

Youth Services Advisory Council  
Meeting of October 9, 2009  
10:00 AM – 11:45 PM  
At UHLS

9:00 – 10:00 AM Review book selection; 10:00 AM -11:45 PM Meeting  
11:45 – 1:00 PM Book Review

Attendees: Attendees: Carolyn Durnin (GRAF), Pat Sahr (NASS), Jane Chirgwin (RENS), Carol Roberts (TROY), Lisa Neuman (MEND), Barbara Goetschius (RCSC), Rose Stuart (EGRN), Elizabeth King (RVLL), Joyce Laiosa (VOOR), Kathy Stemple (BERN), Beth Bomba (COLN), Chris McGinty (BETH), Mindy Fowler (SNLK), Judith Wines (ALTM), Jendy Murphy (APLM), Mary Fellows & Diane Riganti(UHLS).

10:00 AM meeting called to order by Mary Fellows

**I. Introductions**

**II. UHLS Updates**

- Summer Reading Program statistics are being compiled.
- Storytime Skills workshop is on Thursday, November 5, 2009; 9:00 am-1:00 pm at Schenectady County Public Library. Details on the UHLS website.
- Central Library Committee met and are dropping Book Review Index and keeping Reference USA, Legal Forms and Test Preparation.
- Riverway Storytelling festival April 19-25, 2010. Please inform Mary Fellows if you would like to have a performance in your library. Deadline is next Friday.
- Statewide Online Summer Reading Program registration software is expected to be available in March.

**III. Best of Summer Reading Program**

Online registration feedback:

- Thank you to John Love at BETH for his Online Summer Reading program. It was widely used and greatly appreciated.
- The online program needs a bit of tweaking, we had to fudge grades and ages.
- 25% got it and used it correctly. Most had forgotten their passwords. (Use last four digits of their phone number)

Program highlights:

- Chris LaBarge, Mr. Magicman, very good (in the Performers Database)
- Wildlife Alive! Michelle Sutterburgh. Had live owls, etc. (Have on hand Lysol wipes)
- Dean Davis, who brings wildlife.
- Mark Rust- interactive concert featuring the Woodstock singer-musician performing on the guitar, banjo, fiddle and mountain dulcimer. Good!
- Tumbling Tykes-program with 20 kids
- Movie Making-for 8 weeks. ALTM put them on YouTube. (used Microsoft movie maker)
- Yoga Program with Raya Ioffe
- Letterboxing is still a really big hit (COLN).

- Circus workshop with Shawn Fagan
- Puppet People
- Daryl Baldwin- unusual, large balloon sculptures (BETH)
- George Steel-animal printing
- Dazzle Dogs-
- Bike Coalition (free – BETH had)
- Safe at Home (BETH)
- Dental Hygienist (BETH)
- I Try Science for 3-5<sup>th</sup> grades for 5 weeks.
- T-Shirt Bags from Martha Stewart

#### IV. Book Lists

Question raised: should the libraries get together to do a summer book list? The reading list for one school was produced by Scholastic. Do we think it would be possible to come up with a book list of books to read before you reach the 5<sup>th</sup> grade? Conclusion: this could possibly be incorporated into a grant sometime - school library and library cooperation; working together.

#### V. Great Reads

##### **Soul Enchilada by David Macinnis Gil**

From *Booklist*

Eunice “Bug” Smoot is a recent high-school graduate with all sorts of problems: she’s about to get evicted from the flophouse apartment she rents, she’s just been fired from her pizza-delivery job, and it seems like every day some idiot is giving her crap for being half-African American and half-Tejana. The only light in her life is her dead grandfather’s classic 1958 Cadillac Biarritz—and even that goes down the tubes when a demon named Mr. Beals materializes in the passenger seat and demands repossession of the vehicle. Turns out, her grandfather financed the car by selling his soul. Luckily, Bug’s crush, a car-wash attendant, just happens to moonlight for the International Supernatural Immigration Service and he’s got some ideas about how to deport this “Illegal.” Gill’s debut has weirdness to spare: there’s insect-puking villains, pizza-delivery contests with Satan, and some very high-stakes basketball. At times it can all be too much to swallow, but Bug is a refreshingly gutsy female protagonist with an attitude that will win over readers searching for something different. Grades 7-10. --Daniel Kraus

