

Youth Services Advisory Council

Minutes

November 18, 2005

at Upper Hudson Library System

10:00 am-12:00 noon

9:00-10:00 Book Review and 12:00-1:00 Teen Meeting

Attendance: Kathy Stempel (Berne Public Library) Pat Sahr (Nassau Free Library), Darlene Miller (Castleton Public Library), Beth Bomba & Maureen DeLaughter, (William K. Sanford Town Library) Meta Reid (Albany Public Library) Barbara Sinacore (Guilderland Public Library) Carol Gaillard (Cheney Library) Elaine Albrecht (Westerlo Public Library) Joyce Laiosa (Voorheesville Public Library) Jane Chirgwin (Sand Lake Town Library/Brunswick Community Library) Barbara Goetschius (RCS Community Library) Rebecca Lubin (Rensselaerville Library) Sharon Hodges (Petersburg Public Library) Kim McMann (Troy Public Library) Debbie Canzano (Cohoes Public Library) Jen McIntosh & Lee Ricci (East Greenbush Community Library) Mary Fellows (UHLS) Diane Riganti (UHLS)

UHLS UPDATES

Riverway Storytelling Festival—headline performers are Dan Keding and Judith Black. Regional and local performers still to be selected. Libraries interested in hosting a performance should alert Mary ASAP. Email to directors to this effect has gone out.

Booktalking will be the main subject at the March, rather than December, YSAC.

We will now have library services to teens meetings during the hour of 12:00-1:00 at the book review meetings. We will still have small library concerns discussion group and large library concerns discussion group bookending the YSAC meeting on alternate months. The teen meetings consist of half an hour of booktalking and half an hour of services.

We are looking into getting a DVD (LCD) projector and speakers for loan to member libraries.

Helen Volk gave a one-hour presentation titled “De-cluttering and De-stressing Your Work Space.”

Great Reads:

Red Kayak by Priscilla Cummings

From *Booklist*:

Gr. 6-9. In this satisfying crime and coming-of-age drama, a toddler drowns in a kayak accident after friends of teenage Brady, the victim's neighbor, vent some anger against the child's dad by drilling holes in the bottom of his craft. It was a mean-spirited prank--but no one was supposed to die. What happens now? Revealing the terrible secret would implicate Brady's friends in the drowning, and it clouds his whole world with guilt and fear. Cummings works plot and characterizations skillfully, building suspense as the evidence unfolds and as Brady wrestles with his decision and tries to come to terms with his own responsibility. Brady's eastern-Maryland surroundings and heritage (his father, a waterman, struggles to make a living from crabbing) are also vividly evoked. Brady's ultimate decision is both anguished and well reasoned, making for a realistic conclusion. Anne O'Malley"

Jo-Ann Benedetti gave a short presentation on Overdrive, Inc. and the types of titles chosen. There are training sessions scheduled for Monday 11/21/05 and Wednesday 11/30/05. Overdrive is the new e-book and audio book company. Please contact Jo-Ann if you have any questions.

Guest presenter: Aaron Flynn

Next meetings: December 16 at East Greenbush Community Library, January 13 (Book Review) February 16 (Summer Reading Program Planning Workshop) March 17, April 21 (Book Review) May 19, 2006.

**Teens Services Discussion Group
Meeting Notes**

November 18, 2005

At

Upper Hudson Library System

12:00 noon – 1:00 pm

Attendance: Elaine Albrecht (Westerlo Public Library) Maureen DeLaughter (William K. Sanford Town Library) Lee Ricci (East Greenbush Community Library) Jen McIntosh (East Greenbush Community Library) Kathy Stempel (Berne Public Library) Darlene Miller (Castleton Public Library) Barbara Sinacore (Guilderland Public Library) Joyce Laiosa (Voorheesville Public Library) Mary Fellows (UHLS) Diane Riganti (UHLS)

Books

John Lennon: All I Want is the Truth: a biography by Elizabeth Partridge

From *School Library Journal*:

Grade 9 Up—Partridge cuts through the mythology and misinformation surrounding the life of the legendary singer/songwriter and goes a long way toward revealing the complexities of his personality. She relies heavily on Lennon's own writings and the wealth of interviews he granted during his lifetime. What emerges is an unflinchingly honest portrait of a troubled, angry, and highly creative individual who was captivated by rock 'n' roll and often used it as a means of expressing his unhappiness and confusion. Partridge skillfully captures the amazing speed at which the Beatles were swept into astonishing popularity that led to an unrelenting schedule of touring, songwriting, and recording that slowed down only when touring became both too grueling and too dangerous. She doesn't shy away from the sordid details of the band's mercurial rise to fame and fortune but her nonjudgmental commentary focuses first and foremost on the music. Lennon's life after the dissolution of the Beatles is explored in depth, as are Yoko Ono's influence and the worldwide impact of his death. With an abundance of gorgeous black-and-white photos, some of them full-page or even spreads, this handsome book will be eagerly received by both Beatles fans, who are legion, and their elders, who will enjoy reliving the glory days of the Fab Four and exploring the inner workings of a creative talent.—*Ginny Gustin, Sonoma County Library System, Santa Rosa, CA*

Hitler Youth : Growing Up in Hitler's Shadow by Susan Campbell Bartoletti.

