high interest layout and discussion. Homeschoolers can use the work independently and still find opportunity for further study.

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

***On the trail of Sacagawea* / Peter Lourie. LCCN 00049745. Honesdale, Pa.: Boyds Mills, Boyds Mills, 2001. HBB, 1563978407, \$18.95. Elementary. Rating: 4**

978.0049745. Sacagawea, 1786-1884; Lewis and Clark Expedition, 1804-1806. 48 p.

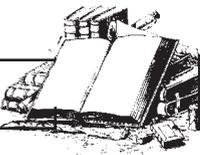
In 1804 President Thomas Jefferson commissioned Captains Meriwether Lewis and William Clark to gather a team for the young nations' first exploration of the West and search for a practical water route to the Pacific Ocean. Together, the captains and their forty-five men, dubbed the Corps of Discovery, set off in the spring of that year, traveling as far as present day North Dakota before winter forced them to halt. It was here that, later the next spring, a French interpreter and his sixteen-year-old Shoshone wife were hired to assist the expedition. The young woman's name has come down through history as Sacagawea, "Bird Woman," and she was to become integral to the success of the incredible effort known as The Lewis and Clark Expedition.

Intrigued by Sacagawea's story, photographer Peter Lourie took his family on a summer-long search for those sites meticulously recorded in the Expedition's reports and retraced the route taken by the early explorers. *On the Trail of Sacagawea* employs simple text, early photographs, maps, paintings, and modern photography to expose the reader to the beauty and stark danger of this daring adventure. As

the trip unfolds, the courage and perseverance of the Corps as well as the phenomenal young Shoshone mother are revealed.

On the Trail of Sacagawea is a well-balanced presentation of text and graphics whose brilliant photographs will appeal to both the upper elementary child as well the curious adult. The inclusion of the photographer's children in the illustrations and activities of the trip make the trek more interesting to the younger set as they see children their own age camping and canoeing in the wake of the historic expedition, panning for gold, and exploring old forts. For the older child, the scenes of the challenges faced by the brave band of explorers will make this episode in American history come alive.

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



Abby : lost at sea / Pamela Walls. (South Seas adventures; 1.) LCCN 00712477. Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale House, Tyndale House, 2000. PAP, 0842336265, \$5.99. Middle school. Rating: 5

F. Hawaii--To 1893--Fiction; Christian life--fiction; Kendall, Abigail Patience (Fictitious character); California--History--1846-1850--Fiction. 211 p.

Abby : quest for treasure / Pamela Walls. (South Seas adventures; 2.) LCCN 00712476. Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale House, Tyndale House, 2000. PAP, 0824336273, \$5.99. Middle school. Rating: 5

F. Hawaii--To 1893--Fiction; Christian life--fiction; Kendall, Abigail Patience (Fictitious character). 212 p.

Abby : California gold / Pamela Walls. (South Seas adventures; 3.) Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale House, Tyndale House, 2001. PAP, 0842336281, \$5.99. Middle school. Rating: 5

F. California--History--Fiction; Christian life--fiction; Kendall, Abigail Patience (Fictitious character). 200 p.

Abby : secret at Cutter Grove / Pamela Walls. (South Seas adventures; 4.) Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale House, Tyndale House, 2001. PAP, 084233629X, \$5.99. Middle school. Rating: 5

F. Hawaii--To 1893--Fiction; Christian life--fiction; Kendall, Abigail Patience (Fictitious character). 200 p.

Abby : king's ransom / Pamela Walls. (South Seas adventures; 5.) Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale House, Tyndale House, 2001. PAP, 0842336303, \$5.99. Middle school. Rating: 5

F. China--Fiction; Christian life--fiction; Kendall, Abigail Patience (Fictitious character). 162 p.

Abby : into the dragon's den / Pamela Walls. (South Seas adventures; 6.) Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale House, Tyndale House, 2001. PAP, 0842336311, \$5.99. Middle school. Rating: 5

F. Indonesia--History--Fiction; Christian life--fiction; Kendall, Abigail Patience (Fictitious character). 207 p.

As if living in Pueblo San Jose, California, in 1847 weren't adventure enough, thirteen-year-old Abby Kendall and her family receive a letter from her ailing uncle to move to the Sandwich Islands to help care for the uncle's ranch. Abby is torn between the adventure of the move and leaving her best friend, fourteen-year-old orphan neighbor, Luke. Efforts by her father to convince Luke's guardian aunt to let him travel to Hawaii with them fail. It isn't until the family is several days at sea that Abby discovers Luke is a stow-away on their sailing ship. Keeping

Luke's secret from her parents, and still being able to secret food and water to him are problem enough for Abby, but when a storm arises which breaks loose the jolly boat holding Luke, and visiting Abby, all secrets are open, and major problems begin.

Author Pamela Walls spins a fast-moving tale of adventure, intrigue, and heart stopping suspense all centered around Abby's faith, which proves that God can be trusted. Along the way the unsuspecting reader learns some Hawaiian history, lore, and culture, all bound up with pirates and Hawaiian natives. While the stories in this South Seas Adventures series carry a girl's name, the books will be equally enjoyed by middle school boys, making this an excellent choice for sharing aloud in the Christian school classroom.

In book 2, Abby Kendall and her friend Luke set out to help save the family's ranch in Hawaii by following a pirate's treasure map. Their search leads them to a deserted Hawaiian island, which may not be as deserted as it seems. Abby and Luke learn that in spite of danger, God will provide.

In book 3, an extremely contagious fever is sweeping the island. To protect them, Abby and her sister Sarah, along with Luke, are sent back to California for safety. But safety seems to be eluding them when they discover they have no place to live. The year is 1848 and the gold rush is in full swing. Will Abby make the family fortune and save their ranch? Through it all, Abby learns that God knows your heart's desire and will never desert you.

In book 4, Abby has returned to Hawaii to find that the ranch is gone. The family decides to seek its fortune in the sugar business by working on a sugar plantation on the island of Kauai. Will this be sweet success for them, or will it turn sour? Abby learns that you can't always trust appearances and actions can speak louder than words.

In book 5, Abby's family is traveling to China when they rescue a young girl from the south China Sea, a victim of pirates. Later when the family themselves are captured by pirates, Abby discovers that God can even turn a crisis into an opportunity.

In book 6, Abby's family stops off on an Indonesian Island for some sightseeing, which quickly turns into a disaster filled with earthquakes, volcanoes, and wild beasts. This most dangerous adventure teaches them that life may not always be fair, but God can always be trusted.

Judy A. Driscoll, Retired Teacher, Poulsbo, Washington

Anna Casey's place in the world / Adrian Fogelin; illustrations by Suzy Schultz. LCCN 2001002261. Atlanta: Peachtree, Peachtree, 2001. HBB, 1561452491, \$14.95. Middle school. Rating: 5

F. Foster home care--Fiction; Homeless persons--Fiction; Florida--Fiction. 224 p.

Anna Casey has run out of relatives and has entered foster care. All she wants to do is belong. She brings a bright intelligence, a desire to please and fit in, an intense determination to explore and excel. Eb, age ten, scrawny and small, has been removed from his mother's house for his own safety. All he wants to do is be returned. Miss Dupree is a woman of sequential order and tidiness. Foster care is brand new to her and she has no idea what to do with children of any age. Add a lady biology teacher neighbor, who collects bones and wears combat boots, and has a house that is really a science museum. Mix together these well drawn characters and get a sensitive, fun portrayal of a young "Pollyanna" type girl who learns how to fit in as she touches the lives and people around her.

Adrian Fogelin writes in such a way that her characters become real, warm, and intriguing. Find out why Anna's backpack is full of rocks when she arrives, and how her careful additions to her explorer's notebook bring her a sense of security. Cheer with her as she finds her special place in the world. This positive and uplifting book will help young people identify with different groups of people and see life from some unusual perspectives. The natural death of a beloved pet is well handled and although Anna finds her place, Eb's life is left a loose end (which could be a lead to a second book?)

Paula Stewart Marks, School Principal, Bend, Oregon

Backcourt ace / Clair Bee; updated by Randall and Cynthia Bee Farley; foreword by Dr. Rogers McAvoy. (Chip Hilton sports series; 19.) LCCN 00068883. Nashville: Broadman & Holman, Broadman & Holman, 2001. PAP, 0805420983, \$5.99. Middle school. Rating: 4

F. Basketball--Fiction. 208 p.

The stakes aren't as high this time. Chip doesn't have to defend himself from a stubborn adversary determined to get him in trouble, or help a teammate fight racism, or clear a friend accused of robbing convenience stores. *Backcourt Ace* is a pure sports story: how can State win a championship without a "big man" on their team? But it's still an engrossing tale. The basketball action is fierce and well-detailed,

and the relationships between the characters are fully developed and realistically drawn.

Clair Bee was always careful to promote sportsmanship and honesty in his books. *Backcourt Ace*, focusing on State's need for 7'0" Branch Phillips to join the team, puts a special emphasis on loyalty and hard work.

Branch has always wanted to be a basketball star, but he works so hard at his family's timber business (he supports his widowed mother and three sisters), there's no time to practice. Chip and company initially help by doing some of the jobs for no pay. But when a raging ice storm damages Branch's house, forcing him to quit the team to earn money for the repairs, Chip's friendship—and Branch's—is tested.

The story has been carefully updated by Randall and Cynthia Farley. Sports rules have been changed where necessary, and modern items like TVs, computers, and cell phones have been added. Yet everything that made the series a classic remains. Chip's team plays hard—and usually wins. The banter between friends is terrific, with Soapy an especially lively character. The only problem is a small one: while sports fans should enjoy these books, they are probably best for strong readers; younger kids and reluctant readers may be put off by the wordiness and attention to detail.

Rosemarie DiCristo, Freelance Writer, The Bronx, New York

***Galen and Goliath* / Lee Roddy. (KidWitness tales.) LCCN 00012432. Minneapolis: Bethany House, Bethany House, 2001. PAP, 1561799556, \$5.99. Middle school. Rating: 4**

F. Goliath (Biblical giant)--Fiction; Philistines--Fiction; Boble. O.T.--History of Biblical events--Fiction; Jews--Palestine--History--To 70 A.D.--Fiction; Orphans--Fiction. 112 p.

***Dangerous dreams* / Jim Ware. (KidWitness tales.) LCCN 00012433. Minneapolis: Bethany House, Bethany House, 2001. PAP, 1561799564, \$5.99. Middle school. Rating: 4**

F. Bible. N.T.--History of Biblical events--Fiction; Jesus Christ--Passion--Fiction; Procula, Claudia--Fiction; Jews--Palestine--History--To 70 A.D.--Fiction; Orphans--Fiction. 117 p.

In *Galen and Goliath*, Galen, ten-year-old boy who has lost his parents, lives in the camp of the Philistines as the giant Goliath ventures forth each morning to challenge the Jews to send out a champion. Galen's hero is Goliath and he does all that he can to please the giant. Goliath not only is unappreciative, but openly mocks Galen. Galen comes up with a plan to spy in the Israeli camp, but while hiding there he meets Reuben, a Jewish boy who explains that God will provide the champion. When Galen returns to camp, Goliath is unimpressed that he has stolen the pennant from King Saul's tent and tells him that he must kill or severely injure one of the enemy. Galen returns and once again meets Reuben, but can he really kill his new friend just to impress Goliath?

Dangerous Dreams introduces the reader to Livy who is the handmaiden to Procula, the wife of Pontius Pilate. Procula treats Livy like a daughter even though she is a slave. But what Livy dreams of is freedom and a return to her native Gaul. She and her friend Quintus meet a radical zealot named Bar Abbas and they become spies in their master's house, hoping that they will be freed when Bar Abbas leads an uprising. But Procula is sharing her strange dreams with Livy and in an effort to interpret them, she and Procula meet the strange new holy man Jesus. Finally Bar Abbas is imprisoned in Pilate's dungeon and as Livy plots to help get him out, she fears that perhaps she is helping the wrong man, especially as she watches Jesus Christ be crucified.

Galen and Goliath by Lee Roddy and *Dangerous Dreams* by Jim Ware are two of the entries in the Focus on the Family's KidWitness series. Each entry in this appealing series is by a different author. These are easy to read books that are exciting and will give modern readers a feeling of "being there." Using youthful protagonists helps younger readers to identify with the people who lived in those ancient times. This series is a nice way to amplify often told Bible stories. Note: at this time there are four other entries in the series.

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

***Isabel : jewel of Castilla* / by Carolyn Meyer. (The royal diaries.) LCCN 99016805. New York: Scholastic, Scholastic, 2000. HBB, 0439078059, \$10.99. Middle school. Rating: 4**

F. Isabella I, Queen of Spain, 1451-1504--Fiction; Kings, queens, rulers, etc.--Fiction; Diaries--Fiction; Spain--History--Ferdinand and Isabella, 1479-1516--Fiction. 204 p.

As a youngster, Carolyn Meyer hated history, because it seemed to be all dry facts. As a grown-up, her curiosity led her to investigate it from a different angle—what people ate and what they wore and how they lived their lives—and she's written about the history she now loves in over forty books for middle school and young adult readers.

Isabel, Jewel of Castilla is her foray into Scholastic's latest diary series, The Royal Diaries, and it brings Isabella to life at a time unfamiliar to most middle schoolers who have only met her late in life, married and settled and sending Christopher Columbus to the New World.

Through fictional diary entries, Isabel introduces readers to the world of fifteenth century Spain, with its prejudices against Jews, its Catholicism, its royal intrigues and marriages that were more about joining kingdoms than about joining hearts. Isabel confides to her diary her distaste for the immoral goings-on around her, her despair at learning of first one unpleasant betrothal, than another, her struggles with her sins of pride and envy and

anger, and her sorrow over her mother's growing madness. She describes her clothes, the food she eats, and her conversations, and each entry seems real, as though the reader is actually getting to read a princess's diary.

Meyer ends Isabel's diary the day before her wedding to Ferdinand. Then, for the reader who asks, "What then?" Meyer finishes the story in Epilogue and Historical Notes. The book also includes a family tree, several pages of illustrations, and a section titled About the Spanish Language, with a pronunciation guide and a glossary for words used in the story. Meyer herself is briefly profiled in About the Author. For the middle schooler who wants to know more about fifteenth century Spain and Isabel, this book is very satisfying.

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

***Jeanmarie, with love* / Lucille Travis. (Apple Valley mysteries; 3.) LCCN 2001025519. Grand Rapids: Baker, Baker, 2001. PAP, 0801044790, \$5.99. Middle school (Elementary). Rating: 3**

F. Bellevue Hospital--Fiction; Orphans--Fiction; Circus performers--Fiction; Blind--Fiction; New York (N.Y.)--Fiction; Mystery and detective stories. 149 p.

Jeanmarie and her Apple Valley Orphanage friends are treated to a once-in-a-lifetime trip to the circus. Though ill, Jeanmarie goes along. To her horror, the big circus tent catches fire. Jeanmarie's friend, Pearl, is injured. While wandering around looking for help in a field filled with animal cages and tents, Jeanmarie accidentally sees a man take a necklace from one of the tents. The children are transported to Bellevue Hospital where the real adventure begins. Pearl has lost her vision. Jeanmarie is ill. Also, their friend Wilfred is in the hospital. They meet Princess, the animal trainer, who is missing a ruby necklace. They meet Willie the circus clown. And they learn of a mysterious man hiding in the hospital who may be the necklace thief. In an abandoned area of the hospital Jeanmarie and her friends discover a secret passageway and even more mystery.

Children who love mystery will enjoy *Jeanmarie, With Love*. Each short chapter contains a "cliff hanger" to pull the reader along. Plus, there is enough action to keep readers motivated to read through to the end. The book's weakness lies in the numerous characters. Lucille Travis does a good job fleshing out most of her characters, but it would be difficult for a young reader to keep track of them. Particularly, the clown Willie and the friend Wilfred are easily confused. Nevertheless, the book will appeal to young mystery buffs.

A religious message thread runs through the book, but is not overt or preachy. The children learn about "trust and a thankful heart" and that "friends stick together."

Chris Ellison is responsible for the beautiful cover depicting Jeanmarie peering into a tent. In the background wisps of smoke hover in front of a circus wagon. Inside the tent, an open trunk reveals a feather boa and a mask. A hand lifts a beautiful red necklace from the trunk. The cover alone will pull readers into the book.

Finally, at the end of the book, the author shares that during World War II the Ringling Brothers and Barnum and Bailey Greatest Show on Earth once waterproofed their massive tent with paraffin and benzene. The material was extremely flammable and on the day after the D-Day landings in Normandy, the circus tent caught fire. Many people were injured. Though the location was changed, the fire in *Jeanmarie, With Love*, was based on that fire.

Dell Smith Klein, *Writer, Teacher, Catalina, Arizona*

***Jeanmarie and the missing ring* / Lucille Travis. (Apple Valley mysteries; 4.) LCCN 2001043190. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, Baker Books, 2001. PAP, 0801044871, \$5.99. Middle school (Elementary). Rating: 4**

F. Orphans--Fiction; Stealing--Fiction; Jews--United States--Fiction; Christian life--Fiction; Mystery and detective stories; Mystery and detective stories. .

Small items are being stolen from Apple Valley Orphanage, which never happened before. Sophie, a new girl, has just moved in. Is there a connection? Jeanmarie thinks so. Unfortunately, no one else does.

That's the easy mystery. The tough one? Jeanmarie hears Mrs. Ripple, the matron, sobbing brokenheartedly one night. Later the woman gets several letters and phone calls that greatly upset her. Something's obviously wrong, but what?

Jeanmarie fans will enjoy *Jeanmarie and the Missing Ring*, the fourth book in Lucille Travis's Apple Valley Mysteries series. Jeanmarie's still impetuous and adventure-prone, and her Pandora's Box-like curiosity still gets her in trouble. Friends Pearl and Wilfrid are still fun characters, and Sophie's an interesting addition to the group. There's a complication, though: Wilfred's very fond of Sophie—and Jeanmarie's jealous. For now, she may be getting her own romance. Ralph, the farmer's son, has just moved to a cottage on orphanage grounds. He's an older boy, quiet and ethical, and it's pretty obvious they like each other.

As usual, Travis nicely blends fact with fiction. This time it's the orphans' growing awareness of the Holocaust. (Sophie's Jewish). Details are given, but gently, as befitting the age group.

A possible complaint: the mystery's a bit slow-moving. Travis does a fine job of making Sophie a suspect (she's secretive, has no friends, and is caught telling obvious lies), but too many pages are spent on the girls wondering if they should accuse her. In the Mrs. Ripple subplot, mistaken identity and jumping to conclusions explain away most of the wrongs. Would this

disappoint a kid reader? Maybe. But since it's unlikely they'll guess the real thief's identity, it may not matter. Certainly the richly-drawn characters, loyal and true friendships, and us-against-the-world orphanage setting will appeal to them.

Rosemarie DiCristo, *Freelance Writer, Bronx, New York*



***Joshua's song* / Joan Hiatt Harlow. LCCN 00052537. New York: Margaret McElderry Books, , 2002. HBB, 0689841191, \$16.00. Middle school. Rating: 5**

F. Newspaper carriers--Fiction; Child labor--Fiction; Disasters--Fiction; Molasses--Fiction; Boston (Mass.)--Fiction. .

Basing her story on the 1918 Spanish Influenza Epidemic, and on Boston's Great Molasses Flood in 1919, Joan Hiatt Harlow creates a fast-paced story about thirteen-year-old Joshua Harper, who goes from a soloist singing hymns in the Boston Boys Choir to singing the headlines as a "newsie" in her historical novel, *Joshua's Song*. After Joshua's father becomes yet another victim of the influenza epidemic, Joshua and his mother struggle to the adjustment of living on Boston's Beacon Hill to living on the edge of despair.

The book is strong on detail, and has notable characters. The overall theme emphasizes how situations can be overcome through resourcefulness, determination, and courage. There are minor concerns such as Joshua and his mother hiding the fact that they must take in boarders, a couple instances of slang bordering on profanity, and the Lord's name used in exclamation; however, all these instances are in context. A noteworthy passage is when Joshua is asked to pray over a friend's dying mother, and not knowing any prayers, he sings her a hymn, giving her solace in her last moments. The added historical note creates further interest, if not credibility to this fine mixture of fact and fiction.

Pam Webb, *School Library Technician, Sandpoint, Idaho*

***The journal of Biddy Owens : the Negro leagues* / by Walter Dean Myers. (My name is America.) LCCN 00044667. New York: Scholastic, Scholastic, 2001. HBB, 0439095034, \$10.95. Middle school. Rating: 3**

F. Birmingham Black Barons (Baseball team)--Fiction; Baseball--Fiction; Negro Leagues--Fiction; African-Americans--Fiction; Segregation--Fiction; Prejudices--Fiction. 141 p.

Walter Dean Myers, award-winning author and poet, has again turned his hand to Scholastic's diary series for boys, *My Name is America*, with *The Journal of Biddy Owens: The Negro Leagues*, a sure appeal to middle school readers who are baseball-crazy. Myers, who himself played sandlot baseball in the Bronx and Harlem as a young man, gives play-

by-play descriptions of quite a few games and that alone will entertain baseball fans. However, he also uses the fictional young batboy's diary entries to do more than give game descriptions; he also allows his readers to experience (through the eyes of a young person like themselves) a time when people of color were forced to sit in the back of the bus, drink from water fountains labeled "colored," frequent only restaurants and hotels meant for their race, and never give offense in any way to any white person, for fear of calling down the wrath of society (and possibly a beating) upon themselves.

Myers lays out their lives in no uncertain terms, using the language of the day (nigger, nigra, colored, and so forth) to show the fights they were often forced into and the inhuman way they were treated by the white people of that time. Of some concern: several entries have Biddy speaking disrespectfully of Christians, including his aunt, and indicating in a few places a desire to go to a bar or to get involved with one of the "road girls" (now called "groupies"), while his older teammates keep him in line.

In the back of the book is an epilogue giving the later history of Biddy Owens and the other characters in the story (and leaving it unclear as to whether they were real people or made-up characters), a historical section ("Life in America in 1948"), photos taken of the black ballplayer scene as well as of examples of racism, and a brief section about the Myers himself. This is a well-written book that may spark a reluctant reader's interest in history, as long as the noted reservations are kept in mind.

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

***The journal of Jesse Smoke : a Cherokee boy* / by Sherry Garland. (Dear America.) LCCN 00055620. New York: Scholastic, Scholastic, 2001. HBB, 0439088208, \$10.95. Middle school. Rating: 3**

F. Household employees--Fiction; Racially mixed people--Fiction; Orphans--Fiction; Diaries--Fiction; California--History--1846-1850--Fiction. 218 p.

Although Joseph Bruchac, author of *The Journal of Jesse Smoke : A Cherokee Boy*, is Abenaki himself, not Cherokee, he has spent many years studying the Cherokee and their history and it shows in the remarkable story he has written here about the Cherokee nation, a story that manages to be both historically accurate and interesting. The young hero of the story, Jesse, has been educated at a mission school, where he learned to speak English as well as Cherokee, and to read and write, enabling him to keep a diary of life on the farm on which he and his mother and sisters live, his religious views on life, Cherokee folk tales and stories, the growing unrest between the Indians and the U.S. Government, and at the end, the sad story of the forced removal westward of the entire tribe, better known as "The Trail of Tears."

Many of his entries talk about the violence and prejudice that the Cherokees endured, the dangers of drinking alcohol (including a distressing sequence in which a young girl describes in a round-about way a time that she and some friends got drunk and were taken advantage of against their will by white soldiers), and the looting, burning, and grave robbing that went on as the Cherokees were forced out of their homes and off the land they had lived on and farmed for generations.

The book ends with a fictional epilogue, a historical note about "Life in America in 1837," photos and illustrations from the time, several pages of acknowledgments from and a brief biography of the author, and a fold-out map of the actual path that "The Trail of Tears" took across the US. A middle school student familiar with the story of the settling of the western US might find this book a thought-provoking alternative.

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

Just between friends / by Sandra Byrd. (Hidden diary; 3.) LCCN 2001002566. Minneapolis: Bethany House, Bethany House, 2001. PAP, 0764224824, \$4.99. Middle school. Rating: 3

F. Diaries--Fiction; Friendship--Fiction; Christian life--Fiction; Dogs--Fiction. 108 p.

Lucy and Serena get in a jam after finding a dog and then discovering that it is about to have puppies. With Lucy living in a "no dogs allowed" cottage, and Serena's dad allergic to dogs, what are the two friends going to do? Lucy learns that solutions aren't always best found alone, that people work better together.

Book 3 in the Hidden Diary series by Sandra Byrd brings friendship back to its very roots, that asking for help is something that God wants us to do. God wants us to work together, sharing with others to come up with sometimes the easiest of solutions. Ms. Byrd once again crafts this storyline around the simple plot, but shares the much bigger picture in its outcome.

Rick Estep, Media Director, HeavenBound Media Center

Kaiulani : the people's princess / by Ellen Emerson White. (The royal diaries.) LCCN 00057338. New York: Scholastic, Scholastic, 2001. HBB, 0439129095, \$10.95. Middle school. Rating: 3

F. Kaiulani, Princess of Hawaii, 1875-1899; Princesses--Fiction; Diaries--Fiction; Hawaii--History--To 1893--Fiction. 238 p.

Ellen Emerson White, an acclaimed author of books for young adults, turned her hand to the newest diary series by Scholastic, *The Royal Diaries*, in *Kaiulani : The People's Princess*. Fictional diary entries first draw a picture of a young girl who loves her home in Waikiki, Oahu, Hawaii, and the carefree life she leads there, and then tell of her misery when she is sent abroad at the age of thirteen to an English

boarding school to be educated. The cold weather, unfamiliar food and clothing, and the regimentation all combine to make her very homesick.

Although she eventually settles down, her heart remains with her country, and she is both awed and excited when her Aunt Lydia, Princess Liliuokalani, is made queen and names her as her successor. When the monarchy is later overthrown, she goes to the United States to plead for her country's freedom from President Garfield.

Although her diary ends with her uncertainty, the book's epilogue has the rest of the story. Included in the back is a brief history of Hawaii, a family tree and family photos, a brief explanation of the Hawaiian language and the pronunciation and definition of the Hawaiian words used in the book, useful to anyone who wants to read the book aloud!

White works in a lot of information on life in the islands, including popular superstitions and religious practices of the day, mentions in passing the princess's desire to be confirmed as an Anglican and her later statement that she is a Christian, and includes information about the friendship between Kaiulani and Robert Louis Stevenson, famous author, island dweller, and family friend. The book's language is somewhat stilted, but appropriate for the Victorian times in which Kaiulani lived. All in all, this would be a good read for middle school readers who want to learn more about Hawaiian history in a painless way.

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

Mandie and the tornado! / Lois Gladys Leppard. (A Mandy book; 34.) LCCN 2001277637. Minneapolis: Bethany House, Bethany House, 2001. PAP, 1556616759, \$4.99. Middle school. Rating: 4

F. Mystery and detective stories; Tornadoes--Fiction. 153 p.

Mandie and the Tornado! is the latest in one of the most beloved series for children. Mandie sniffs out a mystery brewing even before leaving school for the spring holidays. When Mandie arrives home, she discovers that her only clue is a faint, flickering light sporadically shining from the ramshackle building. Late-night investigations by Mandie and Joe, who came home from college in New Orleans, lead them to figure out who was living in the old house on the edge of the Shaw property. Then out of nowhere a tornado strikes and the debris is not the only thing left that will surprise Mandie and her friends.

Lois Gladys Leppard provides us with the 34th installment of the mystery-loving heroine, Mandie. Fans of the series shouldn't be too surprised, as Ms. Leppard's plots tend to favor theatrical elements. Religious messages are mostly subtle, but what might deter readers (or

presiding adults) is the language. The servants use a *Gone With the Wind* dialect, as in "Aunt" Lou's "Lawsy mercy, this chile got to eat something right away, Doctuh.... We's gwine fix dat right now."

Rick Estep, Media Director, HeavenBound Media Center

The stand / Nancy Rue. (Christian heritage series, the Santa Fe years; 3.) LCCN 2001001918. Minneapolis: Bethany House, Bethany House, 2001. PAP, 1561798932, \$5.99. Middle school. Rating: 3

F. Japanese Americans--Evacuation and relocation, 1942-1945--Fiction; World War, 1939-1945--United States--Fiction; Prejudices--Fiction; Christian life--Fiction; Santa Fe (N.M.)--Fiction. 183 p.

The mission / Nancy Rue. (Christian heritage series, the Santa Fe years; 4.) LCCN 2001001919. Minneapolis: Bethany House, Bethany House, 2001. PAP, 1561798940, \$5.99. Middle school. Rating: 3

F. World War, 1939-1934--United States--Fiction; Prayer--Fiction; Christian life--Fiction; Santa Fe (N.M.)--Fiction; Santa Fe (N.M.)--Fiction. 181 p.

Within the time frame of World War II, the main characters in these books are challenged by the emotional and practical demands of many conflicts. In *The Stand*, the timeless theme of loyalty is complicated by the location of a Japanese relocation camp just outside of Santa Fe. While many townspeople, including school children and church board members, assume all these people are evil and taunt them when they are allowed to come to town, Will questions the hateful responses of his friends. Not wanting to be singled out, he goes along with the jeering. Later he has to choose between taunting and throwing rocks or being true to his beliefs. When he loses the friendship of Herb because of his choice, he finds he also has to juggle the deceptions he creates to protect his new friends Kenichi and his sister Emico. Two kindly and strong mentors in the persons of Reverend Bud and the principal Mr. Tarantino help him sort out his beliefs and loyalties. Together with his mom, and a strict teacher, Mrs. Rodrigues, Will pickets the school to help the town realize that there are better ways to respond to all the Japanese in their neighborhood.

In *The Mission*, Will continues his friendship with Kenichi and his sister Emico until they move with their mom to another state. A gifted guitarist, Miguel becomes his new friend, also presenting a challenge as the school bullies; tough kids called The Three Amigos, target both of them. Will has hopes that his father will be returned home from a prison camp in the Philippines. When this doesn't happen, he becomes angry with God and refuses to talk to him. Miguel and Will plan a journey to a prayer site to earn money for war bonds. In the process both must learn about responsibility, honesty, and learning to trust God in some potentially dangerous circumstances.

Will Hutchinson is twelve, and his eleven-year-old foster sister Fawn is a girl who has mixed feelings about embracing her Indian heritage. They enjoy a loving mom and their own sibling relationship. There are several helpful adults in whom God encourages Will to confide. In these last two books in the Santa Fe Years series, Nancy Rue chooses also to include some local Spanish and Indian (at the time, the reference was not Native American) customs integral to her setting. Children are given an opportunity to appreciate other cultures and expressions of faith and evaluate why they choose their own Christian faith. While not integral to the plot, the addition aids character development as Fawn experiences her Indian festivals, Will learns about Catholic saints, and they celebrate the town festival of Zozobra, a custom of burning gloom in effigy.

Carol B. Taylor, Freelance Writer/Certified Social Worker, Poulsbo, Washington

Take a bow / by Sandra Byrd. (Hidden diary; 4.) LCCN 2001002567. Minneapolis: Bethany House, Bethany House, 2001. PAP, 0764224832, \$4.99. Middle school. Rating: 3

F. Diaries--Fiction; Friendship--Fiction; Christian life--Fiction; Fear--Fiction; Santa Catalina Island (Calif.)--Fiction. 107 p.

Lucy and Serena are faithful friends who read and attempt to recreate Great, Great Grandma Serena's diary. The original diary chronicles the daring adventures of Grandma Serena and her friend Mary as they take their very first airplane ride. They approach the ride trembling, but determine to be like their hero Amelia Earhart. The writers tell of their fear, and how they overcome it. Now, years later, Lucy and Serena want to be overcomers, too. Airplanes are no longer new, so how can they recreate the adventure? At first Lucy tries to get Serena on a scary ride at Knott's Berry Farm, but Serena balks and Lucy finds she cannot force her friend to do something that she does not want to do. Finally, the friends realize that they are both afraid to display their talents, Serena as an artist, Lucy as a pianist. Is this the fear they need to overcome?

Sandra Byrd has a knack for uncovering preteen roller coaster emotions. Her characters have personality and sensitivity as they work through friendship issues. What is the difference between pushing and encouraging someone? What do you do when your best friend is mad at you? Grow along with Serena and Lucy as their friendship evolves.

Paula Stewart Marks, School Principal, Bend, Oregon

Torsils in time / William D. Burt. (The king of the trees; 2.) LCCN 2001087336. Mukilteo, Wash.: WinePress, WinePress, 2001. PAP, 1579213685, \$14.95. Middle school. Rating: 4

F. Fantasy. 287 p.

Torsils in Time, the second in the King of the Trees series, presents a captivating story for the fantasy lover. The rich language and descriptions will tantalize the senses as the reader launches into the mysterious world of Torsil trees. King Rolin and his fair queen, Marlis, set out to enjoy a picnic lunch as they search for a rare species of the tree that can transport the climber to other lands. To their wonderment, they discover the Torsils of Herrin and Therrin that can actually carry them into different times. However, with unexpected and evil interference, they find themselves four hundred years into the future, and completely invisible. Meeting the last family alive in that area, they face strange and evil creatures that are encroaching ever closer to their last safe refuge.

Through exciting, and difficult adventures the family and our two "invisibles" dare to face the evil that is threatening to devour, not only their land, but many others, and even the fair, light world of Lucambra. William Burt is careful to bring spiritual lessons to the forefront, letting them flow through the story naturally. Facing hardships and much soul-searching, as well as battles with dark creatures, the reader will discover a delightful tale without missing the importance of the need to surrender all that is valuable and treasured in order to see the mighty, saving hand of Gaelathane, the King of the Trees.

William Burt weaves a many-colored tapestry including Torsil travel, angelic visitations, black pearls and starglasses, as the journey unfolds in an imaginative adventure that is sure to delight young and old alike.

Mary McKinney, Editor, Writer, Conference Speaker, Educator, Port Orchard, Washington

Valley of the Moon : the diary of Maria Rosalia de Milagros / by Sherry Garland. (Dear America.) LCCN 00055620. New York: Scholastic, Scholastic, 2001. HBB, 0439088208, \$10.95. Middle school. Rating: 3

F. Household employees--Fiction; Racially mixed people--Fiction; Orphans--Fiction; Diaries--Fiction; California--History--1846-1850--Fiction. 217 p.

Sherry Garland's *Valley of the Moon : The Diary of Maria Rosalia de Milagros* is another entry in the growing collection of Scholastic's Dear America series and does the usual job of bringing a time period of American history to life through the fictional diary entries of a young person from that time. The writer in *Valley of the Moon* is a young half-Indian female orphan, a servant on a Mexican ranch in what would later become California.

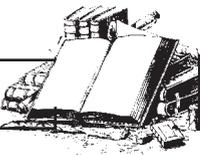
Through her entries, the reader finds out about the smallpox plague that left her and her little brother orphaned, where she got her name and what it means, how rare (and dangerous) it is that she can read and write, and how hard she works every day. She calls her diary "...an island of refuge in a sea of work" and later says, "Writing brings me more joy than sleep!"

Nothing would make me happier than to write all day and all night..." which may fit the story's needs, but doesn't really ring true when her hard life is considered.

Her entries cover a year of details of everything from the food she eats and prepares and the clothing she wears and sews for others to the people she comes to know and the various religious festivals that she celebrates. Her Catholic beliefs and her belief in and participation in prayer are mentioned in many entries. The mystery of who she and her brother really are is cleared up by the book's end and is a welcome surprise.

