

# YAACING

The Newsletter of the Young Adult & Children's Services Section of BCLA  
Summer 2011



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## Message from the Chair

The yak has been passed and we have a new and continuing executive for the coming year!

I saw some of you at the BCLA conference in Victoria, where VPL Children's Librarians Chris Kevlahan and April Ens treated an audience to a puppet show telling of *Amos's Sweater* at the launch for Dave Obee's book on BC library history. Fundraising efforts for the Sheila Egoff prize resulted in a record-breaking \$1000+ raised with a silent auction. Big thanks go to all of our generous donors, particularly Judi Saltman, and to now Past Chair of YAACS, Sarah Donald for bringing it all together.

We're facing the coming year with an eye for change in line with BCLA's refocusing. We welcome your ideas and will be distributing an online survey shortly. You can also email me directly with your ideas at [darbynil@gmail.com](mailto:darbynil@gmail.com).

We also plan to continue being advocates for children's services, particularly in a climate of cuts such as those to Books for BC Babies. Spring brought a successful Rhyme Time workshop with the famous Jane Cobb in attendance filming everyone's rhymes. Look out for our upcoming signing workshop in the Fall. We've also recently begun to collaborate with the Continuing Education Committee to offer more training opportunities to you all (they have webinar technology!).

Cheers,

- Darby Love  
YAACS Chair

## Message from the Editors

Our summer issue of YAACING features a delicious assortment of news, reviews and program ideas. We hope the richness of booklists in this issue will warm you up for summer, and we encourage you to let us know what the biggest hits in your own library are. Don't miss the scrumptious Summer Reading Club ideas included in El's Kushner's SRC update or the sweet tribute to Allison Taylor McBryde. She has been an inspiration and mentor to many of us over her illustrious library career.

This year we've left the BC Library Conference reporting to the Browser, but here's a little taste: *Boys Do Read* is a book-reviewing blog launched by a trio of Richmond librarians. The booklist they featured at their "What's a Boy to Read" conference session is included in the first entry on their blog: <http://boysdoread.blogspot.com/>. Gail Edwards and Judith Saltman's bibliography from their session "Aboriginality and Publishing for Children in British Columbia: One Hundred Years of Change" is also online. You can download it from E-LIS at <http://hdl.handle.net/10760/15543>

We'd like to thank our contributors and encourage all our readers to continue sending us your discoveries, successes and creations. We love hearing from you.

- April Ens and Pamela Fairfield  
YAACING Editors



## Tasty Treats from the Summer Reading Club

By the time you read this, summer reading programs at most libraries will be underway! Every year I'm amazed at the richness, creativity and variety of programming that BC libraries come up with in conjunction with the Summer Reading Club. This year's BC SRC theme, "Savour Each Word," lends itself to delicious food-based activities, of course, but also invites programming that focuses on diverse cultures, poetry and song. Here are seven suggested weekly themes, as created by SRC Committee Chair Hilary Russell and listed on the SRC website:

### 1. Go Bananas!

Suggested subthemes: humour, jokes

### 2. Local Flavour

Suggested subthemes: BC books and authors

### 3. Goblet of Goodies

Suggested subthemes: science fiction, fantasy

### 4. Munchy Crunchy Books

Suggested subthemes: non-fiction, cookbooks, history

### 5. Mystery Meals

Suggested subthemes: mystery, adventure

### 6. Peanuts and popcorn!

Suggested subthemes: sports, heroes, movies

### 7. Tantalizing Tidbits

Suggested subthemes: riddles, brain teasers, poetry, folk and fairytales

The website also includes a wide-ranging buffet of programs and activities for libraries, from story time themes to scavenger hunts to quizzes. To whet your appetite, (it's hard to stop with these food metaphors!) here's a sample of activities from the "Munchy Crunchy Books" theme section, contributed by Barbara Kerfoot of the Parksville Branch, Vancouver Island Regional Library:

#### Munch Bingo

Create bingo cards using food words. To create bingo cards: <http://print-bingo.com/design-bingo-cards.php>

Use Cheerios / Smarties for the chips in individual snack bags. If they eat them, then they have lost their chips to play!

### Building Challenge

How high will the marshmallows go? Supply marshmallows and toothpicks and see who can build the highest structure.

Have a basket of little prizes for different aspects – the highest, the widest, the fewest marshmallows, the most marshmallows – get them all involved in the judging with the aim being that each tween or team will get something.

For literally dozens more programming ideas and resources, for every age group from preschoolers to tweens, check out the SRC Manual Download Page, available on the SRC website at <http://kidssrc.bclibrary.ca/manual.htm>

- Els Kushner,  
Summer Reading Club Coordinator



## YAACS Update from TeenRC

It's the end of the school year; and teens will soon have a bit more time on their hands. As librarians, I think that the best way we can suggest them to spend some of their free time is to join TeenRC and engage in a welcoming, fun online community to share their favourite reads with other book lovers.

I joined TeenRC just this May and am excited to be part of this program. This year's TeenRC is going to be building upon the theme of last year: "Act II" of Get Into Character. As usual, what makes TeenRC run smoothly is a dedicated group of children's and youth librarians volunteering their time to moderate the forums and approve books and book reviews. We also have a group of tech-savvy, enthusiastic teen moderators offering their insight and expertise.



This year's program is turning out to be pretty fantastic. In light of last year's entertaining Mystery Mondays, we will continue that tradition, casting teens or moderators as favourite fictional characters for other teens to talk to and guess their identities. If you've got a character suggestion or are interested in impersonating a character, feel free to drop me a line at [info@teenrc.ca](mailto:info@teenrc.ca)!

Author interviews are also in the works. Authors who have agreed to be interviewed are:

M.T. Anderson  
Eileen Cook  
Chris Crutcher  
Shelley Hrdlitschka  
Susan Juby  
James McCann  
Philip Reeve  
Gene Luen Yang

As you can see, this is quite the amazing line-up of teen authors! We hope that you will help spread the word in your library about the wonderful authors who will be joining us at TeenRC this year.

I am also in the works of hammering out the details of a teen writing contest with the final prize yet to be determined. We will be giving away six gift cards through the summer. Finally, we are excited to be offering two grand prizes this summer of two Kobo readers from ChaptersIndigo, one for BC resident teens, another for out-of-province members.

We believe in the relevance and the importance of connecting teens online via TeenRC. Many teens have expressed how happy they are to find a group of keen book lovers across Canada, who enjoyed sharpening their literary skills in a supportive online community and who were inspired by the authors who came online to visit with them last year. TeenRC has high hopes of continuing to meet teens where they are and in turn, directing them back to libraries and their resources, opening up world upon world for them to explore.

- Ellen Wu  
TeenRC Coordinator



## Rhyme Time

On May 4, 2011 YAACS held a RhymeTime workshop at the Bob Prittie Metrotown Branch of the Burnaby Public Library. It was a top capacity crowd with both "veteran" and new library folks in attendance.

Each person shared two rhymes, performing them, then encouraging the group to join in. (Really, no encouragement was need.) At the end of the session attendees had upwards of 60 rhymes compiled in a package to take back to their libraries and wow the crowds with.

As an added treat author and librarian, Jane Cobb joined us. She brought along her video camera to record the rhymes. Watch YAACS for further information on this project. We are looking into the possibility of video streaming as a way to share information.

We had the lovely opportunity to sing, meet and visit with fellow librarians and library technicians; and most of all, we had a great time!



Photo by Jane Cobb

YAACS organizes a number of workshops each year. Watch for upcoming workshops on incorporating sign language in storytimes. Have a great summer!

- Chris Conroy  
YAACS Continuing Education Coordinator  
(Lower Mainland)



## Red Cedar & Stellar 2011 Book Award Winners and Next Year's Nominees Announced

Thousands of BC youth in Grades 4 – 12 across the province have chosen the 2011 Red Cedar and Stellar Award winners after months of cracking spines and flipping pages in a “read-a-thon” some call the *American Idol* of young adult literature.

Now, after heated debate in classrooms, living rooms, libraries, bookstores and online forums from Victoria to Prince Rupert and the Queen Charlottes to Revelstoke, the zealous readers have spoken:

### Red Cedar Fiction Award Winner:

*Libertad* by Alma Fullerton  
(Fitzhenry & Whiteside, 2008)

### Red Cedar Information Award Winner:

*Everything but the Kitchen Sink* by Frieda Wishinsky and Elizabeth MacLeod  
(Scholastic Canada, 2008)

### Stellar Award Winner:

*The Summoning* by Kelley Armstrong  
(Doubleday Canada, 2008)

Students read at least 5 of the 12-15 shortlisted titles in each category to be eligible to vote by the April 30<sup>th</sup> deadline. The Young Readers' Choice Awards Society founded and administer both awards to promote quality Canadian children's lit, literacy and to improve awareness of our nation's literary talents. Its *grande dame*, librarian Alison Taylor-McBride, retires this week, but her legacy continues by committee.

Media are invited to contact Joy Gugeler, Press & Publisher Liaison, at [joy.gugeler@gmail.com](mailto:joy.gugeler@gmail.com) to set up interviews with judges, students, authors or publishers.

For the goods on the **winning and nominated authors and titles for this year and next** including student reviews, teacher's resources, and exuberant virtual celebrations visit [www.redcedaraward.ca](http://www.redcedaraward.ca) or [www.stellaraward.ca](http://www.stellaraward.ca) and make your reading wish list!

