

**42 Miles**  
Tracie Vaughn Zimmer  
Clarion Books, 2008  
73 pages

**SUMMARY:**

JoEllen's parents live 42 miles apart from each other, a distance that separates her two different worlds, sets of friends, and different identities. As she prepares to turn thirteen, JoEllen decides she wants to find a way to join the two.

**IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...**

*Heartbeat* by Sharon Creech

*Granny Torrelli Makes Soup* by Sharon Creech

*Where I Live* by Eileen Spinelli

**WEBSITES:**

<http://www.tracievaughnzimmer.com> Home page of the author, includes her biography, a look at her other works, and a sneak peak at her new book.

**BOOKTALK:**

JoEllen's parents have been divorced since she was a baby, so living between two homes is nothing new. Neither is the fact that she is called Joey by father and her relatives, and Ellen by her mother and her friends at school. What is new is that this year her father moved to the family farm, 42 miles away. The divide between her two homes highlights her two worlds and her nearly separate identities. As she nears her thirteenth birthday, JoEllen decides to bring the two together. Can she do it! Read *42 Miles*, and find out for yourself, if JoEllen can build a bridge between the two.

**Prepared by:** Gail King

## **100 Days and 99 Nights**

By Alan Madison; Illustrated by Julia Denos

Little, Brown and Company, 2008

138pages

### **SUMMARY:**

This timely realistic fiction book describes, at times poignantly, the burdens and sacrifices endured by military families. Through the distinctive and engaging voice of seven year old Esme, the range of feelings experienced by the children of military parents is convincingly rendered, as dad is deployed for 100 days and 99 nights. The author uses wordplay and generous examples of figurative language including alliteration and similes, “Germany was oatmeal hot in the summer and ice-cream cold in the winter,” to describe the highs and lows of military life: the excitement of traveling around the world, the anxiety of waiting for a loved one’s safe return, and the yearning to do something tangible on the home front in support of friends and family who are far from home.

### **IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...**

*Across the Blue Pacific: a World War II Story*, by Louise Borden

*Letters to a Soldier*, by David Falvey

*Piper Reed: Navy Brat* by Kimberly Holt

*Daddy's in Iraq, But I Want Him Back*, by Carmen Hoyt

*Night Catch* by Brenda Ehrmantraut

*H is for Honor: A Military Family Alphabet*, by Devin Scillian

### **WEBSITES:**

- Author Alan Madison  
<http://www.madisonia.com/index.html>
- Helping Kids Survive Deployment
- <http://www.deploymentkids.com/>
- Operation: Military Kids  
<http://www.operationmilitarykids.org/public/home.aspx>

**BOOKTALK:*****100 Days and 99 Nights***

By Alan Madison

It was a Saturday morning in the kitchen like all others before it. We were beating the batter and beginning the butter when my father, the finest flipper from Fiji to France, put his spatula down and his thick arms around us.

“Esmerelda, Isaac”...Oh no, I inside-fretted. Anytime he called us by our full first names, something big happened, like we’d get another pet or...move to another country. Napoleon left his spot next to the fireplace and slow-walked closer, head down, probably expecting to hear that we were adopting the stray cat that wandered our block, or...

“I have to go away,” he said immediately, so as not to make us worry any longer. “We’re moving again!” moaned Ike.

“No...no, this time I have to go alone.”

It was scary silent except for the angry hiss of butter skiing across the skillet.

“We’re not moving?” I asked, relieved and worried at the same exact moment.

“No. I have to go to a faraway place for one hundred days and ninety-nine nights,” he answered in his most deeply serious voice.

All I could think to say was, “That’s a long time.” So I said it: “That’s a long time.”

Esme is in 2<sup>nd</sup> grade and is used to moving around a lot, since her dad is in the military. She has lived in South Korea, Germany and Kenya. But now they are living in Virginia and everything is going well, until dad breaks the news that he has to go away, this time by himself. And with the country fighting in a war, it is scary when dad has to go off to a faraway place for 100 days. Read *100 Days and 99 Nights* to find out how Esme adjusts to helping her mom, watching out for her annoying little brother and confronting problems at school, while anxiously waiting for her dad’s return.

**Prepared by: Terri Catalano**

**All the Lovely Bad Ones**  
Mary Downing Hahn  
Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2008  
182 pages

**SUMMARY:**

Travis and his sister Corey decide to boost business at their grandmother's Vermont inn by staging a few "hauntings" that soon draw tourists from across the country, but when their antics awaken a dark force, they must find a way to put to rest the ghosts they have disturbed.

**IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...**

*Wait Till Helen Comes* by Mary Downing Hahn

*The Old Willis Place* by Mary Downing Hahn

*Christina's Ghost* by Betty Wren Wright

**WEBSITES:**

[www.marydowninghahnbooks.com](http://www.marydowninghahnbooks.com) – the Author's Official Website

**BOOKTALK:**

Travis, age 12, and his younger sister Corey are high-spirited kids who love to play tricks on unsuspecting targets. When they discover that their Grandmother's Vermont inn is reportedly haunted, they can't wait to cook up a few ghosts of their own to scare the guests and liven up their summer vacation. But their pranks turn too real when they awaken Ada Jack, a terrifying and vengeful spirit. Events soon spiral out of control frightening the staff and guests at the Inn and Travis must come up with a way to rid them of the ghosts. This is a fast paced ghost story complete with creaky floors, blood-curdling screams and a dark grove of trees. You're sure to be kept on the edge of your seat by reading *All the Lovely Bad Ones* by Mary Downing Hahn.

**Prepared by:**

Matthew Strickland, [StrickMD@Spart6.Org](mailto:StrickMD@Spart6.Org)

**Breakfast in the Rainforest:**  
**A Visit with Mountain Gorillas**

Richard Sobol  
Candlewick, 2008  
40 Pages

Summary: Award-winning photographer, Richard Sobol, takes us on a journey through the rainforests of Uganda to visit endangered mountain gorillas. His travel journal includes eye-catching photographs of the gentle giants, Uganda and the people of Uganda.

If you like this book, try:

*Mountain Gorilla* by Barbara Somervill

*Gorilla Doctors: Saving Endangered Apes* by Pamela S. Turner

*Endangered Mountain Gorillas* by Bobbie Kalman

*Who on Earth is Dian Fossey: Defender of Mountain Gorillas* by Jill Kushner

*Uganda* by Ettagle Blauer

Websites:

[http://www.defenders.org/wildlife\\_and\\_habitat/wildlife/gorilla.php](http://www.defenders.org/wildlife_and_habitat/wildlife/gorilla.php)

Interesting facts about mountain gorillas including height, weight lifespan, and diet.

<http://www.gorillafund.org/index.php> The Diane Fossey Gorilla Fund site has information about gorilla conservation.

<http://kids.nationalgeographic.com/Animals/CreatureFeature/Mountain-gorilla> Photographs, facts and a short video about mountain gorillas.

Booktalk:

Did you know that there are fewer than 700 mountain gorillas left in the world? The world's largest primates live only in Africa and are endangered. Richard Sobol, award-winning photographer, takes us on a journey through the challenging rainforests of Uganda to see these magnificent creatures. He tries to raise public awareness of the need for conservation of the mountain gorillas and to share with us what he has learned about these fascinating creatures.

**Prepared by:** Susan Schoer

## **Colonial Voices: Hear Them Speak**

Kay Winters

Dutton Children's Books, 2008

32 pages

### **SUMMARY:**

Ethan, an errand boy for the town printer, must deliver a message to the colonists about an important meeting at the Old South Meeting House. As he delivers this urgent message, readers learn about colonial life by visiting a clockmaker, midwife, slave, butcher, and more. These colonial voices speak to the reader in prose and transport the reader to a day in the life of a colonist.

### **IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...**

*Boston Tea Party*, Pamela Duncan Edwards (Putnam, 2001)

*King George: What Was His Problem?: The Whole Hilarious Story of the Revolution*, Steve Sheinkin (Flash Point, 2009)

*Independent Dames: What You Never Knew About the Women and Girls of the American Revolution*, Laurie Halse Anderson (Simon & Schuster, 2008)

### **WEBSITES:**

1. Kid Info.com – Your Guide to Colonization and Colonial Life  
Compare colonial life to today's life, many links to video clips and primary source documents.  
[www.kidinfo.com/American\\_History/Colonization\\_Colonial\\_Life.html](http://www.kidinfo.com/American_History/Colonization_Colonial_Life.html)
2. 42Explore2 – Colonial Life  
Links to rare maps and activities and projects such as: be a history detective or a colonial newspaper reporter.  
[www.42explore2.com/colonial.htm](http://www.42explore2.com/colonial.htm)
3. Social Studies for Kids – Colonial Times  
Explore farming, religion, education, food and more in the American colonies.  
[www.socialstudiesforkids.com/subjects/coloialtimes.htm](http://www.socialstudiesforkids.com/subjects/coloialtimes.htm)

**BOOKTALK:**

*COLONIAL VOICES – Hear Them Speak*

By Kay Winters

“The big brick oven heats the room until we swelter, but bakes the bread with thickened crusts the town folk crave. I sift flour into a wooden trough and stir the batch. My apprentice kneads a hundred pounds with burly arms and practiced hands. Slowly, the dough bubbles and rises. “Like liberty,” I say. Here’s Ethan, making his rounds. He hands me a notice and shares the secret from the Sons of Liberty.”

Ethan, an errand boy for the printer begins each day at 5:30 AM, with each day seeming just like the last. Until one day, when he is tasked with delivering an important message to the townsfolk from the Sons of Liberty. Ethan makes his way to the local school, the shoemaker, the basket trader and many others with this important information. Along the way, readers peek into the lives of the colonists for a historical moment in time. At the end of Ethan’s day, the Boston Tea Party begins. If you like history, poetry, and excitement, these colonial voices will speak to you!