After the story ends, Maria's fictional life is updated in an epilogue, which is followed by a glossary of Spanish terms used in the book, a historical section called Life in America in 1846, illustrations taken from the time period, a recipe for wedding cookies, lyrics to a song, and a brief biography of the author herself, Sherry Garland.

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



Leading from the lockers : student edition / John C. Maxwell. LCCN 2001030964. Nashville: Tommy Nelson, Thomas Nelson, 2001. PAP, 0849977223, \$9.99. Middle school. Rating: 4

248.8'3. Leadership--Religious aspects--Christianity; Christian life. 212 p.

Leading from the lockers : guided journal / John C. Maxwell. LCCN 2001012345. Nashville: Tommy Nelson, Thomas Nelson, 2001. HBB, 0849977231, \$14.99. Middle school. Rating: 4

248.8'3. Leadership--Religious aspects--Christianity; Christian life. 176 p.

Leading From the Lockers encourages middle school and high school teens to be salt and light to their particular world—the school—by taking a leadership role. Characteristics of good leadership, including integrity, vision, attitude, self-discipline, and facing problems, are discussed in a way designed to reach youth. Stories, cartoons, and lists in locker-graphics help illustrate important points. The guided journal takes up the same points in a brief discussion, then has questions designed to elicit personal response. Space for answering is provided.

The books, especially taken together, are valuable for the lessons given. They encourage students to be a factor for positive change among their peers. The writing is designed to appeal to teen readers, using teen-relevant situations, good quotes, and clear summary lists to reach the age group. They are visually designed for teens also, with graphics highlighting important thoughts, cartoons to illustrate the characteristic discussed, and special typefaces to draw attention to ideas. The set would be especially useful as a group study, but the books are good for individual study, too. They would also work as a church library or home library addition. The points in the books are well-taken, and the questions in the guided journal take thought, requiring readers to decide for themselves about situations, goals, and life choices.

Betsy Ruffin, Librarian/Teacher, Cleburne, Texas

Bound for America : the story of the European immigrants / by Milton Meltzer. (Great journeys.) LCCN 00051875. Tarrytown, N.Y.: Benchmark Books, Marshall Cavendish, 2001. LIB, 0761412271, \$21.95. Middle school. Rating: 5

325.73. United States--Emigration and immigration--History; Immigrants. 112 p.

North across the border : the story of the Mexican Americans / by Lila Perl. (Great journeys.) LCCN 00057017. Tarrytown, N.Y.: Benchmark Books, Marshall Cavendish, 2002. LIB, 0761412263, \$21.95. Middle school. Rating: 5

973'.046872. Mexican Americans--History. 112 p.

The Trail of Tears : the story of the Cherokee removal / by Dan Elish. (Great journeys.) LCCN 00052902. Tarrytown, N.Y.: Benchmark Books, Marshall Cavendish, 2001. LIB, 076141228X, \$21.95. Middle school. Rating: 5

973'.04975. Trail of Tears, 1828; Cherokee Indians--History; Indians of North America--Southern States--History. 96 p.

Following freedom's star : the story of the Underground Railroad / by James Haskins and Kathleen Benson. (Great journeys.) LCCN 2001025414. Tarrytown, N.Y.: Benchmark Books, Marshall Cavendish, 2001. LIB, 0761412298, \$21.95. Middle school. Rating: 5

973.7'115. Underground railroad; Fugitive slaves. 112 p.

This thoughtful and provocative series presents the story of the event and people involved, letting many of the central characters emerge. Challenges, problems, abuses, concerns, and realities are presented concisely and without apology. Most readers will encounter at least two or three unknowns, and one or two tragedies glossed over in earlier history books.

Attractive blending of photos and illustrations breaks up the reading, and enables the reader to see each event and individuals in real life settings. Each of the authors has written many books for young people, and backgrounds include impressive credentials to support the care and expertise conveyed in the book.

This is recommended for all juvenile public library collections, and for Christian school libraries. Collections focusing on the diversity of American history and home schooling families can include these titles with assurance. Adults seeking an informative and scholarly telling of these events without pretense will find much to reflect on and it will demand very little time.

Bound for America: The Story of the European Immigrants

This story of the great migration out of Europe to America in the 1800s conveys why people

left. One strength of the story, with its many angles, is that it tells about the people and the places they came from. It looks squarely at the abuses immigrants encounter, and erases some of the stereotypes associated with immigrants.

North Across the Border: The Story of the Mexican Americans

This fascinating rendering of the history of Mexican Americans describes how the current U.S./Mexico border happened historically. Many readers will better appreciate the stream of immigrants from Mexico into the U.S.—why, how, where, and the consequences. There is no glossing over central problems that still exist with many Mexican-Americans in the U.S.

The Trail of Tears: The Story of the Cherokee Removal

This recounting of the 16,000 Cherokees who were relocated from Georgia to Oklahoma in 1838 involved many colorful and outspoken men and women. The one thousand mile journey is retold through the words of participants and summary comments. Pictures and illustrations lend a personal feeling of being there.

Following Freedom's Star: The Story of the Underground Railroad

This chronicle of the secret and swift protest activity against slavery in the U.S. follows the pace of the 75,000 to 100,000 fugitive slaves who were transported to freedom during the 19th century, and of those who worked supporting this activity.

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

The black soldier : 1492 to the present / Catherine Clinton. LCCN 99048935. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, Houghton Mifflin, 2000. HBB, 039567722X, \$17.00. Middle school. Rating: 2

355'.0089'96073. African American soldiers--History; Soldiers; United States--Armed Forces--African-Americans--History. 117 p.

"Blacks have fought and died in the Americas for centuries, creating an unbroken chain of warriors stretching back nearly five hundred years." This opening sentence sets the proud and hopeful tone of this work by Dr. Catherine Clinton. *The Black Soldier* is well researched, and includes a "selected sources" section. The text itself is simply but engagingly written.

Teachers and parents will find this book a good introduction to the military history of African-Americans. The book does not ignore the

hardships of blacks on the battlefield or in the barracks, and draws many parallels with the larger condition of blacks in America. The courage, patriotism and tenacity of African-Americans are proudly displayed in this book. However, this work does not include as much historical detail as I would prefer. Controversial events such as the Port Chicago Mutiny and Henry Flipper's Court-martial are conspicuously absent. I am disappointed that the Tuskegee Airmen received little mention in the text, and the USS Mason is not mentioned at all.

This work could be used with elementary or middle school students as a history unit source book. Advanced primary or intermediate students should find this text valuable general reading.

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

Water / by John Farndon. (Science experiments.) LCCN 00060187. Tarrytown, N.Y.: Benchmark Books, Marshall Cavendish, 2001. HBB, 0761410872, \$16.95. Middle school (Middle school). Rating: 4

532. Water--Experiments; Experiments. 32 p.

Weather / by John Farndon. (Science experiments.) LCCN 99089261. Tarrytown, N.Y.: Benchmark Books, Marshall Cavendish, 2001. HBB, 0761410899, \$16.95. Middle school (Middle school). Rating: 4

551.6'078. Weather--Experiments; Meteorology--Experiments; Experiments. 32 p.

These titles in the Science Experiments Series (total of six) are attractive from cover to cover, and appeal to middle school and junior high students. The contents page uses photo and eye-catching headings to indicate the topics and experiments. Explanations appear with breathtaking photos and boxed information highlighting central facts. The wealth of material will encourage learning and the layout will make much of it seem effortless.

Teachers can use topics explanation in a class setting, or offer it for students to digest on their own. The experiments are outlined in step 1,2,3 fashion with pictures showing what is happening. Water deals with ice, water, steam, waterpower, floating and sinking, heavy water, and surface tension. Weather concentrates on the role of the sun, winds and how they blow, tornadoes and hurricanes, clouds and humidity, and rain and storms. Each title closes with a glossary and easy to follow index.

Recommended for all middle schools and junior highs, for homeschoolers, and as an easy title for science experiment collections in public libraries.

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

Sound and hearing / by John Farndon. (Science experiments.) LCCN 99089262. Tarrytown, N.Y.: Benchmark Books, Marshall Cavendish, 2001. HBB, 0761410910, \$16.95. Middle school. Rating: 4

534'.078. Sound--Experiments; Hearing--Experiments; Senses and sensation--Experiments; Experiments. 32 p.

Light and optics / by John Farndon. (Science experiments.) LCCN 99089898. Tarrytown, N.Y.: Benchmark Books, Marshall Cavendish, 2001. HBB, 0761410902, \$16.95. Middle school. Rating: 4

535. Light--Experiments; Optics--Experiments; Experiments. 32 p.

Science Experiments is a series currently consisting of six titles which offer simple, clear explanations of the properties of common physical phenomena which are experienced by children everyday. The phenomenon, such as sound or light, is briefly defined; then, simple, clearly-explained experiments using inexpensive materials are suggested to demonstrate its most common properties. The volumes are slim, attractively illustrated, and well laid-out. The table of contents allows for easy location of the experiments, and a glossary of terms is located at the end, followed by an index. An interesting one-page discussion of the purpose of experimentation and the benefits of tests gone wrong rounds out the volumes.

The books are good, although not exceptional, choices for the first-exposure of a child to these phenomena of the physical world. The experiments are "do-able" on the smallest budget. The text is readable at the second to third grade level. The photographs and drawings are large and thoroughly illustrate the ideas under examination. Everything is "right" about these volumes except for the lack of a "Wow!" factor. The properties examined are so basic that only very early elementary-aged children will be impressed.

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

The geology book / by John D. Morris. (Wonders of creation.) LCCN 99067332. Green Forest, Ark.: Master Books, Master Books, 2000. HBB, 0890512817, \$15.99. Middle school. Rating: 5

550. Geology. 80 p.

The Geology Book by John D. Morris is a beautiful and informative volume that would be excellent in the Christian school or home school classroom. With many beautiful full color illustrations and photographs, this book takes the reader from the beginnings of the earth, when it was created by God, through what the Bible predicts will be the final chapter in the earth's history before it is made new again after the return of Christ. In between, the author does

a fine job of describing rocks, the geological process, and the earth's surface.

The data is easy to follow, scientifically accurate and demonstrates how the earth is not only God's creation, but how it reflects Him. The chapter on carbon dating is especially interesting and makes a difficult topic easy to understand while at the same time clearly explaining the flaws that are possible. Also included are a glossary, an index, a bibliography and a list of other resources.

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

Volcano! / by Cynthia Pratt Nicolson. LCCN C009330607. Toronto: Kids Can Press, Kids Can Press, 2001.. HBB, 1550749080, \$14.95; PAP, 1550749668, \$6.95. Middle school (Middle school). Rating: 4

551.21. Volcanoes. 32 p.

Kids can't seem to get enough books on volcanoes. The drama and scope of a volcanic eruption make them one of those dreaded yet compelling obsessions that middle/elementary-aged children want to read about. *Volcano!* by Cynthia Pratt Nicolson joins a host of books on this topic for this age group. The pictures are definitely in the "Wow!" category, but what makes this book distinctive is the balance of text to illustration and the amount of real information that it conveys. Divided into chapters consisting of two page spreads, the vocabulary of geology is introduced and used within the text. Many chapters also contain a "You Try It" section which suggests simple experiments that illustrate the concepts being spoken about. *Volcano!* finishes with a one page glossary of the terms introduced in the text and an index of topics. Although there is not enough in this one book on which to write a large report, the child who reads it will come away with an astonishing number of facts and an impressive vocabulary.

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

Animals at work : how animals build, dig, fish and trap / written by Etta Kaner; illustrated by Pat Stephens. LCCN C009329625. Toronto: Kids Can Press, Kids Can Press, 2001. HBB, 1550746731, \$10.95; PAP, 1550746758, \$5.95. Middle school. Rating: NR

591.5. Animal behavior. 40 p.

This well-organized book offers fun surprises for middle-grade readers. Divided logically into seven sections, each section provides fascinating facts about select animals and insects under related themes, with boxed sidebars, quizzes, and most pleasingly, suggested activities for hands-on experimentation. For instance, under "Showing Off," animals are described doing odd things to attract a mate, such as hut-building bowerbirds,

singing whales, dancing lyrebirds, and knotting weaverbirds. A "who am I?" quiz challenges readers to review, and a full page shows how to tie a single half hitch knot, an overhand knot, and a running knot. The pages are large enough for easy-to-read text and colorful illustrations done in a combination of watercolor, gouache, and color pencil. Nicely organized and appealing to read. No dust jacket. An index is included in the back.

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

Crocodiles / Judith Jango-Cohen. (AnimalWays.) LCCN 99058363. Tarrytown, N.Y.: Benchmark Books, Marshall Cavendish, 2001. LIB, 0761411364, \$19.95. Middle school. Rating: 5

597.98. Crocodiles. 112 p.

Bats / Sue Ruff and Don E. Wilson. (AnimalWays.) LCCN 99058684. Tarrytown, N.Y.: Benchmark Books, Marshall Cavendish, 2001. LIB, 0761411372, \$19.95. Middle school. Rating: 5

599.4. Bats. 104 p.

Gorillas / Paul Fleisher. (AnimalWays.) LCCN 99058364. Tarrytown, N.Y.: Benchmark Books, Marshall Cavendish, 2001. LIB, 0761411402, \$19.95. Middle school. Rating: 5

599.884. Gorilla. 112 p.

Horses / Rebecca Steffoff. (AnimalWays.) LCCN 99058365. Tarrytown, N.Y.: Benchmark Books, Marshall Cavendish, 2001. LIB, 0761411399, \$19.95. Middle school. Rating: 5

636.1. Horses. 112 p.

Frogs / Dan Greenberg. (AnimalWays.) LCCN 99058371. Tarrytown, N.Y.: Benchmark Books, Marshall Cavendish, 2001. LIB, 0761411380, \$19.95. Middle school. Rating: 5

597.89. Frogs. 112 p.

The AnimalWays series by Benchmark Books is a beautifully executed and highly informative series on individual animals for the middle school student. Although written by different authors, each book follows a similar format of discussion of the "world" of that animal, its origin and families, its physical make-up, particular abilities and behavior, habitat, life cycle, and the outlook for its future. Every volume is lavishly illustrated with photographs of exceptional quality and ability to capture the animals' nature and beauty. The resources at book's end include a glossary, species checklist, and a list of resources for further study which includes books, websites, videos, and movies. A bibliography of books the author found useful in writing the book completes this comprehensive list.

As with series on other topics published by Benchmark Books, AnimalWays is exceptional. The information is current, interesting, and just what a student wants to know. The helps for further research represents a serious effort at promoting true research in every medium, making these books an excellent starting point for student papers. Innumerable series have been published on animals, but AnimalWays should be at the top of the list and be added to collections no matter how many other books on the animal a library might have.

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

Elizabeth I and Tudor England / by Miriam Greenblatt. (Rulers and their times.) LCCN 00057209. Tarrytown, N.Y.: Benchmark Books, Marshall Cavendish, 2001. LIB, 0761410287, \$19.95. Middle school (High school). Rating: 4

942.05'5092. Elizabeth I, Queen of England, 1533-1603; Kings, queens, rulers, etc.; Great Britain--History--Elizabeth, 1558-1603; Great Britain--Social life and customs--16th century. 88 p.

Louis XVI, Marie-Antoinette and the French Revolution / by Nancy Plain. (Rulers and their times.) LCCN 00057152. Tarrytown, N.Y.: Benchmark Books, Marshall Cavendish, 2001. LIB, 0761410295, \$19.95. Middle school (High school). Rating: 4

944.035'0922. Louis XVI, King of France, 1754-1793; Marie Antoinette, Queen, consort of Louis XVI, King of France, 1755-1793; Kings, queens, rulers, etc.; France--History--Revolution, 1789-1799. 88 p.

Isabel Ferdinand and fifteenth-century Spain / by Kenny Mann. (Rulers and their times.) LCCN 00041450. Tarrytown, N.Y.: Benchmark Books, Marshall Cavendish, 2001. LIB, 0761410309, \$19.95. Middle school (High school). Rating: 4

946'.03'0922. Spain--History--Ferdinand and Isabella, 1479-1516; Ferdinand V, King of Spain, 1452-1516; Isabella I, Queen of Spain, 1451-1504; Kings, queens, rulers, etc.. 80 p.

Genghis Khan and the Mongol Empire / by Miriam Greenblatt. (Rulers and their times.) LCCN 99086634. Tarrytown, N.Y.: Benchmark Books, Marshall Cavendish, 2001. LIB, 0761410279, \$19.95. Middle school (High school). Rating: 4

950'.2. Genghis Khan, 1162-1227; Kings, queens, rulers, etc.; Mongols--Social life and customs. 80 p.

The series Rulers and Their Times presents, in a uniform but interesting fashion, the lives and surrounding culture of some of the greatest names in history. The brainchild of Miriam Greenblatt, its original complement of four titles has now, with the addition of these new ones, been increased to eight under the authorship of Greenblatt and other writers. Each volume follows a pattern of dividing its subject into thirds. The first third introduces the ruler

through a short, biographical sketch and an examination of the events and policies, both good and harmful, of his or her reign. The middle third explores the "Everyday Life ..." of the culture as experienced by those in different levels of that society, including religious beliefs, food, industry, clothing, education, and leisure activities. The last third presents the opportunity for the people of that time and place to speak "...In Their Own Words" by recounting folktales, poetry, or letters indicative of the temperament of the culture. Illustrations from contemporary or near-contemporary sources abound throughout each section and each title has at least one map. Each book also ends with a glossary, a list of books for further reading, suggested internet sites for more information, a bibliography, endnotes, and an index.

Rulers and Their Times is exceptionally well-conceived and admirably accomplishes the series' goal of giving students a feel for other times and places as well as a nodding acquaintance with the great personages of power from the past. The volumes are colorful and, except for some poor placement in the volume on Elizabeth, the illustrations are attractively and informatively laid out. The documentation and indexing is careful and suggestions for further study are sufficiently varied between other biographies, histories and sources on the literature and art of the culture to enable students to pursue particular interests awakened by the text. The addition of internet websites dedicated to some aspect of the ruler or culture in question has become a necessary addition to all reference book and those cited are respectable and interesting. The only drawback to this very useful collection is the superficial treatment or evaluation of the religious influences of the time. Otherwise, the Rulers and Their Times series is a very good introduction of its subjects to the middle or high school student.

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

The Haida / Raymond Bial. (Lifeways.) LCCN 00022225. Tarrytown, N.Y.: Benchmark Books, Marshall Cavendish, 2001. HBB, 0761409378, \$22.95. Middle school (High school). Rating: 5.

971.1'004972. Haida Indians; Indians of North America--British Columbia; Indians of North America--Alaska. 128 p.

The Huron / Raymond Bial. (Lifeways.) LCCN 99029461. Tarrytown, N.Y.: Benchmark Books, Marshall Cavendish, 2001. HBB, 0761409408, \$22.95. Middle school (High school). Rating: 5.

973.04'9755. Wyandot Indians; Indians of North America. 128 p.

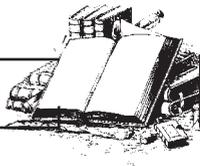
The Apache / Raymond Bial. (Lifeways.) LCCN 99044717. Tarrytown, N.Y.: Benchmark Books, Marshall Cavendish, 2001. HBB, 0761409394, \$22.95. Middle school (High school). Rating: 5.

979'.004972. Apache Indians; Indians of North America--New Mexico. 128 p.

The Lifeways series written by Raymond Bial is comprised of volumes on twelve of the major Native American nations of North America. Each volume is a mini-encyclopedia that begins with an honest but respectful description of the beliefs each tribe has about its origin and relationship to the supernatural and their natural surroundings. It then goes on to describe the material culture of the peoples, such as their homes, clothing, and foods, as well as their artistic culture as seen in art, song, and storytelling. The history and customs of the past several centuries are contrasted with the way in which each tribe has changed and adapted to a very different life than that of their forbearers.. The illustration of the volumes is accomplished through photographs, many of which were taken by the author, archival photographs, and reproductions of original art. Each volume then ends with a timeline of important events in the tribe's history, thumbnail sketches of important personages, a glossary of Indian terms peculiar to the nation in question, and an extensive section for further research that includes a reading list, a selection of websites, and a handbook of organizations, after which may be found a well-organized index.

Raymond Bial has made a name for himself over the past twenty years for the careful, respectful research and stunning photography of every subject he undertakes. His Lifeways series is no exception. The books are well-conceived, beautifully laid out, and uniformly excellent in illustration and in the extent of information they offer to the middle or high school reader. The Lifeways series does a superb job of revealing each tribe's cultural history and then brings that culture and people right up into the present day. The supporting materials of timelines, websites, lists of organizations to contact, biographies, and bibliographies offer the student researcher a ready-made course of study. Liveways is an excellent effort and well-worth inclusion in any library collection.

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



Annilea / Ishbel L. Moore. LCCN C00900830. Montreal: Roussan, Roussan, 2000. PAP, 1896184804, \$8.95. High school. Rating: 3

F. Moebius Syndrome--Fiction. 151 p.

Annilea is a typical Toronto high school girl, who wants to be a singer, is a goalie on a hockey team, and who has a crush on her best friend Celine's brother. But Annilea has special struggles that no teenager should have. She suffers from a genetic disorder, Moebius Syndrome. Because of this, her hands are deformed and she is unable to smile, something that she longs to do. Annilea is devastated at a music competition, where, despite her training with a vocalist, a judge refused to consider her performance. However a journalist who witnesses the competition is inspired by her and asks to do a documentary about Moebius Syndrome and specifically about her. Annilea's parents are on the verge of divorce but agree to cooperate with the journalist. As Annilea struggles with her emotions over the film and over her parents' responses, she is given even more to think about from Celine's well-meaning mother, who begins to encourage her to consider "smile surgery." Annilea is afraid of more surgery, but knows that she can never be a great singer unless she can move her face and smile.

Annilea by Ishbel Moore is not only a wonderfully moving and excellently written story about the battles faced and victories won by a teenager with disabilities but an extremely informative look at a little known birth disorder that affects many people. Young adult readers will be able to identify with Annilea's longings to be accepted for who she is while at the same time be educated about what Moebius Syndrome is and what the prognosis is for those who suffer with it.

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

Between two worlds / Philip Ellis Jackson. (Timeshift trilogy; 2.) Baltimore: AmErica House, , 2002. PAP, 1588514382, \$19.95. High school. Rating: 4

F. Science fiction.

In this second book in the Timeshift Trilogy, *Between Two Worlds*, the reader is promised a fascinating journey into time travel and its consequences. The slightest change in an event or even intruding on the smallest creature can produce disastrous results for the future. Yet, it is this very idea of changing the future that is the incentive for two opposing groups to attempt such a dangerous feat. The ever-encroaching and poisonous ash, a lethal, living organism

produced by a nuclear exchange in the past, is about to destroy all that is left of planet earth. Already, the populace lives under huge, bubble-like structures, or underground in the dark, dank subterranean earth. It seems that traveling to the past and somehow destroying the ash is the only hope for planet earth.

Paul Thorndyke and best friend, Quentin Cottle, are determined to attempt a "jump" back into time to discover a solution for the dying planet. Unknown to them, however, is a group of radicals with a different agenda that are also attempting such a feat, hoping to bring a live human being from the past. Amidst the seriousness of this matter, there is also an ever-present threat from the underground sub-culture, the distorted and grotesque "Imperfis," humans that have become deformed from living in the dank environment below. They have grown restless and determined to stop the flow of humans into their once-quiet domain. The threat of attacks and terrorism keep Thorndyke and the governing body distracted while Dr. Raikel and his cronies ready their sabotage of the Time Machine.

The prologue will bring first time readers up to date with the events in Book One, and help them understand who the characters are and the dilemmas they must face. Jackson gives ample explanation and details of the science involved to bring credibility to time travel, yet leaves enough unfinished business and possibilities that the reader will look forward to the third book in the series.

Mary McKinney, CLJ editor, writer, conference speaker, educator

Christmas in my heart : a treasury of great Christmas stories / edited by Stephen Fortosis. LCCN 2001025586. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, Baker Books, 2001. HBB, 0801012236, \$19.99. High school (Adult). Rating: *5

F. Short stories; Religious fiction; Conduct of life--Fiction; Christmas stories. 224 p.

Judeo-Christian values are the pulse of this anniversary collection of shorts. A woman learns that an ogre-like exterior can hide a tender, hurting heart. A son and daughter, through a simple, lop-sided cake, remind their parents that family love transcends death. A widow's reflection on the early loss of her husband comes full circle with the realization that, even a hard, lonely life can be a gift. A grandson's search for Santa Claus re-unites an embittered father and son. Each story exudes a warm, cozy feeling that offers the reader a pleasant respite from the usual seasonal commercialization. Favorite authors like Grace

Livingston Hill, Pearl S. Buck, and Margaret E. Sangster, Jr. are interspersed with black and white woodcut illustrations reminiscent of Norman Rockwell and Currier & Ives sketches. Many of the vignettes are set during the Great Depression era, when an uncluttered lifestyle was encouraged.

Christmas in My Heart, compiled and edited by Joe L. Wheeler, is the tenth volume in the Christmas in My Heart collection. At first glance, stories are almost annoying in old-fashioned simplicity, but soon tales begin to render a grandma's-attic-like appeal. They are similar in style, size, and greeting card affect to Richard Paul Evans' *The Christmas Box* (Simon & Schuster, 1995). Perhaps, like the Royden family discovered in the story, "Good Old Christmas Preferred," sharing and caring really do make the most inviting Christmas. Recommended for library Christmas collections.

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

The coffin quilt : the feud between the Hatfields and the McCoys / Ann Rinaldi. LCCN 99014455. San Diego: Gulliver Books, Harcourt, 2001. PAP, 0152164502, \$6.00. High school. Rating: 4

F. Hatfield-McCoy feud--Fiction; Vendetta--Fiction; Mountain life--Appalachian Region--Fiction; Appalachian Mountains--Fiction. 240 p.

The Hatfield and McCoy feud is an American legend. And as with most legends it is based on fact, something renowned historical fiction author Ann Rinaldi has explored in her latest offering, *The Coffin Quilt*. The story is told through the eyes of young fourteen-year-old Fanny McCoy who leads readers from the tumultuous feud beginnings of stolen pigs, to the star-crossed affair of her favored, beautiful sister Roseanna to handsome Johnse Hatfield.

Rinaldi has proven in previous historical novels that she can artfully weave fact and fiction together. The Coffin Quilt continues the same successful pattern of strong characterization, rich historical detail, and a well-defined story line. While the complex plot which ranges over a nine year period might be difficult to follow at times, readers will be intrigued to follow this mesmerizing saga to the dramatic climax. Rinaldi takes artistic liberty in adding fictional elements to her story such as Yellow Thing, an ominous apparition that brings Fanny warning when tragedy will befall her family. This adds to the juxtaposition of superstition and religion that runs strong in the mountain people of Fanny's day.

One powerful aspect of Rinaldi's story is how evil can come in the guise of beauty. Fanny adores her beautiful older sister Roseanna, seeing no wrong in her fair sister. Yet, the truth comes slowly to Fanny that her sister must harbor intent of evil when Roseanna seeks paths that fan the flames of hatred between the families instead of distinguishing them. It is a much older and wiser Fanny who finishes the saga of this powerful account of love, hatred, and retribution, showing all the more how revenge is a bitter resolution. Christy readers will be interested in this Appalachian Romeo and Juliet.

Pam Webb, Librarian Technician, Sandpoint High School, Sandpoint, Idaho

Friends in need / N. J. Lindquist. (Circle of friends;3.) LCCN C20019302339. Markham, Ont.: That's Life! Communications, That's Life! Communications, 2001. PAP, 0968549543, \$7.95. High school. Rating: 5

F. Friendship--Fiction. 208 p.

Friends In Need, by N.J. Lindquist, contributes additional teenage conflict to Senior Glen Sauten's struggle to understand himself, his friends, and his growing relationship with God. Questioning his own and others' actions regarding friendships and relationships, he asks, "What is a real friend, anyway?"

Glen helps his best friend, Phil—a paraplegic since his car racing accident—regain a sense of purpose and self-confidence leading to growth in friendship and maturity for both boys. Only after he becomes a hero, does Nicole, Glen's ex-girlfriend thanks to Charlie Thornton, realize that Charlie's rivalry with Glen was why he pursued her. Glen's growing dislike of disagreeable and antagonistic Marta changes to concern when he prays for her and she reveals deep secrets that explain her attitudes.

Lindquist's paints characters and scenes that evoke tears and cheers. Her positive introduction of biblical fasting encourages readers to consider it. Coming to grips with your past, learning to forgive, and growing in maturity and responsibility, all appear in the scriptural story line. Although intended for a teenage audience (12-18) this book, as well as its sequel coming in 2002, might well be enjoyed by adults of any age. Although part of a series, this book can be read as a stand-alone.

Gail Welborn, Freelance Writer/Audio and Book Reviewer, Everett, Washington

Another point of view: Rating: 3

Glen and Charlie, friendly rivals, attend church to get to know Nicole, the pastor's daughter. Nicole chooses to go out with Glen, so Charlie dates her best friend, Joyce. Everyone knows that Charlie is only dating Joyce in order to be close to Nicole. When Nicole dumps Glen, to go out with Charlie, Glen and Joyce decide to pretend they, too, have become a couple. Against his parents' approval, Glen continues to

be a part of the church, especially a study group of adults he has grown close to. Persecution attacks Glen from all sides. First, Nicole breaks up with him to date Charlie; next, Marta, one of his classmates who tries to emulate a witch, begins to actively harass Glen; he starts receiving mysterious threatening notes; then board members at his church want to break up his study group. Glen re-opens a friendship with Phil, who has been in a tragic accident that caused him to become a paraplegic. They begin to encourage each other through e-mail. Glen discovers that success is not always determined by outward appearances.

Friends In Need by N. J. Lindquist, is third in the Circle of Friends series, developed in order to present a non-threatening picture of how teens mature and interact with Christ, adults, and other teens. Lindquist is a former high school teacher, homeschooled her own four boys, and displays a deep concern for teenagers. Although the story is preachy, the characters are well constructed, if a bit too clean. Style and theme are clear, with a mildly suspenseful plot. Recommended for church pre-teen study groups.

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

Hangman's curse / Frank Peretti. (The veritas project; 1.) LCCN 00045084. Nashville: Tommy Nelson, Thomas Nelson, 2001. HBB, 0849976162, \$16.99; PAP, 0840977851, \$8.99; 0849976995, AUDIO CASS, \$14.99. High school. Rating: 3

F. High schools--Fiction; Schools--Fiction; Bullies--Fiction; Christian life--Fiction; Mystery and detective stories. 281 p.

In this first installment of The Veritas Project, Frank Peretti provides a fast-paced mystery/thriller with *Hangman's Curse*. Three small-town high school athletes lie in varying degrees of incoherence in the hospital. The other students believe these popular football players are victims of Abel Frye, the resident school ghost. As panic threatens to break out, the Veritas Project steps in. Together the Springfields, Nate, Sarah, and their twins Elisha and Elijah uncover the real ghost, revealing some hidden skeletons along the way.

Peretti, known for his contemporary thrillers, knows how to keep readers up to all hours of the night trying to finish his books. Peretti succeeds in combining Christian insight with supernatural genre. Bill Meyers does the same with his Forbidden Doors series.

Hangman's Curse in itself provides the message that a strong faith can conquer the darkness. Yet the overriding message of how damaging bullying is, comes out even stronger. The book's layout with its text inserts and chapter/title illustrations will attract 'tween' readers, while young adults will be drawn to the accurate drama of high school life. Those who have read

Peretti's Cooper Kids series readers will be ready to continue with the The Veritas Project.

Pam Webb, Library Technician, Sandpoint, Idaho

Jungle hideout / Jeanette Windle. Grand Rapids: Kregel, Kregel, 2001. PAP, 0825441463, \$5.99. High school. Rating: 4

F. Adventure and adventurers--Fiction; Brothers and sisters--Fiction; Twins--Fiction; Mystery and detective stories; South America--Fiction. 157 p.

Cave of the Inca Re / Jeanette Windle. Grand Rapids: Kregel, Kregel, 2001. PAP, 0825441455, \$5.99. High school. Rating: 4

F. Adventure and adventurers--Fiction; Brothers and sisters--Fiction; Twins--Fiction; Mystery and detective stories; South America--Fiction. 146 p.

Teen twins Jenny and Justin get more than a vacation to South America when they travel with their Uncle Pete. As they travel, Jenny and Justin soon become involved with smugglers and drug dealers. Their quick-thinking resourcefulness and reliance on the Lord grant them adventure with victory. In both books Jeanette Windle lends her extensive knowledge of South America to the stories. Her background as a missionary to that country lends great authenticity, and with the fascinating description of the jungle and culture there is a wider scope to the fast-paced storylines. Teen readers familiar with Bill Meyers Forbidden Doors, and Sigmund Brouwer's adventure books will be easily persuaded to read this series as well.

In *Cave of the Inca Re*, the twins stumble upon a smuggling operation as they tour ancient ruins. Their over-curious natures get them in more trouble than they had bargained for. And their attempts to witness to their reluctant guide, Pedro, are relatively unsuccessful, until they prove to him the power and protection of God. The intertwining of adventure and faith make for a great read for tween readers.

Jungle Hideout continues Jenny and Justin's adventures in South America. This time their uncle takes them to an oil camp. Even though the oil production supposedly is not producing, there certainly is no lack of adventure. This time it looks like the twins have happened onto an all too successful cocaine smuggling operation, and if they don't get ravaged by the jungle they might break the ring and win a tough drug agent to the Lord.

Pam Webb, Library Technician, Sandpoint, Idaho

★

The kingfisher's tale / Mark Delaney. (Misfits, Inc.; 4.) LCCN 00008743. Atlanta: Peachtree, Peachtree, 2000. PAP, 1561452262, \$5.95. High school. Rating: 5

F. Environmental protection--Fiction; Mystery fiction. 216 p.

★

***The protester's song* / Mark Delaney.** (Misfits, Inc.; 5.) LCCN 00054857. Atlanta: Peachtree, Peachtree, 2001. PAP, 1561452440, \$5.95. High school. Rating: 5

F. Kent State University--Riot, 1970 (May 4)--Fiction; Mystery fiction; High schools--Fiction; Schools--Fiction. 214 p.

The Kingfisher's Tale is an installment in the series "Misfits, Inc." Misfits Inc. is comprised of four Oregon high school friends, Byte, a girl who is a computer whiz, Mattie, a young magician who has a way of disappearing, Jake, the strong leader type who boldly leads the group, and Peter, a junior Sherlock Holmes whose father just happens to be an F.B.I. agent. One day as the group is hiking in the forest they discover some dead kingfishers and decide to take one home to see if they can figure out what killed it. Suddenly some threatening men confiscate the bird and chase them away. Now their curiosity is aroused. As they delve deeper into the mystery they find that it involves endangered species, the environment, and logging rights, and the trail they are on leads straight to a congressman in Washington.

In *The Protestor's Song* the suspenseful adventures of The Misfits continues. A mystery presents itself to the group when Byte's uncle Josh shows up for a visit. Is local folk singer Red Carlyle really the infamous singer Dylan McDonnell who disappeared after bombing National Guard jeeps at a college anti-war demonstration in the 1970s? Does Red recognize Uncle Josh, who lost his leg in the explosions? Is he trying to kill not only Josh but the Misfits as well? As the Misfits begin to investigate these questions they find that the answers lie in the violence between the National Guardsmen and the students all those years ago. What they find will lead them to a cover-up that involves the F.B.I., but what they discover will put them in serious danger.