## Red Cedar Book Award -- Fiction Nominees 2011/2012

*The Dread Crew* by Kate Inglis  
*Wanting Mor* by Rukhsana Khan  
*Rex Zero: The Great Pretender* by Tim Wynne-Jones  
*Walking Backward* by Catherine Austin  
*After the Fire* by Becky Citra  
*Faerie Rebels: Spell Hunter* by R.J. Anderson  
*The Ship of Lost Souls* by Rachele Delaney  
*The Giant Slayer* by Iain Lawrence  
*Zoobreak* by Gordon Korman  
*Dear Canada: A Desperate Road to Freedom* by Karleen Bradford  
*Timothy and the Dragon's Gate* by Adrienne Kress  
*The Prince of Neither Here nor There* by Sean Cullen



## Stellar Book Award -- Fiction & Information Nominees 2011/2012

*Shadow Boxing* by Sherie Posesorski  
*thinandbeautiful.com* by Liane Shaw  
*Dreamfire* by Nicole Luiken  
*Living Outside the Lines* by Lesley Choyce  
*My Parents are Sex Maniacs* by Robyn Harding  
*Not Suitable for Family Viewing* by Vicki Grant  
*Wondrous Strange* by Lesley Livingston  
*Pop* by Gordon Korman  
*The Gryphon Project* by Carrie Mac  
*Sweetness at the Bottom of the Pie* by Alan Bradley  
*Swim the Fly* by Don Calame  
*The Uninvited* by Tim Wynne-Jones



- Submitted by Noreen Ma,  
Secretary, YRCA



## Call For Volunteer Camp Counsellors And Assistants

- WHAT:** The Writing & Book Camp
- WHERE:** The Vancouver Public Library  
350 West Georgia Street  
Vancouver, BC
- WHEN:** August 8 – 12, 2011  
8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.  
(Friday's wind-up Gala will end at 6:30 p.m.)

Do you have an interest in working with children and books? The Writing & Book Camp is looking for volunteers to act as camp counsellors and assistants for campers ages 11-13 and 14 +, throughout the week of August 8 – 12, 2011. The Writing & Book Camp brings together children and teens with a passion for reading and writing and well-known authors and illustrators in a creative workshop environment. **Nina Matusmoto, Rebecca Bollwitt, Don Calame, Carrie Mac and Sylvia Olsen** are just some of the professional authors and illustrators who will be presenting at this year's camp!

### CAMP COUNSELLORS

We require Camp Counsellors who are willing to take responsibility for a small group of campers throughout a week of activities. Counsellors should have experience working with children, preferably with a background in education, creative writing and/or library sciences.

### CAMP ASSISTANTS

We also require full-time and part-time assistants whose primary role is to support camp counsellors and help individual campers with writing projects and other camp activities.

Our previous volunteers have found the camp an excellent opportunity to gain experience and skills in a variety of areas. A training and orientation session will be provided beforehand. We are looking for volunteers aged 16 and older.

*"It's been a great experience here at the Book Camp.  
The kids all seem to genuinely love reading and writing.  
Their passion is truly amazing!"*

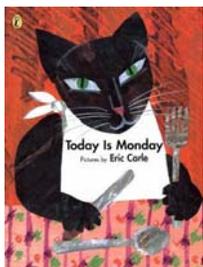
For more information please contact:  
Writing & Book Camp Coordinator  
Vancouver Public Library  
[bookcamp@vpl.ca](mailto:bookcamp@vpl.ca)  
604-331-4093



Vancouver Public Library  
[www.vpl.ca](http://www.vpl.ca)



## Who's on the Felt Board?



### Today is Monday

Story by Eric Carle  
Felt pieces by April Ens

In the spirit of this year's Summer Reading Club we're serving up a food-themed felt story.

Being unable to read music, I turned to Youtube to learn the song behind Eric Carle's "Today is Monday." What I discovered inspired me to try it with my own group, albeit with a little less gusto than this teacher:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2oqOGGpmsQY>

I like to use these felt pieces in tandem with the book, providing a visual reminder as we progress in this cumulative song/story. Each day of the week introduces a new food before repeating each previous day and food. By the end of the week we recite:

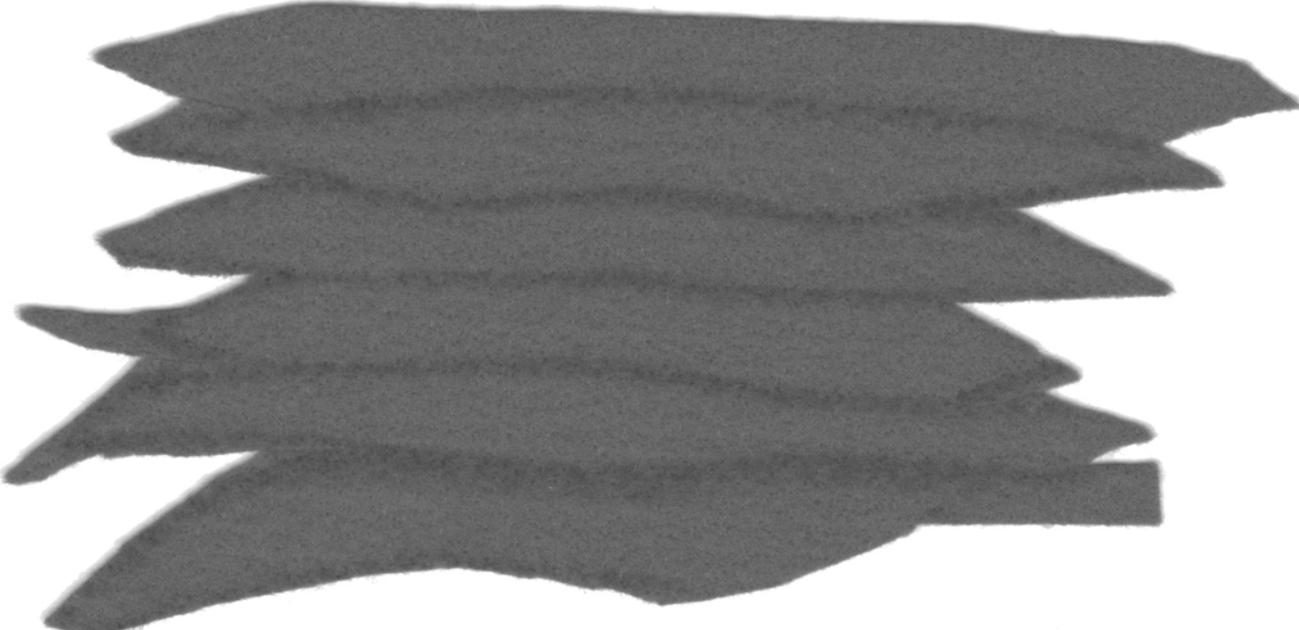
"Today is Sunday, today is Sunday  
Sunday ice cream,  
Saturday chicken,  
Friday fresh fish,  
Thursday roast beef,  
Wednesday soup,  
Tuesday spaghetti  
Monday string beans  
All you hungry children – come and eat it up!"