Prepared by: Jenny Newstead

## **A Dog On His Own**

Mary Jane Auch  
Holiday House, 2008  
153 pages

### **SUMMARY:**

K-10 is a dog that prefers to be called “independent”, not “stray” or “mutt”. But this mixed breed dog is wary of making friends after being disappointed time after time. Told in first person, this book gives insight into what life as a dog could be like. K-10 has many experiences: many humorous, some sad, and some even a bit scary. This book is very appealing to animal lovers and is ideal for reading aloud.

### **IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...**

*Angus and Sadie*, Cynthia Voight  
*A dog's life: autobiography of a stray*, Ann M. Martin  
*Everything for a dog*, Ann. M. Martin  
*The good dog*, Avi  
*Ribsy*, Beverly Cleary

### **WEBSITES:**

Auch Books, <http://www.mjauch.com>, the website of Mary Jane and Herm Auch — children's book authors and illustrators.

Good Reads, [http://www.goodreads.com/author/show/202355.Mary\\_Jane\\_Auch](http://www.goodreads.com/author/show/202355.Mary_Jane_Auch), biography and list of books written by the author.

Animal Shelter.org, [http://www.animalshelter.org/shelters/South\\_Carolina.asp](http://www.animalshelter.org/shelters/South_Carolina.asp), provides links to shelters in SC

Pet Finder, <http://www.petfinder.com/pet-adoption>, information for families looking to adopt a pet. Includes a pet search.

### **BOOKTALK:**

*A Dog On His Own*  
By Mary Jane Auch



Are you a dog lover? Do you ever look at a dog and wonder what he's thinking about? Then the book A Dog On His Own is for you. After having 6 different owners, K-10 decides to become "independent", but when caught stealing meat, he winds up in the animal shelter once again. He makes plans to escape with two other dogs when he isn't adopted after his first day. When one of the dogs is returned to its owner and the other one disappears, K-10 falls in with a Rottweiler and Doberman, who are very street-wise. He soon begins to realize that living on his own is not as much fun as he thought it was going to be. If you want to find out if K-10 ever finds a loving home, you'll have to read A Dog On His Own.

**Prepared by:**

Harriet Good

## **Every Soul a Star**

Wendy Mass

Little Brown and Company, 2008

322 pages

**SUMMARY:** Ally lives at the Moon Shadow Campground where her family is getting ready for thousands of visitors coming to view a rare solar eclipse. Bree is aiming to becoming the next top fashion model or at least the next Homecoming Queen. Add Joel, who loves science fiction and art, and is trying to avoid summer school, and Ryan, Ally's childhood crush. *Every Soul a Star* is a story about unlikely friendships, a little bit of science and some very different characters finding their place in the universe.

### **IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...**

*11 Birthdays* by Wendy Mass

*Jeremy Fink and the Meaning of Life* by Wendy Mass

*A Crooked Kind of Perfect* by Linda Urban

*A Wrinkle in Time* by Madeleine L'Engle

### **WEBSITES:**

Author web site for Wendy Mass, [www.wendymass.com](http://www.wendymass.com)

Find information about the author and all her books.

Total Solar Eclipse, <http://www.exploratorium.edu/eclipse/2008/>

Learn about a total solar eclipse that occurred in 2008.

Kids' Astronomy, <http://www.kidsastronomy.com/>

Learn all about astronomy and the constellations.

Kids Connect,

<http://www.kidskonnnect.com/subject-inde/15-science/102-star-a-constellations.html>

Find interesting information about constellations.

Eclipse Chaser, [www.eclipsechaser.com](http://www.eclipsechaser.com)

Read about the web site author's experiences viewing eclipses and learn how to plan for a trip to view a solar eclipse

NASA web site, <http://eclipse.gsfc.nasa.gov/eclipse.html>

Explore the section of NASA's web site with information about many types of eclipses.

**BOOKTALK:***Every Soul a Star*

by Wendy Mass

Ally's family is busy getting their Moon Shadow Campground ready for an enormous event. Thousands of scientists and star gazers will all be converging there for the best view of a rare total eclipse of the sun. Ally loves the Moon Shadow and her family's simple life there with nature, the stars, her labyrinth and the campers. She is about to be joined by Bree whose major goals in life are to become the next Homecoming Queen and be discovered as a fashion model and who couldn't imagine living without her cell phone. Add Joel to the mix – an overweight kid who loves science fiction and art, and is coming to help his science teacher as a way to avoid summer school. Then there's Ryan, Ally's childhood crush who might be taken in by Bree's beauty. Add a piece of news about to change Bree and Ally's lives in a very big way and make them plot together against their parents, and you have a fascinating story about strangers coming together, unlikely friendships and finding your place in the universe.

**Prepared by:** Mary Ries

## **Farmer George Plants a Nation**

By Peggy Thomas; Paintings by Layne Johnson  
Calkins Creek, An Imprint of Boyds Mills, Press, Inc. 2008  
40pages

### **SUMMARY:**

George Washington is known as the father of our country and our first president, but he was also a successful farmer. Through experimentation with seeds, tools and fertilizer, he was able to produce a self-sufficient farm at Mount Vernon. In addition to detailing the scientific advances he implemented on his plantation, this non-fiction book (as the title indicates) unfolds as a metaphor that chronicles George Washington's challenges to create a profitable business in agriculture and leading a nation to freedom. Endsheets are a map of George Washington's farm of Mount Vernon.