Explores the various factors which led many of Germany's young people to pledge their loyalty and support to the dictator and join the Hitler Youth during his rise to power.

From *School Library Journal*:

Starred Review. Grade 5-8—Hitler's plans for the future of Germany relied significantly on its young people, and this excellent history shows how he attempted to carry out his mission with the establishment of the Hitler Youth, or *Hitlerjugend*, in 1926. With a focus on the years between 1933 and the end of the war in 1945, Bartoletti explains the roles that millions of boys and girls unwittingly played in the horrors of the Third Reich. The book is structured around 12 young individuals and their experiences, which clearly demonstrate how they were victims of leaders who took advantage of their innocence and enthusiasm for evil means. Their stories evolve from patriotic devotion to Hitler and zeal to join, to doubt, confusion, and disillusion. (An epilogue adds a powerful what-became-of-them relevance.) The large period photographs are a primary component and they include Nazi propaganda showing happy and healthy teens as well as the reality of concentration camps and young people with large guns. The final chapter superbly summarizes the weighty significance of this part of the 20th century and challenges young readers to prevent history from repeating itself.

Bartoletti lets many of the subjects' words, emotions, and deeds speak for themselves, bringing them together clearly to tell this story unlike anyone else has.—*Andrew Medlar, Chicago Public Library, IL*

Looking for Alaska by John Green.

Sixteen-year-old Miles' first year at Culver Creek Preparatory School in Alabama includes good friends and great pranks, but is defined by the search for answers about life and death after a fatal car crash.

From School Library Journal:

Grade 9 Up - Sixteen-year-old Miles Halter's adolescence has been one long nonevent - no challenge, no girls, no mischief, and no real friends. Seeking what Rabelais called the "Great Perhaps," he leaves Florida for a boarding school in Birmingham, AL. His roommate, Chip, is a dirt-poor genius scholarship student with a Napoleon complex who lives to one-up the school's rich preppies. Chip's best friend is Alaska Young, with whom Miles and every other male in her orbit falls instantly in love. She is literate, articulate, and beautiful, and she exhibits a reckless combination of adventurous and self-destructive behavior. She and Chip teach Miles to drink, smoke, and plot elaborate pranks. Alaska's story unfolds in all-night bull sessions, and the depth of her unhappiness becomes obvious. Green's dialogue is crisp, especially between Miles and Chip. His descriptions and Miles's inner monologues can be philosophically dense, but are well within the comprehension of sensitive teen readers. The chapters of the novel are headed by a number of days "before" and "after" what readers surmise is Alaska's suicide. These placeholders sustain the mood of possibility and foreboding, and the story moves methodically to its ambiguous climax. The language and sexual situations are aptly and realistically drawn, but sophisticated in nature. Miles's narration is alive with sweet, self-deprecating humor, and his obvious struggle to tell the story truthfully adds to his believability. Like Phineas in John Knowles's *A Separate Peace* (S & S, 1960), Green draws Alaska so lovingly, in self-loathing darkness as well as energetic light, that readers mourn her loss along with her friends. - *Johanna Lewis, New York Public Library*

The Last Universe by William Sleator

When her desperately ill older brother insists that she take him into their mysterious backyard garden, designed by their quantum physicist great uncle, fourteen-year-old Susan discovers that things are not always what they seem.

From School Library Journal

Grade 6-10 -Teenagers Susan and Gary live in the house that has belonged to the family for generations. Now Gary has contracted a disease that has him confined to a wheelchair and traveling to the hospital regularly for transfusions. Susan is unwillingly spending her summer vacation pushing her brother through the garden and woods of their peculiar estate. Gary has been reading about quantum physics, a subject in which Great-Uncle Arthur won an international

prize many years earlier. He is also the one largely responsible for the creation of the garden and just possibly the maze that no one has ever seen except from one window in the house. Gary is convinced that his illness has somehow triggered a quantum event that is responsible for the bizarre changes he and his sister are finding each day. He also seems to be getting better after each visit to the garden and so Susan finds herself torn between her fear of it and her fear for her brother's life. Sleator is a master of suspenseful science fiction and that mastery is evident here. The action is slow at first, but as the garden begins to change, the pace picks up correspondingly. Ultimately Susan must brave the maze on her own when Gary is rushed to the hospital. The twist at the end is entirely logical (if anything about quantum can be) and entirely shocking. Well-drawn characters and a believable story will catch and hold Sleator's fans and make new ones. Another solid entry from a deservedly popular author. -*Elaine Fort Weischedel, Milton Public Library, MA*

Sandpiper by Ellen Wittlinger

When The Walker, a mysterious boy who walks constantly, intervenes in an argument between Sandpiper and a boy she used to see, their lives become entwined in ways that change them both.