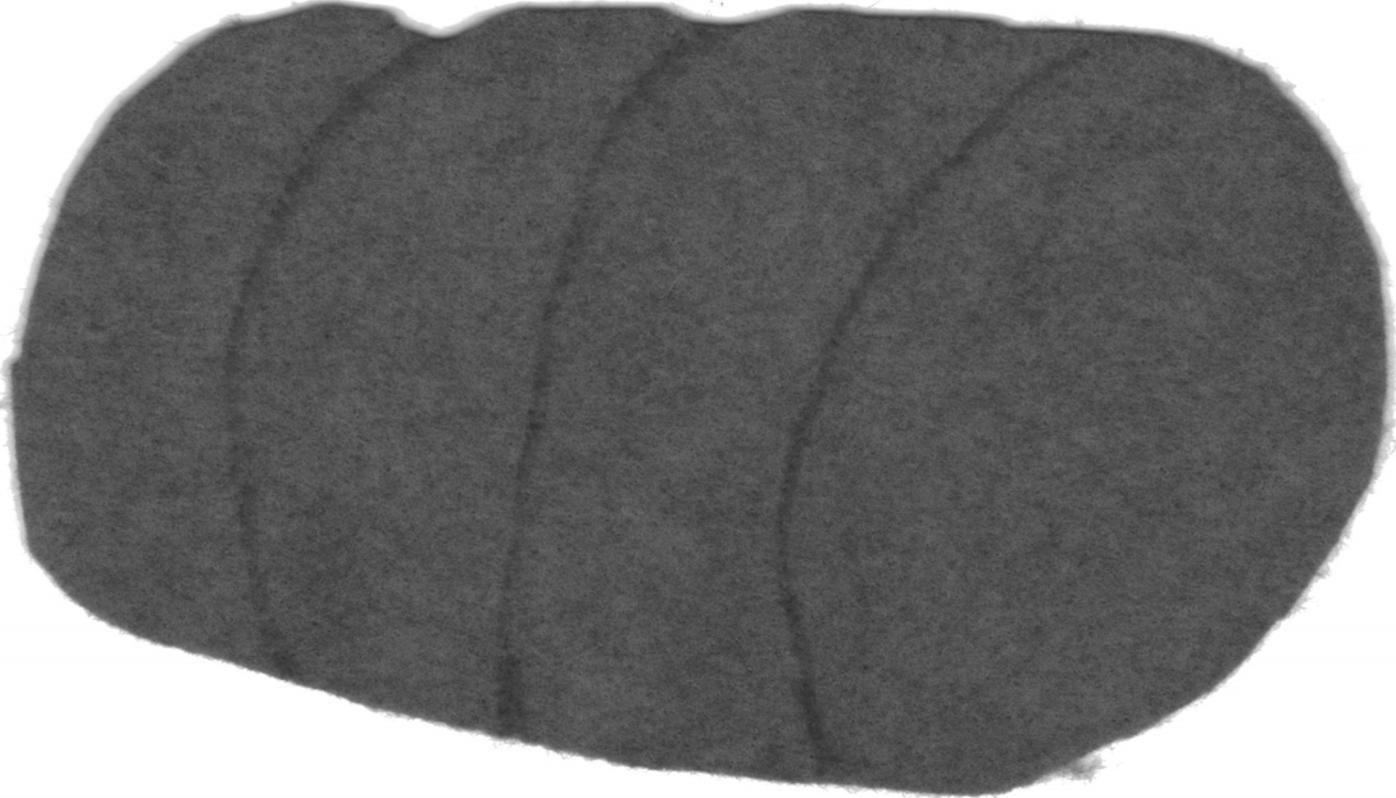
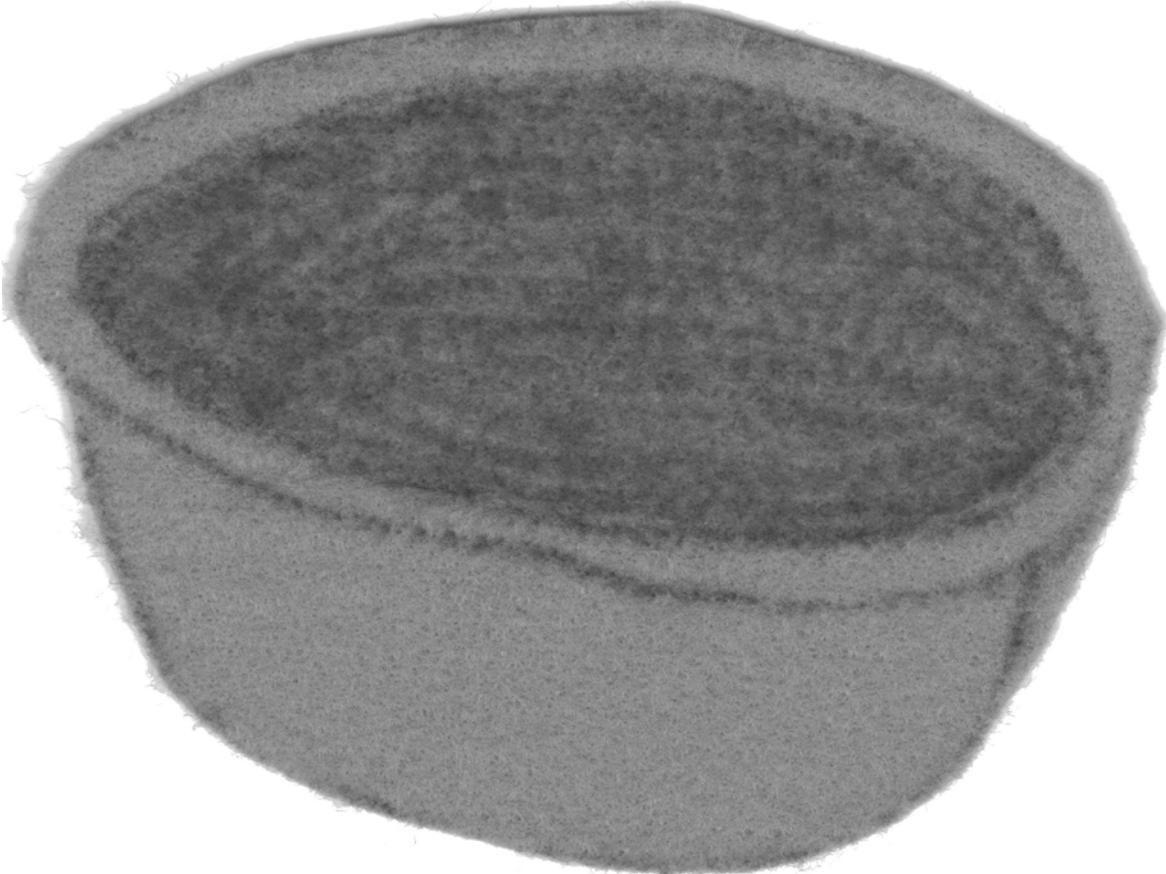
One day I intend to take suggestions from my storytime attendees and make felts out of all their favourite foods so we can personalize and play with this story.