### **IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...**

*Where Washington Walked*, by Raymond Bial

*Mount Vernon*, by Mary Collins

*Mount Vernon*, by Andrew Santella

*Who Was George Washington?*, Roberta Edwards

*George Washington: Farmer, Soldier, President*, by Pamela Hill Nettleton

### **WEBSITES:**

- George Washington's Mount Vernon Estate and Garden <http://www.mountvernon.org/>
- George Washington's World for Kids  
<http://www.washingtonsworld.org/>.
- America's Story from America's Library  
[http://www.americaslibrary.gov/aa/wash/aa\\_wash\\_subj.html](http://www.americaslibrary.gov/aa/wash/aa_wash_subj.html)
- George Washington: A National Treasure  
<http://www.georgewashington.si.edu/kids/index.html>
- George Washington Trivia  
[http://www.washingtonpublishers.com/Washingtonia/george\\_washington\\_trivia.htm](http://www.washingtonpublishers.com/Washingtonia/george_washington_trivia.htm)

**BOOKTALK:**

*Farmer George Plants a Nation*

By Peggy Thomas

Paintings by Layne Johnson

We all know that George Washington was our first president. We also know that he was the commander in chief of the Continental Army in the American Revolutionary War. And he is often called the “father of our country” - but did you know that he was a successful farmer who turned his plantation, Mount Vernon, into a money-making farm?

George Washington was smart and loved farming his land. He experimented with seeds and thought about ways to get better crops, including which manure was the best fertilizer, horse, cow or sheep, and he invented machinery that saved time and energy on the farm. Even while he was a general leading the patriots to victory and then building a new country as our first president, his thoughts were never far from his beloved Mount Vernon and the crops, shrubs, vegetables, plants and trees he wanted to grow. As he wrote in 1788, “I hope, some day or another, we shall become a storehouse and granary for the world.” And many would say, because of George Washington, we are.

Read *Farmer George Plants a Nation* and see how George Washington “planted the seed of freedom on the battlefield, and with his ingenuity as a farmer and leadership as the nation’s first president, the United States grew into a world leader in farming.”

**Prepared by: Terri Catalano**

## **Found**

Margaret Peterson Haddix  
Scholastic Inc., 2008

### **SUMMARY:**

Thirteen years ago a mysterious plane landed without authorization, without a pilot, and without a crew. The only people on board were thirty-six babies. Fast forward to Jonah Skidmore, one of the original 36, who receives a note in the mail stating he is one of the missing. If that is true, what is he missing from, and who has found him?

### **IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...**

*Three Days* by Donna Jo Napoli

*Running out of time* by Margaret Peterson Haddix

### **WEBSITES:**

<http://www.haddixbooks.com/home.html> This official site of the author includes her bio and information about her many titles, including the Shadow Children series.

### **BOOKTALK:**

Thirteen-year-old Jonah has always known his parents adopted him. That topic is discussed openly and often. The same can not be said for Chip, a new neighbor and friend, who learns he, too, is adopted, when he and Jonah receive identical letter declaring they are two of the missing. Missing from what? As they hunt for clues to the puzzling notes, they discover that thirteen years ago an unauthorized plane landed carrying on board 36 babies...no pilot, no crew...only babies. Does that have anything to do with them? And if they were missing, who has found them? Find out for yourself. Read Margaret Peterson Haddix's *Found*.

**Prepared by:** Gail King

## **George Washington Carver**

Tonya Bolden

Abrams Books for Young Readers, 2008

41 pages

### **SUMMARY:**

The amazing life story of George Washington Carver, one of our country's most well-known African Americans, from his beginnings as a sickly slave child to his years as an esteemed professor at Tuskegee Institute in Alabama. With details in both words and pictures, including photographs and Carver's own drawings and paintings, this book informs the reader of Carver's many accomplishments in his life-long quest for learning.

### **IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY . . .**

*The Ground-breaking, Chance-taking Life of George Washington Carver and Science and Invention in America*, Cheryl Harness

*Yours for Justice, Ida B. Wells: The Daring Life of a Crusading Journalist*, Philip Dray

*Barack Obama: Son of Promise, Child of Hope*, Nikki Grimes

*Mark Twain: An American Star*, Elizabeth MacLeod

### **WEBSITES:**

George Washington Carver National Monument, Missouri, <http://www.nps.gov/gwca/index.htm>

The Legacy of George Washington Carver, <http://www.lib.iastate.edu/spcl/gwc/bio.html>

George Washington Carver, <http://www.ideafinder.com/history/inventors/carver.htm>

Tuskegee University Legend - Dr. George W. Carver,

<http://www.tuskegee.edu/global/story.asp?s=1107203&ClientType=Print>

### **BOOKTALK:**

Do you know "The Peanut Man"? In Tonya Bolden's biography, George Washington Carver, we find out that Carver never wanted to be known as "The Peanut Man" any more than he wanted to cause a commotion in his life. His early fascination with plants led to his extensive study of crops to take the place of cotton in the south, where Carver earned his nickname. Peanuts, sweet potatoes, and soybeans were only some of the plants Carver studied in his life-long pursuit of learning. But it's his amazing journey from slavery in Missouri to schools across the Great Plains to his professorship at Tuskegee Institute under Booker T. Washington that truly fascinate.