##### **13 Reasons Why by Jay Asher**

From *Booklist*

When Clay Jenson plays the cassette tapes he received in a mysterious package, he's surprised to hear the voice of dead classmate Hannah Baker. He's one of 13 people who receive Hannah's story, which details the circumstances that led to her suicide. Clay spends the rest of the day and long into the night listening to Hannah's voice and going to the locations she wants him to visit. The text alternates, sometimes quickly, between Hannah's voice (italicized) and Clay's thoughts as he listens to her words, which illuminate betrayals and secrets that demonstrate the consequences of even small actions. Hannah, herself, is not free from guilt, her own inaction having played a part in an accidental auto death and a rape. The message about how we treat one another, although sometimes heavy, makes for compelling reading.

### **Marcelo in the Real World by Francisco Stork**

From *Publishers Weekly*

Artfully crafted characters form the heart of Stork's (*The Way of the Jaguar*) judicious novel. Marcelo Sandoval, a 17-year-old with an Asperger's-like condition, has arranged a job caring for ponies at his special school's therapeutic-riding stables. But he is forced to exit his comfort zone when his high-powered father steers Marcelo to work in his law firm's mailroom (in return, Marcelo can decide whether to stay in special ed, as he prefers, or be mainstreamed for his senior year). Narrating with characteristically flat inflections and frequently forgetting to use the first person, Marcelo manifests his anomalies: he harbors an obsession with religion (he regularly meets with a plainspoken female rabbi, though he's not Jewish); hears internal music; and sleeps in a tree house. Readers enter his private world as he navigates the unfamiliar realm of menial tasks and office politics with the ingenuity of a child, his voice never straying from authenticity even as the summer strips away some of his differences. Stork introduces ethical dilemmas, the possibility of love, and other real world conflicts, all the while preserving the integrity of his characterizations and intensifying the novel's psychological and emotional stakes. Not to be missed. Ages 14–up.

### **Al Capone Shines My Shoes by Gennifer Choldenko**

Product description: Moose and the cons are about to get a lot closer in this much-anticipated sequel. It's 1935. Moose Flanagan lives on Alcatraz with his family, the other families of the guards, and a few hundred no-name hit men, con men, mad dog murderers and a handful of bank robbers too. And one of those cons has just done him a big favor. You see, Moose has never met Al Capone, but a few weeks ago Moose wrote a letter to him asking him to use his influence to get his sister, Natalie, into a school she desperately needs in San Francisco. After Natalie got accepted, a note appeared in Moose's freshly laundered shirt that said: Done. As this book begins, Moose discovers a new note. This one says: Your turn. Is it really from Capone? What does it mean? Moose can't risk anything that might get his dad fired. But how can he ignore Al Capone?

### **Don't Call me Ishmael by Michael Gerard Bauer**

Product description: By the time ninth grade begins, Ishmael Leseur knows it won't be long before Barry Bagsley, the class bully, says, "Ishmael? What kind of wussy-crap name is that?" Ishmael's perfected the art of making himself virtually invisible. But all that changes when James Scobie joins the class. Unlike Ishmael, James has no sense of fear—he claims it was removed during an operation. Now nothing will stop James and Ishmael from taking on bullies, bugs, and Moby Dick, in the toughest, weirdest, most embarrassingly awful . . . and the best year of their lives.

### **Gone by Michael Grant**

From *Booklist*

It's a scenario that every kid has dreamed about: adults suddenly disappear, and kids have free reign. In this case, though, it's everyone 14 and older who disappears, and the harsh reality of such unreal circumstances isn't a joyride after all. A girl driving with her grandfather plunges into a horrific car wreck; gas burners left on ignite a home with a young child trapped inside; food and medical supplies dwindle; and malicious youths take over as the remaining children attempt to set up some form of workable society. Even stranger than the disappearance of much of humanity, though, are the bizarre, sometimes terrifying powers that some of the kids are developing, not to mention the rapidly mutating animals or the impenetrable wall 20 miles in diameter that encircles them. This intense, marvelously plotted, paced, and characterized story will immediately garner comparisons to *Lord of the Flies*, or even the long-playing world shifts of Stephen King, with just a dash of *X-Men* for good measure. A potent mix of action and thoughtfulness—centered around good and evil, courage and cowardice—renders this a tour-de-force that will leave readers dazed, disturbed, and utterly breathless. Grant's novel is presumably

the first in a series, and while many will want to scream when they find out the end is not the end, they'll be glad there's more in store. Grades 6-9.