The Misfits, Inc. series by Mark Delaney is a very exciting and involving series that will captivate readers and draw them into the characters and the plotlines. The stories are suspenseful until the last page. The author does a fine job of weaving intricate mystery tales that will appeal to YA readers and adults. The themes involved — environmentalism, congressional honesty, the anti-war movement, etc.—seem drawn right from the front page of the newspaper. The reader will not only be rewarded with an action packed story but will also learn something about the topics involved.

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

***Troy* / Adele Geras.** LCCN 00057262. San Diego: Harcourt, Harcourt, 2001. HBB, 0152164928, \$17.00. High school. Rating: 2

F. Trojan War--Fiction; Mythology, Greek--Fiction; Troy (Extinct city)--Fiction. 340 p.

Xanthe lives in Prince Hector's household as a servant to his wife Andromache and she spends her free time tending the soldiers who are wounded in the decade old battle outside the city walls. She is also able to see the various gods, Mars, Apollo, etc. as they move invisibly among the citizens. While she is sickened and wearied by the ongoing war, her interest is suddenly captured by Alastor, a handsome young man whose life she helps to save. A mischievous Cupid shoots Xanthe and she is hopelessly in love. Meanwhile, at the home of Prince Paris and Helen, Aphrodite has become bored with their love affair and so she causes the visiting Alastor to be in love with Marpessa, Helen's handmaiden and Xanthe's sister. Which young woman will Alastor ultimately choose, the one to whom he owes his life or the one he is in love with and will they survive the impending destruction?

Troy by Adele Geras is *The Iliad* retold from the Trojan point of view. The characters are well drawn and the plot is intriguing. The author does a fine job in portraying what it is like to live in a place at war, the glamorization of battle and the despair of defeat. However, Christian parents may want to hesitate in allowing adolescents to read this novel. Extramarital sex is portrayed as a common occurrence and the protagonists have no power to resist as they are at the hands of cruel and capricious gods. While the portrayal of the Greek deities is interesting from an entertainment point of view, for the Christian it is certainly a flawed and false message.

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

***The truth out there* / Celia Rees.** LCCN 00031643. New York: Dorling Kindersley, Dorling Kindersley, 2000. HBB, 0789426684, \$16.95. High school. Rating: 5

F. Unidentified flying objects--Fiction; Autism--Fiction; Uncles--Fiction; Computer games--Fiction. 217 p.

Joshua knows that he is in for a boring summer as he accompanies his mother Joanna to his ailing grandmother's house. Things begin to look up when he discovers that a beautiful girl, Katherine, lives next door. Josh's grandmother is confusing the past with the present and through some remarks he overhears, Josh begins to have questions about his mother's brother, Patrick, whom everyone has claimed was dead.

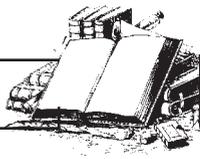
Being in the house resurrects old memories for Joanna and she begins to write Patrick's story on her computer to endeavor come to terms with her mysterious past. When his mother is out running errands, Joshua finds what she has written and he surreptitiously begins to read each day what his mother has written the night before. Soon Katherine is also reading the story of Patrick. Patrick was different, marched to his own drumbeat, but is it possible that he was also a murderer or was he himself murdered? Then

the kids discover that Patrick's story parallels a new computer game AlienState 3. What is going on?!

Josh's grandmother is slipping fast. Will Joanna finish her biography? Will she discover what Josh and Katherine are up to? Will Josh discover the truth about his family?

Celia Rees has done an excellent job in *The Truth Out There* of combining an intriguing mystery with a coming of age story. The reader discovers the importance of family ties and of being both understanding of those who are different and of ones self being understood. This book is wonderful for adolescents and older. Note, the cover and some parts of the book seem to be pointing to aliens and UFOs as the solution to the mystery, but this is a red herring and parents who dislike "alien stories" need not be concerned.

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



The Kregel pictorial guide to the story of the Bible / Tim Dowley. Grand Rapids: Kregel, Kregel, 2001. PAP, 0825424631, \$8.99. High school. Rating: 4

220. Bible--History. 32 p.

This thirty-two-page resource tool is packed with information that is easy to understand and presented in an attractive manner. Color illustrations highlight central points and make it easy, actually inviting, to follow the discussion. Topics range from who wrote the Bible and how it was written, to what's in it, and translations over the centuries.

A unique feature is that it can be used by high school students to make biblical study manageable, and yet holds enough variety and facts to entice adults growing in their biblical understanding.

Dowley, with a doctorate in church history and editing experience on biblical studies, is able to pack a page with a broad overview, e.g. in two pages he covers the Dead Sea scrolls, offering photos of where they were found, where they are now housed, and how scrolls were made. Another two-page spread summarizes each book of the Bible (except the Apocrypha), presenting fascinating Bible facts, and including key Bible passages.

Highly recommended for beginning Bible study groups, both teen and adult, and for church libraries. Recommended for school libraries offering the treasures of recorded literature. Public libraries needing study material to complement Bibles and commentaries could add this title for its ease of use and wide audience feature.

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

God chasers extreme New Testament (The international English Bible translation) / foreword by Tommy Tenney. Shippensburg, Pa.: Destiny Image, Destiny Image, 2001. PAP, 0768421128, \$12.99. High school. Rating: 4

225.5. Bible. N.T. English. International English. 2001.. 403 p.

This translation of the New Testament is geared for people on the move. Tommy Tenney asked Destiny Image for a translation that is in common language. The International English Bible (*God Chasers Extreme Bible*) was previously published as *The Simple English Bible, New Testament*. The text is easy to read using about 3,000 words and simple sentences. The chapters are broking into manageable paragraphs with catchy sub-headings such as,

"Jesus does lunch with a bunch" and "Nick at night". John 3:16 is quoted here to show the reader the style. "God loved the people of the world so much that He gave up His one and only Son. Every person who commits himself to Jesus will not be destroyed. Instead, that person will have eternal life."

The paperback is of good quality and the pages can take a highlighter well. There are no margins to speak of for notations. There are many footnotes. There is an end-page describing how to become a Christian. The only concern is that the present edition will lose its appeal as many of the sub-headings are time sensitive ("Nick at night" only means something to those who know about this show on TV). The Bible will be useful to younger people or those who want a simplified Bible.

Bianca Elliott, Teacher, Linwood, Kansas

Bruce & Stan's God said it ---and bang! It happened : the believable explanation of creation / Bruce Bickel, Stan Jantz. LCCN 00048947. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, Thomas Nelson, 2001. PAP, 0849976138, \$9.99. High school (Adult). Rating: 4

231.7'65. Creation; Theology, Doctrinal. 105 p.

Bruce Bickel and Stan Jantz know exactly how to present important and current material in a style that appeals to teens. In *Bruce and Stan's God Said It...And Bang! It Happened* they have tackled the controversial topic of creationism vs. evolution. They present the theories in a logical and easy to read manner and through clear reasoning lead the reader to easily see why the Bible and science eventually support each other, especially in this area. Beginning with the questions of the existence of a benevolent Creator versus the Big Bang, they methodically lay out their arguments for why what the Bible tells us happened is the truth, not only from faith, but from a logical point of view. They also address dinosaurs, cavemen, and the "missing link." They conclude with what the Scriptures say the future of the planet will be and answer why it is important to know what you believe.

The book has lively cartoon illustrations and boxes that emphasize major points. There is also a very nice bibliography. All in all, this is a wonderful book for adolescents and teens who want to have the facts to back their beliefs. Adults would also enjoy the highly readable, informative and entertaining book.

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

Dinosaurs and creation : questions and answers / Donald B. DeYoung. LCCN 00031280. Grand Rapids: Baker, Baker, 2000. PAP, 080106306X, \$9.99. High school (Middle school, Adult). Rating: 4

231.7'652. Dinosaurs--Miscellanea; Creationism--Miscellanea. 141 p.

Dinosaurs hold an almost universal fascination among humans. The discussion usually places their origin, dominance, and death in the distant evolutionary past. DeYoung provides another alternative to the theories about dinosaurs by placing the dinosaurs as part of the supernatural, six-day creation week. The easy-to-follow discussion makes this appropriate for high schoolers, and the more advanced junior high student, as well as for adults who will appreciate the clarity and wealth of material in so short a space. Fifty questions, and the answers to them, supplemented by figures and tables, provide both stimulating and interesting discussion. The reader is treated to, e.g., what is the evolutionary chronology of dinosaurs? Or are there creationist paleontologists? Or why were dinosaurs so large? To: How fast did dinosaurs run? And: Describe some of the popular dinosaurs. A glossary, chart of dinosaur names, and Scripture index adds to a deeper understanding, and enables further research.

DeYoung chairs the Natural Science Division at Grace College, Winona Lake, Indiana, and is current president of the Creation Research Society. Recommended for all public libraries, for home school and Sunday school teachers, and for Christian teachers and educators. This is such a balanced treatment that public libraries should make it a definite title for inclusion to be sure both evolution and creation views are treated.

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

Where ya gonna go? : now that you're a graduate / Kevin Johnson. LCCN 00012969. Minneapolis: Bethany House, Bethany House, 2001. HBB, 0764223402, \$9.99. High school (College). Rating: 4

248.8'3. Christian life; Young adults--Religious life; Young adults--Conduct of life. 110 p.

Kevin Johnson has written or co-written more than twenty books geared to youth and is well-known nationally to youth and youth workers alike. In *Where You Gonna Go?* he takes the questions ricocheting around inside the head of a new high school graduate and lays them out in chapters with catchy titles such as Who Are You?, Locating True Love, Who God Is and

What God's Done, What's your Priority?, and Eternity Means Heaven or Hell.

In each chapter, Johnson offers eight to ten thoughts on such topics as following the crowd, sin, betrayal, painful circumstances, worrying, unanswered prayer, and going to church, and he ends each thought with a boxed in verse from the NIV that backs him up and leaves the reader with something to carry away. This is not a big book, but its tall and narrow shape is just the right size for a backpack or nightstand and it manages to pack a lot to think about in its 110 pages. If your library has a lot of teen traffic, this would be a good choice to have on your shelves—and it would make a great gift to each of the graduates in your life, too!

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

***The American Revolution* / edited by Kirk D. Werner. (Turning points in world history.)** LCCN 99038377. San Diego: Greenhaven Press, 2000. PAP, 0737702389, \$14.96; LIB, 0737702397, \$22.96. High school. Rating: 5

973.3. United States--History--Revolution, 1774-1783. 224 p.

***American slavery* / edited by William Dudley. (Turning points in world history.)** LCCN 99055866. San Diego: Greenhaven Press, 2000. PAP, 0737702125, \$14.96; LIB, 0737702133, \$22.96. High school. Rating: 5

306.3'0973. Slavery--United States--History. 255 p.

***The Great Depression* / edited by Don Nardo. (Turning points in world history.)** LCCN 99028801. San Diego: Greenhaven Press, 2000. PAP, 0737702303, \$14.96; LIB, 0737702311, \$22.96. High school. Rating: 5

338.5'42. Depressions--1929--United States; United States--Economic conditions--1918-1945; United States--Economic policy--1933-1945; New Deal, 1933-1939. 223 p.

***Women's suffrage* / edited by Brenda Stalcup. (Turning points in world history.)** LCCN 99055609. San Diego: Greenhaven Press, 2000. PAP, 0737703253, \$14.96; LIB, 0737703261, \$22.96. High school. Rating: 5

305.42'0973. Women's rights--United States--History; Women--Suffrage--United States--History; Women in politics--United States--History; Prohibition--United States--History; Anti-slavery movement--United States--History; United States. Constitution. 19th Amendment--History. 256 p.

***The civil rights movement* / edited by Paul A. Winters. (Turning points in world history.)** LCCN 99017694. San Diego: Greenhaven Press, 2000. PAP, 0737702168, \$14.96; LIB, 0737702176, \$22.96. High school. Rating: 5

323.1'196073. African Americans--Civil rights--History--20th century; Civil rights movements--United States--History--20th century; United States--Race relations. 287 p.

***The Atom Bomb* / edited by Tamara L. Roleff. (Turning points in world history.)** LCCN 99034739. San Diego: Greenhaven Press, 2000. PAP, 0737702141, \$14.96; LIB, 73770215X, \$22.96. High school. Rating: 5

355.8'25119. Atomic Bomb--United States; Hiroshima-shi (Japan)--History--Bombardment, 1945; Nagasaki-shi (Japan)--History--Bombardment, 1945; Atomic bomb--Moral and ethical aspects. 272 p.

***The decline and fall of ancient Greece* / edited by Don Nardo. (Turning points in world history.)** LCCN 99036891. San Diego: Greenhaven Press, 2000. PAP, 0737702400, \$14.96; LIB, 0737702419, \$22.96. High school. Rating: 5

938. Greece--Civilization--To 146 B.C.; National characteristics, Greece; City-states--Greece--History; Military; Military history, Ancient--Greece; Military history, Ancient--Rome. 272 p.

***The Crusades* / edited by Brenda Stalcup. (Turning points in world history.)** LCCN 99029283. San Diego: Greenhaven Press, 2000. PAP, 1565109929, \$14.96; LIB, 1565109937, \$22.96. High school. Rating: 5

909.07. Crusades. 258 p.

***The Renaissance* / edited by Stephen R. Thompson. (Turning points in world history.)** LCCN 99034765. San Diego: Greenhaven Press, 2000. PAP, 0737702184, \$14.96; LIB, 0737702192, \$22.96. High school. Rating: 5

940.1. Middle Ages--History; Renaissance. 272 p.

***Victorian England* / edited by Clarice Swisher. (Turning points in world history.)** LCCN 99012771. San Diego: Greenhaven Press, 2000. PAP, 0737702206, \$14.96; LIB, 0737702214, \$22.96. High school. Rating: 5

941.081. Great Britain--History--Victoria, 1837-1901. 263 p.

What are the Turning Points that change the course of history? Titles in this series focus on past events that stand out as pivotal in terms of effecting or changing history. Some of these like the atom bomb can occur in a limited span of time, while others such as civil rights or the Crusades evolve spanning decades.

Each volume consists of a group of essays providing a general overview, and then detailed discussion of applicable events and figures involved. The anthology includes excerpts from primary source documents, and to encourage further research, each volume features an extensive bibliography. Christian teachers and parents can utilize these titles with ease either with assisted or group study or as individual reading material. Religion is a part of life, and periodic references to religious developments aids to make this historical development more rounded. Recommended for high schools, for home schooling families, and for libraries providing ready reference materials for teens.

Volumes reviewed in the Series: *The American Revolution* outlines the causes of the struggle, the people and leader since the war, the war

politics and strategy, and the effects of the revolution. *American Slavery* looks at how slavery divided America and how it became both a cause and casualty of the Civil War. *The Great Depression* analyzes the thirties. *The Civil Rights Movement* examines the events of the 1950s and 1960s and analyzes the causes and strategies of the movement. *Women's Suffrage* sheds light on the struggle for women's suffrage, its divisions and achievements, and enduring legacy. *The Atom Bomb* looks at its development, the decision to drop the bomb and its aftermath, as well as scientists in retrospect evaluating the bomb. *The Decline and Fall of Ancient Greece* brings alive the disunity and decline of the Greeks, with specifics of Hellenistic society and culture, and how the Greek spirit has become an intrinsic part of Western civilization's fabric. *The Crusades* introduces readers to the multifaceted impact that the Crusades made on the Middle Ages, as well as aftereffects still impacting us today. *The Renaissance* looks at the period's origins, political and social contexts, its discoveries and transformations, and its significance. *Victorian England* outlines the achievements and influences of the Victorian Period along with specific social and cultural changes.

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

***Ultimate youth drama book : everything you need! (Except stage, cast, audience etc.)* / Paul McCusker. Grand Rapids: Monarch Books, Kregel, 2001. PAP, 0825460034, \$13.99. High school. Rating: 5**

792. Drama. 318 p.

For those desiring to develop a new youth drama ministry in their church or build upon an existing program, *The Ultimate Youth Drama Book*, by Paul McCusker, is an essential reference tool. McCusker covers every aspect of the drama ministry, including helpful hints, time-tested ideas, and to-do lists to enable even the greenest drama leader/director to become successful. He also explains theatrical terms and breaks down the drama production simply.

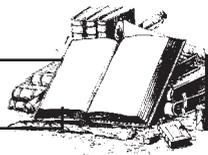
The book is divided into two sections. The first explains the role of the director, gives tips on running a drama group, and explains the minute details of producing anything from a short sketch to a five-act play. The second half of the book contains actual sketches written by McCusker, given to show how to write a sketch or for the youth group to use.

McCusker writes using his native United Kingdom English, so various terms or spellings may not be familiar. Some of the dialogue or expressions used in the sketches would not be fitting for an American audience. For example, McCusker uses the term "ring" in his sketches when a character wants to call someone on the phone. This is not a term widely used in the United States; therefore, it would need to be changed.

The Ultimate Youth Drama Book is a comprehensive reference manual. Beginners can take their eager desire, coupled with this book, and be successful in their first production. Experienced drama leaders will also find useful acting exercises, production tips, and practical promotional ideas as well.

This book is a must-have for any youth program wanting to establish a new ministry or for the established ministry that wants to improve.

Eileen Zygarricke, Freelance Writer and Editor, Grand Forks, North Dakota



***Abiding hope* / Angela Benson. (HeartQuest.) LCCN 2001002139. Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale House, Tyndale House, 2001. PAP, 0842319409, \$9.99. Adult. Rating: 3**

F. Loss (Psychology)--Fiction; Married people--Fiction; Clergy--Fiction; Psychological fiction; Christian fiction. 240 p.

It took four long years after the devastating death of their young son for Marvin and Shay to rebuild their marriage and begin to find joy in life again. They plan to make a fresh start with their move to Mississippi, where they will help establish a Christian community outreach service. Marvin is content with the way things are, but Shay is eager to have a baby, despite having had complications with her first child. When she becomes pregnant, Marvin's fear holds him aloof from his wife until the first trimester has safely passed. Shay's unwillingness to forgive Marvin, and her lack of willingness to trust him continues to build a wall between them. It takes some difficult, unexpected circumstances, and honest words from true Christian friends to open Shay and Marvin's eyes to their sins against each other, which finally allows them to come to grips with their pain, fears, and ultimately their binding love for each other.

Abiding Hope, by Angela Benson, is book two in the Genesis House series, although it is easily read on its own. While the story presents real life characters with real life struggles, it lacks the ability to draw the reader into the characters' lives in any personal way. Unlike the first book in the series, which was fully engaging, I found myself with a curious lack of empathy or compassion for the characters in *Abiding Hope*, and read the book as a detached observer might. The minor characters in this story captured my attention the most, and will likely be the focus of book three in the series, which will be something to look forward to.

Sherrri Beeler, Teacher, Cascade Christian High School, Medford, Oregon

***Angels flight* / by Tracie Peterson and James Scott Bell. (Shannon saga; 2.) LCCN 2001002563. Minneapolis: Bethany House, Bethany House, 2001. PAP, 0764224190, \$11.99. Adult. Rating: 4**

F. Women lawyers--Fiction; Racism--Fiction; Los Angeles (Calif.)--Fiction; Historical fiction; Christian fiction; Legal stories. 381 p.

Kathleen "Kit" Shannon has become one of the first women lawyers in the Los Angeles of the late 1800s. Due to her strong belief that poor people need honest, fair legal representation, as

much as the wealthy, spunky Kit finds herself defending a Mexican servant, her best friend's brother, against false rape charges. Tension rises, as vigilante police officers try to brand and kill her client before he even gets to trial. Meanwhile, the real rapist, one of the city's wealthy elitists, tries to tempt Kit to quit the trial through romance, wealth, and overwhelming societal backing. As Kit clings to God's principles, pressure mounts. Aunt Freddy withholds her familial support, wealthy society launches a campaign to publicly humiliate Kit, and she must deal with the general perception of the male population, that views her as a stupid, big mouthed female, to their ultimate demise.

Angels Flight, by Tracie Peterson and James Scott Bell, is the second book in the Shannon Saga. The first, *City of Angels*, addresses, without bitterness, some of the difficulties women faced when seeking admittance into the men's work world. Writing style is easy to understand and well researched. The theme is: good defeats evil in the end. The plot involves Kit's maturation in both the spiritual and legal realms. As with most quality Christian fiction today, though the happy ending seems to be a thing of the past, the light of hope for a new beginning or the continuation of godly standards still remains. Highly recommended for all Christian collections.

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

***Ashes and ice* / Tracie Peterson. (Yukon quest; 2.) LCCN 2001002507. Minneapolis: Bethany House, Bethany House, 2001. PAP, 0764223798, \$11.99. Adult. Rating: 4**

F. Married people--Fiction; Alaska--Fiction. 384 p.

Ashes and Ice, Tracie Peterson's second installment in her Yukon Quest series, continues the story of missionary's daughter Karen Pierce and her friend Grace Colton, taking both women into physically and emotionally dangerous territory. The conflict between the women and Martin Paxton takes on an even darker cast as Karen loses her last remaining relative to a fire which Paxton undoubtedly started. Unable to prove her charge, Karen must suffer Paxton's pride in his impunity, bringing her to a serious crisis of faith. In addition, the two children she has promised to care for until their father's return are left orphans in her charge after an avalanche kills the gold-seeking father. In all her troubles, Yukon native Adrik Ivanov is more than willing to shoulder her burdens, but Karen's anger with God seems to find a target in him. Meanwhile, Grace's hasty marriage to Peter Colton is

bearing bitter fruit as her husband rejects Grace's faith and any attempt to discuss it. Mistaking her impulses to live her faith as deliberate provocations, Peter leaves their home for Alaska, only to find upon his arrival that Paxton has exercised an obscure option in their contract to wrest the entire Colton enterprise from him. The price for the return of Peter's family's fortune is that which Paxton has desired from the beginning: Grace.

Ashes and Ice is acceptable light romance in the style that is so popular in the current Christian market, but its attempts to deal with the serious issues of faith, revenge, anger, murder, and marriage are lightweight, unconvincing, and highly questionable. The setting of the book is an improbable one to begin with, but the author fails to make it real or the circumstances inherent in it realistic to the reader. Neither are the characters more than the typical stereotypes found in most romances: handsome, kind-hearted, and totally chivalrous heroes, villains of the blackest dye, and beautiful, headstrong women. A light, escapist read, but be careful of both the questions and the answers this novel raises.

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

***Blue night* / Cindy McCormick Martinusen. LCCN 2001001283. Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale House, Tyndale House, 2001. PAP, 0842352368, \$10.99. Adult. Rating: 4**

F. World War, 1939-1945--Underground movements--Austria--Fiction; Americans--Europe--Fiction; Missing persons--Fiction; Venice (Italy)--Fiction; Treasure-trove--Fiction; War criminals--Fiction. 399 p.

A Venetian vacation turns into a holiday of heartbreak when Kate Porter's husband disappears without a trace. The only clue is a mysterious blue tile fragment left on the pillow. All her efforts to find Jack in Venice are fruitless and she returns home to care for their daughter. After three agonizing years with no word, Kate is ready to face the probability that her husband will never return. As she looks toward a future without him, she receives a package containing another blue tile fragment. The package's return address leads her to a group of elderly Austrians who were once Nazi resistors during the Holocaust. An unlikely alliance is formed. The brotherhood's plan, devised long ago, now affects Kate directly. They have information that may lead her to Jack. Together, they face danger to solve the mystery of Jack's disappearance and serve justice to an old foe.

In her second novel, Cindy McCormick Martinusen blends Kate's steadfast search for

A Note from the Editor: by Mary McKinney



Fantasy : How Shall We View It?

The Lord of the Rings trilogy made its appearance eighteen years after its famous forerunner, *The Hobbit*, which came out in 1937. Although this trilogy, which followed and added to the hobbit's adventures, wasn't exactly acclaimed on its first appearing, it has withstood the test of time and is enjoying another comeback in popularity—one of several. And yet, a dilemma seems to have arisen from its pages and now big screen appearance.

I have heard many Christians question whether it is appropriate and godly, or alternatively too dark and downright evil in its content. I would agree that it is not literature for everyone, nor is the movie made for all eyes, but let us be fair in our appraisal so that proper discernment can be made, and proper evaluation applied.

First of all, as presented in *Focus on the Family's* December, 2001, issue, we find a very interesting background on J.R.R. Tolkien. He was a fellow writer, philosopher, and

good friend of C.S. Lewis. Tolkien had several very fruitful discussions with C.S. Lewis concerning the validity of God. It was during one of these lively debates that Mr. Lewis at last understood the truth of Jesus Christ as his Lord and Savior, and went from a nebulous belief in a God 'out there' to a personal acknowledgement of Jesus Christ.

It was from this grand exchange of faith that the two challenged themselves and each other to come up with stories that could portray God, and specifically the Christian view, without being preachy or bringing offensive condemnation. Thus came the marvelous Narnia series by C.S. Lewis, and Tolkien's Lord of the Rings. Based on Christian truths, and designed to make a clear presentation of good (true good as seen in the Christian God), and evil (the true evil of Satan's realm), we find fantasies that delight, bring deep contemplation, and sometimes confused condemnation.

"All fantasy has to do with religious symbolism and beliefs," a social analyst declares on CNN. I would have to agree, and thus acknowledge both the delights and dangers of the world of fantasy. Fantasy is not for everyone, and not all fantasy is worth reading, but for those who enjoy a good tale of whimsy and

imagination, as well as the allegorical meaning of our faith, I would recommend Tolkien's series—*The Fellowship of the Ring*, *The Two Towers*, and *The Return of the King*—which takes you to the very end of time and the mighty battle that hearkens to the biblical Armageddon. Symbolism abounds, and as noted by Chuck Colson in his daily website Breakpoint, "The values and beliefs embedded in the story are deeply Christian. Evil in The Lord of the Rings isn't the opposite of good; it's a perversion of the good. His heroes don't come from among the wisest, strongest, or most powerful races. Instead Tolkien's heroes are members of the smallest, weakest, and least significant race. (They) bring to the quest distinctly Christian virtues, especially love and the capacity for sacrifice."

Much can be found within the pages of these classics. And now that movie goers can watch the unfolding of these tales, Chuck Colson and critic David Ansen of Newsweek agree that a trip to the bookstore just might be in order.

truth with secrets from another time, another place. Set against backdrops of war-torn and modern Austria, Oregon, and the small California town of Cottonwood, *Blue Night* tells a powerful story of courage, tenacity, and true love's vigil.

Although it reads as a stand alone, minor characters from Martinusen's popular first novel, *Winter Passing*, provide a thread of continuity in the second book. Related titles and web sites are listed and will be helpful to the WWII enthusiast. Also notable is the author's fair treatment of Nazi sympathizers as well as the resisters of the regime. She presents a fuller picture that equips the reader to consider, "What would I have done in the same circumstance and why?" Wrapped in suspense and filled with compelling characters, hidden treasure, and a call to faith—*Blue North* is a good read.

Cathy M. Elliott, Freelance Writer, Anderson, California

Camellia / Ginny Aiken. (Bellamy's blossoms; 3.) LCCN 2001027219. Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale House, Tyndale House, 2001. PAP, 0842335617, \$9.99. Adult. Rating: 2

F. Pregnant women--Fiction; Physicians--Fiction; Women--Fiction. 330 p.

Pregnant and widowed, Camellia Bellamy Sprague is trying desperately to convince the town and her overly protective older sisters that she is perfectly capable of running her own life. Cammie opens a boarding house which is filled with interesting characters who love her and want to protect her, too. Unfortunately, a handsome doctor moves into town to take over the local medical practice and he creates havoc for Cammie. Looking like Tom Sellack, Dr. Stephen Hardesty professes to be a Buddhist, which puts the town matrons into a tizzy. The Garden Club matrons develop plans to convert Stephen and to do a little matchmaking between the Doctor and Cammie. Humor and excitement ensue when Cammie tries to thwart her friend's blossoming romance, becomes the landlady to a repulsive iguana, tries to find the culprits who have stolen all of the Bellamy sisters' dogs, plus resisting the attraction to Stephen.

This is the third installment to the Bellamy's Blossoms series in which the first book was *Magnolia* and the second was *Lark*. Although Ginny Aiken's Camellia can be read without reading its predecessors, it is better to have previously been apart of this small Southern town's antics concerning the other Bellamy sisters.

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

Child of grace / Lori Copeland. LCCN 2001017146. Carol Stream, Ill.: Tyndale House, Tyndale House, 2001. PAP, 0842342605, \$11.99. Adult (High school). Rating: 4

F. Acquaintance rape--Fiction; Pregnant women--Fiction; Christian fiction. 231 p.

Lori Copeland, an experienced writer of historical fiction, tries her hand at contemporary women's fiction in *Child of Grace*—and with great success. By employing a very informal, "chatty," personable style of writing she fully engages the reader in the story of E.J., a young business woman carrying the child of a man who date raped her. Having drifted from the God of her childhood, E.J. returns home to small town, Cullen's Corner, to secretly have an abortion and then get on with her life as an L.A. business owner. However, through the gentle ministrations of her loving grandmother and neighborhood friends, E.J. slowly awakens to faith in a personal God who cares deeply for her and her unborn child.

Narrated by Ellen Jean, the child E.J. nearly aborted, this tender story illustrates how God can solve the biggest of quandaries, bring healing to the deepest of wounds, and turn what is meant for evil into a wonderful good. *Child of Grace* employs rare, mild slang, and deals very tastefully with the date rape issue. Although the issues dealt with are serious, the book is not a dark, heavy read, and the characters are very endearing.

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

Deadly cure / William Cutrer, Sandra Glahn. LCCN 2001033756. Grand Rapids: Kregel, Kregel, 2001. PAP, 0825423856, \$10.99. Adult. Rating: 4

F. Genetic engineering--Fiction; Medical ethics--Fiction; Physicians--Fiction. 363 p.

Dr. Tim Sullivan's illegal and unethical experiments in human cloning in the first book, *Lethal Harvest*, resulted in the unplanned birth of a pair of genetically unique but very ill twins, the doctor's death, and the destruction of his life's work in an arsonist's attack on his clinic. But his work had opened the door to untold possibilities for the cure of a host of diseases and the making of billions of dollars. In *Deadly Cure*, forces looking at these benefits were not about to let the knowledge Sullivan had gained die with him. Their attention turns to those the doctor left behind, his wife and the other doctors who had been his clinic partners. As the months pass, Dr. Ben McKay and Sullivan's widow, Marnie, find new love awakening amidst the swirl of the rebuilding of their lives while he and Sullivan's other partner, Luc Morgan, rebuild the clinic. But, deep in cryogenic freeze, the new clinic still holds the last results of Sullivan's cloning experiments, and the lives of the President of the United States and the twin daughters of a powerful Mexican official. To add to the dilemma, the financial and professional standing of an unscrupulous scientist may depend on what is done with them. With so much at stake, the clinic, and Doctors McKay and Morgan become the focus of those

willing to do literally anything to obtain what they harbor.

Cutrer and Glahn have written a thought provoking sequel to their first novel, *Lethal Harvest*, that is perched right on the edge of today's news and the development of medical ethics in regard to manipulation of human genetic material. Strongly committed though fallible Christians, the characters of *Deadly Cure* must bring their understanding of Scripture and the will of God to bear on the astounding legacy they have inherited from their former partner as well as the problems of terminal disease and the loss of a child. The authors write convincingly of the technological and ethical dilemmas that are or may soon be facing the modern world, and for which it has dangerously refused to consider God's sovereignty and transcendent guiding principles toward the critical issues of illness and death.

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

Divided loyalties / L. K. Malone. LCCN 2001033757. Grand Rapids: Kregel, Kregel, 2001. PAP, 0825427967, \$9.99. Adult (High school). Rating: 5

F. Americans--Middle East--Fiction; Middle East--Fiction; Terrorism--Fiction. 318 p.

Giselle, daughter of a high ranking Navy officer, is inadvertently caught up in the plots of the Sword of Islam, a terrorist group set to destroy the Arab-Israeli peace talks. When Giselle, who is Catholic, marries Raz Chayil, a Jewish Marine officer, she learns to live with the many secrets that come with his military career. That is, until she stumbles upon the shock that he may be an operant for the SOI. Fleeing in terror, Giselle finds herself going from picturesque Italy to the confines of Saudi Arabia. Will she be able to reach her father in time to warn him of the dangerous plot? And will she find the truth about the man she married?

Readers of intrigue, those who thrive on spy drama, action-driven plots, and strong characterization will be seeking out *Divided Loyalties* by first-time novelist L.K. Malone. A plot so very timely with current world politics, *Divided Loyalties* is both chilling and mesmerizing as the reader is drawn into the convoluted twists and turns of espionage. The research provides both credibility and insight, and the religions portrayed are discussed with balance, if not respect. It is hoped there will be a sequel to this tightly-written novel that combines politics and power, with the conversion of faith.

Pam Webb, School Library Technician, Sandpoint, Idaho

Drummer in the dark / T. Davis Bunn. LCCN 2001028363. Colorado Springs: WaterBrook, Random House, 2001. HBB, 1578563909, \$21.95. Adult. Rating: 5

F. Women private investigators--Florida--Orlando--Fiction; Debt relief--Developing countries--Fiction; Legislators--Fiction; Orlando (Fla.)--Fiction. 417 p.

Controversial Florida congressman, Graham Hutchings, suffered a massive stroke only weeks before his most important piece of legislation, the Jubilee Amendment, was due for consideration. To add to the dilemma, his investigation into suspicious financial dealings was just beginning to yield some clues. The governor of Florida, no friend to the Amendment or Hutchings, must now appoint someone to assume the congressman's duties until the next general election. What better choice could there be to extend his influence to Washington than his wife's brother, wealthy self-made businessman Wynn Bryant? Bryant has no political ambitions, but his intense older sister pressures him into accepting the position and challenges him to make of it what he can. Meanwhile, the congressman's wife, Esther Hutchings, goes against the careful advice of her husband's political allies and hires Jackie Haviland, a woman snoop out of an obscure Florida detective agency, to discover who is behind the forces that are working against her husband's amendment and reputation. Jackie's investigation leads her to the Hayek Group (headed by Pavel Hayek), the largest hedge fund and currency trader in the South, and into the path of a mysterious stranger who will only identify himself as the Boatman. Brought together by their connection to Esther Hutchings, Wynn and Jackie pursue the elusive answers to the international intrigue swirling around the Jubilee Amendment through the power corridors of Washington, D.C., Rome, and Cairo, hoping that they can stop whoever is on the verge of fomenting world-wide financial chaos.

T. Davis Bunn's fifteenth book, *Drummer in the Dark*, takes readers into the highly charged halls of the nation's capitol and down onto the even more frenetic floor of the currency trader for three weeks of dead-run action and intrigue that the author maintains in as much fact as fiction. A knowledge of the culture of banking and investment would be helpful but is not essential as the author explains, through his characters, the knife-edge upon which the world's financial markets operate, and the effects this has on developing countries and the poor.

Bunn's novel tastes of the real world and real people, creating a welcome marriage of non-stop action in exotic locations with equally intense inner conflict. All the main characters, especially Wynn Bryant, must confront issues they never knew existed, and struggle to make sense of the very different world in which they find themselves as a result. Bunn's expertise in the financial world and his deft handling of character and plot have resulted in an exciting, satisfying read and a cautionary tale that the West would do well to heed.

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

***A garden to keep* / Jamie Langston Turner. LCCN 2001002501. Minneapolis: Bethany House, Bethany House, 2001. PAP, 076422154X, \$11.99. Adult. Rating: 4**

F. Church attendance--Fiction; Women teachers--Fiction; South Carolina--Fiction; Married women--Fiction; Adultery--Fiction. 415 p.