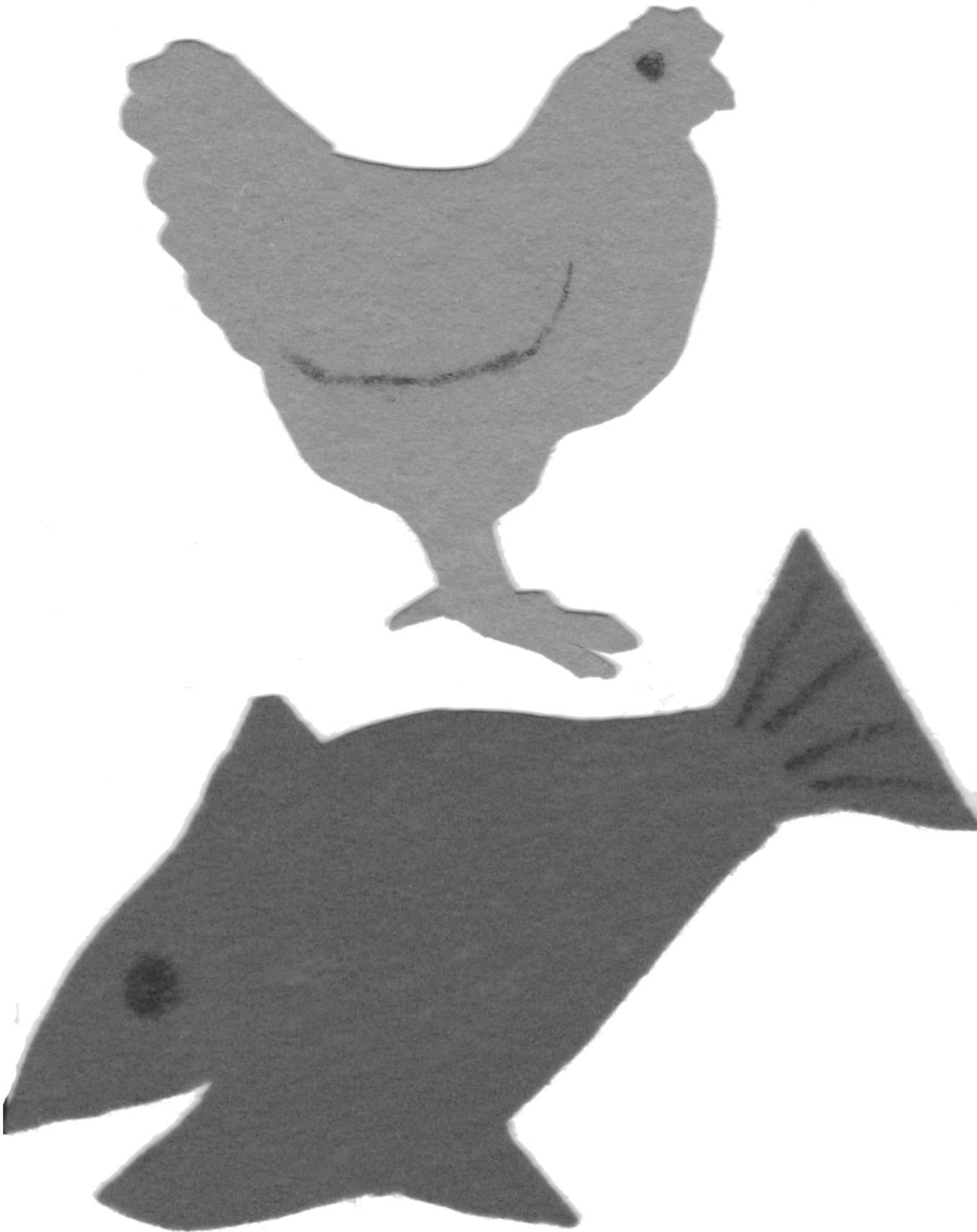


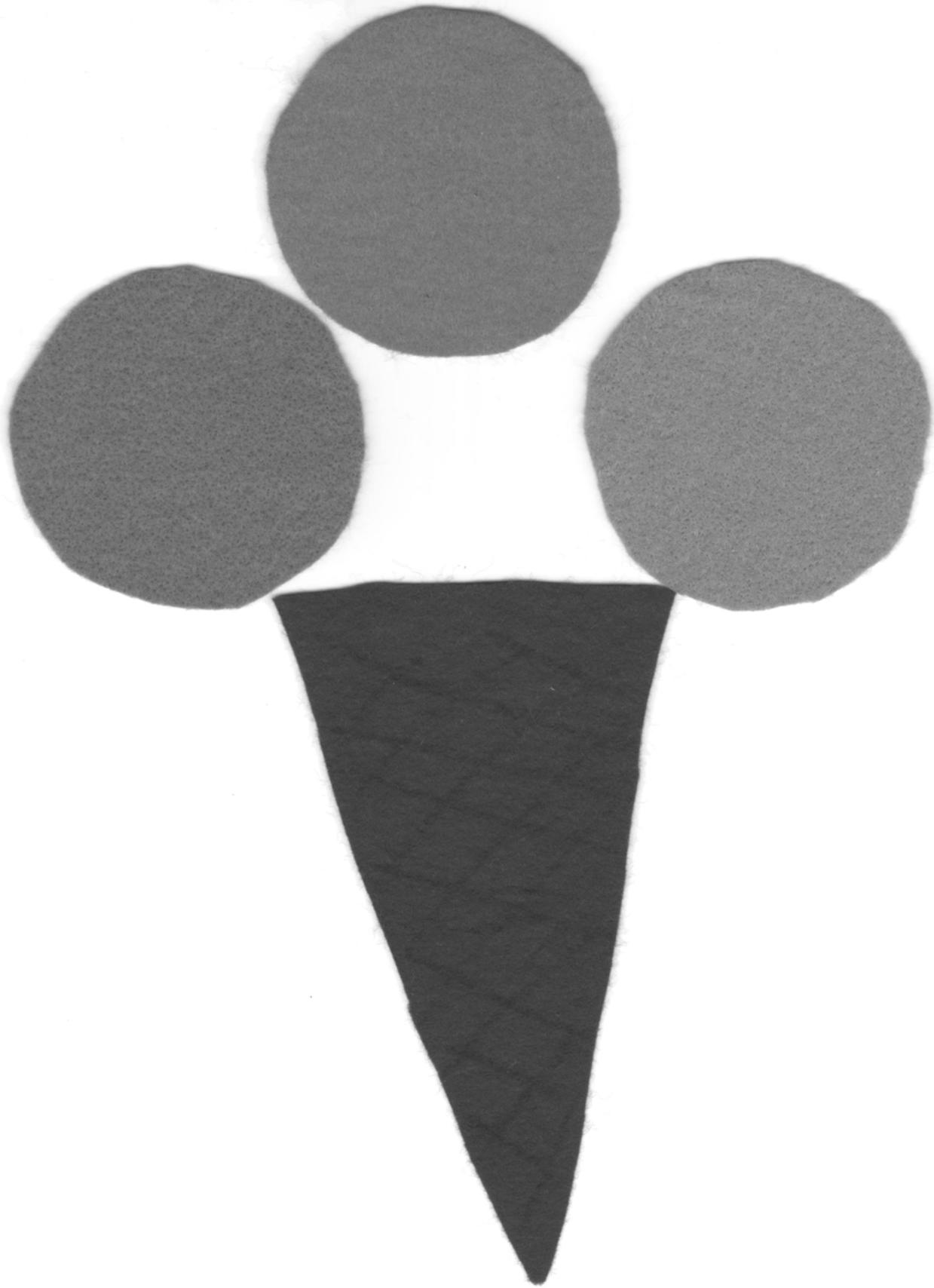
*April Ens is the Children's Librarian at the Kitsilano Branch of the Vancouver Public Library.*











## Teens Only

### Teens + Superpowers = Some Fantastic Reading

By Amy Dawley

Ah, the joys of the trends in teen publishing. After the vampires and the werewolves, there were zombies, quickly followed by a landslide of post-apocalypse dystopian fiction that was (and still is) so very popular. The latest trend to hit my library and its young adult readers has been books featuring teen characters that have special super powers or extraordinary abilities of some kind. With the release of Pittacus Lore's (\*cough\* James Frey, author of *A Million Little Pieces* \*cough\*) *I Am Number Four* into theatres, any book displays I've put together that feature teens with supernatural powers have just flown off the shelves!

One of my favourite parts of being a teen librarian is connecting great books with teens who are excited to read them. If your teens are just as excited about super powers as mine are, you can't go wrong by putting the following books into their hands. Happy reading!

*Birthmarked* by Caragh M. O'Brien  
*The Dangerous Days of Daniel X* by James Patterson  
*Double Helix* by Nancy Werlin  
*Double Identity* by Margaret Peterson Haddix  
*Fight Game* by Kate Wild  
*Genesis Alpha* by Rune Michaels  
*Gone* by Michael Grant  
*The Hunger Games* by Suzanne Collins  
*House of the Scorpion* by Nancy Farmer  
*I Am Number Four* by Pittacus Lore  
*The Lab* by Jack Heath  
*Leviathan* by Scott Westerfeld  
*Maximum Ride* series by James Patterson  
*Shade's Children* by Garth Nix  
*The Summoning* by Kelley Armstrong  
*Uglies* by Scott Westerfeld  
*Unwind* by Neal Shusterman  
*Virals* by Kathy Reichs

*Amy Dawley is the Teen Librarian at the Prince George Public Library.*



## On Allison Taylor McBryde's Retirement

By Alison Campbell

Allison Taylor McBryde retired on May 31, 2011. She was the Coordinator of Children's and Young Adult Services at the North Vancouver District Public library for the past 25 years; but her influence and impact on the library community extends around the province and across the country.

Besides working full time at a busy suburban three branch library system, Allison was (and will continue to be) an adjunct professor at the School of Library, Archival and Information Studies at UBC. Chances are, if you are a children's librarian and graduated from SLAIS in the past 20 years, you have benefitted from Allison's knowledge and experience of children's literature (especially Canadian!), services for children and teens, early literacy and infant brain development. And as soon as you hear her name, you probably have a mental picture of Allison with one of her puppets-- maybe Amos the Sheep or Tacky the Penguin.

As if working and teaching were not enough, Allison somehow managed to compress time (or perhaps clone herself?) and was a driving force behind such initiatives (and these are only a few!) as:

- Young Readers Choice Award Society of B.C.
- (Red Cedar and Stellar Book Awards)
- Province-wide Summer Reading Club
- Books for BC Babies
- CLA Awards committees
- Growing a Reader and Toddler to the Library
- Partnering with school districts to create literacy
- Programs for new Canadians
- Author tours
- YAACS and InterLINK workshops

Those of us who have had the opportunity to work with Allison are especially sad to say goodbye; but we're happy that she is moving on to another chapter in her life, with the chance to do some hands-on research in infant development and early literacy (she's going to be caring for her 1 year old granddaughter!).



## Retirement

*(with apologies to A. A. Milne and James James Morrison Morrison Weatherby George Dupree)*

Allison Ruth  
Clark Haupt  
Allison Taylor McBryde  
Sat on every committee  
And a few more on the side.  
Allison Allison

Said to the committee  
"Committee," she said, said she:  
"You must never forget the importance of  
The public li-brar-y."

Allison Allison  
Taylor McBryde  
(Commonly known as Alli)  
Coordinated the Children's Department  
At Parkgate, Cap and Lynn Valley  
Allison Allison  
Said to the librarians  
"Librarians," she said, said she:  
"You must tell what you want me to buy;  
Please consult with me."

The library  
Put up a notice  
KIDS or TEENS or TOTS!  
Allison Allison  
Taylor McBryde  
SAYS COME LOTS & LOTS!  
THERE ARE BOOKS BY THE SHELFULL  
STORIES AND MOVIES AND SONG  
COME TO THE LIBRARY EVERY WEEK  
AND BRING YOUR FAMILY ALONG!

Allison Allison's  
Daughter Morgan  
Had a daughter too  
And when she had to go back to work  
She wondered what she would do  
Allison Allison said to Morgan  
"Morgan," she said, said she:  
"When looking for a nanny,  
Look no further than me."



(Now then, very softly)

A R  
C H  
Alli Tay McB  
Is retiring from the library  
Despite our every plea  
A A  
Said to the library,  
“Library,” she said, said she:  
“You must keep up your circulation,  
You’ll just be doing it without me.”

*Alison Campbell is a Children’s Librarian & Assistant Manager at the Lynn Valley Main Library, North Vancouver District Public Library.*

## YA Crafternoon: Collage Postcards

*By Courtney Novotny*

Looking for a quick and easy program to do with your children or young adult patrons? Why not hold a crafternoon and make collage postcards out of recycled materials? I ran this program for a group of first-year university students when I worked as a community advisor in an undergraduate residence; and it was a big hit! The program was cheap to run and fairly low stakes for participants, so even the quieter residents came out. This program is great for the summer months because kids and/or teens can make these postcards to send to their friends and family while on vacation or from home!

### What You Need:

- A package of 4x6” note cards (You can find them at most dollar stores in a pack of 50 or 100 for around \$1)
- Glue sticks
- A big stack of old magazines (a great way to recycle your library’s old issues)
- Scissors (you can also just carefully tear the paper, which gives a neat ‘torn-edge’ effect)

### What You Do:

- Using the recycled magazines, find images, word and coloured pages that appeal to you
- Rip them out, cut them down to a manageable size and creatively arrange them on one side of your note card
- When you’re happy with the placement, glue down the pieces

- If you like, write a message on the blank back of the note card, stick a stamp and an address on it and send it off in the mail

### More Ideas:

- It’s always a good idea to have sample postcards made up ahead of time for participants to look at and get ideas from
- Pick a theme and have the participants make postcards to display in the library
- Invite children and/or young adults to bring in their postcards for display in the library

### A Few Related YA Books:

- *My Secret: A Postsecret Book* by Frank Warren
- *13 Little Blue Envelopes* by Maureen Johnson
- *Postcards From No Man’s Land* by Aidan Chambers
- Insert your awesome idea here!

*Courtney Novotny is an MLIS student at the School of Library Archival and Information Studies at the University of British Columbia.*

## A Summer Reading Club Scavenger Hunt

*By April Ens*

At my library we’ve had a lot of fun with SRC scavenger hunts. Because we get a number of young participants, I eschew the tricky clues and design a scavenger hunt that will get kids clomping around the children’s section and discovering the variety of resources we have.

Everyone who completes the first sheet wins a prize, and every bonus answer earns additional prizes. I’m quite willing to give hints to ensure that everyone is able to finish. The second page is for the older kids and keeners who zip through the first page and want something trickier.

Note: all the images I’ve used come from [www.openclipart.org](http://www.openclipart.org), a free repository of creative-commons licensed clip art.

If you would like a copy that you can edit to suit your own library collection, email me at [April.Ens@vpl.ca](mailto:April.Ens@vpl.ca).