From School Library Journal

Grade 9 Up -Sandpiper Hollow Ragsdale, 15, is on a sexual power trip, engaging in brief hookups for fellatio. When Derek, one of several rejected boys, returns in a rage to torment Piper and her family, she finds an unlikely ally in Walker, a solitary young man of few words who habitually roams the roads of her Massachusetts town. Piper and Walker (whose real name, she finds out much later, is Aidan) awkwardly begin a platonic relationship of truth telling about their lives. Both are outsiders; she is estranged from her female friends, and he is grief stricken over the accidental killing of his nephew. Piper also has complex family issues-her mother is preoccupied with her fashionable upcoming wedding, and her father, with an active sex life and acknowledged discomfort over Piper's well-developed breasts, gives mixed paternal messages. Chapters in Piper's candid voice alternate with her expressions of lyrical poetry, sometimes penned in the style of famous poets. When Derek, a half-crazed and overdrawn antagonist, attempts to rape Piper, Aidan disables him and then drives Piper to the hospital, where it is clinically determined that she is a virgin. Copious tears and attempts to assign blame ensue, and Piper realizes what a jerk she has been. While heavy on message and mature in subject matter, the novel is notable for the bold look it takes at relationships and at the myth that oral sex is not really sex. -*Susan W. Hunter, Riverside Middle School, Springfield, VT*

A Brief Chapter in my Impossible Life by Dana Reinhardt

Simone's starting her junior year in high school. Her mom's a lawyer for the ACLU, her dad's a political cartoonist, so she's grown up standing outside the organic food coop asking people to sign petitions for worthy causes. She's got a terrific younger brother and amazing friends. And she's got a secret crush on a

really smart and funny guy—who spends all of his time with another girl. Then her birth mother contacts her. Simone's always known she was adopted, but she never wanted to know anything about it. She's happy with her family just as it is, thank you. She learns who her birth mother was—a 16-year-old girl named Rivka. Who is Rivka? Why has she contacted Simone? Why now? The answers lead Simone to deeper feelings of anguish and love than she has ever known, and to question everything she once took for granted about faith, life, the afterlife, and what it means to be a daughter.

Your Eyes in Stars by M.E. Kerr

Kerr's newest, due out in 2006. A story in which WWII and the Holocaust loom large, even though all action is in a small New York town. Two teenaged girls become friends while helping each other make sense of their families (one is German and one the dramatic daughter of the local prison director), neighbors and selves as they approach adulthood.

The Burn Journals by Brent Runyon

From *Booklist*

Starred Review Gr. 8-12. On the sixteenth page of this incisive memoir, eighth-grader Brent Runyon drenches his bathrobe with gasoline and ("Should I do it? Yes.") sets himself on fire. The burns cover 85 percent of his body and require six months of painful skin grafts and equally invasive mental-health rehabilitation. From the beginning, readers are immersed in the mind of 14-year-old Brent as he struggles to heal body and mind, his experiences given devastating immediacy in a first-person, present-tense voice that judders from uncensored teenage attitude and poignant anxiety (he worries about getting hard-ons during physical therapy) to little-boy sweetness. And throughout is anguish over his suicide attempt and its impact on his family: "I have this guilt feeling all over me, like oil on one of those birds in Alaska." Runyon has, perhaps, written the defining book of a new genre, one that gazes as unflinchingly at boys on the emotional edge as Zibby O'Neal's *The Language of Goldfish* (1980) and Laurie Halse Anderson's *Speak* (1999) do at girls. Some excruciatingly painful moments notwithstanding, this can and should be read by young adults, as much for its literary merit as for its authentic perspective on what it means to attempt suicide, and, despite the resulting scars, be unable to remember why. *Jennifer Mattson*

Services

Looking for a selection tool for graphic novels. What works in what library? Baker and Taylor has a list of best selling graphic novels. Mary will also search and send findings out on youthserv.

Blog—There is interest in posting a blog for book reviews, program ideas etc. Certain members will be able to post to this blog.

There is no need for a teen performance database. The Statewide Performers Database may be viewed by age. Currently there are 10 listings for teen shows. What about local bands willing to do shows? Everyone should encourage teen performers to put themselves on the database.

Suggestions for teen workshops/programs:

- Self-defense
- Carmine's Restaurant
- Police Dogs
- Dan Gray-anime expert from GUIL
- Dan Murphy-talk to teens about sports
- How to recruit teen volunteers

Successful Program at William K. Sanford Town Library

The Coffee House takes place when the library is closed. (7:30-10:00) There were 142 kids there. (9-12th grade) We hired a local band for \$100.00

The Art Gallery at William K. Sanford Town Library is now open.

Suggestion of Teen Pod Cast. New way to reach teens. Article handed out. Individual libraries encouraged to explore.