### **Hunger by Michael Grant**

From *School Library Journal*

Grade 7 Up—In the second in a planned six-book series, the children of Perdito Beach, CA, have survived without adults for three months following the FAYZ, a nuclear event that caused everyone over the age of 14 to vanish and an impenetrable barrier to rise for 20 miles around the town. Now their food is almost gone, and in their desperation and fear, the young people are beginning to sort themselves into factions; those without special powers opposing those who have them. To add to the suspense, a terrifying presence that calls itself the Gaiaphage, a being of overwhelming hunger, is insinuating itself into the minds of the susceptible. Like *Gone* (HarperTeen, 2008), this novel is not for the faint of heart or weak of stomach. Nonstop action and recurring scenes of graphic violence, death, and torture will keep readers on the edge of their seats as they race toward the climactic cliff-hanger ending.

### **Nation by Terry Pratchett**

From *School Library Journal*

Grade 7–10—In this first novel for young people set outside of Discworld, Pratchett again shows his humor and humanity. Worlds are destroyed and cultures collide when a tsunami hits islands in a vast ocean much like the Pacific. Mau, a boy on his way back home from his initiation period and ready for the ritual that will make him a man, is the only one of his people, the Nation, to survive. Ermintrude, a girl from somewhere like Britain in a time like the 19th century, is on her way to meet her father, the governor of the Mothering Sunday islands. She is the sole survivor of her ship (or so she thinks), which is wrecked on Mau's island. She reinvents herself as Daphne, and uses her wits and practical sense to help the straggling refugees from nearby islands who start arriving. When raiders land on the island, they are led by a mutineer from the wrecked ship, and Mau must use all of his ingenuity to outsmart him. Then, just as readers are settling in to thinking that all will be well in the new world that Daphne and Mau are helping to build, Pratchett turns the story on its head. The main characters are engaging and interesting, and are the perfect medium for the author's sly humor. Daphne is a close literary cousin of Tiffany Aching in her common sense and keen intelligence wedded to courage. A rich and thought-provoking read.

### **Academy Seven by Anne Osterlund**

Product description

With a past too terrible to speak of, and a bleak, lonely future ahead of her, Aerin Renning is shocked to find she has earned a place at the most exclusive school in the universe. Aerin excels at Academy 7 in all but debate, where Dane Madousin—son of one of the most powerful men in the Alliance—consistently outtalks her. Fortunately Aerin consistently outwits him at sparring. They are at the top of their class until Dane jeopardizes everything and Aerin is unintentionally dragged down with him. When the pair is given a joint punishment, an unexpected friendship—and romance—begins to form. But Dane and Aerin both harbor dangerous secrets, and the two are linked in ways neither of them could ever have imagined. . .

### **Up Close: Harper Lee by Kerry Madden**

From *Booklist*

From the Up Close series, this informative biography spotlights writer Harper Lee, who grew up in Monroeville, Alabama, and studied law in college before deciding to become a writer. After working and writing in New York City for many years, she found a publisher for her first novel. Her life was transformed by the publication of *To Kill a Mockingbird* (1960), which quickly became a best-seller, a Pulitzer Prize winner, and the basis for an unusually successful movie adaptation. Though Lee appreciated the critical acclaim, she found the unrelenting demands for interviews, public appearances, and personal contact increasingly unwelcome and withdrew. Given the writer's refusal to grant access to

any biographer and her closest friends' and relatives' reluctance to discuss her, Madden has done a fine job of researching the novelist's life and presenting it with respect for her point of view. The sensitive treatment of race relations during Lee's youth and the section on three trials that may have inspired parts of her novel will interest students researching *To Kill a Mockingbird*. A lengthy acknowledgments section, source notes for the many quotes, and an extensive bibliography conclude this unusually readable biography of an elusive figure in American letters. Grades 7-12.