Always observing, always learning, follow the life of scientist and inventor George Washington Carver through words and photographs in Tonya Bolden's detailed account of this calm, diligent man, not a mere "Peanut Man" at all.

### **Prepared by:**

Amber Keeran

## **The Gollywopper Games**

Jody Feldman  
Greenwillow Books  
308 pages

### **SUMMARY:**

When Gil Goodson's dad is accused of embezzling five million dollars from the Golly Toy and Game Company, Gil and his family are treated like criminals by the media, their friends, and the entire town. Even after his father is proven innocent, their reputation is destroyed. Gil can't wait to move to a new town and start over, but their family can't afford it. Then the Golly Toy and Game Company announces the Gollywopper Games, a chance for Gil to win a fortune and a new start. But in order to win, Gil must answer trivia, solve puzzles, and complete stunts better than thousands of other kids.

### **IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...**

*The Wright Three*, Blue Balliett

*Are You Smart, or What? A Bizarre Book of Games & Fun for Everyone*, Pat Battaglia

*The Puzzling World of Winston Breen*, Eric Berlin

*Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, Roald Dahl

*The Brainiest Insaniest Ultimate Puzzle Book!*, Robert Leighton, Mike Shenk, Amy Goldstein

*The Westing Game*, Ellen Raskin

*The 39 Clues Book 1: The Maze of Bones*, Rick Riordan

*C D C?*, William Steig

### **WEBSITES:**

Gollywopper Games

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

This site includes book reviews, information about the book, and games to play.

BrainBoosters

<http://school.discoveryeducation.com/brainboosters/>

This site has several different logic puzzles to use in the classroom.

Enchanted Learning Logic Puzzles

<http://www.enchantedlearning.com/math/logic/puzzles/>

This site has several logic puzzles.

Hoagies' Gifted Education Pages

[http://www.hoagiesgifted.org/brain\\_teasers.htm](http://www.hoagiesgifted.org/brain_teasers.htm)

This site has a list of several websites with logic puzzles and games.



**BOOKTALK:**

*The Gollywhopper Games*

By Jody Feldman

One in 25,000. Those are the odds of Gil Goodson winning the Gollywhopper Games. He has been studying the history of the Golly Toy and Game Company for months, ever since his dad was falsely accused of embezzling five million dollars from the company. Even though his Dad is proven innocent, Gil's friends have all turned against him. Gil begs his Dad to move, but the family can't afford it. Then Golly announces the biggest competition ever, the Gollywhopper Games. This is a game like no other. Competitors must know trivia about every Golly toy product ever made, solve all kinds of puzzles, and perform stunts among gigantic toys. Gil will need to know all about the company and more to have a chance of winning this competition.

If you love puzzles and games, you will love this book. Test your skills along with the competitors to see if you have what it takes to win [The Gollywhopper Games](#).

**Prepared by:** Carrie Williams

## **I, Matthew Henson: Polar Explorer**

Carole Boston Weatherford

Walker & Company, 2008

32 pages

### **SUMMARY:**

Matthew Henson has big dreams early in his life. He wants to be adventurous and become an explorer. Henson must overcome poverty, prejudice, and dangerous conditions in order to be a successful polar explorer.

### **IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...**

*Jesse Owens, Fastest Man Alive*, Carole Boston Weatherford

*Beyond the Sea of Ice: The Voyages of Henry Hudson*, Joan Elizabeth Goodman

*George Washington Carver*, Tonya Bolden

### **WEBSITES:**

- Carole Boston Weatherford, [www.caroleweatherford.com](http://www.caroleweatherford.com). This is the author's own page, which contains her biographical information and overviews of her books.
- Explorers of the Millennium, <http://library.thinkquest.org/4034/pearyhenson.html>. This is a web site which includes information about explorers of the past one thousand years.

### **BOOKTALK:**

Can you believe that a thirteen-year-old boy walks forty miles from the nation's capital to Baltimore? This really happened way back in 1879. The young man who did this is Matthew Henson. He works hard laboring as a cabin boy on a ship, working as a stock boy in a men's store, and helping with a survey crew while he is growing up. He overcomes many obstacles and faces fear, hunger, and hate along his journey. He learns the Eskimo language, Inuit, and helps a man by the name of Robert Peary for years as they try to make it through frozen lands and seas. They have one goal in common: reach the North Pole. Do Henson, Peary, and four Eskimos make it to the North Pole? Read *I, Matthew Henson: Polar Explorer* to find out!