This conversational-style story unreels as if Elizabeth Landis sits across the table from readers recounting events in her life from one February to the next August.

On a Sunday two people, "neither of which fits my stereotype of born-again Christians," cause Elizabeth to come away "having my whole view of God revised." Before days end a misplaced phone call shifts her life onto an unexpected path.

She plummets into depression while she tries to understand implications of the spiritual commitment she made earlier that day. A new friend, Margaret Tuttle, helps guide her through the turmoil.

Elizabeth goes back to substitute teaching and at last asks God to "Open my eyes to what you want me to see." God answers her request, but later she complains, "...I hadn't meant I wanted to see all this." She confronts the truth: her actions and attitudes created at least part of the problem. Slowly the picture clears and Elizabeth finds courage to invoke the right resolution.

In *A Garden To Keep*, Jamie Langston Turner creates a double-layered story: past and present. The past becomes the heavier layer that thoroughly dissects Elizabeth, her husband Ken, and their marriage. Smooth transitions transport the reader back and forth with ease. Langston makes good use of foreshadowing as she weaves the layers into a worthwhile pattern. Several secondary characters connected with Turner's previous novel, *Suncatchers*.

Elizabeth doesn't reveal the heart of the story until page 57. Later, she comments about the slow pace, "A story goes forth in its own way." Her way, "...its own sweet time...." eventually captures the reader and turns the book into a can't-put-it-down read with much to consider.

Several characters connected with *By the Light Of a Thousand Stars* and *Suncatchers*, previous books by Turner.

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

***Hidden places : a novel* / Lynn N. Austin. LCCN 2001002252. Minneapolis: Bethany House, Bethany House, 2001. PAP, 0764221973, \$11.99. Adult (High school). Rating: 3**

F. Depressions--Fiction; Orchards--Fiction; Widows--Fiction; Historical fiction; Christian fiction; Love stories. 429 p.

Set during the Great Depression, Eliza is overwhelmed with becoming a widow and the sole proprietor of the impressive Wyatt Orchards. She has neither the financial

resources or knowledge to operate an thriving orchard business, but she does have determination to keep a home for her children—something she didn't have as a child. She is informed by her late husband's quaint Aunt Betty that God is going to send Eliza a guardian angel. As odd as Aunt Betty is, she believes God answers prayer. The ill hobo Eliza finds on her doorstep one night hardly seems like an answer to prayer, and hardly a guardian angel. Yet Gabriel Harper begins to fill in the gaps in Eliza's life in surprising ways. Both Gabe and Eliza must deal with the consequences of hiding the truth about their past, as they realize God has a future for them.

Hidden Places, the latest offering by Lynn Austin, is full of plot turns, memorable characters, and lively action. Eccentric Aunt Betty, better known as Aunt Batty, keeps the story from becoming overly-sentimental. Her offbeat ways, along with the interweaving of the characters' own stories works well. Austin is a strong writer, being able to provide a message without preaching, while providing a delightful story. The underlying theme of how fathers impact future generations comes through with affective subtlety.

Pam Webb, School Library Technician, Sandpoint, Idaho

***Highland hopes : a novel* / by Gary E. Parker. (Blue Ridge legacy; 1.) LCCN 2001002515. Minneapolis: Bethany House, Bethany House, 2001. PAP, 0764224522, \$9.99. Adult. Rating: 3**

F. Women--North Carolina--Fiction; Mountain life--Fiction; Grandmothers--Fiction; Aged women--Fiction; Blue Ridge Mountains--Fiction; North Carolina--Fiction. 400 p.

Lisa Abigail is out of touch with her family, has just lost her job, and can't understand why none of the plethora of relationships she has started with men ever quite click. When her brother invites her to a family reunion celebrating Great Granny Abby's one hundredth birthday, she hesitantly packs up her notebook and camcorder and arrives a week before the rest of the family. Sensing there is some connection between herself and Granny Abby, Lisa is determined to record the details of her century of life. During the first thirty years, Granny Abby faces the death of her mother at birth, the estrangement this causes between her father and herself, and the cruel life and people of the Blue Spring Mountains. Kindness is sparingly gleaned from teachers, other students, and a half-interested step-mother. When she marries a man who seems to be ashamed of her and her family, Granny Abby's driving force becomes the letter her mother wrote to her upon her death bed, and a doll her father carved for her on her first Christmas.

Highland Hopes by Gary E. Parker presents a life full of hardships and blessings. Though not a page turner, style is historically interesting and reminds reader of a slower paced time period. Theme is sprawling, but built upon the human

life cycle, both in relationships and in span of earthly years. Plot revolves around Abby, and her perception of life, as it swirls around and past her. Parker eludes to a continuing saga. Recommended for Christian collections.

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

Into his arms / produced by Michael & Marc Linn. LCCN . Worcester, Pa.: Gateway Films, Vision Video, 2001. VID, 0970079400, \$19.99. Adult. Rating: 3

F. Kidnapping--Fiction; Christian life--Fiction. 77 min., color.

This story centers around every mother's worst nightmare, a missing child. Set in a small South Dakota town, seven-year-old Jennifer's story begins with some delightful footage of a fun-filled birthday party. Viewers immediately realize that this is a very loving, caring family. When Jennifer and her mother later go shopping at the mall for a special dress to wear to a piano recital, Jennifer goes to try on a dress. But the dress is found on the store floor and Jennifer has disappeared. This video explores the emotional turmoil that results. Police, friends, and finally the whole town become part of the search for clues. Time passes and Jennifer's body is found in a nearby wood, neck broken from a thirteen foot fall, and no other marks or indications of foul play.

At this point the movie becomes somewhat depressing as Jennifer's mother, Sharla, questions God's care and love in this heartbreaking situation. How can a loving God allow such evil to happen to a child entrusted into His arms? The rest of the story involves a plot twist, an exciting police chase scene, and finally the capture of the person responsible for the death. In the end, Jennifer's mother reclaims her faith, and the family—mother, father, and older sister—adapt to their life without the missing child.

This is the first production by Linn Productions, and the acting and story are somewhat unpolished. The behind the scenes bonus footage at the end, showing how the whole town was involved in the movie production, talks from the actors, the six hours it took to wreck the car, and insights about the twins who wrote and directed the movie, is actually the best part of the movie. Recommended for families with children seven or above as a good tool to talk about the realities of stranger/friend danger.

Paula Stewart Marks, School Principal, Bend, Oregon

The Janus deception / John F. Bayer. LCCN 2001025090. Nashville: Broadman & Holman, Broadman & Holman, 2001. PAP, 0805424393, \$12.99. Adult (High school). Rating: 4

F. Chemical warfare--Research--Fiction; Americans--Mexico--Fiction; Conspiracies--Fiction; Soldiers--Fiction; Mexico--Fiction. 310 p.

To Lieutenant Commander Jake Madsen, an MD in the United States Naval Reserve, the two weeks of active duty he'd been assigned at the Naval Support Station was hardly challenging. The day-to-day sick call, like his work at the VA hospital, was of little help in easing the ache of the recent loss of his wife to a terminal disease. But when Army Sergeant Jerry Wallace is brought to him by a concerned corpsman, Jake is confronted with a man whose condition and current treatment is a total mystery to him. Doing only his duty as a doctor, Jake unwittingly trespasses into the dark, horrific world of chemical warfare research being conducted on a world-wide scale under the code name Janus. At the same time, two Drug Enforcement Agents in Mexico stumble upon an international holding company with high-level connections in the United States and Mexican governments, which they suspect of transporting drugs. As they track down the evidence, it begins to point them in the direction of a small town on the high Mexican plain that has suddenly ceased to exist, but whose perimeter is guarded by crack Mexican troops. As they dig deeper, a name appears in connection with the mystery of the town's annihilation, Janus. As witnesses and informants around both Jake and the DEA agents are murdered, both parties are driven to the house of an old, respected statesman living in retirement in Virginia. They hope he will have the answers that will stop the madness.

The Janus Deception is a fast-paced adventure story whose premise hits very close to home in these last days when international terrorism and fear of chemical warfare have suddenly become more than elements in action-based fiction. Using the technologies and attitudes of the present day, John F. Bayer has woven a plausible "what if" story that may constitute a modern cautionary tale. Unarguably a page-turner, *The Janus Deception* suffers from shallow character development, and a certain awkwardness both in the introduction and use of Christian themes within the story, and in Madsen's sudden romantic interest in an Investigative Service Agent assigned to Wallace's murder. But the timeliness of the subject and the pace of the story overcome these problems handily, to make *The Janus Deception* a more realistic piece of fiction of this type usually published for a Christian market.

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



Jerusalem's heart : a novel / Bodie and Brock Thoene. (The Zion legacy; 3.) LCCN 00043758. New York: Viking, Penguin Putnam, 2001. HBB, 0670894877, \$23.95. Adult (High school). Rating: 5

F. Jews--History--20th century--Fiction; Israel--History--1948-1967--Fiction; Israel--Arab War, 1948-1949--Fiction; Jerusalem--Fiction. 328 p.

In Jerusalem's Heart—third in the Zion Legacy Series, after *Jerusalem Vigil* and *Thunder from Jerusalem*—Bodie and Brock Thoene advance the valiant struggle of a small band of Jewish patriots to save the Old City of Jerusalem. On May 23, 1948, when the new nation of Israel is only nine days old, and supplies of food, water, and ammunition are nearly exhausted, the resolve of the men, women and children in the Jewish Quarter remains firm. They will not surrender to the Arab Legion! Their Haganah leader, Moshe Sachar, has been gone too long, having sneaked through an underground tunnel and blown up a cannon on the enemy line. His pregnant wife Rachel mourns for his return as she listens to her Grandfather, the rabbi, predict their future. Will they obey Moshe's command to detonate the tunnel if he doesn't arrive soon? What is buried in Jerusalem's heart?

Jacob Kalner's band of untrained, newly-arrived Jewish immigrants is almost totally annihilated at the bloody Battle of Latrun. His wife Lori, trapped in the Old City, comforts little orphan Abe near a rose garden and wonders if Jacob will return. Pilot David Meyer flies daredevil missions while his wife Ellie, an American photojournalist, snaps candid shots of Madame Rose navigating her boatload of European refugees into Jaffa harbor. When a teenaged boy leads men and supplies along an ancient Roman road from the seacoast toward Jerusalem, hope awakens in the Jewish Quarter. Will they arrive in time to save the city?

Jerusalem's Heart throbs with tense action, suspense, and spine-tingling adventure. An excellent pace keeps the reader moving among vividly-drawn scenes with an occasional graphic depiction of war. Slang words are seldom used. Characters portray the common human experience: passionate loyalty, fear, joy, hunger, thirst, anger, and love. Several truths shine naturally in context: Courage is living, not dying; we are refined like gold through our trials; and we are trapped in a cage until we love someone more than we love ourselves. A must read for our times, the book is rife with the history of Jerusalem and Israel, which continues in the next volume, *Jerusalem's Crown*. Pulsating through the tale is the bright Christian message of the Messiah, skillfully embedded in Jewish culture. A mysterious rose gardener with pierced hands enables the reader to respond to the One who loves and died for him and is coming again.

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

Pacific hope : a novel / by Bette Nordberg. LCCN 2001002325. Minneapolis: Bethany House, Bethany House, 2001. PAP, 0764223976, \$11.99. Adult (High school). Rating: 3

F. Married people--Fiction; Pacific Ocean--Fiction; Sailing--Fiction; Romantic suspense fiction; Christian fiction. 383 p.

Successful, content, and happily married change for Mike and Kate Langston one day when envelopes containing evidence of Mike's affair arrive. Devastated, Kate is determined to shut Mike out of her life, and begins to turn from God as well. Kate's troubled marriage is temporarily side-tracked when she learns her father has suffered a massive heart attack, and flies back to Kansas to help out her aging parents. In the meantime Mike must deal with the consequences of his affair, as well as cope with a possible FBI investigation of his computer company.

Mike learns the ripple effect of moral failure, while Kate learns that a hard heart yields bitterness, not freedom. Trust is an ongoing theme throughout Bette Nordberg's novel, *Pacific Hope*. How to deal with the aftermath of broken trust is explored with an acute poignancy. Readers will empathize with Kate, who feels justified in her anger towards Mike. And at the same time readers will also rally with Mike who desperately wants to win Kate back. Will a sailing trip from San Francisco to Hawaii bring Mike and Kate together, or will it be the endnote of their twenty-six years together?

Marital dissolution has sadly become an increasing occurrence in the church. The author explores marital failure from a Christian perspective with frankness, realistically portraying the pain from both perspectives. It's evident the author researched well the novel's sailing scenes. There is also great local color and depth given to the characters, no matter how inconsequential they appear. Forgiveness, trust and integrity are issues explored without undue emotion, and provide thoughtful insights on how failure can be used as a means for growth.

Pam Webb, School Library Technician, Sandpoint, Idaho

***The protector* / by Dee Henderson. (O'Malley series; 4.) LCCN 2001003459. Sisters, Ore.: Multnomah, Multnomah, 2001. PAP, 1576738469, \$11.99. Adult (High school). Rating: 4**

F. Fire fighters--Fiction; Witnesses--Fiction; Arson--Fiction; Christian fiction. 335 p.

With her trademark blend of in-depth character development and an absorbing storyline, Dee Henderson produces another excellent book in the O'Malley series: *The Protector*, book four. Firefighters Jack O'Malley and Cassie Ellis team up to find an arsonist who appears to be targeting Jack and the fire station with signature attacks that leave behind a trail of popcorn and elaborately painted murals. Cassie gets a glimpse of the arsonist, and fears he may be her old partner, Ash. As she and Jack work to unravel the mystery before the arsonist hurts someone, they also work together to help Jack come to an understanding of God as a trustworthy, loving Savior. Jack's sister Jennifer continues her struggle with cancer, but her abiding joy and hope, and Cassie's personal testimony enable Jack to find his own hope in Christ.

Readers who enjoyed Terri Blackstock's Newpointe 911 series will undoubtedly enjoy the O'Malley series as well. The characters' relationships and their "real life" scenarios, coupled with a strong sense of family make the books very engaging. It is also nice to read a story where the main characters take time to develop friendships rather than jumping immediately into romance. Cassie is especially appealing as she struggles with her attraction for Jack, knowing that she cannot be unequally yoked with an unbeliever.

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

***Ribbon of years* / Robin Lee Hatcher. LCCN 2001001171. Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale House, Tyndale House, 2001. HBB, 0842340092, \$19.99. Adult. Rating: 4**

F. Aged women--Fiction; Auctions--Fiction. 302 p.

Wishing she could start over with a clean slate, Juliana is out shopping at an estate sale when she happens across a box marked "My Life." The contents of the box provides Juliana not only with how Miriam's unwavering faith throughout the decades of her life sustains her, but also how it impacts the lives of those around her in miraculous ways. Juliana progresses through Miriam's life from teen to death, interrupting her life story with the present-day reflections of Juliana, who comes to grips with her need for God.

Robin Hatcher's thirty-ninth novel, *Ribbon of Years*, is a smoothly written novel that blends historical and present information magnificently. God is noted for speaking in the novel by using all caps, which can be a little distracting a times, but comforting at others. Although the main characters of Miriam and Juliana are both very well developed, some of the supporting characters could have used some deepening. It would also have been nice to see a deeper reaction of Juliana, such as how the discussions she was having with Miriam's old friends was changing her life in the present day.

Rick Estep, Media Director, HeavenBound Media Center, Middleburg, Florida.

***Riona* / by Linda Windsor. (Fires of Gleanmara; 2.) LCCN 2001002100. Sisters, Ore.: Multnomah, Multnomah, 2001. PAP, 1576737527, \$11.99. Adult (High school). Rating: 3**

F. Knights and knighthood--Fiction; Historical fiction; Christian fiction; Love stories. 351 p.

Riona is a virtuous, well-intentioned young woman with a temper as volatile as Shakespeare's shrewish Katharina. Unfortunately she is in love with an Irish warrior-king, Kieran, whose fiery temper equals Petruchio's. When Kieran is falsely accused of murdering a clergyman, he must flee in the company of Riona, three orphans, and a bard—

and the arguments and clashes between the two escalate to epic proportions.

Keiran is a man of action who lives by the sword, while Riona has the heart of a mother who must surrender her desire for children to the Lord. As God works in both their lives, Riona comes to trust in the Lord's provision and praises him at every turn for his amazing faithfulness. Her example affects the piteful Keiran, tempering his fierceness and preparing him to be a godly husband to Riona, and a father to the three orphans.

Riona is book two in the Pipes of Geannmara series by Linda Windsor. Although a helpful glossary of Irish terms is included, readers must pay close attention to keep track of various clan relationships, political connections, and the hierarchy of the church and clergy. The actual story-line is a bit thin; however, the book is an enjoyable read because of its humor, miracles, and the transformed lives of engagingly human characters. There are some discreetly handled scenes of sensuality once Riona and Kieran marry, (the wedding night is one of the funniest scenes in the book), and occasionally certain people are referred to as "iarballs," delicately defined in the glossary as "the southernmost part of a creature headed north."

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

***Safely home* / by Randy C. Alcorn. LCCN 01002235. Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale House, Tyndale House, 2001. HBB, 0842337911, \$19.99; AUDIO CASS, 0842355375, \$19.99. Adult. Rating: 4**

F. Americans--China--Fiction; Businessmen--Fiction; China--Fiction; Christian fiction. 402 p.

Ben Fielding, "brains and energy" for Getz International in Portland, Oregon, and "on the fast track to CEO," heads off to China at the decree of Martin Getz, his boss. The purpose: to strengthen the company's business ties there. Unexpected events, however, turn the trip into much more for Ben.

While there, he lives in the simple village home of Li Quan, his old college roommate, and his family. Life there, Ben finds out, has little to do with how he had pictured it. Since college days, Ben, the strong Christian, who introduced Quan to Christ, has become an on-the-fringes believer, while persecution for their faith has strengthened Quan's family. Ben begins to doubt Quan. Could he be involved in something illegal, like smuggling drugs?

In spite of promising Martin not to get involved in anything religious that could jeopardize the Getz International name and business, Ben enters in and discovers situations he had never imagined. Quan's arrest and imprisonment, along with the hard questions Quan asks Ben, force the American to face himself straight on. At the same time, Quan realizes the answer to a question he asks himself many times.

Views from heaven mingle naturally with village scenes throughout *Safely Home*. Randy Alcorn skillfully uses this writing technique to provide story background and to foreshadow other events.

The action moves slowly at times when characters reiterate details about Christianity in China. Yet, Alcorn manages to maintain reader interest.

Safely Home becomes more than fiction because it offers insight into China today, the part of China the news does not cover. Alcorn did thorough research, but does not use real names and places, and while he bases the incidents on actual happenings, he has scrambled those, also.

This is a serious, intense read. By the time readers finish the book, they also ask themselves hard questions. *Safely Home's* jacket with unusual cutouts that reveal the rich painting on the book itself characterize the story. Its striking appearance makes it coffee-table quality.

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

Sanctuary / Beverly & David Lewis. LCCN 2001001259. Minneapolis: Bethany House, Bethany House, 2001. PAP, 0764225103, \$11.99; HBB, 0764225111, \$15.99; 0764225138, LP, \$15.99; 076422512X, CAS, \$15.99. Adult (High school). Rating: 2

F. Runaway wives--Fiction; Impostors and imposture--Fiction; Pennsylvania Dutch--Fiction; Lancaster County (Pa.)--Fiction; Female friendship--Fiction. 320 p.

Melissa James has the perfect life: a dedicated husband, a gorgeous ocean view house, and a enjoyable job. She also has a deadly past that catches up to her one day when she least expects it. Her reaction is to run away from everything she holds dear as she hopes to find safety from the evil that stalks her.

Beverly and David Lewis provide a fast past read of suspense and romance in *Sanctuary*. Drawing upon their knowledge of the Amish found in many of their other books, the authors provide a riveting juxtaposition of the tranquillity of the Plain people and the tension of the modern world Mellie lives in. Although the plot and the characters leans toward the melodramatic at times, the story is nevertheless a page turner. Despite how the conclusion comes much too quickly and is tied off rather neatly, the message of running to God instead of from Him in times of desperation makes this a favorable read.

The side story of Lela, the Plain woman who takes Melissa in as a temporary boarder, adds depth to the plot. Lela lends a quiet grace to the story, and is instrumental in showing Melissa the way to salvation. While Mellie struggles with surrendering to the Lord her past and the helplessness of her situation, her husband, Ryan, faces his own struggles. He realizes greed and self-centered interests resulted in more loss than gain, and through the dedicated friendship of

Denny, Ryan also realizes how empty his life has been without the Lord.

Pam Webb, *School Library Technician, Sandpoint, Idaho*

Sea of glory : a novel based on the true WW II story of the four chaplains and the U.S.A.T. Dorchester / Ken Wales & David Poling. LCCN 2001025584. Nashville: Broadman & Holman, Broadman & Holman, 2001. HBB, 0804350009, \$24.99. Adult (High school). Rating: 4

F. World War, 1939-1945--Campaigns--North Atlantic Ocean--Fiction; World War, 1939-1945--Naval operations--Fiction; World War, 1939-1945--Fiction; North Atlantic Ocean--Fiction; Chaplains, Military--Fiction. 384 p.

The story of the Four Chaplains has gained a quiet prominence over the years, impacting audiences with its message of self-sacrifice. Ken Wales and David Poling have taken the facts surrounding the Four Chaplains and woven them into an historical novel.

Four men of different backgrounds and different faiths answer the calling to serve both God and country. They find themselves on the USAT Dorchester in the treacherous Torpedo Alley zone of the Atlantic during WWII, on a top secret mission. Their faiths, though different, do not deter these men from forming a strong bond with one another. As they minister to those on board, readers are drawn to the emotionally charged, tragic climax. Yet it is through the tragedy that true victory is revealed as soldiers witness the amazing sacrifice of these four soldiers of faith.

Ken Wales, who was instrumental in bringing Catherine Marshall's *Christy* to television, brings the same light, warm touch to his portrayal of the chaplains. David Poling, cousin of one the chaplains, brings authenticity to the story, allowing for a unique blend of fiction and history. It is the closing chapters of the book that hold the greatest impact, for it is clear while there may be victories wrought on the battlefield, the authors remind us that the greatest battles are those overcome within our own souls.

Pam Webb, *School Library Technician, Sandpoint, Idaho*

Sophie and the rising sun / Augusta Trobaugh. LCCN 2001028734. : Dutton Books, Penguin Putnam, . HBB, 0525946276, \$22.95; Lg Print, 0786240520, \$28.95, Thorndike. Adult. Rating: 4

F. World War, 1939-1945--Georgia--Fiction; Japanese Americans--Fiction; Gardeners--Fiction; Georgia--Fiction; Historical fiction; Love stories. 213 p.

Miss Anne begins the story, declaring that after more than twenty years she still can't say for sure what happened to Sophie. From there on, her side of the story alternates with the narrator. Mr. Oto, Miss Anne's "Chinese gardener," and according to one Salty Creek resident, "... the strangest-looking bandy-legged little man," admires Sophie, Miss Anne's close friend,

though Sophie does not appear to notice him. A great white crane startles him one day and reminds him of a fable his father often told. This citing holds significance for Mr. Oto.

When he takes his paints to the riverside one Sunday he finds Sophie there, painting. They work alongside each other, and at last dare to share words. Their friendship develops even as the news spreads like poison on the wind.

Then Pearl Harbor intervenes. What will Salty Creek residents do when they discover Mr. Oto is not Chinese? Mr. Oto and Miss Anne decide he must go away; she must tell a lie to protect him. But when Miss Anne breaks a leg, their plan disintegrates. Miss Ruth, Salty Creek's mistress of gossip, forces Miss Anne to make a promise, and when she keeps that promise, Miss Ruth's eyebrows raise a mile.

At last Sophie throws to the wind small childhood relics. In this getting-rid-of she throws out more than relics while she receives courage.

Sophie and the Rising Sun carries a haunting melody. Color, looks, background, age—none of that matters. And people who live in little towns set in their ways can break through to new life. Augusta Trobaugh, with good writing, gives readers an advantage over Miss Anne, because they have little doubt about what finally happened to Sophie. Trobaugh fans have come to expect a thought-provoking read from her, and once again she meets the mark.

Readers will not find a deeply spiritual book in *Sophie and the Rising Sun*. Trobaugh, however, does leave the reader with inspiration in a well written novel.

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

The Swan House / by Elizabeth Musser. LCCN 2001002281. Minneapolis: Bethany House, Bethany House, 2001. PAP, 0764225081, \$11.99. Adult (High school). Rating: 3

F. Children of the rich--Fiction; Mothers--Death--Fiction; Social classes--Fiction; Young women--Fiction; Socialites--Fiction; Poor--Fiction. 443 p.

Mary Swan, a sixteen-year-old sophomore at Wellington School for Girls, is pleased to be chosen as the Raven of the year. Given a puzzle to solve about a missing art donation, she enlists her closest friend. As part of Atlanta's white privileged upper class, Mary Swan has never really thought about those less fortunate than herself. Then, the June 1962 plane crash and loss of over a hundred Americans, many of them part of an Atlantic Art Delegation, changes her life and perspective forever. Reeling from the loss of her mother, Mary Swan finds herself suddenly searching, not just for lost art, for something to be her anchor. Ella Mae, Mary Swan's family's black maid, cook and helper, enlists Mary Swan as a helper in a black ghetto area. Soon Mary Swan finds herself learning about a whole new group of people. Carl, a young black man, becomes a special friend.

When Mary Swan gains new friends, she also gains a new perspective about what being a Christian is all about. As she continues her search for missing art, startling facts about her own mother began to emerge.

Author Elizabeth Musser sympathetically explores the different economic structure between black and white. She gives a good historic overview of the 60's. Her characters are well drawn, revealing depths of empathy and deep seated prejudice dictated by generation and economic strata. Overall, the plot and heroine seem a better fit for a teen audience.

Paula Stewart Marks, Principal, Morning Star Christian School

Swallowing the golden stone : stories and essays, by Walter Wangerin, Jr. : Augsburg Books, , 2001. HBB, 0806637102, \$16.99. Adult. Rating: 3

F. Children's literature; Literature--Collections. 184 p.

Wangerin weaves original fairy tales and essays on faith and storytelling to convey the art of storytelling, while also illustrating it's a practice that can be enjoyed by parents, grandparents, teachers, and all adults who tell and hear stories. What is particularly appealing here is that one can locate some yarn or tale for storytelling while also receiving concrete suggestions about how to shape a tale that shapes children. Teachers, preschool storytellers, parents and adults sharing stories with children can come back to this title many times.

Recommended for use in storytelling classes, in children's literature classes, by children's librarians, and by parents. *Swallowing the Golden Stone* can find a natural place in public library collections offering tales and ideas for storytelling, and in collections on folklore.

Wangerin is a storyteller and author of books for children and adults, including *Probita Jones* and the *Gear Not Angel*, a Publisher's Weekly 'Best Book of the Year' and other titles receiving the Theologos Award for Best Children's Books in 1998 and 1999.

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

Sweet delights / Terri Blackstock, Elizabeth White, Rane McCollum. (HeartQuest.) LCCN 00061562. Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale House, Tyndale House, 2000. PAP, 0842335730, \$9.99. Adult. Rating: 3

F. Christian fiction; Love stories. 367 p.

Three romantic novellas, each with the unifying element of chocolate, combine to make *Sweet Delights* fun, light reading. Each story has a romantic theme with strong Christian characters.

In the first, For Love of Money by Terri Blackstock, Blake Adcock leaves half of a million-dollar sweepstakes ticket and a box of chocolates as a tip for waitress, Julie Sheffield.

When Blake knocks on her door the next day announcing they have won the sweepstakes, Blake and Julie's lives become intertwined and complicated. As Christians, they struggle to discover God's plan for their fortune and their future.

The Trouble with Tommy by Elizabeth White finds Carrie Pierce back in her hometown opening a candy shop after her husband dies. Next door to Carrie's shop is an auto repair shop owned by Tommy Lucas. Scarred by her husband's adultery, Carrie won't admit her attraction to Tommy. Circumstances frequently bring Carrie and Tommy together. Finally Carrie gives in to what God has for her—a life with Tommy.

A dessert auction and an old friendship provide the catalyst for romance in the third novella, What She's Been Missing by Rane McCollum. Anne Singletary enjoys a quiet life as church secretary in Kansas City. When high school friend, Rhys Carter offers her a high-profile job and the chance for something more, Anne must decide how she can best serve God.

Adultery and premarital sex are subtly mentioned in *The Trouble With Tommy*. However, it is secondary characters that engage in this behavior. The main characters in all the stories remain chaste. Learning the will of God in their lives is the challenge for every character.

Elizabeth Coleman, Freelance Writer, Tumwater, Washington

Tears in a bottle : a novel / Sylvia Bambola. LCCN 2001002176. Sisters, Ore.: Multnomah, Multnomah, 2001. PAP, 1576738027, \$10.99. Adult (High school). Rating: 3

F. Abortion services--Fiction; Pro-life movement--Fiction; Abortion--Fiction. 297 p.

When seventeen year old Becky finds herself unwed and pregnant, she agrees to an abortion at her parents' request, even though everything in her rebels against the idea. A deranged shooter kills everyone in the abortion clinic, leaving Becky the only survivor. Damaged internally by the abortion, and more traumatized by the actual procedure than by the shooting, Becky turns to self-loathing, depression, and attempted suicide. With her parents desperately seeking healing for Becky and themselves, they are led to Community Life Center where the director, Maggie, offers them a glimmer of hope in the love and forgiveness of Christ.

Tears in a Bottle, by Sylvia Bambola, takes a hard look at the abortion industry and describes its horrors, while showing the far-reaching effects abortion has not only on the women, but also on their husbands or boyfriends, the doctors and technicians who work in abortion clinics, and their families. Bambola holds nothing back in her stark portrayal of teenage sexuality, Planned Parenthood seminars, public school abortion counseling, abortion clinic procedures, abusive doctors, and the illegal harvesting of fetal tissue and body parts for collagen creams,

or medical research. She clearly defines the web of evil surrounding the abortion industry that ensnares and ultimately devours so many people. However, in her stretch to portray all aspects of the issue, from one extreme to the other, none of the characters are as fully developed as readers might wish, and may even seem a bit stereotypical.

While nothing is too graphically described, the material is shocking—generally because it is so much easier for Christians to ignore the harsh realities of abortion than to face them head on and take action. This is a substantive book worth reading for adults, mature teens, or teens who have a parent to discuss the issues that are raised. *Tears in a Bottle* may be painful reading for those who have had abortions; hope for healing is offered, but the storyline does not provide complete closure on Becky's tale. A number of addresses for support services are listed for those struggling with abortion related issues.

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

Tested by fire / Kathy Herman. (The Baxter series; 1.) LCCN 2001003217. Sisters, Ore.: Multnomah, Multnomah, 2001. PAP, 1576739562, \$11.99. Adult (High school). Rating: 4

F. Mystery fiction. 314 p.

Tested by Fire is a gripping mystery by Kathy Herman—the first in a series about the little town of Baxter. Jed is determined to track down his best friend Mike, who is accused of murdering his entire family in a violent houseboat explosion. Resolved to prove Mike innocent, Jed travels across the country evading the FBI—but he is unable to evade the Lord's call on his life which comes from the unexpected source of a mentally challenged teenager with childlike faith. During Jed's absence, the Lord also works in the heart of his wife and begins to heal old wounds from their early years of marriage.

Tested by Fire is an "on-the-edge-of-your seat" read as Jed and Mike race the clock to find each other before the FBI finds either of them. The characters are well-developed, portrayed as ordinary folks with ordinary problems and concerns. Even the minor characters are appealing, and older readers may appreciate the fact that all of the main characters are in their forties or above. The story clearly lays out the plan of salvation a number of times, and would be a good, non-threatening book to pass along to interested non-believers.

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

***Tobias of the Amish : a true story of tangled strands in faith, family, and community* / Ervin R. Stutzman; foreword by Katie Funk Wiebe. LCCN 2001024401. Scottsdale, Pa.: Herald Press, Herald Press, 2001. PAP, 0836191706, \$13.99; HBB, 0836191900, \$22.99. Adult (High school). Rating: 3**

F. Stutzman, Tobias J., 1918-1956--Fiction; Amish--Fiction; Kansas--Fiction; Biographical fiction; Christian fiction. 352 p.

Ervin Stutzman sets out to discover the father he didn't have the chance to know in his account of family history. The result is not only homage to his father, but an in-depth look at the Amish community. In *Tobias of the Amish*, the author presents Tobias, his father who had ambitions, but was bound to live within his Amish heritage. Researching deeply, Ervin traces back to his father's family including much of the Amish heritage that outsiders are not aware of. Readers see a young Tobias who has talent and drive, yet is bound by tradition to stay within accepted boundaries. The question of how far does one go when exploring potential while living out one's beliefs? The pressures of trying to live a lifestyle with a rich heritage in a modern society is epitomized in Tobias.

For those interested in reading about the Amish this book provides many insights. *Tobias of the Amish* also is a story for those interested in family genealogies with a storyline. A thoughtful tribute to his father, Ervin leaves the readers with the comment how he gained a greater respect for the Amish leaders, as well as learning that it is our past that so shapes our future.

Pam Webb, School Library Technician, Sandpoint, Idaho

Unafraid / Francine Rivers. (Lineage of grace.) LCCN 2001003093. Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale House, Tyndale House, 2001. HBB, 0842335994, \$12.99. Adult. Rating: 3

F. Tamar, daughter-in-law of Judah--Fiction; Rahab (Biblical figure)--Fiction; Ruth (Biblical figure)--Fiction; Bathsheba (Biblical figure)--Fiction; Mary, Blessed Virgin, Saint--Fiction; Bible--History of Biblical events--Fiction. 212 p..

Unspoken / Francine Rivers. (Lineage of grace.) LCCN 2001027224. Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale House, Tyndale House, 2001. HBB, 0842335986, \$12.99. Adult. Rating: 3

F. Bathsheba (Biblical figure)--Fiction; Bible. O.T.--History of Biblical events--Fiction; Women in the Bible--Fiction. 214 p.

Francine Rivers puts flesh and bones on two familiar women of the Bible: Bathsheba and Mary, the mother of Jesus. She adds womanly emotions easily identifiable by today's women. Bathsheba and Mary follow different paths, one disobeying God, the other obeying Him. Yet they both suffer because of their actions.

Bathsheba, a beautiful woman who loved David from girlhood days, submits to a night of

passion and reaps heartache the rest of her life. "You've ruined us all," her mother spits out in fury. Her husband, Uriah, loves his only wife, but he understands when King David hands him a note for Joab that he holds his own death sentence. After her husband's death, Bathsheba suffers more than ever. Citizens of the kingdom forgive King David, who sinned, but they do not forgive the comely Bathsheba.

Mary, a young teenaged woman, willingly says yes to God's plan. But how can she explain her unusual pregnancy to family, friends, and neighbors? She bears up under the ridicule and insults hurled at her as Joseph stands by her side. Rivers portrays Jesus as a boy with special powers and one whose siblings love. Mary's love for Jesus does not fade, even as He becomes an adult, leaves home, and begins ministry. She agonizes at his death, not yet understanding God's ultimate plan.

Unafraid and *Unspoken*, biblical fiction novellas and part of a five-book series, do not include suspense. Readers familiar with the Bible already know the outcomes. Rivers maintains interest with the real-life emotions, details of setting, culture, and day by day life. She says she has "attempted to remain true to the scriptural message in all points..." Both books reflect thorough research.