### **Hunger Games by Suzanne Collins**

From *Publisher's Weekly*

If there really are only seven original plots in the world, it's odd that boy meets girl is always mentioned, and society goes bad and attacks the good guy never is. Yet we have *Fahrenheit 451*, *The Giver*, *The House of the Scorpion*—and now, following a long tradition of Brave New Worlds, *The Hunger Games*. Collins hasn't tied her future to a specific date, or weighted it down with too much finger wagging. Rather less *1984* and rather more *Death Race 2000*, hers is a gripping story set in a post-apocalyptic world where a replacement for the United States demands a tribute from each of its territories: two children to be used as gladiators in a televised fight to the death. Katniss, from what was once Appalachia, offers to take the place of her sister in the Hunger Games, but after this ultimate sacrifice, she is entirely focused on survival at any cost. It is her teammate, Peeta, who recognizes the importance of holding on to one's humanity in such inhuman circumstances. It's a credit to Collins's skill at characterization that Katniss, like a new Theseus, is cold, calculating and still likable. She has the attributes to be a winner, where Peeta has the grace to be a good loser. It's no accident that these games are presented as pop culture. Every generation projects its fear: runaway science, communism, overpopulation, nuclear wars and, now, reality TV. The State of Panem—which needs to keep its tributaries subdued and its citizens complacent—may have created the Games, but mindless television is the real danger, the means by which society pacifies its citizens and punishes those who fail to conform. Will its connection to reality TV, ubiquitous today, date the book? It might, but for now, it makes this the right book at the right time. What happens if we choose entertainment over humanity? In Collins's world, we'll be obsessed with grooming, we'll talk funny, and all our sentences will end with the same rise as questions. When Katniss is sent to stylists to be made more telegenic before she competes, she stands naked in front of them, strangely unembarrassed. They're so unlike people that I'm no more self-conscious than if a trio of oddly colored birds were pecking around my feet, she thinks. In order not to hate these creatures who are sending her to her death, she imagines them as pets. It isn't just the contestants who risk the loss of their humanity. It is all who watch. Katniss struggles to win not only the Games but the inherent contest for audience approval. Because this is the first book in a series, not everything is resolved, and what is left unanswered is the central question. Has she sacrificed too much? We know what she has given up to survive, but not whether the price was too high. Readers will wait eagerly to learn more.

### **Catching Fire by Suzanne Collins (Second book of the Hunger Games)**

From *School Library Journal*

Gr 7 Up--Every year in Panem, the dystopic nation that exists where the U.S. used to be, the Capitol holds a televised tournament in which two teen "tributes" from each of the surrounding districts fight a gruesome battle to the death. In *The Hunger Games*, Katniss Everdeen and Peeta Mellark, the tributes from impoverished District Twelve, thwarted the Gamemakers, forcing them to let both teens survive. In this rabidly anticipated sequel, Katniss, again the narrator, returns home to find herself more the center of attention than ever. The sinister President Snow surprises her with a visit, and Katniss's fear when Snow meets with her alone is both palpable and justified. *Catching Fire* is divided into three parts: Katniss and Peeta's mandatory Victory Tour through the districts, preparations for the 75th Annual Hunger Games, and a truncated version of the Games themselves. Slower paced than its predecessor, this sequel explores the nation of Panem: its power structure, rumors of a secret district, and a spreading rebellion, ignited by Katniss and Peeta's subversive victory. Katniss also deepens as a character. Though initially bewildered

by the attention paid to her, she comes almost to embrace her status as the rebels' symbolic leader. Though more of the story takes place outside the arena than within, this sequel has enough action to please *Hunger Games* fans and leaves enough questions tantalizingly unanswered for readers to be desperate for the next installment.

**VI. Outreach Projects brainstorming**

The group discussed potential outreach projects.

Next meetings: November 5 Storytime Skills Workshop at Schenectady, Dec 11 YSAC at UHLS