*April Ens is the Children’s Librarian at the Kitsilano Branch of the Vancouver Public Library.*



# Summer Reading Club 2011

## “Savour Each Word” Scavenger Hunt

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**Find...**



A cookbook

-----

A DVD

Bonus: Based on a story you've read



A magazine about sports

-----



A book about an animal  
that can fly

Bonus: Written by a Canadian

Super-Bonus: Tell me what the animal eats

A book about  
Chinese New Year

-----



A book that comes with a CD

Bonus: In Chinese

A comic book about a cat

-----

A fairy  
tale



Bonus: With a talking animal in it  
Super-Bonus: With a bowl of porridge

# Summer Reading Club 2011

## SAVOUR each BONUS Question

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**Find...**



A poetry book with  
a poem about food in it

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A book about an animal or plant  
that some people eat

-----

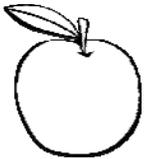


A CD with a song about food

-----

A book for babies (with food in it)

-----



Find APPLE in the World Book  
Encyclopedia. What page is it on?

-----

A French-language magazine  
(no food necessary)

-----



A paperback from a series  
you think is delicious

-----

A book about a country  
(and something they eat there)

Title: -----

Food: -----



## An Evening with Jeanne Birdsall, May 16<sup>th</sup> 2011

By Lise Kreps

Jeanne Birdsall, author of the popular “*Penderwicks*” chapter book series, made her first visit to Vancouver for a Q&A and book signing at the KidsBooks store on Broadway.

Jeanne looks exactly as I imagined she would: cats-eye glasses, a loose garden-green linen shirt and expressively fluttering hands. She got a full house, mostly of moms and girls aged about 7-11 but a few dads and sons as well, and held us enraptured for almost an hour with her charming and funny tales about herself and how she came to write the books. Her visit was originally requested by an email to KidsBooks from 10-year-old Annabella, who was in the audience; her ears turned red when Jeanne shook her hand and thanked her; but she looked very pleased.

Jeanne is from Massachusetts and explained that “*Little Women* is our *Anne of Green Gables*.” She based the Penderwick girls loosely on the Marsh girls, but making Rosalind more interesting than Meg, and giving Jo’s temper to Skye and her interest in writing to Jane. The first Penderwicks story she described as “Little Women Visit the Secret Garden.” Other authors Jeanne loved in her childhood included Edward Eager, E. Nesbit, Madeline L’Engle and Noel Streatfeild. She had only one sister, four years older, who wouldn’t play with her much, so she enjoyed and read books about families of siblings. What does she like to read now? “Well-written British mysteries.”

Jeanne is now friends with many writers, including Patricia MacLachlan (*Sarah, Plain and Tall*) and Annie Barrows (*Ivy and Bean*). Originally she named the Penderwicks the Penderghasts. But when Patricia MacLachlan tried to read the manuscript she could never pronounce their names, so Jeanne looked for another British-sounding name. (She was delighted that her hotel in Vancouver was near Pender Street!)

All of the Penderwick girls like to read, and tell us about the books they enjoy. In the latest Penderwick book (*The Penderwicks at Point Mouette*), youngest sister Batty is just starting to learn to read, and makes her sister read *Ivy and Bean* aloud to her. Hound is named after Sherlock Holmes’ Hound of the Baskervilles.

Small biographical details also appear in *The Penderwicks*. Jeffrey Tifton is named after Jeanne’s boyfriend Jeff in 6<sup>th</sup> grade and his cousin Tiff who stole her affections. Mr Penderwick likes to drop Latin phrases

because Jeanne studied Latin in high school “and I like to use things that interest me.”

Why is their mother dead? Jeanne started with this question, “Before all the mothers ask it.” For children to have enough freedom in a story to make it interesting, “the mom either has to be a bad mom or dead,” she explained. “Otherwise it’s just, ‘Can we do this?’ ‘No.’ No story!”

Which Penderwick girl is Jeanne most like? A combination of Batty and Skye. Will Jeanne ever publish Jane Penderwick’s stories, “The Adventures of Sabrina Star”? No, Jeanne laughed that Jane has more imagination than she does. What scene makes Jeanne laugh the most? “The homework swap [between Jane and Skye, in *The Penderwicks on Gardam Street*]. The best scenes are the ones [like this] that I just sat down and wrote. They feel like someone else wrote them.” She agonizes over most scenes she writes.

Why is Rosalind mostly absent in the *The Penderwicks at Point Mouette*? “It’s not like Susan in Narnia,” Jeanne explained, referring to Susan being left out of the last Narnia book. Mr Penderwick felt that Rosalind had been looking after her sisters for years and she needed a chance to be a child while she still was one, so he let her go on vacation with a friend. This leaves Skye in charge as the “oldest available Penderwick” sister, an unfamiliar and uncomfortable role for her, which gives her character room to grow.

How does Jeanne plan her books? “I plan the arc of a book, but how I get there is a little fuzzy.” How does she get her ideas? Cautioning us not to try to catch butterflies, as it harms them, she said, “Imagine sitting in a field watching butterflies for hours and hours, and then all of a sudden one is in your net. That’s one sentence.”

What would Jeanne do if she was not a writer? “Design wallpaper. When I was a child I wanted to be an actor, but I would have been terrible!” Jeanne was a photographer for a number of years, “but I was always reading and reading to train myself.” In her 40’s, her husband encouraged her to start writing. Each novel has taken her about three years to write. She has written two picture books, as well as the three Penderwick novels, and is working on the fourth Penderwick book, which will take place on Gardam Street again. The fifth and last book will return the Penderwicks to Arundel, the setting of the first book.

*Lise Kreps is a Librarian at the McGill Branch, Burnaby Public Library.*



## The Vital Importance of Library Programs for Youth at Risk: An Interview with Jeff Katz

By Caroline Johnson

Jeff Katz has been a professional librarian and educator for two decades. He works as a freelance library consultant, writer, editor and historian, and has conducted and presented numerous guest workshops and lectures in the US and Canada. He is an Adjunct Professor at SLAIS, UBC and teaches Literature and Other Materials for Young Adults and Library Services to Special Needs and At-Risk Young Adults. He currently divides his time between New York and Seattle.

**CJ:** Hello Jeff. Thanks so much for taking time out of your busy schedule to talk to YAACing! For those librarians who haven't had a chance to take your course, can you give some advice and suggestions on programming for at-risk youth?

**JK:** Absolutely. Thanks so much for inviting me. And, as a starting point, I can share a few magic words: passion, commitment, creativity, flexibility, open-mindedness, understanding, sensitivity, advocacy, lifelong learning, collaboration and persistence! I am pretty sure that these words will come up fairly frequently during the course of our discussion!

**CJ:** First of all, why is it so vital that public libraries provide services for this group? Why aren't they already accessing general library programs and services?

**JK:** The short answer is that serving special needs and at-risk populations is at the heart of public library services – it is one of the *core values* of library work. This is something that needs to be remembered, kept in mind by all library staff members at all times.

Public libraries have a mission to serve *all* segments of the population. And since the earliest days of public libraries, the goal has been to provide free educational, informational and recreational materials, as well as guidance to every member of society. If you take this idea – a truly *beautiful* and incredibly *noble* idea – one step further, you understand that a necessary focal point must be people who are less affluent or disadvantaged, who may be disenfranchised or marginalized, who may have language problems, who may be facing enormous psychological or emotional or physical challenges, who may need information or services but do not know how to (or simply cannot) access such information and services, and so forth. The great library theoretician, Michael Gorman, has said that the historic mission of the public library is to help *everybody*, but *especially* the

poor, the socially disadvantaged, and what he terms the “powerless.” I am a firm believer in this credo!

Now of course, there are many groups that can be classified as “special needs” or “at-risk” and, though plenty of commonalities exist, each group is unique (and obviously each member of each group is also unique). But taken together, it is possible to say that it is vital for public libraries to provide services for people who are at-risk or who have special needs precisely because public libraries believe in equal access, a level playing field for all and also in providing people with an awareness of what resources and choices are available to them. The public library should be the place where people can satisfy their educational, informational, and recreational needs and also the place where all people can discover new roads to travel and gain assistance in realizing their dreams.

As for why people with special needs or people who are at-risk may not be accessing library programs and services – well, the reasons are varied. It could be fear of not being welcomed (many have never been welcomed anywhere else); it could be negative past experiences with authority figures, government institutions, or even librarians and libraries; it could be embarrassment; it could be cultural background; it could be the feeling that the library is “uncool” or stuffy; it could be peer pressure; it could be sheer physical inability to get to a library; it could even be a complete unawareness of what libraries do or what can be found in the library – the belief that “there is nothing in the library for me.” And this is just a small sampling! So clearly, we librarians need to educate and prepare ourselves in many ways.

**CJ:** Thanks Jeff! These are all great points to keep in mind when pitching programs to the powers that be!

**CJ:** What are the most important types of programs to provide?

**JK:** Much is dependent upon the group in question. Programming is critical when it comes to YA services in general. When it comes to special needs and at-risk teens, this critical importance is raised to an even higher level. To summarize, there should be – actually, there *must* be – a wide range of programs created and offered, with the main ideas being to listen and respond to what is needed and wanted, to know what is *already* being offered in the community, to be creative, to be positive and determined, to be sensitive and aware of the multiplicity of issues that exist for every group and the individuals linked to these groups, to be a tireless promoter, to be constantly re-educating yourself and educating others. What is essential is close collaboration



with local schools and agencies, library colleagues, parents and caregivers but most of all, with special needs and at-risk teens themselves. At every step along the way - the planning, the carrying out and the evaluation - special needs and at-risk individuals and groups must play a major role.