Following each story, a Seek and Find section leads readers into a Bible study.

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

A Victorian Christmas keepsake / Catherine Palmer, Kristin Billerbeck, Ginny Aiken. LCCN 2001002236. Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale House, Tyndale House, 2001. PAP, 0841225692, \$9.99. Adult. Rating: 4

F. Christmas stories, American; Love stories, American. 337 p.

A Victorian Christmas Keepsake gathers three romantic novellas together with a common theme of love at Christmastime. All three authors use keepsakes to anchor the story to scripture.

In Catherine Palmer's "Behold the Lamb," a tiny lamb is stolen from a manger scene along with silverware and important papers. The theft of the papers creates serious financial problems for Rosalind Treadwell's family. Rosalind and her father, Lord Buxton, are living in poverty when Sir Michael offers to marry Rosalind and restore their family home in exchange for Lord Buxton's estate and title. However, in the end, it is the lamb that restores everything Rosalind, Lord Buxton, and Sir Michael lost. The characters are delightful in this endearing story.

Kristin Billerbeck skillfully combines the story of Leah in Genesis with the Proverbs 31 wife in "Far Above Rubies." Sent in her sister's place to marry Jack, Emma struggles to become the wife Jack thinks he wants. Jack wonders if he will ever be able to give Emma his grandmother's ruby ring. Billerbeck writes to all the Leah's

who feel they are second in their husband's affections. "Far Above Rubies" addresses an age-old problem with wisdom. Readers will appreciate the delightful conclusion.

Set on the Isle of Skye, Ginny Aiken's "Memory to Keep" will delight readers. Andrew Fraser's father gave him two packages before he died. One is Andrew's; the other he must deliver to Grace Carlisle, the daughter of the missionaries he blames for his mother's death. The packages contain life-changing keepsakes. Aiken's descriptions of Scotland's weather and hills give a real sense of place.

The cover illustration of Rosalind and Sir Michael by Aleta Rafton compliments the book beautifully.

Barbara Bryden, Freelance Writer, Olympia, Washington

★

***What once we loved : a sisterhood of friendship and faith* / Jane Kirkpatrick. (Kinship and courage historical series; 3.) LCCN 2001039016. Colorado Springs: WaterBrook, WaterBrook, 2001. PAP, 1578562341, \$13.95. Adult. Rating: 5**

F. Female friendship--Fiction; Women pioneers--Fiction; Oregon--Fiction; Historical

Jane Kirkpatrick's third book of the Kinship and Courage series zigzags among the characters readers learned to love in *All Together In One Place* and *No Eye Hath Seen*. The women, molded together into treasured friendships, first on the Oregon Trail and then in Shasta, California, look back on those days. Their pasts rise like dark clouds in a blue sky, but throughout the story they all learn something about themselves, are willing to change, and even make it happen.

Tipton turns the wrong direction, thinking she deserves more than life offers with her husband. Mazy thrills with her independence as a dairywoman. Ruth's dream unfolds when she settles in Oregon Territory, while Suzanne finally succeeds in allowing herself to add a "little light to another's life." Unexpected twists bring results none predict. Happiness, adjustments, learning, heartaches, fear, and difficult decisions stalk their daily lives. Sister Esther, Adora, Elizabeth, Lura, and the surviving Celestials play their roles as secondary characters.

Men of the series add their own spice in *What Once We Loved*. Zane Randolph, now with a peg leg, and Charles Wilson still hold as much venom as two angry rattlesnakes. Nehemiah Kossuth faces up to failures. David Taylor lends the same grace he did in the previous book. Matthew Schmidtke and Seth Forrester, as well as newcomers, Sterling Powder, Gus Grotefend, and Burke Manes, bring balance to female independence. Other men make spot appearances.

Kirkpatrick's copious research passes on to readers knowledge of horsemanship as well as

fascinating details about daily life in that time and place. She also includes specific information about the territory. Her characters follow the line she drew for them in *All Together In One Place*, yet she gives them space to change for better or for worse.

As an accomplished writer, Kirkpatrick weaves an enthralling story in *What Once We Loved*, but adds much to ponder and assimilate along the way. She includes gentle, well-positioned reminders of God's presence and guidance. Page-turners end each section and chapter. As always, Kirkpatrick writes clearly, almost poetically, and with no spare words.

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

When stars begin to fall / Denise Williamson. (Roots of faith; 2.) LCCN 99050404. Minneapolis: Bethany House, Bethany House, 2001. 1556618832, PAP, \$. Adult (High school). Rating: 3

F. Antislavery movements--Fiction; Underground railroad--Fiction; African-Americans--Fiction; Quakers--Fiction; Philadelphia (Pa.)--Fiction; Historical fiction. 446 p.

When Stars Begin to Fall, by Denise Williamson, continues the story of Joseph begun in book one of the Roots of Faith series. Joseph, a newly freed slave, studies medicine with a sympathetic white doctor, and quietly practices his skills among his own people. Mayleda, the widowed daughter of Joseph's former owner, risks imprisonment to bring Daniel, an injured young mulatto, through the underground railroad to receive medical care. Her joyful reunion with Joseph is marred by the appearance of two slave hunters who trailed Mayleda and exposed numerous safe houses along the way. When they spread rumors that Daniel is Mayleda and Joseph's child, and that Mayleda herself actually has Negro blood, Joseph flees to avoid accusations of rape. Mayleda's brother imprisons her in his home, and threatens to send her to an insane asylum, forever separating her from her young daughter.

Through a series of frustrating circumstances, Mayleda, Joseph, and Daniel end up being captured and taken to the south to be sold on the slave auction block. Mayleda's good friend, Charles, mounts a "search and rescue" effort, locates Mayleda and Daniel, and buys them back. But Joseph is sold to an old enemy who has him severely beaten before Charles is able to rescue him. Traveling to the north is too dangerous, and they are all forced to take refuge at the home of a sympathetic southerner while Joseph recovers from his injuries. Eventually Charles manages to smuggle Joseph to Canada, where he is reunited with his fiancé, and Charles returns to the south to marry Mayleda and remain in hiding for at least a year.

Williamson has written another intensely captivating story, full of real people grappling with the wide range of quandaries posed by the slavery issue. Once again, she emphasizes the importance of Christlike love and forgiveness,

even in the face of unspeakable horrors and offenses.

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

When tomorrow comes / Janette Oke. LCCN 2001002454. Minneapolis: Bethany House, Bethany House, 2001. PAP, 0764225553, \$11.99; HBB, 0764225561, \$15.99; 0764225588, LGP, \$15.99; 076422557X, Audio, 15.99. Adult. Rating: 4

F. Canada--Fiction. 256 p.

In this sequel to *Beyond the Gathering Storm*, Christine longs to return to her precious North country, but God seems to be moving her in other directions. Although she ardently searches for a job, finding what seems the perfect position just as her funds are running out, Christine must forfeit the employment to take care of an injured aunt. While her Aunt recuperates, they plan a family reunion that ends in disaster. A terrible accident nearly costs Christine's brother Henry and his family their lives, and may, yet, cost Henry his job. Once again, personal job and life decisions must be placed on hold. During her time away from nursing her family, Christine assuages her desire to help the war effort by volunteering in the local canteen. Three Christian men are attracted to Christine, who is recovering from a broken heart. Although she tries to stay aloof, Christine wonders how she will ever get back to the North country, where her heart remains. Christine determines to give her hopes and dreams to God, and trust that He will control her life's outcome.

The theme from *When Tomorrow Comes*, by Janette Oke, reminds the reader of the constant need for God's control in the human life plan. Oke has long been an author of historical Christian fiction, with more than seventy-five novels, many translated into fourteen different languages, and awards including the prestigious Gold Medallion Award, The Christy Award of Excellence, and the Life Impact Award. Her wholesome, believable characters are adored by millions. Similar in style to Laura Ingalls Wilder's *Little House on the Prairie* series, Oke's characters struggle to find their places in often harsh and unforgiving environments. Recommended for all adult fiction collections.

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



***The world Jesus knew* / Anne Punton. LCCN . Grand Rapids: Monarch Books, Kregel, 2001. PAP, 0825460042, \$12.99. Adult. Rating: 4**

225.9'1. Jesus Christ--Biography; Bible. N.T. Gospels--Geography; Christian life. 267 p.

The World Jesus Knew by Anne Punton offers the 21st century Westerner an introduction to the 1st century world of the Middle East in which Jesus and his disciples lived. Seventeen short chapters give the background and explanation of customs and beliefs of the time in relation to everyday Jewish life as it revolved around the Torah, the prescribed festivals and sacrifices, the history of the nation, the agricultural season, and the demands of their Roman overseers. As Punton says, many of the words of the prophets and the parables of Jesus become much more

clear if read with an understanding of the culture to which they were addressed.

The World Jesus Knew is written in short, specific chapters, making the lack of an index less of a drawback than it might have been. Black and white photographs and drawings are sprinkled throughout the text, and each chapter includes scriptural footnotes. Except for a brief mention of sources at the beginning, no source is cited specifically; and a glossary at the end provides only the page number on which a term may be found. This book is a good introduction to the cultural context of Scripture for the high school student and adult laymen and a helpful tool for the Bible study leader or Sunday school teacher.

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

***Where Jesus walked : a spiritual journey through the Holy Land* / R. Wayne Stacy. LCCN 00064358. Valley Forge, Pa.: Judson Press, Judson Press, 2001. PAP, 0817013902, \$16.00. Adult. Rating: 4**

225.9'1. Jesus Christ--Biography; Bible. N.T. Gospels--Geography; Christian life. 191 p.

Want to know about key places of the Holy Land mentioned in the Gospels, or desire to bring together the geography and history of a Holy Land site to understand the meaning of scripture? *Where Jesus Walked* addresses both of these areas. Stacy introduces the reader to a place that figures in a central way in Jesus' life by describing the geography, topography, history, and archaeology of the site, looking at new translation of the biblical passage depicting the site and event there, and then ending with a

A Note from the Editor: by Ray Legg



Winter Wondering

Inside, today, the only noise I hear is the one made by the heater working its

hardest to keep the room comfortable. Outside, the snow is falling. It is cold and the winds are intermittent. Part of me thinks being inside on a day like this is a good thing because I have to be on the road soon and I would rather stay where I am. That is the part hoping that the snow piles up making travel impossible and relaxation by the fire in the family room the only option for the day.

Traveling does not really bother me, though. I have done it all my life. My family is scattered from coast to coast and we are often on the road to see them. I traveled when I lived in Chicago and we continued to do so when we moved to Tennessee. Some of my earliest memories are those of visiting Civil War sites with my family. I can

remember wondering what the place would be like before we arrived, and comparing what I had envisioned with what I finally saw. Upon arrival I found myself wondering—daydreaming—about what it must have been like to be at the site during the event that made it famous. And I still do that. Once, after I got married, daydreaming about such things supplied a perfect metaphor for one of my poems—but that story is for another day.

That daydreaming has turned out to be a useful coping mechanism during the long stretches when I am alone in the car or when everyone in car is either asleep or listening to CDs. You see, I am composing a novel in my mind and I use the sights and sounds along the road for material. I read road signs and make up names for characters and locations; I use scenery for settings and situations; and I use the hours behind the wheel of the car to weave the tapestry of my imaginary world into what I hope will be a great work of fiction. (Now before you fear meeting this distracted driver on the road some day, be assured I pay attention to my driving.)

I wonder, now, how much of my creative daydreaming would have been possible without authors like Lewis, Tolkein, L'Engle, LeGuin, and others who have dreamed before me. What would my world be like if they had not created their imaginary worlds and peopled them with characters who have fascinated more folk than myself over the years? And what would it be like not being able to wonder at all? Am I better off for having read these authors? I think so. And I think others will be as well—young or old.

As I write, we are in the midst of a cultural struggle over this issue. It has come down to choosing between Harry Potter or The Lord of the Rings; who should read what? I say, why not both? Why do we need to choose sides taking one over the other? Why not trust what readers choose? Why not encourage them to enjoy any story and in the process keep the good and discard the false? It is called "thinking." I wonder, what would happen then?

meditation on possible insights. Each of the fourteen chapters ends with discussion questions, enabling this work to also be used in a group setting.

Where Jesus Walked testifies to Stacy's teaching experience in college and seminary, to his own love of Scripture, and to his many tours to the Holy Land. Few readers will close the book on a chapter and not see anew a biblical story and place. The combination of geography and archaeology alongside a direct biblical passage and reflection gives a fresh tone. While works such as Bruce Feiler's *Walking the Bible* (William Morrow, 2001) cover the history and geography of various Holy Land sites, Stacy's addition of meditation and further insights enables the reader to grasp a biblical setting in more depth.

Stacy's book is recommended for public library collections on the Bible, for collections on archaeology, and for current history on the Holy Land. Congregation and parish study groups probing biblical interpretation in new and refreshing ways can use this guide with ease and stimulation. Christian school libraries serving high school and beyond can add this title with satisfaction for it can be used to probe one particular place, or as a longer study.

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

***Your next miracle : experiencing the power of Christ in everyday life / Warren W. Wiersbe.* LCCN 00052969. Grand Rapids: Baker, Baker, 2001. PAP, 0801063523, \$10.99. Adult. Rating: 4**

225.9'2. Peter, the Apostle, Saint; Christian life--Biblical teaching. 156 p.

Once again, noted Christian author, Warren Wiersbe, has produced a book that is easy to read yet delves deeply into an important topic for today's Christians. Using the well-known life of the apostle Peter, Wiersbe answers the question: "Why should we settle for ordinary lives when God has the power to transform us into walking miracles?" Each chapter takes an inspiring story from Scripture, such as the healing of Peter's mother-in-law, the storm on the Sea of Galilee, and the cock crowing after Peter's denial, and applies the truths to our own Christian walk.

Beginning with the premise that God's greatest miracle is the salvation of a lost sinner, the author shows how Peter's life illustrates other miracles that God desires to produce in a believer's life. Filled with Scriptural references, some hymn excerpts, and ending with notes for each chapter listing books mentioned, this book is eye-opening concerning the life of Peter himself and what the Lord wants to do in each of our lives.

New believers as well as those who have followed the Lord for many years will benefit from reading *Your Next Miracle*. Highly recommended.

Cecil Carey, Young Adult Librarian, Public Library, Plano, Illinois
***Parables in the eye of the storm : Christ's response in the face of conflict / by Stanley A. Ellison.* LCCN 00062944. Grand Rapids: Kregel, Kregel, 2001. PAP, 0825425271, \$12.99. Adult. Rating: 5**

226.8'06. Jesus Christ--Parables. 272 p.

Stanley Ellison writes that the parables in their native setting were "born in the eye of an awesome storm" where "Truth's foundations were being lashed." In this work Mr. Ellison examines the parables of Jesus with the goal of striking a balance between their literary, historical, and theological concerns. Using what he calls a conservative hermeneutical approach, which sounds like it might be slightly boring, he proves to us without a doubt that, "Since Jesus was never boring; neither should we be." *Parables in the Eye of the Storm* is packed full of solid meat for study as well as history, inspiration, insight, and humor.

After an examination of the various types of parables and how they were used, and establishing some guidelines for interpreting the parables, the author groups the parables chronologically and topically for further examination. Some of these groupings are Jesus' first parabolic sayings, parables on Jesus' new relation to Israel, parables in response to blasphemy, mysteries of the kingdom, parables on entering the kingdom, parables on servanthood, and parables on human responsibility and divine concern. For each parable the author presents the problem in light of its historical and theological context, discusses its central truth in relation to its audience, and explores its wider significance, applying it to our modern world.

The book contains extensive endnotes and an index of parables, making it not only an enjoyable and thought provoking read, but an excellent resource for deeper study, one that should be included in any well-rounded biblical library.

Judy A. Driscoll, Retired Teacher, Poulso, Washington

***Whatever happened to the gospel of grace? : rediscovering the doctrines that shook the world / James Montgomery Boice; foreword by Eric J. Alexander.* LCCN 00012245. Wheaton, Ill.: Crossway Books, Crossway Books, 2001. HBB, 1581342373, \$17.99. Adult. Rating: 4**

230'.04624. Grace (Theology). 224 p.

Boice takes the reader through a Bible history course that is not for the non-thinking Christian. Boice discusses topics that shook the world such as Sola Scriptura, Christ alone, grace alone, faith alone, and glory to God alone. He sandwiches this information in between the perception that our culture is dying in America and we need a renewal. His Presbyterian theology will shake the Armenians but there is little else to rock a theological boat unless it is his staunch position that the Bible is inerrant; he served as the

chairman for the International Council on Biblical Inerrancy for ten years.

Well reasoned and laced with contemporary thinkers and the reformers of modern Christianity, the book reads quickly. There is a note section but the index was especially useful to me. The adult classes or persons wondering basic Christian belief systems were developed will find this book helpful. Pastors may enjoy it as a reference to their library for the material it presents which they learned in seminary in summary form.

Bianca Elliott, Teacher, Linwood, Kansas

***In six days : why fifty 50 scientists choose to believe in creation / edited by John F. Ashton.* LCCN 00110204. Green Forest, Ark.: Master Books, Master Books, 2000. PAP, 0890513414, \$13.99. Adult. Rating: 5**

231.7. Creation. 384 p.

A literal six-day creation is the subject of these fifty essays edited by John Ashton. The reader is treated to wide-ranging analysis of information, and challenged to probe these issues debated among scientists and educators.

Each essay in this text offers insight into facets to conclude that the Genesis account of creation is the most reasonable explanation. A scientific critique of evolution as well as the scientific basis for creation is investigated, delving into the big bang theory, radioactive rock dating, the decay of the magnetic field, and the second law of thermodynamics just to name a few.

The background and expertise of the contributors includes university professors and researchers, geologists, zoologists, biologists, botanists, physicists, chemists, mathematicians, medical researchers, and engineers. Respect for the literal interpretation is increased as the advocates for the six days interpretation do not seek to debunk evolution as much as accentuate the reasonable basis for creationism. I suspect that many readers will minimally take pause in automatically accepting evolution.

This book is highly recommended for all academic and public libraries that seek to offer a balanced perspective on this subject, and a worthy title to include in any discussion of evolution. Advanced high school students can benefit from the clarity and straightforward approach, and it will be a helpful resource for adult discussion groups.

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

***Faith is stranger than fiction : serving a God who loves surprises / Steve Halliday.* LCCN 00102658. Green Forest, Ark.: New Leaf, New Leaf, 2001. PAP, 0892214961, \$10.99. Adult. Rating: 3**

231.7. Faith. 213 p.

This new book with the beguiling title *Faith is Stranger Than Fiction*, by Steve Halliday, is

intriguing. The three recurring themes are how faith is stranger than fiction, how God responds to his children's faith, and how God loves to turn Satan's plans for evil to good.

Halliday uses a compilation of true incidents, both contemporary and historical, to prove his point. The stories are captivating, faith-building, and surprising. They are as current as cancer incidents last year to Martin Luther's incredible escape from Roman Catholics centuries ago to ancient Bible accounts millenniums old.

After all these glorious stories Halliday reminds readers that faith doesn't separate us from the reality of our world. He calls it the agony of victory and dedicates an entire chapter to the subject. Here he eloquently and clearly defines what may be a dilemma to some readers: The mix of Christian faith with God's sovereignty. For example, praying for healing but seeing no answer.

Halliday has an uncanny ability to catch readers off guard by jerking them from there and then to here and now. Halliday jolts readers back into their present reality with an encouraging word and a startling challenge.

Each chapter ends with Questions for Further Study, which includes scripture references. The book reads fast and easy except for when readers must stop to wipe an eye or ponder a point.

Ginger McGrath, Freelance Writer, Leavenworth, Washington

***God's trademarks : how to determine whether a message, ministry, or strategy is truly from God* / George Otis, Jr. LCCN 00060265. Grand Rapids: Chosen Books, Baker, 2000. PAP, 0800792815, \$11.99. Adult. Rating: 2**

231.7. Discernment of spirits. 155 p.

Have you ever really wondered if the television evangelist you are watching is truly giving a message from God? If you have, founder and President of The Sentinel Group, George Otis Jr., has written *God's Trademarks* just for you. According to Otis, Christians must evaluate messages not only from television evangelists but any teachers. We must question everything that we read and hear. Readers are encouraged to really listen to God's voice which makes a certain sound that can be heard within our hearts. To do this we must have an intimate relationship with the Lord which is the only remedy to recognizing whether a sermon, Sunday School lesson, or any other message is truly genuine. Otis encourages ministers and other speakers to speak truthfully so that listeners will not have to read between the lines.

God's Trademarks does not pull any punches in denouncing false teachers. Television evangelists are especially hard hit, since Otis claims many are nothing more than performers looking to gain glory and money. The text is highly documented with footnotes and quotes

from C.S. Lewis, Os Guinness, C. Peter Wagner and the Bible to name a few. An index and notes are included at the back of the book. A passionate plea is made to the readers to not be deceived by false prophets by encouraging all to look into the heart of any message being heard and discerning if that speaker is following God's path or his/her own agenda.

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



***Walking on the waves : meeting Jesus through stories and scripture* / Mark Shaw. LCCN 2001025127. Grand Rapids: Baker, Baker Books, 2001. PAP, 0801063647, \$15.99. Adult. Rating: 5**

232. Spiritual life--Christianity; Jesus Christ--Meditations. 254 p.

Each of us carries his/her own story, a mixture of self, family, and society acceptance and traditions, that colors individual perceptions of the Jesus image. Over the decades, man has reached for self-fulfillment in many directions, but has never been able to find lasting solace, outside of Christ. Eventually, even the best of toys turns into the dull gray of daily existence that once appeared such a shining rainbow of hope. Today, man reaches up in the New Age spiritual styles, represented here as those of Deepak Chopra, with his mystical, pantheistic approach, and Stephen Covey, with his practical humanistic views of success. Human nature drives us forward, when the answer to our problems lies in looking back to the story of Jesus. From birth to death to resurrection, he forged a path to eternal freedom from the dull existence of everyday life.

Walking on the Waves: Meeting Jesus Through Stories and Scripture, by Mark Shaw, takes the story of salvation and breaks it down into modern day terms that clearly, without overstatement or guilt appeal, map out the path to true and everlasting spirituality in Jesus Christ. Fulfillment is reached as we evolve beyond our imbedded stories of disappointment and sorrow into the greater and more lasting reality of the Jesus story. Shaw's work over the past twenty years as a professor missionary in Africa adds a freshness to his work that is distinctly colored by the incomparable artistic flair of the African story. Philosophical in style, Shaw has written to impress the layman, as well as the theologian. He writes with a truth that shatters doctrinal vices and declares one of the most alive pictures of the risen Christ ever written. Highly recommended for Christian study, whether self, Bible group, or professional course study.

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

***The blood of Christ* / Andrew Murray. LCCN 2001001256. Minneapolis: Bethany House, Bethany House, 2001. PAP, 0764224689, \$7.99. Adult. Rating: 4**

232'.4. Blood--Religious aspects--Christianity; Blood (in religion, folk-lore, etc.); Atonement; Redemption; Jesus Christ--Crucifixion; Jesus Christ--Person and offices. 253 p.

Andrew Murray's in-depth examination of *The Blood of Christ* is a combination of two previous works on the subject. Part one is a translation of a section from a series of discourses on the power of the blood of Jesus and, prior to this publication, has been available only in Dutch. The second part completes the series and addresses the blood of the cross. Each part is divided into ten chapters—the chapters into titled subsections.

Written in Murray's devotional style and translated into modern-day English, the work is reader-friendly for such a profound book. He investigates both Old and New Testament text to present the truth of redemption, at the time of salvation, and then through life as a Christian. "I am deeply convinced that we can never know too much about the truths the blood proclaims," says Murray in his preface to part two.

Scriptures are quoted at each chapter's beginning. Murray's writing style reaches across the page to help readers grasp elusive truths. It is both eloquent and personal. He does not condescend even when he explains terms like pardon or eternal. It is written simply—point upon point—so that even a new believer will understand. Murray sets up the discussion with a few key elements to consider, and then proceeds to elucidate. His thoughtful and thorough treatment of the subject in this volume is sure to elevate it to the status of a Classic—as have been many of his works.

The Blood of Christ would be an excellent choice for a topical Bible study or adult Sunday school class. However, Murray's exposition is so complete, any interested individual might gain a great deal of knowledge from the book. Destined to become a must-have for the reference shelf, this book is highly recommended reading.

Cathy M. Elliott, Freelance Writer, Anderson, California

***Four-dimensional Jesus : seeing Jesus through the eyes of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John* / John Timmer. LCCN 00054878. Grand Rapids: Faith Alive, CRC Publications, 2001. PAP, 156212532X, \$. Adult. Rating: 3**

232.9'01. Jesus Christ--Biography; Bible. N.T. Gospels--Criticism, interpretation, etc. 157 p.

***Four-dimensional Jesus : seeing Jesus through the eyes of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John : leader's guide* / John Timmer. LCCN . Grand Rapids: Faith Alive, CRC Publications, 2001. PAP, 1562125311, \$11.95. Adult. Rating: 3**

232.9'01. Jesus Christ--Biography; Bible. N.T. Gospels--Criticism, interpretation, etc. 58 p.

Four-Dimensional Jesus takes the reader on a journey through the four gospels. Timmer shows how an understanding of the differences of the four gospels leads to a four-dimensional portrait of Jesus. The resulting portrait, while more complex, also offers a more profound portrait for the believer. While the 6x9" format book can certainly be read for individual study and understanding, it lends itself wonderfully for group discussion, reflection, and prayer. Being divided into thirteen sessions, each one offers Timmer's insightful commentary. Interspersed throughout the discussion are boxed paragraphs with quotes from other authors and scholars that lend complimentary and applicable insights to the immediate subject under consideration.

A leader's guide in 8 1/2 x 11" format offers suggestions for how to conduct the session, along with answers to the chapter review questions posed. Particularly helpful are further general discussion questions with commentary for stimulating further dialogue and prayer. Timmer is an ordained pastor in the Christian Reformed Church, having served as both missionary and pastor until his retirement in 1995. Recommended for adult bible study groups, and for individual study of the four gospels. This makes a good title for parish reading racks.

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

In the shadow of the cross : the deeper meaning of Calvary / Ray Pritchard. LCCN 00052889. Nashville: Broadman and Holman, Broadman and Holman, 2001. HBB, 0805423419, \$19.99. Adult. Rating: 3

232.96. Jesus Christ--Crucifixion; Holy Cross. 221 p.

In the Shadow of the Cross by Ray Pritchard presents, in two parts, the often overlooked meaning of the Cross of Christ. Part I covers the basic tenets of salvation, clearly and concisely, using modern anecdotes to personalize understanding. The foundation for building sturdy faith in Christ begins with understanding forgiveness and realizing responsibilities as Christians. Some answers for the hard "why's" of human suffering culminates in encouraging believers to see that God can and does make miracles blossom from adversity. Since Jesus is our only way to God, our choice then becomes whether to accept (destination Heaven) or reject (destination Hell) Christ's free gift of salvation. Part II details the deeper meaning of the Cross. To God, it means an outpouring of his Spirit to man, to Christ, covering man with his righteousness. To Satan, the Cross means total defeat, to the world, it means either judgment or salvation. And to the church the Cross means a free, though never cheap, gift of God. Pritchard draws the two parts together by encouraging the reader to "linger at the foot of the Cross," and thereby receive salvation, be changed, and possess hope.

Ray Pritchard is the Senior Pastor of Calvary Memorial Church in Oak Park, Ill. Best known for his co-authorship of *The Leadership Lessons of Jesus*, and *More Leadership Lessons of Jesus* (Broadman and Holman, 1997-8), short reflections on biblical references to Jesus' leadership style and behavior, he has also authored several spiritual self-help and group study pieces. Each chapter of *In the Shadow of the Cross* ends with a section entitled "Going Deeper," that encourages both self and group analysis of the scriptures and ideas presented. Notes section represents a chapter-by-chapter bibliography for ease in locating resources to back up book. Though sometimes preachy in manner, Pritchard is obviously a seasoned professional at teaching the way to salvation. Recommended for spiritual self-help and Bible study groups.

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

Shaking the heavens / Ana Mendez. LCCN 00062626. Ventura, Calif.: Renew Books, Gospel Light, 2001. PAP, 0830724966, \$10.99. Adult. Rating: 2

235'.4. Spiritual warfare. 256 p.

The enemy has entered our society with little or no resistance, yet God is even now waking his people and calling them into battle. He is equipping us with spiritual discernment, wisdom, and the tools of spiritual warfare, all while giving us new understanding of the times in which we live. *Shaking the Heavens* is a must have for any spiritual warrior, a tool with which the Body of Christ can be better equipped.

Ana Mendez, a former occult priestess, has become a mighty prayer warrior and prophetic voice in the church after being freed from the voodoo occult. She shares with you personal experiences from her occult days that pull you into the story, allowing you to gain insight into the occult realm. Ana provides sufficient testimony and scriptures that help the reader understand with better clarity all that is involved in today's spiritual battles.

Rick Estep, Media Director, HeavenBound Media Center, Middleburg, Florida.

Why I am a Christian : leading thinkers explain why they believe / Norman L. Geisler and Paul K. Hoffman, editors. LCCN 2001025170. Grand Rapids: Baker, Baker Book House, 2001. HBB, 0801021104, \$19.99. Adult. Rating: 3

239. Apologetics. 318 p.

Want compelling answers to those familiar questions that many Christians deal with, e.g., How can anyone claim to have the truth? Does evolution prove the Bible's creation story false? Why choose Christ in spite of seeming abundance of evil and suffering? The discussion Geisler, as president of Southern Evangelical Seminary, and Hoffman as a trial lawyer for

twenty-plus years, offer is food for thought that will long linger on.

A strength of *Why I Am A Christian* is the variety of contributors including an astronomer, engineer, lawyer, historian, former atheist, former skeptic, and Jewish Christian. The editors have laid out the discussion as if witnesses were testifying in behalf of Christianity. Those who appreciate a logical, developed defense will find much to digest. Those who approach life in a more feeling manner will appreciate the personal and life-sharing experiences that have a difference in many of the contributor's lives. In each of the six parts (with two or three contributors per part) some of the discussion is sensible to the mind, and some most gratifying to the heart.

The contributors bring a contemporary feel to the discussion. It compliments earlier works such as *Why Become A Christian?* by Garry Poole (Zondervan, 1998) and *Why I Am Still A Christian* by Hans Kung (Abingdon, 1987, 1999).

Recommended for adult Christian religions collections in public libraries. Parish and congregation libraries can add this title for reading by adults searching for answers and to probe their own spiritual journey, particularly if missing the Poole and Kung titles.

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

Cutting to the core : the seven components of Christian character / by Rick Ezell. LCCN 2001029022. Grand Rapids: Kregel, Kregel, 2001. PAP, 0825425301, \$11.99. Adult. Rating: 4

241. Bible. N.T. Peter, 2nd, I, 3-8--Criticism, interpretation, etc.; Christian life--Baptist authors; Character; Christian life--Biblical teaching; Character--Biblical teaching. 192 p.

Using factual and fictional stories drawn from everyday life, Pastor Rick Ezell teaches Christian character. The eleven chapters of *Cutting To The Core* walk the adult reader through the necessary and vital steps of developing real and godly character. Written with simplicity and directness, this book weaves through the complex subject of developing and maintaining godly character.

Pastor Ezell's upbeat tone and positive approach moves the highest levels of ethical behavior and righteous living within human grasp. Without once sugar-coating the harsh realities of going against the immoral tide, this text never gives the reader an excuse out of living a godly life. Using Scripture and real-world examples, the author pounds out a message: "You and God can do it."

This text could be adapted for use as an adult group Bible study. Mature high school students could benefit from this work, possibly with an adult teacher or mentor. I am more than happy to recommend this book.

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

What your counselor never told you : seven secrets revealed--conquer the power of sin in your life / by William Backus. LCCN 00011425. Minneapolis: Bethany House, Bethany House, 2000. PAP, 0764223925, \$10.99. Adult. Rating: 4

241'.3. Deadly sins; Sin--Psychology; Psychotherapy--Religious aspects--Christianity. 250 p.

Respected author, clinical psychologist, and clergyman, William Backus, explores the root causes of emotional and psychological problems common to many in his recent book, *What Your Counselor Never Told You: Seven Secrets Revealed*. Backus applies the premise that most of these ongoing afflictions can be traced back to seven attributes, usually called the Seven Deadly Sins.

Experts have produced compelling works dealing with breaking down strongholds, finding freedom from spiritual bondage, and surviving the co-dependent lifestyle. Books have emerged that explain how to live the victorious life or how to change one's view of relationship to God in order to do so. William Backus's text breaks new ground. He illustrates the value of understanding the dominant traits one possesses, traces them back to the deadly sins, and then teaches the reader how to embrace the healing restoration of God.

Using short, interesting case studies, Backus shows how one can often ascribe one's own negative characteristic to another. He helps one identify and correct the problem within while turning to the Great Physician for the ultimate assistance. Telling the truth to self is a central theme in Backus's book, as it often is throughout his writing. In addition, it is a necessary antidote for overcoming the entrenchment of sin.

This work may be used by an individual or in a group setting. Each chapter includes a self-assessment test, study questions to examine the reader's understanding, and exercises for further thought and discussion. The book concludes with the opportunity to take the Sin Test, a comprehensive questionnaire. The results may be compared with a test group of individuals. William Backus has written a book that will empower the reader with biblical insight and truth. Highly recommended.

Cathy M. Elliott, Freelance Writer, Anderson, California

Dating and waiting : looking for love in all the right places / by William Risk. LCCN 00030974. Grand Rapids: Kregel, Kregel, 2000. PAP, 0825435811, \$10.00. Adult. Rating: 5

241'.6765. Dating (Social customs); Dating (Social customs)--Religious aspects--Christianity. 190 p.

Most books about being a Christian single are not about being Christian or about being single, but about how to get married as soon as

possible. *Dating and Waiting* by William P. Risk is a delightful exception to that rule. The title is misleading and an unfortunate choice. This book is not really about dating and waiting, but about how to be a Christian who happens to be single. Risk acknowledges that some singles may marry and some may not, but that all can work toward becoming Christ-like, irrespective of marital status. How refreshing!

Dating and Waiting is packed with in-depth application of scripture. Topics like integrity, patience, obedience, and emotions are addressed. William Risk is associated with the Peninsula Bible Church in Palo Alto, an independent non-denominational evangelical congregation. Information regarding this church and its doctrinal stance can be found at <http://www.pbc.org/doctrine.html>.

Even married Christians could benefit from reading this book. This is the book I was looking for all through my single years. It is highly recommended for teens and adult readers.

Karla Castle, Public Services Librarian, Warner Pacific College, Portland, Oregon

Written upon the heart : the ten commandments for today's Christian / Anthony J. Tomasino. LCCN 00048735. Grand Rapids: Kregel, Kregel, 2001. PAP, 0825438470, \$11.99. Adult. Rating: 2

241.5'2. Ten commandments. 200 p.

The Ten Commandments are the subject of *Written Upon The Heart* which is written by Pastor Anthony J. Tomasino who is an expert on the Dead Sea Scrolls and who has written articles for *Eerdmans' Dictionary of the Bible*. The first two chapters deal with what was meant by the Law to early Christians and are the Ten Commandments still applicable to today's society. The next ten chapters discuss each of the commandments individually. Tomasino writes that the Ten Commandments are to be viewed as marriage vows, not laws. Other ideas that are portrayed include: how we treat our parents is a good indicator of our relationship with God; by hating another person we are showing a lack of respect for the Creator; and if we rely on the Holy Spirit we can overcome any sinful desires.