### **Prepared by:**

LaDona Shaver, [shaverchapin@aol.com](mailto:shaverchapin@aol.com)

## **Lady Liberty: A Biography**

Doreen Rappaport

Candlewick, 2008

40 Pages

**Summary:** A beautifully crafted nonfiction book depicting the history and creation of one of our country's widely recognized national symbols, the Statue of Liberty. This story is told from several different perspectives including the law professor who came up with the idea, the sculptor who created it, the poet who wrote of it and an immigrant who first sees the statue.

### **If you like this book, try:**

*The Story of the Statue of Liberty* by Betsy Maestro

*The Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island* by Joseph Faria

*Liberty Rising: The Story of the Statue of Liberty* by Pegi Deitz Shea

*Little Miss Liberty* by Chris Robertson

### **Websites:**

<http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2009/05/20/nyregion/20090520-liberty-pano.html>

This site provides a panoramic view inside the Statue of Liberty's head.

<http://kids.nationalgeographic.com/Stories/History/Statue-of-liberty>

This site includes a brief history of the Statue of Liberty and fast facts.

<http://history.howstuffworks.com/american-history/20-facts-about-the-statue-of-liberty.htm>

This site contains 20 interesting facts about the Statue of Liberty.

### **Booktalk:**

Have you ever wondered how or why the Statue of Liberty was created? Doreen Rappaport's book *Lady Liberty: A Biography* tells us about the many people who were involved in her creation from the law professor that dreamed up the idea, Auguste Bertoldi who sculpted her, Lazarus who wrote the words on her base, to Joseph Pulitzer, whose article inspired 100,000 Americans to donate money when Congress and the mayor of New York would not. The last few pages of the book include more artwork, quotes from immigrants, and the entire dimensions of the statue including the length of the torch and the height of the pedestal.

**Prepared by:** Susan Schoer

## **The Leanin' Dog**

K. A. Nuzum

Joanna Cotler Books, 2008

250 pages

### **SUMMARY:**

The tragic death of Dessa Dean's mother left her with nightmares and too grief-stricken to venture off the cabin porch. With her father away trapping furs much of the time, Dessa Dean's home is a very lonely place. That is until a dog shows up one day, with a hurt paw and the possible promise of friendship.

### **IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...**

*Missing May* by Cynthia Rylant

*My Louisiana Sky* by Kimberly Willis Holt

### **WEBSITES:**

<http://www.kanuzum.com> This is the author's site. It includes a biography and information about other books she wrote. Of particular interest is a poetry contest and video of the author.

### **BOOKTALK:**

Try as she will, Dessa Dean cannot bring herself to go much past the cabin porch. Reminders of how her mother died in the snow keep her trapped in her house and find their way into her dreams at night and her thoughts during the day. Sadness fills her father as he struggles to trap food for the table while he waits patiently for Dessa Dean to heal. Fortune brings a lame dog to the cabin with its own set of struggles far greater than an injured paw. Will the two be able to get past their own pain to find a friendship that they both need? Find out for yourself. Read K. A. Nuzum's *The Leanin' Dog*.

**Prepared by:** Gail King

## **Lost and Found**

Andrew Clements

Atheneum Books for Young Readers, 2008

161 pages

### **SUMMARY:**

Identical twins Jay and Ray Grayson are ready to start at their new school, or are they? When only Jay's school record appears, the boys play the old "switcheroo" and only one has to go to school at a time. The other brother stays home and has the time of his life. One school's mistake can be a great gift to two students if they play their cards right and don't get caught.

### **IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...**

*Trading Faces* by Julia DeVillers

*The Secret Identity of Devon Delaney* by Lauren Barnholt

*The Brothers Schlemiel* by Mark Binder

*The Great Quarterback Switch* by Matt Christopher

### **WEBSITES:**

Andrew Clements, <http://www.andrewclements.com/index.html>, author's official website which tells readers more about him in his biography, updates readers with news and lists of books, as well as share some personal information with links to his poetry, speech excerpts, and letters.

Simon & Schuster, <http://authors.simonandschuster.com/Andrew-Clements/1146268>, along with the typical bibliographical information and listing of books, this website also provides a sneak peek video of the author's newest series. A message board is also available for posting and reading discussions about this author and his works.

### **BOOKTALK:**

Have you ever thought about what life would be like if you were a twin? Having someone who looks like you, walks like you, talks like you, acts like you? It sounds pretty neat unless you're identical twins Jay and Ray Grayson. After years of dressing alike and being confused for one another, they just want to be themselves, separately. Little did they know that when the family moves to Ohio they would receive the opportunity of a lifetime on the first day of school. That first day was strange, not only because it was a new school with new kids, but for the first time Jay was on his own. His twin brother Ray got sick and missed the first day. However, a day that starts out as strange turns into a new adventure when the school assumes that Jay and Ray is the same person. As far as Taft Elementary knows, Ray doesn't exist! Once the boys realize what has happened they decide to use it to their advantage, alternating days at school and living the good life. How long can they keep up this charade and what will happen when the school and their parents find out what they've been doing?