Three key concepts for librarians are:

- 1) strive for involvement;
- 2) be open-minded and flexible;
- 3) attitude makes all the difference.

Programs themselves can be *inclusive* (programs open to all teens) or *specialized* and *targeted* (programs that are planned and designed for one or more specific groups of special needs and at-risk teens). And programs can happen inside or outside the library with the library acting as a *host* or a *sponsor* or a *participant*. There are a zillion programs and program ideas that exist out there; and I would be happy to share some of these with any YAACING readers, if they'd like to contact me.

**CJ:** What should librarians be keeping in mind when planning programs for this group?

**JK:** Well, certainly, the number one thing to keep in mind is that working with special needs and at-risk populations is part of the bedrock of public library services. This being said, it is critical to keep in mind, as I mentioned earlier, that collaboration, commitment and knowledge are paramount. It is also important to remember that every young person is unique. This is a tremendously important concept, since there is a tendency to think that all members of this group or that group are alike. That absurd notion has to be excised from one's consciousness. Each young person has had different circumstances that have affected his or her life; and every kid has wildly different "life baggage" that he or she is carrying. Many kids considered to be "special needs" or "at-risk" have had terrible experiences domestically, physically, psychologically or emotionally. Many have had negative experiences with the library in the past; and many feel suspicious of any representative from an outside agency or institution who offers something seemingly wonderful since they've had great things offered and then taken away in the past. We have to remember that, in essence, *these kids are kids* and it is possible that the library *can* make a huge difference in their lives. Even if we are able to help a young person simply feel welcomed and feel like a valued and respected person, we have performed a hugely important task. But we ourselves have to *want to do it!*

**CJ:** How can public librarians reach out to at-risk youth?

**JK:** How can they *not?! Again, we go back to collaboration! And also the simple act of *actually making an effort!* Again, we first have to *want* to reach out. Attitude is everything. We have to help create a positive environment; and we have to make ourselves known in the community. Many kids and many groups or agencies or even schools do not consider the library a partner or an ally or a source of great resources for themselves or their clients or students or charges. We need to spread the word about what we do; and at the same time, we need to listen carefully and *respond*: communicate and visit and welcome, then communicate and visit and welcome some more – and repeat *ad infinitum*. One thing that is for sure: once the library becomes "accepted" (or, dare I use this word, "liked"), the word will certainly get around that the library is a good and trustworthy (maybe even a *cool!*) place.*

In the case of special needs and at-risk groups, word of mouth is an especially powerful and meaningful element. Again though, attitude is vital. We can reach out to at-risk and special needs youth; but we have to *want* to do it; and we have to be willing to listen and learn, as well as share what we have. The techniques and methods are numerous and would probably take up way too much space, so I would say again, feel free to contact me or take my course! As you can confirm, Caroline, outreach is a prime topic in the course.

**CJ:** Are there community partners librarians can be working with? How can we identify them?

**JK:** There are always community partners to be working with! In fact, this is absolutely *essential!* Most libraries should have a pretty good sense of the groups and populations that are out there. But, even if we think we have every base covered, we never know about *every* potential partner unless we are constantly re-educating ourselves and re-engaging with the community. Surveying one's community and re-examining one's neighbourhood are activities that libraries and librarians need to be doing on a regular basis. Identifying population changes in a community, being aware of people in the library and on the street and always, always asking questions. Some of the major agencies in the city can also help with identifying local agencies and groups. And once one or two agencies are identified, it is pretty likely that you will be referred to *other* agencies as well. Again, the key is making the effort and asking questions and establishing a *real*, highly visible presence in the community. Then there is a very high degree of certainty that potential community partners will come to regard the *library* as a community partner; and a solid alliance will have been created.



I should add, though, that it is important to keep in mind that some agencies and many agency clients may have had less than splendid relationships and partnerships with the library in the past, so there is also that issue, potentially, to deal with. It is always a great idea to present *many* options to partners and potential partners when reaching out. This being said, though, there is no question that the vast majority of agencies and schools in the community will be thrilled to be approached by the library and will welcome the opportunity to work together on behalf of “their kids.” And even for those groups that may be a bit more resistant or skeptical, once it becomes clear that you are sincere and determined to make this new opportunity succeed, it is likely a new door will open.

**CJ:** What resources are available for librarians who want to plan this type of program? Any particular suggestions?

**JK:** Well, there are lots and lots of fabulous articles and guides that exist which detail techniques and programs and which describe experiences that others have had. Also, libraries generally have their own office or in-house department that focuses on special services or outreach services and these offices and departments are invaluable sources of assistance. In the field, agencies and schools and professional organizations also provide resources that can be utilized. Vancouver Public Library and Seattle Public Library, for example, have worked for years with special populations and should have plenty of great resources of their own. And organizations such as the McCreary Centre Society and Qmunity and Directions Youth Services Centre employ outstanding, brilliant and dedicated people, offering a wealth of resources.

**CJ:** What should librarians be aware of when working with youth at risk?

**JK:** Whether or not you are told flat out, you need to remember that you are making a huge difference in the lives of the young people to whom you are reaching out. Kids can sense when someone is being “real” and when someone is not. You need to be passionate and genuine, persistent and energetic, both idealistic and realistic, in a nutshell: flexible! A good sense of humour and an ability to not take yourself too seriously doesn’t hurt, either! The goal is to open up the world of the library and the possibilities that exist in the wider world to these young people.

**CJ:** Are you going to be offering your Youth at Risk course again at SLAIS?

**JK:** I sure hope so! I believe that there is a tentative plan to offer the course again in November 2011. At some point, it would be spectacular if the course was expanded from a one-credit, two-day affair to a full-fledged, three-credit extravaganza. But we do pack a whole lot into one credit and two days, don’t we?

**CJ:** Yes, you absolutely do! For those of you studying at SLAIS, I can’t recommend Jeff’s course highly enough. I would like to see SLAIS incorporate it into the core program.

**CJ:** Where are you working now and what’s next for you?

**JK:** Well, right now I am teaching an online course for SLAIS: Young Adult Literature and Other Materials. Simultaneously, I am busy getting a new archives and library consulting collective – Corvidae, LLC – off the ground (hey out there – we are looking for clients!), while also working on a book that should be completed by April 2012. I still keep dreaming of living and working full-time in Vancouver and perhaps that will happen sometime in the not-too-distant future. I do miss the city very dearly. Right now, I am back and forth between Seattle and New York with stops in Vancouver to teach whenever the opportunity presents itself. And speaking of teaching, there are some lovely and exciting course ideas that I hope to one day see realized – primarily related to YA Services, of course!

**CJ:** I’m looking forward to hearing what your new course ideas are!

Jeff, you’ve done a great job at giving us some pointers and re-motivating us to get out there and program for youth at risk! Thanks so much for giving us your time and such great advice and suggestions!

Jeff has very generously offered his email address for those of you with follow-up questions: [jklib91@gmail.com](mailto:jklib91@gmail.com). Jeff is a great supporter of programming for youth and would be happy to respond to email communications from interested readers who have questions or are seeking additional information about programs or resources.

*Caroline Johnson is a Children's Librarian at the New Westminster and Surrey Public Libraries.*



## SteamPunk: Adventure and History with a Twist

By Lee Anne Smith

*Leviathan* by Scott Westerfeld  
*The Hunchback Assignments* by Arthur Slade  
*Fever Crumb* by Philip Reeve

Steampunk is a strangely satisfying combination of science fiction, adventure, Victorian or alternate history with a juicy twist of engineering technology. The incongruence of all these genres and mechanical machinations meshing together makes steampunk novels really fun and exciting to read. Plus the protagonists in these novels are always spunky characters who make sure we totally get on board with them no matter what the danger.

Speaking of danger there is no shortage of that in steampunk novels. The breathless pace of these stories makes certain the reader stays glued to the page. There are also thought provoking 'what-if' scenarios that pose provocative questions which makes all of these books excellent read-alouds for upper elementary students.

For example Westerfeld's *Leviathan* is set in pre-World War I where Britain and her allies are using biotechnology to create hybrid bird/beasts for weaponry and huge living jellyfish creatures as airships for transporting these and other bizarre killing machines. The 'Clankers' on the other side have giant mechanized robots capable of complete destruction. Which side can triumph - the mechanical or biological engineers? Into the quandary jumps Deryn Sharpe (cool name) a girl posing as a boy in order to join the British Air Service. Deryn befriends the supposed enemy Prince Alek of Austria-Hungary, who is on the run from the assassins who killed his parents. Will they manage to outwit the assassins? I loved the twists and turns of this book. *Behemoth* is the sequel to *Leviathan*.

Arthur's Slade's trilogy *The Hunchback Assignments* is another gripping, story that features Modo - a hunchbacked orphan - as a secret agent for the

mysterious Permanent Association led by Modo's caretaker Mr. Socrates. Modo is seriously ugly but has the ability to transform his shape at will which comes in very handy when he, along with the beautiful but aloof agent Octavia, unearths a diabolical plot by the Clockwork Guild to take over the world from deep within London's sewers. Book 2, *The Dark Deeps* is set in a mythical ocean where ships keep disappearing. This assignment has Modo facing death by drowning only to be rescued into an amazing underworld utopia where technology has altered human life completely. But can Modo or this new technology save the inhabitants? As of this writing I haven't read the third book, *Empire of Ruins*, but I'm really looking forward to diving into it! The Hunchback Assignments' website is brilliant too.

<http://www.hunchbackassignments.com/>

If you are a teacher and want some great classroom activities try this website

<http://www.hunchbackassignments.com/steamtrunk/HunchbackStudyGuide.pdf>.