Tomasino includes historical information on individual words that are used in the Ten Commandments plus historical facts that provide insight into early Christian life. Each chapter ends with five questions for reflection which could be used with a study group or by an individual. No bibliography is included nor is there an index.

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

Waiting for morning : hearing God's voice in the darkness / Cindy Crosby; foreword by Phyllis Tickle. LCCN 2001025033. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, Baker Book House, 2001. HBB, 0801012228, \$13.99. Adult. Rating: 4

242. Nature--Religious aspects--Christianity--Meditations. 159 p.

In *Waiting for Morning: Hearing God's Voice in the Darkness*, Cindy Crosby muses about some of her life experiences through the filter of her interaction with nature. She talks about her neighbors, gardens, plants and flowers, and bike rides in the woods. She asks questions like, "What is God up to anyway? What about my ideas for my life, my children's lives?" and "God, do you know what you are doing?" She obviously writes out of her struggles, and is very aware of her creator. Crosby follows a theme of day versus night, and traveling through the seasons. She aims at finding peace through acceptance and balance in her life, and holds out the value of growth and hope for the future. "In what ways am I pruning my own life? I close my eyes and consider how to prune, thinking of the future rather than the present."

I had expected a devotional book, with brief inspirational ideas for tough situations. What I read was well developed essays, somewhat philosophical in tone, the working through of internal conflicts and hard times. These are not always discussed explicitly, but more in the symbolism of what she experiences. She often presents detailed descriptions of what she sees, much as a poet does. She is obviously very visually aware. Some passages take some healthy chewing to fully grasp the main ideas and a few of these portrayals seem to trail on a mite long.

Judy Belcher, Teacher, Bremerton, Washington

He leads me beside still waters : a forty-day journey toward rest for your soul / Jennifer Kennedy Dean. LCCN 00067470. Nashville: Broadman and Holman, Broadman and Holman, 2001. PAP, 0805423796, \$12.99. Adult. Rating: 4

242. Meditations; Spiritual retreats. 192 p.

Come, take a forty-day journey of discovery and find rest for your soul, invites Jennifer Kennedy Dean in *He Leads Me Beside Still Waters*. Inside this compact paperback devotional lies an abundance of expository teaching, as well as memorable anecdotes illustrating scriptural principles, all chosen to lead the reader into a closer walk with God. Like a doctor offering medicine to a sick patient, Dean offers a prescription for the weary Christian's soul.

Challenging and thought provoking, this unique devotional doesn't just talk about what to do; it actually leads the reader through the process of spiritual growth and provides ample space for answering questions and journaling.

Following forty days worth of devotions is a section entitled An Extended Retreat. Here,

Dean invites the reader to set aside a larger block of time, either a full day or several hours, just to focus and meditate on God, especially the Holy Spirit. While some readers may find the author provides too much direction, others will enjoy the firm structure of the exercises that are designed to keep the reader focused while exploring the book's concepts.

A final section suggests resources for further study and offers information on retreats and conferences.

Virginia G. Schnabel, Freelance Writer, Shelton, Washington

***Between two gardens : from Eden to Gethsemane* / Jane Rubietta. LCCN 00012099. Minneapolis: Bethany House, Bethany House, 2001. PAP, 0764224719, \$9.99. Adult. Rating: 3**

242. Gardeners--Prayer-books and devotions--English; Gardens--Religious aspects--Christianity--Meditations. 203 p.

No matter what color your thumb, Jane Rubietta has something to offer to suit your palette as she explores two gardens, Eden and Gethsemane. The author suggests that while we often long for the rest and beauty we envision in the Garden of Eden, we tend to shy away from the Garden of Gethsemane where Christ wept in prayer over Jerusalem and prayed in turmoil before his crucifixion. Perhaps, she notes, we are really called to live somewhere between the two where Eden finds its fulfillment in Gethsemane.

A book of devotions for all seasons, *Between Two Gardens* invites the reader to consider creation, oneness, darkness, shame, sacrifice, thorns, failure, exile, suffering, and life...all in the garden setting, and all in relationship to our heavenly Creator. Her down to earth honesty and illustrations help the readers let down their guard and enter fully into the discovery of their own relationships.

While the book can be read at any time of year, its forty readings are especially meaningful when used during Lent as preparation for the Easter celebration. Each devotional section concludes with Listen: a scriptural reference, Learn: a quote from a wide variety of resources, and Live: questions for further discussion, which make this an excellent tool for use in personal devotions and in group studies.

Judy A. Driscoll, Retired Teacher, Poulsbo, Washington

***Thinking clearly about prayer* / John Woolmer. LCCN . Grand Rapids: Monarch Books, Kregel, 2001. PAP, 0825460220, \$12.99. Adult. Rating: 3**

242. Prayer. 254 p.

What makes prayer effective? Why are some prayers seemingly empty words while others bring extraordinary encouragement with their answers? John Woolmer, the Rector of Shepton Mallet and a Zambia mission leader, draws on his own experience as well as giving insights from people around the world, to weave

scripture and stories into practical guidelines to encourage a deeper prayer life.

Thinking Clearly About Prayer is a book of depth, not quickly read or quickly dismissed. The stories and experiences probe beyond the norm, honestly looking at the gulf between the feeling of spiritual wilderness and the lush bounty, delight, and satisfaction that accompanies God's provisions and guidance. Woolmer depicts the biblical picture of a loving, generous Father as the focus of prayer. If God's people respond with thanksgiving, praise, and adoration to God's love, they can then discover how receiving forgiveness and forgiving others becomes a gateway to answered prayer. Friendship with Christ and accepting the guiding power of the Holy Spirit will help bring the power and authority needed to be effective prayer warriors.

The ultimate goal of *Thinking Clearly About Prayer* is to encourage believers to bring every part of their lives into the spiritual realm and to learn how to join others in united appeal. This book works well as a personal devotional or as a small group Bible study. An appendix in the back of the book gives chapter by chapter exercises and suggestions for meditation or group interaction. The Thinking Clearly Series is designed to help Christians understand their faith better and illuminate crucial Christian truth.

Paula Stewart Marks, School Principal, Bend, Oregon

***God's pace : stress and Psalm 23* / James G. T. Fairfield. LCCN 00068986. Scottsdale, Pa.: Herald Press, Herald Press, 2001. PAP, 0836191536, \$10.99. Adult. Rating: 4**

242'.5. Bible. O.T. Psalms XXIII--Meditations; Stress (Psychology)--Religious aspects--Christianity--Meditations. 165 p.

The hectic pace of contemporary life often leaves Christians feeling overwhelmed and spiritually underfed. In his book, *God's Pace : Stress and Psalm 23*, James Fairfield exhorts Christians to slow down and take more time for God, his word, and relationships with others, by ignoring outside pressures to conform.

This is not a Bible study on the text of Psalm 23, but is instead a presentation of the ideas behind the scriptures. Fairfield uses his own and others' personal experiences to explore the theme of resting in God. Information is laid out in short, but spiritually meaty chapters, each prefaced by quotes pertaining to the chapter.

Scripture is scattered sparsely throughout the book, but at the end, questions and verses for more study on the subject are laid out. *God's Pace* is a quick, entertaining, and inspiring read, with many extractable quotes.

Virginia G. Schnabel, Freelance Writer, Shelton, Washington



***Calm in my chaos : encouragement for a mon's weary soul* / Elisabeth K. Corcoran. LCCN 00048736. Grand Rapids: Kregel, Kregel, 2001. PAP, 0825423880, \$10.99. Adult. Rating: 5**

242'.6431. Mothers--Prayer-books and devotions--English; Motherhood--Religious aspects--Christianity--Meditations. 155 p.

There are days in a young mother's life that tea and sympathy are a welcome respite to the often hectic times in raising children. Elisabeth K. Corcoran's devotional of encouragement, *Calm in My Chaos*, runs a close second to sharing the joys and struggles of raising kids with a good friend over a cup of tea in a warm kitchen. With humor, candidness, and wisdom, the author shares from the heart her trials and jublations of being mom and wife. She offers her readers forty-five journal entries expressing her thoughts, dreams, and desires, closing each segment with a Personal Touch and a Prayer.

While the book is short in length, it is long on inspiration. Each entry is at most two pages in length, allowing a quick visit with the author before readers must contend with sibling wars, diaper duty, and the other numerous crises of motherhood. The book covers many areas most mothers can relate to from whiny toddlers, to wanting more children, to carving out personal time. Indeed, this collection of advice and honesty does offer up a bit of calm in the daily chaos of motherhood, making this a consideration for gifts and a devotional choice for the young mothers in our life. There are also several website listings of interest, as well as the author's e-mail address.

Pam Webb, School Library Technician, Sandpoint, Idaho

***Children are a blessing from the Lord : learning God's wisdom through our children* / Tamara Boggs. LCCN 2001029024. Grand Rapids: Kregel, Kregel, 2001. PAP, 0825420652, \$9.99. Adult. Rating: 3**

242'.645. Parents--Prayer-books and devotions--English; Parenting--Religious aspects--Christianity--Meditations. 137 p.

Children Are a Blessing from the Lord, by Tamara Boggs, is a reminder that our best life lessons often come in the form of what we learn from our children. Each entry is segmented into days, creating a collection of thirty-one vignettes of prayer and share, making this a welcome monthly devotional. The author shares personal stories from her family life with three children who each have distinctly different needs. This book is an especially welcome read for parents who have a child with special considerations.

However helpful this devotional is for parents, it is also one that could be used as a family devotional, as children will most likely see themselves in the author's children at times. The chapter reflections, scripture passages, and prayer will go a long way in providing a greater outlook on God's wisdom. It surely is true that

out of the mouths of babes strength is established, and parents will be encouraged and strengthened by these small offerings that reaffirm how much children are indeed a blessing.

Pam Webb, School Library Technician, Sandpoint, Idaho

The day I met God : extraordinary stories of life-changing miracles / Jim and Karen Covell, Victorya Michaels Rogers. LCCN 2001001028. Sisters, Ore.: Multnomah, Multnomah, 2001. PAP, 1576737861, \$10.99. Adult (High and middle school). Rating: 4

248.2'4'0922. Life change events--Religious aspects--Christianity; Conversion--Christianity. 232 p.

Wonderful stories of life-changing events. Inspiring true instances of salvation. Evidences of God's presence in the lives of ordinary people. This is a diverse collection of encounters with God and how he broke into lives and changed them forever. In the hands of a Christian, these salvation experiences will encourage and uplift. Put this in the hands of those who are yet seeking and they may find the answers to their questions are right at their fingertips.

A unique and interesting feature of *The Day I Met God* is the short blurb at the end of each of the thirty-two stories that gives up-to-date info on the writer, including in many cases his or her e-mail address. Also included is contact information if the reader has a story to tell and would like to share it.

Several testimonies included mystical or supernatural experiences, but there are only a few instances of this sort. *The Day I Met God* will appeal to both men and women, middle school students to adults, believer or seeker. This book would make an excellent addition to most library collections.

Ceil Carey, Young Adult Librarian, Public Library, Plano, Illinois

Your kingdom come : living out the Lord's Prayer / Michael Sullivant. LCCN 00105505. Lake Mary, Fla.: Creation House, Strang, 2000. PAP, 0884196909, \$12.99. Adult. Rating: 3

248.3. Prayer--Christianity; Lord's prayer. 209 p.

Designed as a companion to the musical recording *Your Kingdom Come* by Craig Smith (Integrity's Alleluia Music, c2000), *Your Kingdom Come: Living out the Lord's Prayer*, by author Michael Sullivant, seeks to enhance the themes gleaned from praying the Lord's Prayer and singing its themes. Following a chapter devoted to praying, its purposes, processes, and pitfalls, the author visits each petition of the Lord's Prayer. With each petition, the words to one of the songs from the recording are printed, followed by several devotion-like discussions speaking to aspects of that petition. These chapters could be used for exploration in a study group setting, or easily by an individual

for daily devotions. Interspersed throughout each chapter are Prayerfacts, short one-sentence truths related to the subject. As if the reader's plate would not already be full enough, the author then ends each chapter with creative activities for deeper learning, both individual and group, a prayer from the heart reflecting the insights of the chapter, and intercessory prayers taken from the scriptures which relate to the subject of the chapter.

Readers should not be concerned if they have the book without the recording. While the music may enhance the appreciation of the insights gained, the book can stand firmly on its own merit. Overall, Michael Sullivant has developed nearly an encyclopedia of New Testament prayer!

Judy A. Driscoll, Retired Teacher, Poulsbo, Washington

It's prayer time! : prayer and spiritual warfare from the African-American perspective / Mark Pollard, general editor. LCCN 00028605. Ventura, Calif.: Regal Books, Gospel Light, 2000. PAP, 0830725326, \$12.99. Adult. Rating: 3

248.3'2. Prayer--Christianity; Spiritual warfare; African-Americans--Religion. 181 p.

It's Prayer Time! is an excellent examination of prayer and its place in the modern church. Edited by Mark Pollard, each of the twelve chapters has a different author, and addresses a different aspect of beginning, maintaining, or targeting prayer in a community. This work can be a valuable tool to anyone being led to begin a prayer ministry.

This work is distinctive in that it is written by, and for, African-American Christians and church leaders. The challenges of inter-urban and ethnic churches are unique, and the strategies for kingdom building in the inner city must reflect those differences. *Prayer Time!* pulls no spiritual punches on addressing what must be done.

The roots and legacy of racism and slavery are examined in this work. The discussion is in a context of understanding how best to attack and destroy demonic strongholds in the African-American community. Readers seeking to better understand their inner-city brothers and sisters should find this work helpful.

Prayer is a constant that cuts across all parts of the Christian church. This book addresses the subject with a "here and now" focus. I heartily recommend this work to all prayer warriors.

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

Praying prodigals home / Quin Sherrer and Ruthanne Garlock. LCCN 00032327. Ventura, Calif.: Regal Books, Gospel Light, 2000. PAP, 0830725636, \$11.99. Adult. Rating: 4

248.3'2. Intercessory prayer--Christianity; Parents--Religious life. 237 p.

In this most useful book, Quin Sherrer and Ruthanne Garlock take a thorough look at the prodigal, be it your child, husband, relative, or friend. The reader will find a thorough plan of "how- to's" for prayer and prayer strategy, as well as encouraging examples throughout the chapters that confirm that God is able to work with those who have turned away from their Christian walk. There are "Questions to think about" at the end of each chapter that challenge the reader to check their own hearts and be sure their thoughts and speech line up with God's word. There are also wonderful victory stories that will have the reader declaring "God is able to do this for me, too!"

Many different causes for why a child or loved one becomes a prodigal are explored, as well as specific prayers to cover those that are in prison or unable to be reached. Page after page, this "book of warfare" builds the reader up in the strength and promises of God's word. There is also an excellent appendix entitled "Waging your Prayer Battle," that lists specific scriptures used for specific problems. Some of the categories are: know the enemy, ask for a strategy, use of spiritual weapons, why people don't come to the Lord; and godly goals. There is also a section of "arsenal scriptures for spiritual warfare" that list appropriate scriptures for specific issues with which you might be dealing.

Praying Prodigals Home is a straightforward and action-packed (in prayer) book—a must for those who face the agony of having a prodigal, or who know of others who are dealing with this problem. The reader will be enabled to become a more effective, confident prayer, as well as find peace, trust, and answers in the Lord.

Mary McKinney, Editor, Writer, Conference Speaker, Educator, Port Orchard, Washington

The great investment : faith, family, and finance / T. D. Jakes. LCCN 00062671. New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, Penguin Putnam, 2000. HBB, 0399146830, \$21.95; PAP, 0425183459, \$13.00. Adult. Rating: 2

248.4. Christian life; Family--Religious aspects--Christianity; Finance, Personal--Religious aspects--Christianity. 194 p.

There is a great deal of wisdom and truth in Bishop T.D. Jakes' book, *The Great Investment*. Using the analogy of investment, the author makes a strong case for carefully developing personal faith, family life, and financial stewardship. Jakes hammers out a message of balance and good judgment in these three areas. Using personal examples and Scripture, each point in the book is supported and clarified for the reader.

The primary areas are not covered in depth, because of the broad nature of the text, but a great deal of content is squeezed into the various pages. Each of the illustrations is appropriate to the subject.

The Great Investment uses a "Great Journey" analogy to tie the primary subjects together. The great journey is either inadequate in itself or underdeveloped for this ambitious task. When you consider the number of works that address any one of these subjects, it is important that any unifying concept be very strong and well integrated in the text.

The writing could be improved with greater focus and directness on each concept being taught. Intensity must make up for the lack of depth and the great breath of *The Great Investment*.

I am sure many can and will read *The Great Investment* and be blessed and nurtured. For those who are working on the finer points or are looking to move to "the next level," perhaps other works will help you get there.

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

***Out on a whim : a somewhat useful guide to marriage, family, culture, God, and flammable household appliances* / by Dave Meurer. LCCN 2001002492. Minneapolis: Bethany House, Bethany House, 2001. PAP, 0764225456, \$10.00. Adult. Rating: 4**

248.4. Christian life--Humor. 187 p.

Dave Meurer's third book, *Out on a Whim*, is a humorous look at many aspects of daily life. It claims to be a Somewhat Useful Guide to Marriage, Family, Culture, God, and Flammable Household Appliances including a study guide—although no one is quite sure why. Meurer, who compares favorably to Dave Barry, has put together a collection of light essays that often pack a powerful punch. Contained within the commentaries are thoughtful insights wrapped in zany humor. The book keeps the reader chuckling from first page to last.

Meurer is a master of the understatement and uses his talents to teach us to lighten up. Some of his subject matter comes from everyday life with his wife and kids—hence the chapter titled, Pause for Concern, ribbing the reader about menopause. It is laugh-out-loud funny. Other chapters gaze into our culture and offer acumen. Out With the Old is a comical glance at today's disposable society. A discussion of throwaway items, expendable spouses, and broken goods not worth the repair turns toward a spiritual lesson as Dave relates a visit to the local Mission where, through God's grace, a hopeless dope addict becomes a dopeless hope addict.

Study questions accompany each chapter and add to the book's whimsical flavor. At times, jokes masquerade as questions. Or they are tender, heart-warming pleas for the reader to look into his heart and see what God is revealing. They are often pithy, more often hilarious.

Dave Meurer has written another delightful collection of vignettes that poke fun while

tugging at the heartstrings. When you want to put your feet up and escape, go *Out on a Whim*.

Cathy M. Elliott, Freelance Writer, Anderson, California

***Waiting on God* / Andrew Murray. LCCN 2001001319. Minneapolis: Bethany House, Bethany House, 2001. PAP, 0764224697, \$7.99. Adult. Rating: 5**

248.4. Trust in God--Christianity. 140 p.

Waiting on God by Andrew Murray will provide the reader with thirty-one days of outstanding devotional reading. Each chapter begins with a scripture verse that counsels the reader to wait on the Lord. In the three pages following, Murray discusses the verse and how it can be applied. On day thirteen, Psalm 39:7 says, "And now Lord, what do I wait for?" Murray encourages the reader to wait even when you don't know what you are waiting for. However, he adds, don't limit God by your expectations when you wait. God is God of power. He can "do more than you can ask or think."

Some chapters cover specific times of waiting such as, waiting for supplies, instruction, or in times of darkness. Other chapters address what the condition of our heart should be while we wait.

Murray writes with a depth that will draw the reader back year after year. His humble, loving, relationship with God shines through the pages as he calls on believers to wait on the Lord. Written more than a century ago, the information is as pertinent today as it was then. *Waiting On God*, previously published as *The Believer's Secret of Waiting on God*, has been edited and updated for today's readers.

Barbara Bryden, Freelance Writer, Olympia, Washington

***Designed to be like Him : understanding God's plan for fellowship, conduct, conflict, and maturity* / J. Dwight Pentecost. LCCN 2001029023. Grand Rapids: Kregel, Kregel, 2001. PAP, 0825434653, \$13.99. Adult. Rating: 2**

248.4. Christian life--Biblical teaching; Jesus Christ--Example--Biblical teaching. 288 p.

Doctor J. Dwight Pentecost has written a good work for every adult believer. *Designed To Be Like Him* tells how to become more Christ-like. The thirty-two chapter-lets are divided into four parts, Designed for Fellowship, Design for Conduct, Design for Conflict and Design for Maturity.

The Armor of God, Christian Liberty, and the Spiritual Nature are all topics covered with great detail and surprising simplicity. A believer who reads this text should grow in spiritual grace and Christ-likeness. The author weaves Scripture throughout his text and backs every point with Bible verses. He even includes a Scripture Index in the book, to assist in finding his commentary on a particular Bible passage.

Designed To Be Like Him is written clearly. Doctor Pentecost explains complex theological

truth in everyday language. Still, the reading isn't easy. It takes focus and discipline to sit, read, and internalize all of the truth of this text. Only the most determined self-study Bible students will finish solo. The text could be easily adapted to a year-long adult study group.

I recommend this text for anyone serious about the study of Christ's nature. This text will assist in the spiritual growth of any believer.

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

***Taking up your cross* / Tricia McCary Rhodes. LCCN 99050580. Minneapolis: Bethany House, Bethany House, 2000. PAP, 0764222066, \$10.99. Adult. Rating: 3**

248.4. Christian life--Biblical teaching. 207 p.

Tricia McCary Rhodes shares the joy she found in taking up your cross and following Jesus. Each of the seven chapters deals with an attribute that can be ours when we take up the cross. In the first chapter on holiness, Rhodes compares the love expressed between the man and woman in the Song of Solomon to the love between Christ and the believer, referring to it as, "Living in a love affair with our Lord..". She acknowledges not all scholars take this position on the Song of Solomon. However, she feels if we approach Christ as our bridegroom-lover we will better understand the necessity of a life of holiness.

The rest of the book follows the premise that taking up your cross is not hard work. If you love Christ totally and move into a relationship with Him, you will find contentment, quietness, and joy result. Every chapter is packed with quotes from other books and scripture verses.

At the end of each chapter is a section titled, Taking up Our Cross—What We Gain and What We Lose. This is followed by suggestions for having a personal mini-retreat. Each mini-retreat has scripture to read, topics to write on in your prayer journal, and ideas for prayer. Extensive endnotes close out each chapter. Rhodes also includes a list of other books she recommends. *Taking up Your Cross* is written from a Calvinist perspective.

Barbara Bryden, Freelance Writer, Olympia, Washington

***Ride the river* / Larry Christenson. LCCN 00010882. Minneapolis: Bethany House, Bethany House, 2000. PAP, 0764223747, \$10.99. Adult. Rating: 3**

248.4'841. Christian life--Lutheran authors; Trinity. 239 p.

Using the explorations of Lewis and Clark and their interaction with President Thomas Jefferson as a parable, Larry Christenson presents the triune God's plan for our life journey and how he has put that journey under the co-leadership of Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit. Each chapter starts with illustrations from Lewis and Clark, then presents the meat of

the scriptural teaching. Christenson looks at The Plan, the hands-on co-leadership, our relationship with the Trinity, basic principles and directions, obedience under the guidance of our Co-Leaders and our ultimate homecoming. All chapters are footnoted. Several helpful chapters close the book: appendices looking at doctrines of the Holy Spirit from the view point of Charismatic Renewal; footnotes; a helpful, detailed bibliography; and subject and scriptural indices.

Ride the River gives an understandable presentation of the subject matter. While enhanced by the Lewis and Clark parable, the scriptural teaching and material are not dependant on it. Lutheran Minister Larry Christenson does honor to his own belief in charismatic evidence, yet saves involved references to this until the ending appendices. His apologetics are backed by relevant Bible material. The bibliography displays a wide variety of authors—Andrew Murray to Stephen Ambrose to Bishop Meares. *Ride the River* is not packed as full of study data as Bullinger's *Word Studies on the Holy Spirit*. This book will interest those who are both history buffs and Christians.

Donna J. Eggett, Freelance Writer, Radford, Virginia

Women by design / Penelope Swithinbank. LCCN . Grand Rapids: Monarch Books, Kregel, 2001. PAP, 082546000X, \$8.99. Adult. Rating: 2

248.8. Women—Religious life—Christianity. 126 p.

In *Women by Design*, Penelope Swithinbank, wife of an Anglican clergyman, says that women should feel special because God has designed them especially to be a part of his plan. She says women are designed to be helpers and no one else can do the job which God has created them to do. Women can be creative, strong-minded, shy, or impetuous. Basically, women can do whatever God has called them to do, which sometimes proves to be a challenge. Even though women are a part of God's plan, it does not mean that life is problem free. Various chapters deal with how to be feminine, how to make a difference, how to build for the future, and how to love.

At the end of each chapter are ideas on how to put into practice what has been discussed. *Women by Design* is written for all types of women. However, Penelope lives in the United Kingdom; therefore some phrases and terms may be unfamiliar. In each chapter, personal anecdotes illustrate that Penelope Swithinbank is trying to follow God's plan for her, however, there are times when she admits there are struggles even for her.

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

Celebrate the journey : discovering God's vision for your life / by Debra Fulghum Bruce and Ellen Oldacre. LCCN 99059018. St. Louis, Mo.: Concordia, Condordia, 2001. HBB, 0570052440, \$10.95. Adult. Rating: 5

248.8'43. Christian women--Religious life. 171 p.

Co-authors Debra Fulghum Bruce and Ellen Oldacre, in their book *Celebrate the Journey*, have put together a book that will help readers look beyond a destination—marriage, a new job, getting debts paid off—to the joy and contentment of the journey.

In chapter one of part one, Celebrations and Concerns, they say, "Women of vision understand the difference between wishing and living the life of peace and joy with which God blesses us." Laying out problems familiar to their readers as well as various solutions for each, they offer hope, stating, "There are times our decisions cause us to miss the biggest blessings he has in store for us, but he creates new blessings and forgives us through Christ's death and resurrection."

In chapter two, they throw down the gauntlet: "We challenge you to consider your passion—that highest vision in life—as you focus on reaching out and making a personal difference in the world, as well as fulfilling your own needs as a Christian woman."

The rest of the book is divided into seven sections, each explaining an aspect of a woman with vision and telling readers how to connect to the plan that God has for each of their lives. They state bluntly, "When we care for our souls, all other areas of life inevitably fall into place. And this care of the soul means giving meticulous attention to our daily actions—what we listen to, what we feel, what we think, whom we befriend, what we read, and how much time we spend talking with God," and they use stories of women from both today and Bible times, well-chosen quotations, bulleted lists, and lots of Bible verses to support their statements. If you want to provide patrons with material that encourages them to enjoy both their journeys and their destinations as they work out God's plans for their lives, *Celebrate the Journey* is the book to buy.

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

Standing on the promises : a woman's guide for surviving the storms of life / Susan Wales with Holly Halverson. LCCN 00012789. Sisters, Ore.: Multnomah, Multnomah, 2001. PAP, 1576737969, \$10.99. Adult. Rating: 4

248.8'43. Christian women--Religious life. 208 p.

Susan Wales' *Standing on the Promises : A Woman's Guide for Surviving the Storms of Life* is exactly what the title guarantees—encouragement and hope for women who are hurting. A victim herself of adultery and divorce, Wales empathizes with and

communicates gently to the hearts of those suffering the ravages of broken dreams, unfulfilled expectations, rejection, and grief.

Weaving her personal experiences among true stories from other women's lives, the author convincingly exhorts the reader to believe, pray, and wait for God, who is always faithful, no matter how dark the circumstances. Key promises abound for each situation. Perhaps Prince Charming has not ridden into view (or has fallen off his horse!), a spouse has died, a crib stands empty, or unfaithfulness has crushed a marriage. Perhaps a young woman's boyfriend rapes her unexpectedly, or a mother's heart aches for her rebellious child walking far from God. Whatever the storm, God has a plan and he is trustworthy.

Wales does a superb job of providing practical suggestions for building faith and dealing with difficult relationships. The reader is blessed by abundant Scripture verses which promise that God always has a better plan than she can imagine if she will be patient and wait for him to reveal it. *Standing on the Promises* is an excellent resource for a women's support group or a welcome gift for a despondent relative or friend.

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

Feathers from my nest : a mother's reflections / Beth Moore. LCCN 00066709. Nashville: Broadman and Holman, Broadman and Holman, 2001. HBB, 0805424644, \$14.99. Adult. Rating: 4

248.8'431. Moore, Beth, 1957-; Mothers--Religious life; Christian life--Baptist authors; Home--Religious aspects--Christianity. 214 p.

We all wish we had the perfect family life; no worrying about money, no fighting, no arguments. We see other people as if their life is everything we have ever wanted, and more. Beth Moore shows us in her latest book, that even those that we deem "famous" can still have the same ups and downs in their lives that we do. This book looks at those same ups and downs from a different angle by giving the details behind the challenges and explaining how they were dealt with in their family.

Beth Moore's latest release, *Feathers From My Nest*, uses the empty nest syndrome to showcase her memories that have helped shape and guide her mothering. At times the mood is jovial; she relates comically being the carpool mother, and the intimate moments shared with friends of her daughters. At other times, her tone is more somber, as she relates to their spiritual journeys. This sentimental and highly personal book speaks to the lasting gifts of motherhood and why it helps to raise a family within the context of Christian faith.

Feathers from My Nest is a collection of memories, as Beth Moore ponders memories left behind by each of her children, not only

physically, but spiritually as well. This book reminds us that as parents, we must always remember the special gifts that were entrusted to use from him, our children.

Rick Estep, Media Director, HeavenBound Media Center, Middleburg, Florida.

***Finding the hero in your husband : surrendering the way God intended / Julianna Slattery.* LCCN 2001024689. Deerfield Beach, Fla.: Health Communications, 2001. PAPER, 1558749306, \$12.95. Adult. Rating: 2**

248.8'435. Wives--Religious life; Christian women--Religious life. 283 p.

Christian psychologist Julianna Slattery has written wives an instructional manual on how to go about *Finding the Hero in Your Husband*. Personal stories of wives who have attended counseling are portrayed in each of the twelve chapters, along with strategies on how to make a marriage work. These chapters range in subjects from submission, to intimacy, sex, loneliness, and destructive behaviors. Wives are to complement their husbands, help husbands to find a dream, to respect their husbands, and to shape the Father-Child relationship in the family. Not only are wives encouraged to be a positive influence on their husbands, but they are also called upon to not be a negative influence. For instance: wives should not be like Mrs. Olson from *Little House on the Prairie* who was frustrating, manipulative, and irritating.

Each of the chapters end with discussion questions and every chapter ends with : "The wise woman builds her house, but with her own hands the foolish one tears hers down" (Proverbs 14:1). Even though wives are compared to a fragile precious vase, they are also instructed to be inspiring prayer warriors so that their marriage will remain a godly institution.

A bibliography is included.

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

***A marriage after God's own heart / David Clarke.* LCCN 00011430. Sisters, Ore.: Multnomah, Multnomah, 2001. PAPER, 1576737551, \$10.99. Adult. Rating: 5**

248.8'44. Marriage--Religious aspects--Christianity; Spouses--Religious life. 195 p.

Clarke's precept is provocative. We people, being primarily comprised of spirit, need above all else, spiritual intimacy with our mate. Physical and emotional bonding will naturally follow, if they haven't preceded it. Spiritual intimacy is necessary to achieve God's best in a marriage. Here Clarke expounds eloquently on God's plan for marriage and the benefits of spiritual intimacy along with the practical how-to's. The book is both compelling and convincing.

Clarke says that the benefits of bonding spiritually are exhilarating closeness, great sex, personal communication, protection from relationship killers, and fuel to go the distance. Further, Clarke lists ways to begin bonding with your spouse: prayer, Bible study, spiritual conversations, worship, accountability, and service. Of course there will be roadblocks along the way; Clarke lists and covers those topics, too.

The only weakness in this volume is that a reader may become overwhelmed and put it down. However, Appendix B is full of hints on making spiritual intimacy do-able in bite-sized applications.

Readers will be encouraged and pleased when they read this book. And they will enjoy a chuckle along the way

Ginger McGrath, Freelance Writer, Leavenworth, Washington

***Espresso for your spirit : hope and humor for pooped parents / Pam Vredevelt.* LCCN 99015627. Sisters, Ore.: Multnomah, Multnomah, 1999. PAPER, 1576734854, \$12.99. Adult. Rating: 4**

248.8'45. Parenting; Parenting--Religious aspects--Christianity. 204 p.

Espresso to some provides the means to clear the head and start the heart, especially in the morning. Pam Vredevelt recognizes how parents need a little java jolt to wake up their parenting, and does so in her offering, *Espresso for Your Spirit : Hope and Humor for Pooped Out Parents*. Her book is brimming full of enough inspirational wit and wisdom to rival a Starbucks' menu board. There are stories to laugh about, tear up over, ponder, pass on and consider. As a professional counselor, speaker, pastor's wife, and the mother of three she has plenty of material to share. The stories alone provide readers with illuminating consideration, yet she throws in Power Perks at the end of each chapter, which consist of quotes that will find their way into hearts and onto refrigerator doors. The author even supplies Koffe Klatch questions so parents can gather to discuss the trials and victories of raising kids.

An attractive cover matches the stimulating material found within. Readers will be looking for this book as a gift or to use for devotional reading. Worn out, stressed out parents who are looking for a pick-me-up of reassurance that God really is there helping them raise up a family will want to check out this book. A soothing blend of rich warmth and startling flavor, *Espresso for Your Spirit* is a parenting help that provides a caffeine-free jolt to the needful mom or dad.

Pam Webb, School Library Technician, Sandpoint, Idaho

***And then I had teenagers : encouragement for parents of teens and preteens / Susan Alexander Yates.* LCCN 2001018497. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, Baker Books, 2001. PAPER, 0801063663, \$12.99. Adult. Rating: 4**

248.8'45. Child rearing--Religious aspects--Christianity; Parent and teenager--Religious aspects--Christianity; Christian teenagers--Religious life. 207 p.

And Then I Had Teenagers by Susan Alexander Yates explores the many varied issues that parents face during those tenuous years when children waver between childhood and adult. Her analogy of what it's like to be a parent of teenager is insightful and right on the mark. It takes about eleven or twelve years to get the hang of parenting a child, to get the confidence and knowledge, and even enjoyment of the task at hand—like the fulfillment of putting the last piece in a difficult puzzle. And then the child becomes a teenager and somehow the puzzle pieces end up in disarray and parents must start all over. Granted for some, parenting their teenager isn't quite so traumatic, and yet, those handful of years can be stressful. Yates offers her experience with raising five teens and pre-teens all at once, but is wise enough not to offer answers. Instead she somehow provides a listening ear, then provides some thought provoking questions that tie it all back to Scripture. The author brings out example after example of how even kids raised in a Christian home can stray from God's truth. Yates doesn't provide solutions so much as she gives reassurance that others have been there, and that no matter how big or small the problem is, God's grace is sufficient to cover even the teenage years.

Parenting a teen today is so much more difficult than ever before. Pressures, values, and influences have dramatically taken a toll on the family structure. It is easy to want to give in, give up, lose hope. Even though there are many parenting references available, *And Then I Had Teenagers* is one have on hand even if things are going well. Its upbeat, to-the-point chapters hearten and motivate to hang in there, that the puzzle will come together in time, piece by piece.

Pam Webb, School Library Technician, Sandpoint, Idaho

***Walking through adversity : 7 steps to overcoming life's challenges / Rob Bryant.* LCCN 2001024738. Deerfield Beach, Fla.: Health Communications, Health Communications, 2001. PAPER, 1558749144, \$12.95. Adult (High school). Rating: 3**

248.8'6. Bryant, Rob, 1955-; Suffering--Religious aspects--Christianity; Success--Religious aspects--Christianity. 285 p.