**Prepared by:** Rebecca Adams, [radams@mce.gcsd.k12.sc.us](mailto:radams@mce.gcsd.k12.sc.us)

**Skylar: A Story**  
Mary Cuffe-Perez  
Philomel Books, 2008  
138 pages

**SUMMARY:**

Skylar and his four friends are pond geese who live on a small pond in the suburbs. Life is good for the group, and only Skylar remembers his first migration, long ago. When a lost, one-eyed great blue heron lands in the pond, Skylar and his small group try to help lead the heron to Lost Pond in the Adirondacks in upstate New York – even though none of the other geese have ever migrated or flown as a flock and they have no idea of the dangers awaiting them.

**IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...**

*The Golden Goose* – Dick King-Smith

*Wild Geese Calling* – Robert Murphy

*The Fledgling* – Jane Langton

**WEBSITES:**

Love Canada Geese Website

<http://www.lovecanadageese.com/index.html>

Want to know more about Canada Geese? Check out this website for all kinds of stories, books, photographs and other fascinating information about Canada Geese.

Canada Geese Information from the Seattle Audubon Society

[http://www.seattleaudubon.org/birdweb/bird\\_details.aspx?id=61](http://www.seattleaudubon.org/birdweb/bird_details.aspx?id=61)

View photographs of Canada Geese during their migration, listen to sounds of geese, see migration maps and more.

**BOOKTALK:**

Imagine you were once a wild goose who has now become a little tame – a little too used to the good life. A little too used to not having to move around or look very hard for your food. A little too comfortable with being able to eat as much as you want and not worry about having enough. Skylar, a Canada goose, is the only goose of the five geese in his pond who has ever migrated anywhere – and he has four companions who have never even left the pond to fly anywhere. One day, a lost one-eyed great blue heron ends up at Skylar's pond by accident – he's looking for a different pond and needs some assistance getting there. Skylar decides his flock can lead the lost heron to his final destination – but he never imagines the danger they will encounter along the way or the challenges they will face. Read *Skylar: A Story* – an unforgettable book about the bravery and leadership of one goose who finally took flight again in order to help a feathered friend in need.

**Prepared by:**

Jenny Dilworth

[jdilworth@myrcpl.com](mailto:jdilworth@myrcpl.com)

## **The Totally Made-Up Civil War Diary of Amanda MacLeish**

Claudia Mills

Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2008

197 pages

### **SUMMARY:**

A fifth grade social studies assignment helps Amanda MacLeish through difficult times with her family. The assignment to write a journal through the eyes of a girl living during Civil War times helps her to understand her classmates and family and see that things can work out although not always as you expect.

### **IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...**

*Being Teddy Roosevelt* by Claudia Mills

*Dear America Series*, various authors

*My America Series*, various authors

### **WEBSITES:**

#### **Journal Writing**

This site offers interviews with journaling experts, reviews of journal technique books, historical and private journals, a hints and tips section, and how to create your own journal

[www.journalforyou.com/](http://www.journalforyou.com/)

#### **Creative Journal**

<http://www.creative-journal.com/>

Here you will find articles, techniques, a visual gallery and more designed to spark the creative flow for you when writing.

### **BOOKTALK:**

Do you keep a journal? Do you like homework? What if your homework was to write a journal? Not too boring if you could write about your life. But what if your assignment was to write a journal from the point of view of someone living during the Civil War? In this book, that is what Amanda has to do. She is assigned to write a journal from the point of view of a ten-year-old girl whose brothers fight on opposite sides in the Civil War. But Amanda is an excellent writer and a creative thinker who finds that through this assignment she is able to put voice to her own anxiety about her family's problems and losing her best friend, and she also sees her classmates through new eyes. Sometimes homework is not so bad!

**Prepared by:** Debbie Belue

## **When the Wolves Returned: Restoring Nature's Balance in Yellowstone**

**Dorothy Hinshaw Patent  
Walker and Company, 2008**

### **SUMMARY:**

There was a time when Yellowstone National Park's natural system was out of balance because of one missing piece- the wolf. This natural predator had been eliminated from the ecosystem, changing the system for the worse. After scientist realized the vital role the wolves play in Yellowstone, the park's natural balance is gradually being restored. Told through full-color photographs and dual level text, this informational book shows the wolves in the habitat that was at risk without them.

### **IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...**

*How! A Book About Wolves* by Melvin and Gilda Berger

*Growing Up Wild: Wolves* by Sandra Markle

### **WEBSITES:**

Yellowstone National Park

[www.yellowstonenationalpark.com/wolves.htm](http://www.yellowstonenationalpark.com/wolves.htm)

Yellowstone's Wildlife: Wolf

[www.yellowstone.net/wildlife/wolf.htm](http://www.yellowstone.net/wildlife/wolf.htm)

Yellowstone wolves

[www.yellowstonewolves.org](http://www.yellowstonewolves.org)

### **BOOKTALK:**

In children's books the wolf is seen as the villain. Everyone knows the story of Little Red Riding Hood and The Three Little Pigs. But in the ecosystem of the Yellowstone National Park, the wolf was a vital piece of the natural balance of the system. This predator kept the system viable and when it was eliminated from the system, other pieces of the fragile habitat suffered. Scientists noticed the change and over the past ten years have worked to bring back the wolf and heal the ecosystem. In this book, using full color photographs of the wolves in Yellowstone Park you will learn about this journey back to health for one of our majestic wonders.