*Fever Crumb* is the first book in a series of three that are themselves a prequel to the *Mortal Engines* Quartet by Phillip Reeve. *Fever Crumb* (one more awesome name for a character) is another orphan who has been taken in and nurtured by a scientist, Dr. Crumb. Since she was a founding Fever's home has been the Godhead, a research station for the Order of Engineers where Fever is an apprentice. She is the only girl to serve in this order because women are not seen as reasonable creatures and therefore not suitable to be Engineers. However, Fever's past allows her to train with the other engineers. Fever starts to uncover her mysterious past when an archeologist, Kit Solvent, brings her to a top secret project deep in the heart of London. On top of this Fever keeps having strange memories that don't seem to be her own. In the midst of a civil uprising and an outside attack by nomadic tribe from the Frozen North Fever keeps being transported deep into the centre of the memories. Who are the people in them and why does everyone want Fever for their own?

If you want to break into some completely original, nifty writing this summer I highly recommend these three titles. Yay Steampunk!

*Lee Anne Smith is the Head of the Cambie Branch of the Richmond Public Library.*



## Singing, Dancing, Writing, Painting: Creative Art in Children's Lives

By Saeyong Kim

Creative art – making something true to our inner selves and inviting others to join in the fun by interacting with what we make – is one of the great joys of life. And in many cultures it has been both a communal activity and an important tradition. Be it dancing or painting, making music or making stories, art changes our lives and brings us together in “seeing and being and doing your all” (from *The Art Room*). This collection of ten picturebooks for children aims to reflect the diversity of modes of art and the cultures they spring from, while also focusing on the child protagonist as an active person involved with art, an artist indeed.

### The Drum Calls Softly

Bouchard, David and Shelley Willier. *The Drum Calls Softly*. Paintings by Jim Poitras. Singing and Drumming by Northern Cree. Calgary: Red Deer Press, 2008.

Bilingual text, bilingual audio CD included. Translation into Cree is done by Steve Wood, leader of the pow-wow group Northern Cree. Métis author Bouchard and Cree poet Willier depict for us the experience of being a child dancing the round dance, the song expressing aspects of daily life from morning through evening and culminating in a dream of understanding and harmony. The paintings by Poitras are breathtaking and full of wonder, especially the dramatic dance scenes. The inclusion of an indoor scene, dancing in a modern sports stadium, brings us the life and energy of this activity.

### Picturescape

Gutiérrez, Elisa. *Picturescape*. Vancouver: Simply Read Books, 2005.

In this lovely wordless picturebook we are invited to experience art appreciation as an enjoyable immersion, a creative activity in its own right. On his visit to the (Vancouver) Art Gallery, the protagonist takes an imaginary voyage through a series of Canada's best known paintings of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The seamless narrative meanders and hurtles through each painting (copied in its own signature style), linked by elements like a red balloon or a galloping horse, leaving us at the end breathless and excited but also glowing inside, just like the boy feels when he goes to bed that night: enriched by art.

### Aziz the Storyteller

Hughes, Vi. *Aziz the Storyteller*. Illus. Stefan Czernecki. Vancouver: Tradewind Books, 2002.

This tale based in the Middle East showcases storytelling as something magical and fruitful, a heritage which crosses boundaries and is passed from one artist to another. Aziz's father is worried that Aziz cannot make a living, but Aziz cannot resist the lure of stories told in the marketplace. The book is designed to look like ink script written on old scrolls with black line illustrations. Readers will enjoy this story about stories.

### The Sidewalk Rescue

Hutchins, Hazel. *The Sidewalk Rescue*. Illus. Ruth Ohi. Toronto: Annick Press, 2004.

When Josie draws a flower bed on the sidewalk, her older sister Morgan sees she's in trouble – there's a terrible lion coming after her! Everyone in the neighborhood stops by to help bring Josie out of her successive fixes, using their imaginations and different colors of chalk. The results are charming: friendliness, fun and fiction brought to life. This title is the essence of children's creative art – spontaneous, interactive and set in one's daily environment. Ohi's warm and humorous illustrations match the quirky text perfectly. You will want to go out and cover the sidewalk with picture stories.

### Hannah's Collections

Jocelyn, Marthe. *Hannah's Collections*. Toronto: Tundra Books, 2000.

Art is not high-brow at all in this exuberant account of collecting, sorting, counting and creating. Hannah collects Popsicle sticks, buttons, barrettes, small books, rings, seashells and more. When she can't decide which of her many collections to take to school, she puts them together to make a sculpture collection! Many children love to do what Hannah does; and you might go from reading about a sculpture collection to having one yourself. Lots of fun and texture are present in the illustrations, which are collages of the very items Hannah describes in the text.

### “I Did It Because –” : How a Poem Happens

Lesynski, Loris. *“I did it because –” : how a poem happens*. Illus. Michael Martchenko. Toronto: Annick Press, 2006.

An absolutely hilarious book composed of a poetry collection for children, group activities on reciting and reading aloud, how-to guides on writing poetry and information on the illustration process. Despite so many things happening at once, it is remarkably well put together and frolics along. The text on every page is



seemingly fused with the joyful illustrations. The poetry is delightful and the how-to sections are really helpful, encouraging children to play with *any* words and topics they like, whether sock fluff or dirty dogs. It includes lists of websites and book titles for further reading on drawing and poetry, both reading and writing it. Illustrated in pencil, watercolor and gouache. Disclaimer: "...poems DON'T HAVE TO RHYME."

### Abby's Birds

Schwartz, Ellen. *Abby's Birds*. Illus. Sima Elizabeth Shefrin. Vancouver: Tradewind Books, 2006.

Here the shared art of making folded paper figures, *Origami*, forges a link of friendship. When Abby moves to Mrs. Naka's neighborhood, the two watch robins nesting in a maple tree together and Mrs. Naka teaches Abby to make *tori* (birds) out of paper. The calm, quiet text follows Mrs. Naka, Abby and the robins from a first meeting in spring to a firm friendship in the winter. The illustrations—cut and pasted collages of papers and fabric in traditional Japanese prints—bring a lot of character and texture to the work.

### Aiko's Flowers

Umezawa, Rui. *Aiko's Flowers*. Illus. Yuji Ando. Toronto: Tundra Books, 1999.

The title is set in a tranquil Japanese neighborhood by the sea, where Aiko struggles to learn *Ikebana*, Japanese flower arranging, from her mother. When not a form of spontaneous play, art is often brought to children as part of their education or as a classical tradition, which can sometimes be stressful, especially if they are in the learning stages of a highly structured art. Aiko learns to relax, and take in the heart of the philosophy of *Ikebana*, by enjoying the beauty of the flowers first. The detailed illustrations are soft, colorful, and evocative (possibly nostalgic).

### The Art Room

Vande Griek, Susan. *The Art Room*. Illus. Pascal Milelli. Toronto: Groundwood books, 2002.

Based on the period in her life when Emily Carr taught students art in her studio, the free verse text shows us her vitality, love of animals and insistence on observance from real life, but emphasizes not Carr herself but the impact of her style on the students she taught. We experience from the students' point of view what it was like to ascend to "The Art Room" or go out to the park, learning to see, notice, observe. After lessons the students are reluctant to leave; but when they do go out into the world they "[go] out to see with eyes that [are] wide." The warm, deep, oil on canvas illustrations show

scenes from around Vancouver in the early 1900's with a glow you want to touch.

### A Fiddle for Angus

Wilson, Budge. *A Fiddle for Angus*. Illus. Susan Tooke. Toronto: Tundra Books, 2001.

Music and family life in Cape Breton are the focus of this story. When Angus decides he wants to do more than hum along, his loving musical family waits for him to choose the perfect instrument for himself: a fiddle. Now Angus must learn the skills to set free the music he feels inside; and it will take a lot of practice. Getting to know an instrument is a long process but can be enjoyable in itself. The beautiful illustrations (Acrylic on watercolor paper) are filled with sunlight, wind and the smell of the sea.

*Saeyong Kim is an MACL student at the School of Library Archival and Information Studies at the University of British Columbia. An earlier version of this article was written for the class LIBR 523: Canadian Literature and Other Materials for Children at UBC.*

## Life on the Prairies – an Annotated Bibliography

By Helen Pinsky

The Canadian prairies are vast and have historical significance as the world's breadbasket. Yet, they have a diminished impact and voice in today's world, largely because of a stagnant population, a lack of wealth and a dearth of large urban centres. Still, prairie natives and those who have learned to love and respect the prairies, feel an affinity to the vast spaciousness and to the distinctiveness of its inhabitants. This annotated bibliography identifies books that recognize the unique qualities of Canadian prairie life. They are about geography and nostalgia, as well as a prairie "feeling" and pioneer spirit. Selections include several examples of illustrated literature geared towards various ages, including modern and historical YA novels.

### Josepha: A Prairie Boy's Story

McGugan, Jim. *Josepha: a prairie boy's story*. Illustrated by Murray Kimber. Red Deer: Red Deer College Press, 1994.

Josepha, an immigrant to the Canadian prairies in 1900, sits in the classroom's primary section, isolated and frustrated and barely able to speak the language - "A blushing bull in primary row." One day he tries to leave school, to earn a pittance bagging grain. His only friend,



the young narrator of this poignant immigrant tale, suffers at the thought of losing Josepha. He and Josepha break through language barriers by gifting each other with precious mementos of their connection. Bold and intense illustrations strongly evoke the golden wheat fields and the huge prairie skies.