Rob Bryant recounts his terrifying fifty-five-foot fall from an oil rig, the unbelievable story of his recovery, and the journey that has led him to find strength and hope in his relationship with his family and God.

Bryant's story is inspirational, thoughtful, and Christ-centered. Here is a man who loves the Lord with all his heart and finds himself literally on his back looking up at the troubled faces of his friends; he is unable to move from the waist down and unable to lose consciousness. With great clarity and coherence, he tells his story of surviving physical pain, emotional terror, and the shortsightedness of medical personnel.

The first third of the book recounts Bryant's fall and physical recovery. The remainder of the book examines the seven principles he learned from this experience and continues to apply in his professional, spiritual, and family life. *Walking Through Adversity* is aptly titled as the author chronicles the achievement of his personal goal: a goal that his physical therapists and physicians said was a medical impossibility. After one year of hard, physical training, Rob Bryant walked twenty-four miles and set the world's record for paraplegic walking. Later, Bryant goes on to set another world's record for rowing across America in 119 days.

Many people face hardships in life. Some turn inward and become self-centered and bitter. Bryant does not fit into this category. Rather, he looks beyond his hardships. He looks outward and seeks opportunities to serve and provide hope to others. His is a message that provides meaning an otherwise tragic and senseless accident.

The book is full of practical advice, biblical wisdom, and common sense. It is also filled with stern warnings, uncommon wit, and biblical admonitions. Targeted for an adult reader, high schoolers will also enjoy reading about Bryant's heroic accomplishments.

Dr. Dann Brown, Professor of Communication, Grove City College, Grove City, Pennsylvania

Beyond failure : discovering grace and hope in the hard times of life / James A. Scudder. LCCN 00010843. Wheaton, Ill.: Crossway Books, Crossway Books, 2001. PAP, 1581342500, \$12.99. Adult. Rating: 4

248.8'6. Success--Religious aspects--Christianity; Failure (Christian theology); Success--Biblical teaching; Failure (Christian theology)--Biblical teaching; Peter, the Apostle, Saint. 207 p.

Pastor Scudder uses the life of Peter and his writings in Scripture as a backdrop for Christians who are struggling or are losing the battles in life. Without attacking or allowing excuses, Scudder takes real world people who have made a mess in their life, their family's life, and so on and shows them step-by-step how to get back up and continue on. There are no sugar coating or placebos here. Scudder describes one situation after another that a Christian may find themselves in and shows how to find grace and hope.

There are other books similar to this one but I enjoyed how realistically he drew the situations and their solutions. I felt that we were talking over coffee, maybe at times crying. Scudder

takes on tough subjects like what is success, hope when there is no hope, failure, forgiveness, and holiness. While Scudder is Baptist, his work is nondenominational and highly useful. There is an appendix that assures persons of their status before God and a notes section. *Beyond Failure* would be great for an adult study or independent time.

Bianca Elliott, Teacher, Linwood, Kansas

Deepening your conversation with God : learning to love to pray / Ben Patterson. LCCN 2001001258. Minneapolis: Bethany House, Bethany House, 2001. PAP, 0764223518, \$10.99; HBB, 155661974X, \$16.99. Adult. Rating: 5

248.8'92. Clergy--Religious life; Prayer--Christianity; Pastoral theology. 171 p.

Like a splash of cold river water, this book reminds us to love to pray again. Patterson doesn't do it in a guilt driven fashion but rather draws the reader to peek into his private life regarding prayer and how he has discovered a revitalization of it. Patterson doesn't just tell the reader, but masterfully intermixes stories and vignettes regarding other's quotes and stories regarding prayer. There are some sections that will make the reader emotional and others where the reader will want to stand up and shout. I liked his closing comments where he quotes C. S. Lewis in *The Weight of Glory* by saying "We are too easily pleased."

Yes, in our prayers we don't strive after the "big" things for reasons that Patterson confronts in his book. The reader will be challenged and yet comforted that someone like themselves also struggles with prayer. This would be a great book for contemplative studies either corporate or private. It is best for adults, as the quotes and situations are geared more for the adult audience.

Bianca Elliott, Teacher, Linwood, Kansas

A feast of seasons / Margot R. Hodson. LCCN . London, Eng.: Monarch Books, Kregel, 2001. PAP, 1854244736, \$11.99. Adult (High school). Rating: 4

249. Jews--Fasts and feasts; Fasts and feasts. 216 p.

A Feast of Seasons is a celebration of biblical festivals in which author Margot R. Hodson has blended her experiences working with Messianic Jews in England with her interest in Jewish tradition and how it relates to the Christian message into a veritable feast for her readers. After giving an overview of the Jewish calendar year, each of the major biblical festivals are treated to its own chapter. For each festival the author traces its background and evolution through time during each of the temple periods, how Christ himself might have celebrated the festival, and how a Jewish family today might celebrate it. As if this were not enough, all laid out in easy to read, and locate (with bold subtitles) format, Mrs. Hodson includes recipes for the foods traditionally used

at each feast and ideas for holding the festival in homes or churches.

A Feast of Seasons with its extensive bibliography and index will be an excellent resource for the youth director, Sunday School teacher, or Christian School teacher searching for ways to bring biblical times to life for their students or adding deeper insight into Bible study. It can also be an excellent resource for families who are looking for new old traditions to enrich the lives of their children and their faith.

Judy A. Driscoll, Retired Teacher, Poulsbo, Washington

Caring for your pastor : helping God's servant to minister with joy / Lorna Dobson. LCCN 2001029021. Grand Rapids: Kregel, Kregel, 2001. PAP, 0825424615, \$10.99. Adult. Rating: 3

253'.2. Clergy--Office; Church controversies; Interpersonal relations--Religious aspects--Christianity; Church etiquette. 175 p.

Speaking from many years experience as the wife of a successful pastor, Mrs. Dobson brings a credible viewpoint to her discussion of *Caring for Your Pastor*. Assuming the reader wants to learn more about how to come beside leaders in your church's pastoral ministry and their families, Mrs. Dobson clarifies what pastors do, and who they are not. For example, pastors are not substitutes for God, or any more spiritual than anyone else is. They are not equipped to be perfectly responsive to all situations and needs anymore than anyone else. As we can extend them grace and forgiveness, we can form relationships that are helpful in their journey as leader and ours as supportive follower.

The scrutiny pastors and families must endure covers every choice made in parenting, schooling, financial expenditure, and clothing; even preaching and exhorting. While there are some biblical expectations for pastors, even concerning their children's behavior, overly critical responses and undermining gossip is far too much the norm. As the family maintains a healthy perspective, they can do what is right as believers and not be motivated by expectations of others.

Specific examples of how to be encouraging in different situations are offered. Biblical examples are included from Paul's writings. Brief mention is made of female pastors and the "fine line between spirituality and sexuality." No mention is made of couples co-pastoring but the descriptions of how family life is affected would seem to apply with some magnification of impact. Readers sincerely wishing to care for their pastors are guided to evaluate motives behind criticism, learn to be sensitive to the stresses of pastoring, and to express more helpfully and consistently their appreciation.

Encouragement and prayer is vital to the continued spiritual health and ministry of any pastor. The helping of people in the family of God on the long and sometimes painful path to

spiritual maturity always requires grace. Lorna Dobson mentions the extending of grace as a spiritual discipline, not only to the pastors you seek to support, but also to all people.

Carol B. Taylor, Freelance Writer/Certified Social Worker, Poulso, Washington

***How Christian is Christian counseling? : the dangerous secular influences that keep us from caring for souls* / by Gary L. Almy, M.D. LCCN 99054975. Wheaton, Ill.: Crossway Books, , 2000. PAP, 1581341350, \$24.00. Adult. Rating: 5**

253.5'2. Pastoral counseling; Pastoral psychology; Psychotherapy--Religious aspects--Christianity. 352 p.

Board-certified psychiatrist Dr. Gary L. Almy poses one of the most important questions of our time in the title of his book *How Christian is Christian Counseling?* The short answer is: precious little! The long answer takes the reader into the history and theories behind modern counseling methods practiced with the approval of many Christian churches. Almy first traces his own involvement, beginning in medical school with a fascination with Freudian psychoanalysis, through special training to become a board-certified psychotherapist, and on to a highly successful practice, only to come to find that his own life was spinning out of control. The solution came not from therapy but from theology and it started Dr. Almy on an honest evaluation of what he had believed to be the scientific view of the human mind and how people should deal with their problems. As the author delineates the basic pillars of Freudian analysis and the therapies which have evolved from it over the last one hundred years, he also shows how both their origins, tenants, and practices are directly counter to Scripture.

More than merely a critique of Freud, Almy reaches back behind the "Father of Psychoanalysis" to ancient Gnostic and Pelegian heresies, Greek philosophies, and the more modern systems of thought from Descartes to Darwin that have contributed to the formation and acceptance of a way of dealing with sin-induced problems that seeks to by-pass the Word of God and its prescriptions. The last third of the book is devoted to the examination and refutation of Recovered Memory Therapy, a therapy that has wreaked havoc within countless families and communities.

Heavily footnoted, Almy's book is a scholarly yet highly readable work that is also well-indexed, both in its content and use of Scripture and comes highly recommended by Dr. Jay E. Adams. *How Christian Is Christian Counseling?* is a "must read" for the layman as well as pastors and counselors and particularly for those caught in the therapy merry-go-round.

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

***Holy invitations : exploring spiritual direction* / Jeannette A. Bakke. LCCN 00027896. Grand Rapids: Baker, Baker, 2000. PAP, 0801063272, \$16.99. Adult. Rating: 5**

253.5'3. Spiritual direction. 287 p.

It is easier to explain what spiritual direction isn't than what it is. That's how Bakke handles the first chapter of *Holy Invitations*. It's not exactly discipling or counseling or even mentoring. The most concise definition appears in a quote from Howard Rice that opens chapter five: "A covenant friendship between Christians in which one assists the other in the discernment of God's presence and the contemplative living out of God's call."

The book is divided into three sections. The introduction is a very detailed explanation of what spiritual direction is, including who would benefit from it, preparing oneself for it, and selecting a director. The second section, Subjects Frequently Considered in Spiritual Direction, describes its applications in drawing closer to God through Scripture, prayer, and discernment. The final section, Possible Complications and Benefits of Spiritual Direction, discuss awareness of the quality of the experience.

Although the book deals specifically with spiritual direction, it's also about growth, about progressing in the journey. The chapter on prayer is one of the best ever as it leads beyond verbal prayer and crosses over to meditation and contemplation, listening and receptive prayer. Also interesting is Bakke's use of the word "invite," as in "How is God inviting you to pray about this?"

Spiritual direction may be a relatively new concept to some in non-Roman Catholic Christianity. Quite possibly there are entire congregations who have never even heard of it. On the other hand, congregations who have identified spiritual direction as something they want to explore, offer, or participate in would do well to stock this book. Bakke brings fifteen years of experience as a director and trainer to the writing of *Holy Invitations*. She is meticulous in her thoroughness.

However, it takes a motivated reader to persist through this book. Its very thoroughness prevents it from being mistaken for light reading.

Andrea R. Huelsenbeck, Freelance Writer, Tempe, Arizona

***Caring relationships : helping people with mental impairments understand God's gift of sexuality* / Ronald Vredevel. LCCN 00054876. Grand Rapids: CRC Publications, CRC Publications, 2001. PAP, 1562125214, \$3.95. Adult. Rating: 2**

259'.32. Church work with the mentally handicapped; Sex instruction for the mentally handicapped. 37 p.

Though slim in presentation, *Caring Relationships* by Ronald Vredevel provides aid

to those needing guidance when helping people with mental impairments understand God's gift of sexuality, which is the pamphlet's subtitle. The author's objective is to guide those who must answer the difficult questions about sexuality and the mentally impaired. While the book is helpful, its scope does not address the subject fully, nor is that the intent. The main intent is guide with a biblical perspective in this sensitive, and overlooked area. The author freely refers to other sources such Schwier and Hingsburger's book *Sexuality: Your Sons and Daughters with Intellectual Disabilities*. Caring Relationships is a quick look at a deep need. Those unfamiliar with resources at hand will appreciate the numerous references and insights offered. Teachers, pastors, counselors, family, and caregivers will appreciate this succinct booklet.

Pam Webb, School Library Technician, Sandpoint, Idaho

So what's the difference? / Fritz Ridenour. LCCN 00066500. Ventura, Calif.: Regal Books, Gospel Light, 2001. PAP, 0830718982, \$12.99. Adult. Rating: 3

261.2. Christianity and other religions; Christian sects. 256 p.

Thirty years ago Fritz Ridenour wrote, *So What's the Difference*. This revised updated and expanded edition has the same goal as the original—to sharpen the reader's perspective on his or her own biblical world view.

Each chapter in the book compares Christianity with one of the world's faiths or religions. Specific differences are noted. Topics covered include: biblical based only or biblical and traditional, faith or faith plus works, and views of the sacraments. At the close of each chapter is a short summing up of the major differences between evangelical protestants and the other world religions.

Other religions looked at include Buddhism, Mormonism, humanism, witchcraft, Jehovah's Witnesses, postmodernism, evolutionism, New Age and more.

Christianity has been undermined, criticized, and attacked since the first century. There are dozens of cults looking for Christians who really don't understand their own theology. This book shows some of the viewpoints currently competing for the hearts and minds of men and women, children, and young people.

Ridenour does a thorough job of comparison and does it in such a way as to be comprehensible to the layman. If you don't know the difference, how can you share your faith with others?

Myrtlemary P. Crane, Freelance Writer, Editor, and Speaker, Alderwood Manor, Washington

***Science and its limits : the natural sciences in Christian perspective* / by Del Ratzsch. LCCN 00024681. Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, , 2000. PAP, 0830815805, \$12.99. Adult. Rating: 5**

261.55. Religion and science. 191 p.

"The scientific research shows.." and "Scientists say.." have been introductory phrases that modern society has come to equate with the revelation of some incontrovertible new truth. The modern era itself has been defined as one formed and founded by science and the pursuit of knowledge through its processes. This is so much so that no other path to knowledge is granted legitimacy in the public square. To the general, non-scientific public, science is solid and monolithic, based on objectivity, empirical research, and reason. Who in their right mind would contest what scientists say? Scientists do, but they rarely air their difficulties in the public square.

Now, Del Ratzsch, in his book, *Science and Its Limits*, lifts the veil off the myth of monolithic science and, through a scholarly study of the history and philosophy of science, reveals the deep cracks and chasms that have developed in the last fifty years in the very idea of what science is capable of saying. He first shows that the old tenants of objectivity, reason, and empirical research have long proved illusory and, especially since the Kuhnian revolt in the 1960s, have been almost universally abandoned as self-evident truths. Ratzsch then points to the effects of postmodernism on the idea of what makes science, as well as the challenges Intelligent Design Theory have brought to bear. Then, with a philosopher's skill, Ratzsch suggests a rapprochement between the tattered remains and the Christian faith, showing how they can and should work together.

Science and Its Limits is written to those who have some familiarity with philosophical and scientific processes beyond the introductory level. As such, it is an excellent examination of the current problems in the scientific community. The Christian scientist will find in it the philosophical and historical support and analysis both for his involvement in science and for the legitimacy of the interaction between science and faith. For the non-scientist, it is deep going; but the persistent reader will be rewarded with a view of current scientific thought that is rarely accessible to the public. The author provides copious footnotes for those interested in following up on his research, a short index, and several pages of titles of suggested reading listed by topics which are discussed in his book. *Science and Its Limits* is a very professional academic offering.

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

Let those who have ears to hear : if they took the music away... would you still follow Jesus? / Kimberly Smith. LCCN 00105879. Enumclaw, Wash.: WinePress, WinePress, 2001. PAP, 1579213189, \$10.99. Adult. Rating: 4

261.57. Rock music--Religious aspects--Christianity. 202 p.

Can Christians find Bible based-defenses for the Contemporary Christian Music (CCM) so popular today? Is it just a matter of taste or free expression? Does God only approve of hymns? The debate has been hotly contested for years among believers. Kimberly Smith's book, *Let Those Who Have Ears to Hear*, eagerly steps up to the plate and examines the issue—inside and out.

In a question/answer format that is easy to read and reference, Smith answers hard-hitting questions that may cause one to look again at beliefs about music as an instrument of worship or a tool for evangelism. She states that a CCM concert is not a tool for evangelism because the audience draw is the performing group or artist—not Jesus Christ. This, her second book on the subject, is created largely out of the questions she received since the release of her first controversial book, *Oh, Be Careful Little Ears*. Using the Bible as her guide, she questions the validity of CCM in the church.

Smith does allow for those artists who are serious about their evangelism commitment, but she questions the method, particularly when it is CCM. As an exercise, she asks the reader to listen to a CCM vocalist's technique—is it breathy, gravelly, sultry? Would one wish one's husband to be spoken to in this tone of voice? Her claim of sensuality in CCM is supported by a close examination of secular music that nourishes the flesh rather than the spirit, identifying the elements that make it so, and applying the techniques to CCM. Does our favorite music pass or fail the test?

Included in the book are chapter end notes, appendixes and resources, comparison charts, study questions, and bibliography. A very interesting read. Be prepared to be challenged in this area of belief.

Cathy M. Elliott, Freelance Writer, Anderson, California

Beauty restored / Me Ra Koh. LCCN 00051837. Ventura, Calif.: Regal Books, Gospel Light, 2001. PAP, 0830727612, \$9.99. Adult. Rating: 5

261.8'3272. Koh, Me Ra, 1973-; Acquaintance rape victims--Religious life; Acquaintance rape--Religious aspects--Christianity. 127 p.

It seems unbelievable one could retell a journey that entailed over nine years of pain, anger, sorrow, and restoration in less than 200 hundred pages. Me Ra Koh in her sparse prose and testimony does this and more in *Beauty Restored*, her account of recovering from date rape. It seems so incredible such a horrible crime could take place in a Christian setting, yet it happened. It seems so incredible the justice system makes Me Ra a victim all over again, yet it did. It seems so incredible that this young woman has the courage to relive the whole ordeal once again through her words, yet she did. And so many will come away thankful for her words of loss, shame, grief, and rejuvenation.

This book will be a balm to the open wound of being violated, and in it Me Ra takes her readers on the journey of restoration. Using allegory, she describes vividly with sensitive, dynamic images of the rape victim's pain. She also describes the joy of being restored by the healing only Jesus can truly bring. The additional passages of friends and family add depth to Me Ra's story, as does the detailed resource listings on the subject.

Pam Webb, School Library Technician, Sandpoint, Idaho

A mighty long journey : reflections on racial reconciliation / Timothy George, Robert Smith, Jr., editors. LCCN 00040410. Nashville: Broadman and Holman, Broadman and Holman, 2000. PAP, 0805418202, \$17.99. Adult. Rating: 4

261.8'348'00973. Race relations--Religious aspects--Christianity--Sermons; Reconciliation--Religious aspects--Christianity--Sermons; United States--Race relations--Sermons. 228 p.

In light of the events and aftermath of the September 11th attacks, *A Mighty Long Journey : Reflections on Racial Reconciliation* becomes a very timely book. The volume, edited by Timothy George and Robert Smith Jr., brings together sermons by various speakers on the subject of racism. It takes a Christian look at this prominent social issue.

The writings in the book, taken equally from Anglo and African-American pastors, present a look at race relations in the United States today. Prominent in the themes are that racism is a sin, that it must be dealt with in the church, that it must be dealt with in personal relationships, and that Jesus Christ is to be our model, our guide, our help in solving this problem. Scripture is well and frequently used in the selections, and an appendix gives the text of the Southern Baptist Resolution on Racial Reconciliation adopted in 1995.

Though Anglo-African American relations are a primary issue in the sermons, it is not the only issue. A call is made in more than one selection for all ethnic groups to get along, to judge people not by color but by character. The book is balanced in its approach, and the selections are well chosen. A strong biblical and Christian perspective is seen throughout. The volume is a thought-provoking and nicely done work.

Betsy Ruffin, Librarian/Teacher, Cleburne, Texas

Marriage, family, and sexuality : probing the headlines that impact your family / Kerby Anderson, general editor. (Probing the headlines.) LCCN 99033450. Grand Rapids: Kregel, Kregel, 2000. PAP, 0825420318, \$10.99. Adult. Rating: 4

261.8'357. Sex--Religious aspects--Christianity; Marriage--Religious aspects--Christianity; Christian ethics. 181 p.

Need help answering the tough questions of life? *Marriage, Family, and Sexuality : Probing the Headlines That Impact Your Family*

provides a biblical viewpoint to help families confront current societal issues from a Christian perspective. Each chapter discusses the prevailing worldview on a sexual, social, or marriage and family topic. Then the biblical side is given, backed up with Scripture references. Editor Kerby Anderson and five other contributors from Probe Ministries author the fifteen chapters of this book.

Divided into three parts, this book is logically organized, the information flowing smoothly from one issue into the next. It is easy to read. Issues are defined clearly, with information supported by documented facts and statistics and biblical references. The Christian reader will appreciate the sound teaching, versus a group trying to push their own ideas. Some chapters include practical applications, such as the lists, "Little Things for Husbands to Do" and "Little Things for Wives to Do," from the chapter entitled Marital Reminders.

Marriage, Family, and Sexuality is a good tool for parents desiring to set godly precedents, especially when guiding children through the teenage years. For high school and college students exploring these issues on their own, this book is a true help in sorting out differences between worldly influences and Christian truths. A helpful primer, the book gives an overview of the issues without going too deep. It leaves the reader somewhat uncomfortable with a desire to further pursue the data and study the Scriptures further. That's a strength, as it pushes the Christian reader to grow beyond the easy answers.

Karen Brehmer, Teacher, Sylvan Way Christian School, Bremerton, Washington

***Releasing heaven on earth : God's principles for restoring the land* / Alistair P. Petrie. LCCN 00034555. Grand Rapids: Chosen Books, Baker, 2000. PAP, 0800792785, \$14.99. Adult. Rating: 2**

261.8'362. Christianity and geography; Spiritual warfare. 259 p.

Releasing Heaven on Earth, a look at spiritual warfare in our world, is a thought-provoking piece relating religious, emotional, and other problems in a place to the history, culture, and outlook of the people living there. The book's first section gives a call to biblical stewardship that goes beyond money to our role as God's stewards for all elements of life on this earth. The second part discusses the ways the land can be defiled by man's activities and the judgments on a people because of this defilement. The third section discusses the healing of the land and its people, bringing the return of God's blessings. Recognition of our role as stewards, repentance of sins, and turning or returning to God through Jesus Christ are prominent themes throughout the book.

The book is provocative, requiring the reader to think deeply about the ideas presented. It is not an easy read, as it challenges the reader in depth,

premise, tone, and conclusions. With its call for taking back our land for Christ and redefining our role as God's stewards, there are good lessons here for the adult or college person who takes the time and thought this work requires (though s/he may not agree with all points). An index is included. The work will be most useful for church libraries, Christian college libraries, or individuals interested in spiritual warfare in our world.

Betsy Ruffin, Librarian/Teacher, Cleburne, Texas

***A promise to keep* / Mary Teegardin. LCCN . Fort Washington, Pa.: Christian Literature Crusade, Christian Literature Crusade, 2000. PAP, 0875084907, \$10.99. Adult (High school). Rating: 4**

266. Teegardin, Mary; Missionaries--China; Missionaries--Thailand. 264 p.

One of five children growing up on a farm during the Great Depression Era, Mary learns the importance of teamwork to maintain a home. From two loving parents who quietly act out their faith, she ascertains the value of close relationships with both God and family. Although her mother suffers the affects of tuberculosis, she tenderly manages and cares for her husband and their children. Dad, who works constantly to feed and shelter them, still finds time to tell the stories that inspire Mary's dream to become a missionary in China. After a career day at school, Mary hears the Lord calling her to be a missionary and promises to serve Him in China. Before her death, Mary's mom reminds her of the importance of fulfilling her promise to God. From nanny to nursing program, and on to the mission fields of Asia, Mary discovers that the secret to success through adversity is a grateful heart. Through crowded conditions, deadly diseases, and unfair treatment, Mary and her co-workers minister both spiritual and physical healing to the multitudes. God encourages her to help out in other Asian countries, as well as China, and provides the strength and supplies needed to continue fulfilling Mary's promise to become a missionary for Him.

A Promise is to Keep, by Mary Teegardin, is written in a charming, simple style. Theme reverberates with a consistent faith in God. Language used is easily understood and built upon a refreshingly moral foundation. Recommended for Christian character studies, high school and up, and all Christian hero/heroine memoir and autobiographical collections.

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

***The heart of evangelism* / Jerram Barrs. LCCN 2001002975. Wheaton, Ill.: Crossway, Crossway, 2001. PAP, 1581341539, \$14.99. Adult (High school). Rating: 5**

269'.2. Evangelistic work--Biblical teaching; Bible, N.T.--Criticism, interpretation, etc. 272 p.

In his book, *The Heart of Evangelism*, Jerram Barrs examines God's directives to his people to spread the Gospel in the Old and New Testament and relates them to the challenges of today. Specifically, Barrs draws comparisons between the manner in which the Gospel was presented to pagan societies in the past and to the situation Christians face today, and contrasts this to Gospel presentations fitted for those who, like the ancient Jews, have a working knowledge of who God is. Although the approaches to these two groups differ somewhat, they share seven "Principles" which Barrs contends are a more scriptural reflection of the love Christians need to express to fellow image-bearers of God than a memorized set of steps in evangelism. The principles of respect, bridge building, understanding, communication, persuasion, clarification, and challenge are culled, says Barrs, from the lives and ministries of Jesus and the apostle Paul and offer a pattern for life as well as evangelism.

The Heart of Evangelism is a gentle but firm call to Christians to return to the task of ambassadorship for which they were commissioned but feel very ill-equipped. Barrs, executive director, resident scholar, and professor of Christianity and Contemporary Culture at the Francis Schaeffer Institute at Covenant Theological Seminary, St. Louis, eschews motivation by guilt or promises of a "sure-fire" method. Instead, as his mentor Francis Schaeffer did, he reminds the reader of the lives of our Lord, the prophets, and the apostles, and presents for our imitation the love and respect with which they regarded their contemporaries and the varying ways they called them to faith. Jerram Barrs' *The Heart of Evangelism* is the best book on the subject for laymen in years.

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

***Turning points : decisive moments in the history of Christianity* / Mark A. Noll. LCCN 00057212. Grand Rapids: Baker, Baker, 2000. PAP, 080106211X, \$18.99. Adult. Rating: 5**

270. Church history. 352 p.

Thousands of books have been written on church history—including many in multi-volume sets. *Turning Points : Decisive Moments in the History of Christianity* is a single volume written for lay people and introductory students. Acknowledging many other historical events that were also quite significant, Wheaton College professor Mark Noll focuses on twelve milestone events in the history of Christianity: the fall of Jerusalem (70), the Council of Nicaea (325), the Council of Chalcedon (451), Benedict's Rule (530), the coronation of Charlemagne (800), The Great Schism (1054), The Diet of Worms (1521), the English Act of Supremacy (1534), the founding of the Jesuits (1540), the conversion of the

Wesleys (1738), the French Revolution (1789), the Edinburgh Missionary Conference (1910).

Each chapter addresses "Why was this event crucial? How did it relate to what went before and lead on to what followed? And what might those of us looking back ... learn from the event?" Evangelical historian Noll seeks to be fair and nonpartisan as he describes both doctrinal and practical issues affecting key persons and events in Roman Catholic, Orthodox, and other Christian communities. He presents Christianity "as a worldwide religion rather than a faith for just Europeans and North Americans."

In his last chapter suggesting five possible "Further Turning Points of the Twentieth Century," Noll includes "the massive production of new Bible translations as an aspect ... of the globalization of Christianity." Each chapter includes black-and-white illustrations; one has a map showing the spread of Islam. Boxed inserts contain quotations from documents or individuals of the period. In this well-written and well-documented book, each chapter begins with a hymn and closes with a prayer quotation, followed by suggestions for further reading. Originally published in 1997, this second edition inserts, before the index, seventeen pages of thought-provoking study questions for individual or group use.

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

A global history of Christians : how everyday believers experienced their world / by Paul R. Spickard and Kevin M. Cragg. LCCN 00058493. Grand Rapids: Baker, Baker, 2001. PAP, 0801022495, \$26.99. Adult. Rating: 4

270. Church history. 486 p.

Expect no rote discussion here, and look forward to a healthy mix of faith and historical scholarship. Spickard and Cragg, as professors of history, have provided the helpful structure and chapter organization for the reflection, including contributing authors who add a wealth of global insight that is easily accessible to the average person but bold in its assessment and with every intent to be as global in scope as feasible. The goal is a mammoth one, viz, to look at how typical Christians of the past experienced the world. By emphasizing the lives of average Christians, they enable the reader to recognize the differences among Christians and how we influence the world, and the world us.

Spickard and Cragg worked together on *World History by the World's Historians* (McGraw-Hill, 1997) and bring that quality approach to this work, too. This makes for interesting spiritual reading, as the work is much more about people than ideas or institutions with varied and particular nuisances, and serves as helpful reading for group discussion about how to live in today's world, aware of the many

influences from the past. This also serves as a helpful text in understanding church history. The multicultural balances can enable theological students to see a more complete and less denominational story of who Christians are. It looks at the history of the church in the West but also in its worldwide settings.

Brief treatments of key persons, boxed quotations, photographs, and maps enhance the discussion. Each chapter's list of suggested readings enables further study. Recommended for academic and theological libraries, for church history classes and study groups, for public library collections offering global Christian history, and for adults seeking to understand the social, cultural, and personal sides of Christian history.

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



The hidden smile of God : the fruit of affliction in the lives of John Bunyan, William Cowper, and David Brainerd / John Piper. (The swans are not silent; 2.) LCCN 00011665. Wheaton, Ill.: Crossway Books, Crossway Books, 2001. HBB, 1581342470, \$17.99. Adult. Rating: 5

270.7'0922. Bunyan, John, 1628-1688; Cowper, William, 1731-1800; Brainerd, David, 1718-1747; Christian biography. 176 p.

Unjust imprisonment, suicidal depression, painful dying; here are the depths of sorrow. Why does God allow such problems in the life of his people? How do his people face these problems without despair? In *The Hidden Smile of God*, the second in his Swans Are Not Silent series, John Piper sets out 'to spread a passion for the supremacy of God in all things for the joy of all people.' He introduces us to three deeply afflicted men, John Bunyan, William Cowper, and David Brainerd. Each man has a chapter to himself, with a brief biography, a keen look at his tribulations, how he fared through them, and how Christians since then have been blessed by them. The beginning preface and acknowledgments add interest to this book. Useful Indices of Scriptures and Persons end it.

Approaching the subject of suffering from a different perspective than Tada's *When God Weeps* or Lewis's *The Problem of Pain*, *The Hidden Smile of God* successfully presents the valuable fruit of affliction that nourishes all Christians. Piper, a senior Baptist pastor, knows his subject well, presents it convincingly, backing all up with songs and quotes from the three men, many apropos footnotes at the end of each page, and applicable scripture references. He builds his argument carefully, encouraging the reader toward faith and strength in God who 'governs the world in all that happens.' A scholarly writer, Piper uses easily understood words and sentence structure to cut to the heart of this discussion and breathe life and interest into his subject.

Donna J. Eggett, Freelance Writer, Radford, Virginia

China's Christian millions : the costly revival / Tony Lambert. LCCN 00362584. Grand Rapids: Monarch Books, Kregel, 2000. PAP, 0825459990, \$12.99. Adult. Rating: 5

275.1'0825. Christianity--China. 254 p.

Oh, East is East, and West is West,

and never the twain shall meet,

Till Earth and Sky stand presently at

God's great Judgment Seat."

from "The Ballad of East and West" by Rudyard Kipling

A poet and writer, Rudyard Kipling is not usually regarded as a prophet, but that may be because most have forgotten the second two lines of his oft quoted poem "The Ballad of East and West." Before the astonished eyes of even the Christian world, according to Tony Lambert and the Overseas Missionary Fellowship International, China, the East, is rising in faith to stand beside the West before that very God. *China's Christian Millions : the Costly Revival* is both a well researched and organized handbook of the growth of the church in China since the 1970s, and a collection of praise-inspiring stories of Christ's work behind the severe and cheerless Bamboo Curtain of the communist regime. Replete with graphs, tables, and statistics, the phenomenal growth of the Christian church in every province is documented as honestly as possible given the repressive conditions in some regions of the country. But it is the history of God's work in China and what he is doing now recorded by Lambert's book that captures the heart and excites praise.

Lambert is no idealist, however. He honestly records the triumphs and the true works of God as well as the formidable problems that remain such as the deep resistance of the Communist Party and the influence of foreign and domestic cults. *China's Christian Millions* is first choice reading for anyone contemplating a mission's trip to China or who works in the West with Chinese students or colleagues. The bibliography on the Chinese church at the end is, by itself, worth the price of the book. As the example of the Chinese church becomes increasingly relevant to Western Christians facing the intolerance of their own post-modern cultures, it is, perhaps, time for us both to meet at last.

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

Safe at home : the true and inspiring story of Chicago's Field of Dreams / Bob Muzikowski with Gregg Lewis. LCCN 2001026320. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, Zondervan, 2001. HBB, 0310241073, \$16.99. Adult. Rating: 3

277.72'1'10829'092. Muzikowski, Bob, 1957-;
Christian biography--United States; Little League
baseball--Illinois--Chicago; Urban youth--Illinois--
Chicago--Societies and clubs. 261 p.

Safe at home is an interesting sports biography, yet of a different sort because the author is a man of commitment to a cause, to a people, and to the Lord. Bob Muzikowski's twelve year work with an inner city ministry has won him acclaim and respect, yet his New Jersey past is not a pretty picture. He speaks frankly about his sports, academic, and business accomplishments as well as his struggle with drug and alcohol addiction. After becoming a Christian, he held a vision for a Little League program in Chicago that would show urban kids how to make dreams come true through fun, love, and commitment. A vision that with the Lord's help, he was able to realize. Bob Muzikowski braved the dangers of inner city life in Chicago, shootings, threats, having his wife mugged, yet dared to live in that same inner city with his family.

This fast paced, quick read will appeal particularly to men because of the baseball angle, but women will also find it of great interest. The author's frankness in speaking of his past in some ways does seem to glorify his former life of drinking and drugs. I do not think this was the intent of Muzikowski, but nevertheless it may appear that way, particularly to younger readers.

Safe at Home includes information on the Chicago Hope Academy, a non-denominational Christian school for Chicago's youth. Author royalties will go to Chicago Hope Academy and to other urban charities.

Cecil Carey, Young Adult Librarian, Public Library, Plano, Illinois



***The spiritual legacy of Henri Nouwen / Deirdre LaNoue.* LCCN 00043118. New York: Continuum, Continuum, 2000. HBB, 0826412831, \$22.95. Adult. Rating: 5**

282'.092. Nouwen, Henri J.M.--Contributions in spirituality--Spirituality--Catholic Church--History--20th century. 194 p.

At the time of his death in 1996, Henri Nouwen was one of the most popular spiritual writers of the late twentieth century. His writing style was warm, personal, and encouraging, while challenging his readers to continue in their pursuit of personal spiritual growth. Since his death a number of biographies and tributes have appeared in print. LaNoue's contribution provides both a biographical and thematic perspective on the array of Nouwen's writings. The genesis of this book was a Ph.D. dissertation from Baylor University and some of the traits of an academic work are evident; however, they do provide a useful framework for LaNoue's work.