**Prepared by:** Debbie Belue



## **Wild Tracks!: A Guide to Nature's Footprints**

Jim Arnosky

Sterling, 2008

32 pages

### **SUMMARY:**

Jim Arnosky has created a fascinating book that teaches how to interpret animal tracks. This book contains paintings, pencil sketches of rows of tracks, and life size paintings of indented footprints of different animals, many of which are common to our state. He also provided information on what distinguishes one animal's print from another. This book is educational, entertaining, and will appeal to all ages.

### **IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...**

*Big Tracks, Little Tracks: Following Animal Prints*, Millicent E. Selsam

*Crinckleroot's Guide to Animal Tracking*, Jim Arnosky

*Slither and Crawl: Eye to Eye with Reptiles*, Jim Arnosky

*Tracks, Scats and Signs*, Leslie Dendy

### **WEBSITES:**

Jim Arnosky's website, <http://jimarnosky.com> contains info on his books, drawing lessons, coloring pages, and much more.

Beartrackers Animal Tracks Den, <http://bear-tracker.com> has information and pictures of many different types of animal tracks, including humans!

Animal track identification quiz, <http://boyslife.org/hobbies-projects/funstuff/6662/animal-track-identification-quiz> is an interactive quiz of common wild animals.

### **BOOK TALK:**

Have you ever seen tracks in your yard or the woods and wondered which animals made them? If you have, Wild Tracks is the book for you. The author is Jim Arnosky and not only does he have great illustrations of wild animals, but he has drawn their tracks life-size as well. He includes many animals that are native to South Carolina as well as bighorn sheep, wolves, and bears. If you check out this book, you will be able to identify those mysterious tracks in no time.

### **Prepared by:**

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## **Women Daredevils: Thrills, Chills, and Frills**

Julie Cummins

Dutton Children's Books, 2008

48 pages

### **SUMMARY:**

This collective biography showcases fourteen women who were stunt performers between 1880 and 1929. These female risk takers performed death-defying acts such as shooting out of a cannon, tumbling over Niagara Falls in a barrel, taming tigers, and many more. The brightly colored illustrations depict these daredevils in action. These women and others outlined in an included chronology helped change stereotypical views of women and paved the way for equal rights.

### **IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...**

*Who Put the B in the Ballyhoo?*, Carlyn Beccia

*A is for Abigail: An Almanac of Amazing American Women*, Lynne Cheney

*Amelia to Zora: Twenty-Six Women Who Changed the World*, Cynthia Chin-Lee

*Girl on the High-Diving Horse*, Linda Oatman High

*Ladies First: 40 Daring American Women Who Were Second to None*, Elizabeth Cody Kimmel

*Brave Harriet: The First Woman to Fly the English Channel*, Marissa Moss

*Girls Think of Everything: Stories of Ingenious Inventions by Women*, Catherine Thimmesh

### **MOVIES:**

*Wild Hearts Can't Be Broken*, Walt Disney Pictures (1991)

*The Great Waldo Pepper*, Jennings Lang (1975)

### **WEBSITES:**

Ontario Science Centre

<http://www.ontariosciencecentre.ca/scizone/e3/circus/cannon/default.asp>

Learn about the science and history of human cannonballs at this website.

Time for Kids: Women's History Month

<http://www.timeforkids.com/TFK/whm>

Learn about women throughout history.

Children's Encyclopedia of Women

<http://www.pocanticohills.org/womenenc/womenenc.htm>

This encyclopedia was created by third and fourth grade students at Pocantico Hills School in Sleepy Hollow, NY.

## **BOOKTALK:**

*Women Daredevils: Thrills, Chills, and Frills*

By Julie Cummins

I know that you've heard of "Extreme Sports." A few examples are bike tricks, skateboarding, racecar driving, and circus acrobatics. The book, Women Daredevils: Thrills, Chills, and Frills tells the true stories of fourteen women who were pioneers in their field – creating death defying feats of bravery. Well, ladies and gentlemen, step right up to the Big Top to see the best show on earth! These female daredevils include: Zazel, the human cannonball; Annie Edison Taylor, who tumbled over Niagara Falls in a barrel; Mabel Stark, Tiger Trainer; May Worth, who did a backwards somersault while riding a horse; Gladys Ray, who danced on the wings of a flying airplane; Gladys Ingle, who changed the wheel of an airplane during flight; and Sonora Carver, who dove 40 feet into a pool of water while riding a horse. Learn about the bravery of these women pioneers of extreme sports by reading Women Daredevils: Thrills, Chills, and Frills. Caution: Don't try any of these acts at home.

**Prepared by:** Carrie Williams