### **Louis Son of the Prairies**

Palud-Pelletier, Noëlie. *Louis Son of the Prairies*. Illustrated by Philippe Dupas. Translated by Elizabeth Maguet. Winnipeg: Pemmican Publications Inc., 1990.

This is the story of young Louis Riel, the Metis leader who was executed for instigating the North West Resistance and is now considered a hero and visionary. Palud-Pelletier describes Metis life in the 1800s in great detail, in order to put Riel's early years in proper context and to lay the foundation for his passion to have Metis inclusion in Canadian political life. She describes in detail the great buffalo hunt, as well as Riel's father's discussions of politics and trade. Drawings and maps add depth to this valuable information book. It is suitable for primary grade students.

### **Porcupine**

Tilly, Meg. *Porcupine*. Toronto: Tundra Books, 2007.

Life is not easy for twelve year old Jack (short for Jacqueline) Cooper. Her father was killed in Afghanistan and her mother collapsed into a self-centred depression, ultimately dropping Jack and her siblings off at the Alberta home of their great grandmother, whose existence was previously unknown. Jack assumes full responsibility for siblings Tess and Simon and adjusts to life with Gran. Gran epitomizes the independent prairie pioneer spirit – she is sharp and prickly; and she has to make a little go a long way. Ultimately Jack starts to find strength in family love and trust. References to Calgary and to rural prairie life give this story a strong sense of place.

### **A Prairie Alphabet**

Bannatyne-Cugnet, Jo. *A Prairie Alphabet*. Illustrated by Yvette Moore. Montreal: Tundra Books, 1992.

This is a sophisticated alphabet book, aimed at amusing adults as well as young children. Details of prairie life are included in each page, from endless horizons to John Deere tractors to Ukrainian dance costumes. Alliterative captions with prairie words and realistic, action-oriented images accompany each letter. The "P" caption, for example, is: "The prairie has the pattern of a patchwork quilt". But there's a surprise! The image for "P" also includes planes, pilots, a pond, ponies and more. Guides at the back of the book reveal extra words and explain

interesting features about prairie life. It's an entertaining book that stirs the imagination.

### **A Prairie as Wide as the Sea**

Ellis, Sarah. *A Prairie as Wide as the Sea: The Immigrant Diary of Ivy Weatherall*. Toronto: Scholastic Canada Ltd., 2001.

Part of the series *Dear Canada*, this is the diary of an eleven year old London girl who, with her family, immigrates to Mitorie, Saskatchewan in 1926. Ivy Weatherall is cheerful and chatty with a positive attitude. In adapting to her new home, Ivy experiences some hardships and has to assume many new responsibilities. She also makes friends, encounters mishaps and discovers prairie treasures, such as Saskatoon berry pie, snow days and box socials. The diary entries are amusing and full of adventures. They reveal much about prairie life in the early part of the last century. Recommended for ages 8 – 12.

### **A Prairie Boy's Summer**

Kurelek, William. *A Prairie Boy's Summer*. Montreal: Tundra Books, 1975.

There are so many wonderful things for a boy to do in the summer in the prairies. William Kurelek describes twenty activities, in illustration and in text, as he remembers them from childhood. In doing so, he captures the heart of a prairie child's existence – sometimes stark, sometimes difficult – but always forming the rich tapestry of young William's life. Illustrations are classic Kurelek style boasting prairie colours like green meadows, endless blue sky and golden wheat. His people are drawn full of character and evoke a simple and straightforward world.

### **Prairie Pictures**

Matheson, Shirlee S. *Prairie Pictures*. Toronto: McClelland & Stewart Inc., 1989.

Twelve year old Sherri has moved to Gardin, Alberta with her family. They live in a new duplex surrounded by prairie clay that is far away from anywhere. Adjusting to her new town is difficult for Sherri. It's a harsh place with strong resentments between ranching, industry and the oil patch families. Sherri works hard to make a place for herself and her little sister in a prairie reality that faces the issues of poverty, race and class tension. Matheson writes with a strong sense of place, also describing exciting historical sites and warm friendships, culminating in a well-rounded perspective on small town Alberta.



**Prairie Summer**

Hundal, Nancy. *Prairie Summer*. Illustrated by Brian Deines. Toronto: Fitzhenry & Whiteside Publishers, 1999.

Freeflowing poetry carries the rhythm of the prairie winds in this praise of prairie summer. City cousins love visiting their prairie cousins, rediscovering each summer the sights, smells and delights of the landscape. Hundal includes every sensation from the taste of homemade jam to the sound of the wind and grasshoppers. Who couldn't resist the attraction of the city kids to their vacation paradise? Strong forceful paintings in golden tones evoke nostalgia and repeat the text's sense of wonder at prairie beauty.

**A Prairie Year**

Bannatyne-Cugnet, Jo. *A Prairie Year*. Illustrated by Yvette Moore. Montreal, Tundra Books, 1994.

This book takes the reader through the calendar year with stories and images of prairie life. There are finely drawn details about seasonal activities and the intertwining of lives in the responsibilities and celebrations of life. Families and community are at the centre of each tale. This book would add interest and dimension to an elementary school curriculum on Canadian studies.

**Under a Prairie Sky**

Carter, Laurel. *Under a Prairie Sky*. Illustrated by Alan and Lea Daniel. Victoria: Orca Book Publishers, 2002.

A boy describes how he dons his Mountie outfit, gets on his black horse Bess and rides across the prairie to find his wandering brother Will. A storm is coming. Dark clouds burst over the familiar prairie landscape as the boys reach the safety of their barn. This book touches on the dreams of every prairie boy: to find adventure as a Mountie, battle fierce elements and protect little brothers from the prairie storms.

*Helen Pinsky is an MLIS student at the School of Library Archival and Information Studies at the University of British Columbia. An earlier version of this article was written for the class LIBR 523: Canadian Literature and Other Materials for Children at UBC.*

**Reviews****Dog Loves Books** by Louise Yates

Knopf, 2010

Audience: Preschool

A whimsical picture book that celebrates a love of reading and a visual portrayal of the worlds that reading opens up to us. Dog -- a cute, ever-smiling soul -- so loves reading that he opens a bookstore. Preparing for the Grand Opening involves a bath and balloons. But... nobody shows up, except a lady who wants to order tea and a man looking for directions. So dog decides to pass the time by reading and becomes immersed in adventures involving dinosaurs, kangaroos and space travel. So absorbed, in fact that he's quite surprised when a little girl comes in looking for books! Dog knows exactly the right books for her. Yates' simple watercolour-and-pencil illustrations are delightful. An excellent book for pre-school storytimes, particularly appropriate for the focus on books themselves during Summer Reading Club.

- Jon Scop, *Burnaby Public Library and Vancouver Public Library*

**Creature ABC** by Andrew Zuckerman.

Chronicle Books, 2009.

Audience: Preschool

*Creature ABC* is a magnificent alphabet book. Each letter is illustrated by two pages of crisply detailed photographs of fish, insects, birds, amphibians and mammals.

Few books take my breath away as this does. Each scale of the chameleon, feather of the yellow canary and quill of the porcupine stands out in sharp relief against the white studio background. The mandrill stares at the camera, looking unnervingly reminiscent of a man in a monkey mask. This is a book to inspire a new generation of naturalists.

*Creature ABC* is a child's version of Zuckerman's coffee table book *Creature*, itself an exciting visual experience. This book will not sit on your shelves for long before it is snapped up by eager little hands. I love carrying books that can inspire such joy and awe!

- April Ens, *Vancouver Public Library*



**Taken** by Norah McClintock  
Orca, 2009.  
Audience: Teen

A bunch of girls disappeared near where Stephanie lives, which is creepy enough, but they also had the same long brown hair and were the same age as Stephanie. Stephanie's mom and her loathsome boyfriend have even asked her not to run away again, hanging an article about the murders on the fridge. One night, against her better judgment, Stephanie takes a shortcut on her way home and wakes up bound in a remote cabin with no idea who took her or where she is. She just knows she needs to get out of there and quick.

*Taken* is a short, thrilling read; I felt like I was in an episode of *Criminal Minds* but from the victim standpoint. It was also neat that it was a survival story and had an ending I didn't see coming until it had already unfolded, despite my amateur profiling job. The last page left me vividly imagining the emotional fallout for the characters.

- *Darby Love, Squamish Public Library*

**Sew Teen: Make Your Own Cool Clothes** by Sheila Zent. Sixth & Spring, 2006  
Audience: Teen

Summer is the perfect time to become a Sew Teen. In *Sew Teen: Make Your Own Cool Clothes* by Sheila Zent you can learn how to make the clothes that you want to wear. You learn about picking out the fabric you love and turning it into the clothes that fit both you and your personal style.

- *Susan Redmond, Fraser Valley Regional Library*

## Call for Submissions

YAACING is published four times per year and is always looking for submissions that might interest children's and teen specialists in BC libraries. We accept news pieces, articles, program descriptions and ideas, conference reports, and much more. If you would like to write a regular column, send us a brief pitch.

Submissions should be no more than 2500 words, sent as .doc or text files. Please include a byline with your job title and workplace, or for students: your school, program and class information if applicable.

YAACING invites your contributions to our new Review and Felt Story sections:

**Reviews:** Please send us reviews of books, blogs, websites or other resources. Submissions should be no more than 300 words. Longer reviews may be considered for publication as featured articles.

**Felt Stories:** Share your creativity! YAACING is looking for felt story patterns. Submissions should include a printable pattern, a photograph of the finished product, and a related rhyme or note about the origin of the story.

The deadline for the Fall 2011 issue of YAACING is **September 1<sup>st</sup> 2011**. Email your submissions to the editors at [YAACING@gmail.com](mailto:YAACING@gmail.com)