The author, who teaches at Dallas Baptist University, begins her book with a chapter defining spirituality in the light of the last four

decades of American religious life. This background provides a context in which to analyze Henri Nouwen's contribution. LaNoue, then goes on to provide a brief literary biography and examine the various themes of Nouwen's writing: his concept of spirituality as relationship with God, self, and others.

Henri Nouwen was both a theologian and a psychologist and in the milieu of 20th century North America his message of the need to know and love God, yourself, and your neighbor struck a definite chord. By sharing from his personal struggles Nouwen demonstrated the solidarity of our human condition. The ripple effect of his personal life on both those who knew him and on readers worldwide will continue for many years to come. The final chapter of the book provides a summary of Nouwen's spirituality and some analysis of what his place and significance might be for our present spiritual landscape.

LaNoue also provides a selected bibliography of Nouwen's writings, an index of names and subjects, and finally, a scripture index keyed to Nouwen's books. Together with Jurjen Beumer's *Henri Nouwen: A Restless Seeking for God* and Michael Ford's *Wounded Prophet: a Portrait of Henri J.M. Nouwen*, LaNoue's contribution helps us fathom the depths of this unique person.

Ted Goshulak, University Librarian, Langley, British Columbia, Canada

The Tabernacle / . LCCN . Gahanna, Ohio: Antioch Interactive, Vision Video, . VID, 1931012008, \$19.99. Adult. Rating: 3

296.4. Tabernacle. 1 video, 28 min.; color.

Antioch Interactive and Vision Video have given Christians an extraordinary view of the Tabernacle. This video takes you on a virtual tour of the Tabernacle and explains the basic meaning of each article of the Tabernacle furnishings. The computer animated graphics (CGI) give shape and form to important, narrative sections of Scripture.

The video starts with a very slow pace and does not immediately capture the viewer. The symbiology of each article is clearly explained, but is not immediately linked to Christ and Christianity. The video does not explain the symbiology and lessons of the Tabernacle in great depth, allowing a teacher to present custom material to a class or group. A more detailed version of the video might be valuable as a self-study tool.

This video is informative and useful. It could be used as the centerpiece of a teaching unit or a sort series. A separate workbook (not reviewed) is available to supplement the video itself. I am pleased to recommend this work to church and school libraries everywhere.

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

***TV--the great escape! : life-changing stories from those who dared to take control / Robert G. DeMoss, Jr.* LCCN 00011181. Wheaton, Ill.: Crossway Books, Crossway Books, 2001. PAP, 158134242X, \$12.99. Adult. Rating: 4**

302.23'45. Television broadcasting--Social aspects; Television broadcasting--Religious aspects--Christianity. 206 p.

Author Bob DeMoss offers quite a deal: Send the television on a thirty-day vacation and watch family relationships improve, projects get completed, and creativity soar. Using testimonials from families throughout the country, as well as his own, he details the benefits of life without TV and convincingly argues why more families need to accept his challenge to unplug the tube.

TV is the weapon of choice in the battle between competing world views, DeMoss says. Even Christian adults are increasingly tolerating the formerly intolerable as sensibilities sink to ever-lower standards. The statistics are troubling. In 1999 the Parents' Television Council found that in just two years, violence in television shows increased 86 percent, sexual content rose 77 percent, and foul language was up 58 percent. Yet 53 percent of children aged two to eighteen years old have a TV in their room, and 49 percent claim their parents provide no viewing guidelines. Even the act of watching television creates detachment, DeMoss said. Our minds don't have to think critically, since script and images are provided.

However, DeMoss is clear that his ultimate goal is not to convince families to give up TV permanently, but to help them regain a sense of balance in its use. He understands the powerful attachment most people have to television and anticipates the pitfalls of trying to stop watching for a month. In a humorous style, he offers suggestions for alternative activities, entertainment and news sources, and how to respond to incredulous family and friends. He recommends journaling the journey through the TV-free month, and even includes thirty days of brief devotions and Scripture passages to inspire the reader.

DeMoss has written a thought-provoking book that will appeal to any adult concerned about television's hold. Whether the challenge to turn off the TV is accepted, the reader will likely become a much more discerning viewer when it is on.

Sharon Berg, Freelance Writer, Bellevue, Nebraska

***Set free : a journey toward solidarity against racism / Iris de Leon-Hartshorn, Tobin Miller Shearer, Regina Shands Stoltzfus; foreword by Ched Myers.* LCCN 2001024367. Scottsdale, Pa.: Herald Press, Herald Press, 2001. PAP, 0836191579, \$14.99. Adult. Rating: 4**

305.8'00973. Racism--United States--Psychological aspects; Racism--Religious aspects--Christianity; Race relations--Religious aspects--Christianity; Race relations--Handbooks, manuals, etc.; Church and social problems--United States; United States--Race relations. 167 p.

Taking an African-American woman, a Mexican Amerindian woman, and a white man and what will you get? An excellent book on race relations. Written sensitively and intelligently, this book takes the reader into each of the three writer's worlds and shows how racism is handed out and received. The book doesn't stop with describing the problem, but provides poignant and deeply personal peeks into the psyche of these representatives of color. Written with a Mennonite perspective, the book raises one's awareness of the disparity in the world and seeks to remedy it one person at a time. The reader is asked at times to do certain activities at the end of chapters which solidify the information. There is a useful note and reference section. This book uses no offensive language and yet shows racism to be truly offensive.

This is a must read for people who work cross culturally. The reviewer is not aware of any such books in the market that so lovingly target a problem with real solutions. This is designed for the adult reader but some parts may be adapted for younger people and resources are available to teach this material to young people.

Bianca Elliott, Teacher, Linwood, Kansas

Reclaiming intimacy : overcoming the consequences of premarital relationships / Heather Jamison. LCCN 00062942. Grand Rapids: Kregel, Kregel, 2001. PAP, 0825429404, \$11.99. Adult. Rating: 4

306.73. Premarital sex--Psychological aspects; Sexual ethics; Intimacy (Psychology). 176 p.

Speaking from her own experience, Heather Jamison writes to adult and college-age readers on the topic of how premarital sexual relationships can negatively affect a marriage. She and her husband Brian had to overcome the consequences of early intimacy to repair their own relationship and heal their subsequent marriage. The book's three sections look first at our quest for intimacy—why we desire to be close to others and why some choose the wrong path, second at the challenges to intimacy—the problems caused by premarital sex and how it affects subsequent interactions, third at reclaiming intimacy—how, through the Lord, the people involved may be healed and the relationship restored. Heather and Brian worked through their problems and are now serving God as missionaries.

This book is one of few I've seen dealing with the growing problem of premarital intimacy from this angle, that is the need for healing afterwards. The author is open and honest about her own life, using it as an example of the problem, consequences, and healing, without becoming pitying or proud. As one of the few on this topic, the book would make an excellent

purchase for individuals facing this situation, for counselors, for church or public libraries, and even for Christian college collections. It is a good, biblically based look at a growing moral crisis.

Betsy Ruffin, Librarian/Teacher, Cleburne, Texas

It takes a church to raise a village / Marva Mitchell. LCCN . Shippensburg, Pa.: Treasure House, Destiny Image, 2001. HBB, 0768430356, \$15.99. Adult. Rating: 4

307.1. Church and social problems. 141 p.

This is an inspiring book! Although not all churches will want or even be able to incorporate the many ideas that author Marva Mitchell presents, *It Takes a Church to Raise a Village* challenges us to take a deeper look at our role in the community as the Church. In the introduction, she states "My purpose in this book is to stir up your compassion and commitment. I want to move the Church into the mission field of the village. This book is not intended to be a put-down but a get-up for the Church, who has the ability to halt and reverse the decay of the village. Are we ready to say 'Enough is enough'? Are we ready to come out of hiding and become ambassadors for the gospel? Let's move forward in the confident understanding that: It Takes a Church to Raise a Village!"

Mrs. Mitchell's book is filled with concrete ideas for helping the community and community members through the work of the local church. Each chapter begins with a succinct quote that gets right to the point and the book itself ends with three appendices: a proposal checklist, how to write a proposal, and support information. The reader will be encouraged and inspired by the many experiences that the author shares of the work of churches to raise the particular "village" in which they are situated: help for children, single mothers, literacy programs, and the list goes on and on. Your town or area may not represent the same problems illustrated in this book, but you will be able to use the information and apply it to those challenges that do exist. If you desire to restore your community and help those that are lost by doing so, this is the book for you. Bishop T.D. Jakes' recommendation says it all. "Any church leader or layperson who seriously prays for the restoration of their community should read Dr. Mitchell's book with great diligence."

Ceil Carey, Young Adult Librarian, Public Library, Plano, Illinois

Empty womb, aching heart : hope and help for those struggling with infertility / Marlo Schalesky. LCCN 2001001316. Minneapolis: Bethany House, Bethany House, 2001. PAP, 0764224107, \$11.99. Adult. Rating: 4

362.1'96692. Infertility--Psychological aspects; Infertility--Religious aspects--Christianity. 187 p.

Schalesky has compiled twenty-four stories of women and men dealing with infertility. It's not a guidebook on infertility treatments and gives no easy or pat answers. Yet the sharing of heartaches, questions, and fears leads to hope and understanding, and that one is not alone.

The sharing of stories offers variety, sincerity, and genuineness that anyone struggling on this path will welcome. There is no pretense, no clichés; there is only dealing with infertility and the accompanying tears, doubts, hopes, bargains, and struggles. Two Appendices offer a further treasure: one shares short tips of advice from those on the road of infertility, and another, Christian ministries and secular organizations providing help and support.

As one who has personally experienced infertility, Schalesky knows just what to choose for this work. She's written over 400 magazine articles and has had two novels, *Cry Freedom* (Crossway Books, 2000) and *Freedom's Shadow* (Crossway Books, 2001) published.

Recommended for all public libraries, for self-help collections, for marriage and family collections, and for a title for congregational and parish bookracks.

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

The ABC's of homeschooling / Vicki Caruana. LCCN 2001000477. Wheaton, Ill.: Crossway Books, Crossway Books, 2001. PAP, 1581342586, \$10.99. Adult. Rating: 4

371.042. Home schooling. 186 p.

Caruana's *The ABC's of Homeschooling* helps parents decide whether homeschooling is right for their family and provides practical information with regard to getting started. Cognizant that homeschooling is not for everyone, she carefully examines the costs and benefits of home education. She is sensitive to and enables those who lean toward highly structured school environments or more freestyle learning.

The ABC's of Homeschooling can also be used by someone currently homeschooling and looking for fresh ideas. She writes from experience as an educational consultant and as one who has homeschooled her two sons all the way through high school. Anecdotes and illustrations from other homeschool parents offer additional insights and encouragement for beginners. Caruana knows how to encourage, and this work continues the fine tradition she began in *Apples and Chalkdust* (Honor Books, 1998), which at heart was very encouraging reading for teachers and counselors, growing out of her own teaching experience.

Recommended for all public library collections, and for collections offering resources for new parents. It is a title helpful for pastors and counselors to suggest to parents seeking alternatives their current schooling option.

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

Staying fit after forty : a plan for healthy and active living / Don S. Otis, editor. LCCN 00053186. Colorado Springs: Shaw, Waterbrook, 2001. PAP, 0877884536, \$9.99. Adult. Rating: 3

613.7044. Physical fitness for middle aged persons; Exercise for middle aged persons; Middle aged persons--Health and hygiene; Aging. 183 p.

Staying Fit After Forty is designed just for who the book proclaims; those people who are over the age of forty. Editor Don Otis is a forty-year-old runner and is the author of *Trickle-Down Morality*. The book covers not only material for those readers in their forties, but also those who are in their fifties, sixties, seventies, and even eighties. It starts with the obvious question of where to find the time for fitness and then how to keep motivated. Since our bodies were created by God, we should treat our bodies as a temple. Biblical references are given on why we should be concerned with not only what goes into the body, but also with how we should work our bodies. Walking is the predominant choice of exercise favored by these authors; however, running, and swimming are also encouraged.

Although exercise is the dominating topic, others subjects included are nutrition, vitamins, and injuries as we age. Otis claims that 50% of food needed to maintain good health should come from carbohydrates; taking vitamins are necessary to maintain healthy bodies, and that we must know our body's limitations. The book is written by a variety of authors, whose credits are listed in the back of the book. Most of the authors' ages are revealed in the bios, with the majority being in their forties, however, one author is in her eighties.

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

Raising godly kids : 52 guidelines for counter-culture parenting / Harold J. Sala. LCCN 2001130448. Camp Hill, Pa.: Horizon Books, Christian Publications, 2001. PAP, 0875099270, \$10.99. Adult. Rating: 5

649. Parenting--Religious aspects--Christianity. 212 p.

Harold J. Sala addresses the challenge parents have today in his book *Raising Godly Kids*. The difficulty of raising children in the ever increasing hostile environment we live in is challenging enough—to raise godly children is almost daunting. Sala draws upon his years and experience as pastor, speaker, author, and founder of Guidelines. He is also a parent and grandparent. He brings warmth, wisdom, and common sense mixed with scripture to his fifty-two guidelines for parents.

Although there are vast and countless parenting helps available, with numerous ones presenting a biblical point of view, Sala's compact book of guidelines is timely and beneficial to parents

seeking sound advice. What is really appreciated is how the author inherently realizes parents are busier than ever today. His succinct entries are short enough to digest at a glance, and his "Think on This" section gives one something to ruminate on. The resource reading suggestion completes the emphasis. Presented as daily readings, a parent can peruse the index to hit upon a topic of interest. The book works well as a devotional, study guide, and with its fifty-two day arrangement would most certainly be an excellent Sunday School class resource.

Pam Webb, School Library Technician, Sandpoint, Idaho

Reading the classics with C.S. Lewis / Thomas L. Martin, editor. LCCN 00058680. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, Baker Books, 2000. PAP, 801022347, \$24.99. Adult. Rating: 5

823'.912. Lewis, C.S. (Clive Staples), 1898-1963--Knowledge--Literature; English literature--History and criticism--Theory, etc.; Criticism--England--Hiswotry--20th Century. 410 p.

Readers of C.S. Lewis are drawn to his works for a number of reasons. Some enjoy his style; others, his ability to create worlds and people them with beings who are at once as familiar to us as they are foreign. Still others are intrigued the depth of his intellect and the breadth of his knowledge. But how did Lewis come to have such broad appeal? What went into making him what Michael Price calls "a 20th century Samuel Johnson"?

Critics have long held that the key to understanding the appeal of Lewis can be found in his ability to incorporate the greatest characteristics of "Classic" literature into his own masterpieces. In other words, he learned from what he read. That perspective is the one from which *Reading the Classics with C.S. Lewis*, edited by Thomas Martin, is written. Because, as Martin believes, reading both informs the way we think and helps us understand the thinking of others, he has compiled a series of twenty essays by noteworthy scholars (among them, Leland Ryken—Wheaton College and Gene Edward Veith—Concordia University) each of which is intended to enhance the reader's understanding Lewis and his writing. Beginning with Ryken's "Reading Literature With C.S. Lewis," and ending with Martin's own, "Lewis: a Critical Prospective," the essays reflect the same breadth of interest as the works of Lewis themselves. That said, readers should not be put off some of the topics because they are either too critical or not critical enough. That is the genius of Lewis reflected in criticism of him and his writing.

This book of essays will be of interest to all readers of C.S. Lewis. It will serve fan, student, and scholar alike, and maybe, just maybe, it will also encourage greater diversity in the interests of its readers.

Dr. Raymond E. Legg, Asst. Professor/English, Dayton, Tennessee

Popular Lewis titles just released again:

The screwtape letters : with, Screwtape proposes a toast / C. S. Lewis. LCCN 00049860. San Francisco: Harper San Francisco, HarperCollins, 2001. HBB, 0060652896, \$; PAP, 0060652934, \$8.00. Adult.

248'.4. Christianity--20th century. 209 p.

Mere Christianity : a revised and amplified edition, with a new introduction, of the three books, Broadcast talks, Christian behaviour, Beyond personality / C. S. Lewis. LCCN 00049862. San Francisco: Harper San Francisco, HarperCollins, 2001. PAP, 0060652926, \$8.00. Adult.

230. Theology, Doctrinal--Popular works; Apologetics; Christian ethics--Anglican authors. 227 p.

Solzhenitsyn : a soul in exile / Joseph Pearce. LCCN 00045512. Grand Rapids: Baker, Baker, 2001. HBB, 080101204X, \$19.99. Adult. Rating: 5

892.7344. Solzhenitsyn, Aleksandr Isaevich, 1918-; Authors, Russian--20th century--Biography. 334 p.

For the last sixty years no one, East or West, has known what to do with author, poet, and playwright Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn. Championed and then denounced by one group after another, Solzhenitsyn's works are now largely ignored. In the Christian community, they are almost completely unknown. Why? To borrow a phrase from C.S. Lewis, Solzhenitsyn "is not a tame lion." Joseph Pearce's biography, *Solzhenitsyn : A Soul in Exile*, is the first account for which the "lion" has consented to lie down for a few moments with the lambs.

Pearce's biography is complete, beginning with Solzhenitsyn's early childhood and ending with his exclusive, private interviews in 1998. Although little that is startling occurs in the author's life until he volunteers for duty during World War II, the reader is given an engaging glimpse into the social life and aspirations of a prime example of the "new socialist man" that was being molded by the communist regime. Raised since early childhood under this system, it was not until Solzhenitsyn was accused of treason while serving during World War II that the truth of the crushing inhumanity of the system became his daily experience. Pearce shows us a man in shock that he has been betrayed by the very system he championed and continued to champion even in prison. A long process of heated debate with fellow prisoners of every political and religious stripe finally brings Solzhenitsyn to the stark realization of the utter depravity of communism and points him to wholeness of life in Christ.

From his conversion to the present day, Solzhenitsyn as been a lion in his persistent literary and personal struggle with all systems, East and West, that mitigate against life lived as a testament to the glory and goodness of God, thus making him truly A Soul in Exile. Pearce has told Solzhenitsyn's story with respect and honesty both for his courageous stands and his

mistakes, making it the most readable account of this incredible man's life. Also included are six pages of photographs and thirteen pages containing the first English translations of Solzhenitsyn's latest poems. End notes may be found at each chapter's end; an index completes the volume. For those who wish to know the whole man, here is the real Solzhenitsyn.

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

***Man with a mission : Mel Trotter and his legacy for the rescue mission movement / by Leona Hertel.* LCCN 99057355. Grand Rapids: Kregel, Kregel, 1999. PAP, 0825427991, \$10.99. Adult. Rating: 3**

921 (266.022/092). Trotter, Melvin E. (Melvin Earnest), 1870-1940; Mel Trotter Ministries--Biography. 176 p.

Leona Hertel, author of *Man With a Mission*, has worked with Mel Trotter ministries for over forty years. She writes the simple history of this powerful ministry in short, easy to read chapters. Each chapter explains chronologically the ministry and ends with a testimonial from someone connected or saved through the ministry.

Beginning with Trotter's early life, the book chronicles the life and choices he made, and culminates with the 100 year celebration of the ministry in 2000. Hertel artfully and tastefully covers the long life of the ministry and delicately covers incidents such as Trotter's situation with his wife and his financial decisions. She never skirts issues, she simply tells the story and success of this mission.

The cover, text, and images all show a quality book. The photos in the book are of high quality and provide additional insight without detracting from the text. In the back of the book is a helpful timeline. This would make a nice addition to a public school because of its historical importance and a required title for the private/parochial school.

Bianca Elliott, Teacher, Linwood, Kansas

***When character was king : a story of Ronald Reagan / .* LCCN 2001046824. New York: Viking, PenguinPutnam, 2001. HBB, 0670882356, \$24.95; Lg Print, 0375131462, \$24.95. Adult (High and middle school). Rating: 4**

973.927. Noonan, Peggy, 1950-; Reagan, Ronald--Anecdotes; Presidents--United States--Biography--Anecdotes; Character--Political aspects--United States--Anecdotes; Reagan, Ronald--Friends and associates--Anecdotes. 338 p.

Peggy Noonan was Special Assistant to the President from 1984-1986. In other words, she was one of Ronald Reagan's speechwriters. Her gift for language is put to good use in this most recent biography of the former president.

Noonan grows sentimental for her old boss from time to time, but that is to be expected. What is unexpected is her stories from his days as a contract actor with Warner Brothers Studios and

as the president of one of the most powerful and highly visible labor unions, the Screen Actors Guild, at the height of the McCarthy anti-communism hearings. What is further unexpected is her gentle tale of the baby that Reagan and first wife Jane Wyman lost early in their marriage. Unexpected as well are the behind-the-scenes views Noonan provides as the Cold War begins to thaw out and the Iran-Contra scandal begins to heat up.

This biography does not pretend to be an academic text. It is a fair and honest retrospective from one of the lieutenants who served along side the general during the Reagan Revolution.

Noonan has interviewed countless family members, college friends, and long-time colleagues to create this intriguing portrait. For example, her interviews with former President George Bush and with his son, President George W. Bush, are interesting and insightful. What these men recall about Reagan tells us as much about them as it does about Reagan. When her interviewees surprise Noonan, she tells the reader she is surprised. When disappointed, she does not hesitate to point this out.

Very well written and conversational in its tone, *When Character Was King* is recommended to high school and advanced junior high school students as well as to adults who are the book's target audience.

Dr. Dann Brown, Professor of Communication, Grove City College, Grove City, Pennsylvania

***Possum Hollow, book 1 / Levi B. Weber.* LCCN 00053940. Scottsdale, Pa.: Herald Press, Herald Press, 2001. PAP, 0836191269, \$7.99. Adult (High and middle school). Rating: 2**

974.8'15044. Weber, Levi B.--Childhood and youth; Farm life--Pennsylvania--Lancaster County; Farm life--Virginia--Amelia County; Mennonites--Pennsylvania--Lancaster County--Biography; Lancaster County (Pa.)--Biography. 144 p.

***Possum Hollow, book 2 / Levi B. Weber.* LCCN 00053940. Scottsdale, Pa.: Herald Press, Herald Press, 2001. PAP, 0836191315, \$7.99. Adult (High and middle school). Rating: 2**

974.8'15044. Weber, Levi B.--Childhood and youth; Farm life--Pennsylvania--Lancaster County; Farm life--Virginia--Amelia County; Mennonites--Pennsylvania--Lancaster County--Biography; Lancaster County (Pa.)--Biography; Amelia County (Va.)--Biography. 167 p.

Born in 1911, Levi Weber explains how he grew up in a Mennonite family. Book 1 starts at the very beginning in 1897 when his Papa and Mama were married. Four children were born in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, before Levi was born. Eva, Helen, Franklin and Esther all were able to fill in the family's early history for Levi. Levi's Papa decides to move the family, leaving all relatives and friends behind as they buy a little farm in Virginia. Mama is not happy, but the move is made. One day in late summer, Mama is making apple butter when the house

catches on fire. The house burns to the ground, but neighbors help the Weber family with food, clothes, lumber, and other goods. The tragedy was not finished as Helen contracts polio. The next spring, Levi arrives into the family. The Webers move two more times before eventually settling in Pennsylvania again.

Book 2 continues the saga of the Weber family and their move to Possum Hollow. The new home needs quite a lot of repair, but the Webers enthusiastically jump into the renovations. Levi begins school, World War I ends, Eva and Helen go off to a Normal School, Franklin goes to high school, and another baby is born. Other events that happen are: a neighbor's baby dies, the family buys an automobile, and opens a produce business.

Although this series is intended to be a biography, its format is reminiscent of Carrie Bender's books. The books are small with black and white illustrations by Joy Dunn Keenan, plus the text is simply written with some Pennsylvania Dutch phrases included. Middle school and high school students may enjoy reading this author's rendition of what life was like growing up in a Mennonite family during the 1920's and 30's. Due to the juvenile look of the book, many may feel it is more suited to youth than adults.

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

***Life is so good / George Dawson and Richard Glaubman.* LCCN 99048834. New York: Random House, Penguin Putnam, 2000. HBB, 037550396X, \$23.00; PAP, 0141001682, \$13.00. Adult. Rating: 5**

976.5'192. Dawson, George, b. 1898; African Americans--Texas--Marshall--Biography; Centenarians--Texas--Marshall--Biography; Marshall (Tex.)--Biography. 260 p.

A Texas legend died in July at age 103. George Dawson was introduced to the nation by Seattle high school history teacher Richard Glaubman. Glaubman decided to follow up on news that Dawson had learned to read when he was 98. He traveled to Texas and ended up living with the old man off and on for two years, asking questions, listening, and learning a different history from the one he grew up with himself.

Born in 1898, grandson of a slave, Dawson became an inspiration and a living history lesson. *Life Is So Good* tells in Dawson's own words how that very attitude sustained him throughout his life.

As a ten-year-old, he watched his teen-age friend being lynched unjustly. His father comforted the boy and told him: "Some of those white folks was mean and nasty. Some was just scared. It doesn't matter. You have no right to judge another human being. Don't you ever forget that." Through the years he suffered the many indignities of segregation; still he harbored no ill will and always looked for the good in his fellow man.

When he married, he and his wife settled in Texas and raised seven children, all of whom graduated from high school and college. Always a hard worker, Dawson sometimes held two jobs at once to support his family. He broke horses, built roads and railroads, worked on the Mississippi River levee, and worked farms.

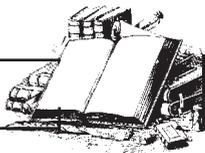
Dawson's life began to change when a recruiter for adult education showed up at his door. The old man decided he was tired of fishing and might as well go to school. For the next three years he never missed a day. He had cherished a dream to attend school in earlier years, but that hope diminished as time passed.

At one time he said to Glaubman, "Why am I still here?.. I am a witness to the truth.. I can't let the truth die with me. That's why you're here: to help me get the story down, before it's my time."

And get the story down, they did. A story of pride and determination, of courage and kindness. A story of racism, yes, but also a story of love.

Every library should have and "push" this book. Role models may be hard to come by in our age, but one of those could well be George Dawson.

Jeanette Hardage, Freelance Writer, South Carolina



Facts on File dictionary of cultural and historical allusions / Sylvia Cole, Abraham H. Lass. LCCN 00021995. New York: Facts on File, Facts on File, 2000. HBB, 0816040575, \$35.00. Adult (High school). Rating: 5

031.02. Allusions. 470 p.

Facts on File dictionary of modern allusions / Sylvia Cole, Abraham H. Lass. LCCN 00021995. New York: Facts on File, Facts on File, 2000. HBB, 0816040575, \$35.00. Rating: 5

031.02. Allusions. 470 p.

Facts on File has published the same book under two different titles. The title *Dictionary of Cultural and Historical Allusions* appears to be the more accurate, as the entries range from basically 1000 AD to 2000 AD. Why the difference in titles? I don't know. There doesn't appear to be any difference at all. Word-for-word, the entries are even on the same pages in both volumes. The *Cultural and Historical* is part of the Facts On File Library of Language and Literature while the *Dictionary of Modern Allusions* is in the Facts On File Writer's Library. The call numbers given in the LC CIP are different also. 031.02 for *Cultural and Historical* and 809.003 for *Modern*.

Facts On File has developed a dictionary to cover words and phrases we use that allude to some similar situation to give our language a richer meaning. A great many topics are covered from Reformation literature and Renaissance art to modern criminals and current phrases such as "soccer moms," resulting in more than 1500 entries. The definitions are a bit winsome at times, in that occasionally in the explanation of word or phrase the authors will indicate something is "delightful" or "great" which adds a nice, if subjective, touch.

Though film is fairly well represented, the definitions tend to favor the literary reference over the cinematic, even when most people may be more familiar with the film version of a particular work.

The juxtaposition in a resource like this is always interesting. For example, "The Muppets" is followed by "Murder, Inc." or "Bible Belt" comes just before "big bang." The entries usually end with an example of how the phrase is used today and are cross-referenced. Recommended for all ages.

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

The story of Christian spirituality : two thousand years, from East to West / Gordon Mursell. LCCN 2001267044. Minneapolis: Fortress, Augsburg Fortress, 2001. HBB, 0800632893, \$35.00. Adult. Rating: 4

248. Spiritual life--Christianity; Church history. 384 p.

What is the relationship between Christianity and other historic world faiths? How much do the great spiritual traditions of humanity have in common? Is synthesis between the traditions, or the consumerist effort to fashion one's own "designer spirituality" the answer? These and more serve as the underlying quest in this discussion. The spiritual vision of Christianity is highlighted, stretched, and articulated so that the reader is able to digest part of the riches of this vision.

Each of the ten chapters focuses on a different time period, e.g., chapter three looks at the eleventh to sixteenth centuries focusing on the saints and mystics, while chapter eight looks at the Anglican spirit of the sixteenth to nineteenth centuries. Both the general reader and student will wean enough to make one come back to digest more. A variety of traditions are showcased including the early church fathers, the Celts, the saints and mystics, the Eastern traditions, the Russian contributions, the Protestant tradition in Europe, the Catholic saints and Reformers, the Anglicans, the Protestant tradition in America, and the 20th century international profusion of spiritualities arising from Christian traditions and adaptations.

Recommended for academic libraries, for theological libraries, for public libraries offering titles on the history of Christianity and its influence, for study groups seeking to explore spiritual traditions, and for students in church history classes.

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

Concise dictionary of the occult and new age / Debra Lardie. LCCN 96030481. Grand Rapids: Kregel, Kregel, 1999. HBB, 0825430909, \$19.99. Adult (High school). Rating: 5

299'.93. Occultism--Encyclopedias; New Age Movement--Encyclopedias. 302 p.

It has happened to all of us in one form or another. We have either improperly said something in a language not our own, thinking we knew what it meant only to find out differently, or we have worn clothing from

another culture improperly, or something similar.

Recently, two boys I know were working on a school project. Wanting to make it their "own" they chose to put a flag on it. The design they selected for their flag looked "cool," so on it went. When they got the project to school they found the flag was one flown by a group with which they wanted nothing to do, and they were forced to remove it. What they did in ignorance could have had far-reaching ramifications.

Such is often the case with the new or the strange. To help readers avoid making mistakes like the one committed by the boys, Debra Lardie has compiled the *Concise Dictionary of the Occult and New Age*. Written in easy to understand language, this book defines the people, terminology, and worldview matters espoused by Occult and New Age believers in such ways as to make them accessible to mature readers.

To help readers understand their purpose, the editors of the dictionary use the e preface to affirm their commitment to Christ and Christianity, and to outline their reasons for compiling this information. Those reasons are (1) to bear witness for Christ, (2) to inform readers as to the nature of occult and New Age beliefs, and (3) to show the many ways in which those beliefs are "utterly incompatible" with Christianity. To those ends, this book will be a very helpful resource. It will be useful for anyone interested in understanding these phenomena as well as those who have opportunity to challenge them.

Dr. Raymond E. Legg, Asst. Professor/English, Dayton, Tennessee

★

The Facts on File dictionary of environmental science, rev. ed. / Bruce Wyman, L. Harold Stevenson. (Facts on File science library.) LCCN 00055554. New York: Facts on File, Facts on File, 2001. HBB, 0816042330, \$44.00. Adult (High school). Rating: 5

363'.7003. Environmental engineering--Dictionaries; Environmental protection--Dictionaries; Environmental sciences--Dictionaries. 458 p.

Ten years after its first edition, Wyman and Stevenson have produced a new edition of their useful environmental science dictionary. This revised edition updates over 4,000 cross-referenced entries on the subject, adding over 1,000 new terms on a broad range of topics. The area of environmental science covers a wide range of disciplines (e.g., agriculture, biology, chemistry, engineering, medicine, microbiology,

soil science, geology, meteorology, toxicology, government, law, and more), and it is here that this work provides a valuable source of concise and current information. Wyman and Stevenson, both professors at McNeese State University in Louisiana, bring academic as well as practical experience to bear in compiling the entries of this dictionary. With black-and-white line drawings, appendices, charts, tables, and a bibliography, this reference source will benefit students, industry personnel, as well as those working for government and private environmental agencies.

Ted Goshulak, University Librarian, Langley, British Columbia, Canada

***The Facts on File Marine dictionary of marine science, rev. ed.* / Barbara Charton. LCCN 00052817. New York: Facts on File, Facts on File, 2001. HBB, 0816042926, \$44.00. Adult (High school). Rating: 5**

551.46'003. Marine sciences--Dictionaries. 373 p.

This revised edition of *The Facts on File Dictionary of Marine Science*, twelve years after the first one, containing over 500 new terms and forty new line drawings, is testimony to the growth of research in marine science and the wider grasp of the public with many of the topics, e.g. global warming, the Titanic resting on the ocean floor. It lends itself to use for a quick reference or for longer reading by those seeking the basics of marine science.

Arranged in A to Z format with explanations from one to a few paragraphs, the double column format is easy to read and the writing style one understandable by most high school students and the general public. Appendixes offer the geologic time scale, a chronology of marine history, and marine science research projects. Charton, associate professor specializing in science reference, is able to amass authoritative and clear definitions that professionals and researchers would be satisfied with, and that science students and those intrigued with geology, botany, meteorology, or geophysics would find enlightening.

Recommended for reference collections in all public libraries, as a must title in student marine labs, and an important addition for collections seeking to make the best of science accessible to the average person.

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

***Wetlands* / Peter D. Moore. (Ecosystem.) LCCN 00041750. New York: Facts on File, Facts on File, 2001. HBB, 0816039305, \$65.00. Adult (High school). Rating: 5**

577.68. Wetlands. 200 p.

Wetlands, by Peter Moore from King's College, London, England, is the first book to attempt to describe the full range of the world's wetlands and provide a scientific basis for understanding

their form and function. Moore's intention is to explain how wetlands work and develop, and the interrelations of the inhabitants of this kind of ecosystem.

This multi-faceted task encompasses the topics of the geography, geology, atmospheric science, biology, and biodiversity of wetlands. The author also investigates the economic value of this landform. In an extremely fascinating chapter, *Wetlands and History*, Moore summarizes the changing public perceptions of wetlands during the course of history, with particular emphasis on how this is reflected in popular literature and culture. To round out the book, the author looks at the present health of wetlands worldwide and how their future existence rests in proper management and conversation. The abundance of color photos and illustrations provides the reader with a visual expression of the variety of wetland forms and demonstrates the necessity of working towards wetland preservation.

Ted Goshulak, University Librarian, Langley, British Columbia, Canada



***A journey into Christian art* / Helen de Borchgrave. LCCN 00710213. Minneapolis: Fortress, Augsburg, 2000. HBB, 0800632400, \$35.00. Adult (High school). Rating: 5**

704.9'482. Christian art and symbolism. 223 p.

This inspiring book is truly a pilgrimage of Christian art from the birth of Christianity to modern times. It is filled with beautiful color illustrations of more than a hundred major paintings. The volume also includes recommended museum and church listings where the paintings can be viewed, and an extensive chapter-by-chapter bibliography and list of illustrations. Actually, *A Journey into Christian Art* is a history of Christian art, delving into the lives of over fifty of the world's greatest artists. As de Borchgrave probes these lives, she gives insights into their spirituality and how this spirituality formed and shaped their works.

This tome is for those who already love Christian art and clamor for more information, but also for the novice who is merely interested and would like to see what the subject is all about. Adults and young adults in high school will be fascinated by the details contained in de Borchgrave's writing. The pictures themselves are inspiring and the facts only add to the illustrations by giving deeper understanding. *A Journey into Christian Art* is beautifully and professionally done and would be a particularly good addition to any library where art is a focus. Although not the size of a coffee table book, it clearly contains the beauty and quality of one.

Ceil Carey, Public Librarian, Plainfield Public Library, Plainfield, Illinois

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