

Youth Services Advisory Council

Meeting Notes

January 13, 2006

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: Pat Sahr (Nassau Free Library), Darlene Miller (Castleton Public Library), Beth Bomba (William K. Sanford Town Library), Melissa Wasilewski (Albany Public Library) Carol Gaillard (Cheney Library) Elaine Albrecht (Westerlo Public Library) Jane Chirgwin (Sand Lake Town Library/Brunswick Community Library) Barbara Goetschius (RCS Community Library) Sharon Hodges (Petersburg Public Library) Debbie Canzano (Cohoes Public Library) Polly Hartman (Bethlehem Public Library) Ann-Marie Cicchinelli (William K. Sanford Town Library) Trevor Oakley (Guilderland Public Library) Judith Wines (Altamont Free Library) Lisa Neuman (Menands Public Library) Mary Fellows (UHLS) Diane Riganti (UHLS)

I. UHLS UPDATES

Mary is going to the ALA in San Antonio, Texas. As soon as there is an announcement of the Caldecott and Newberry awards, Mary will call and Diane will email everyone.

Summer Reading Program state wide statistics had a 2,000 person drop in registration, but a 14 % attendance jump in programs.

Summer Reading Planning workshop is February 16th at the Schenectady Public Library. Flyers are in the delivery now. As soon as the manuals arrive, they will be shipped to you. With approval from the group, the grant will be used to purchase Summer Reading paperback prize books again this year.

May 1-7 is the Riverway Storytelling Festival. Please plan to attend. The May 5th workshop is free to you. A tentative schedule has been handed out.

The Teen Advisory Council is going to start a Blog with reviews of Young Adult books and programs ideas specially designed for Young adults.

PRESENTATION: BEST BOOKS OF 2005 BY SUE ROKOS

III GUEST PRESENTER: T.G. VANINI

Next meetings: February 16 (Summer Reading Program Planning Workshop at Schenectady County Public Library) March 17, April 21 (Book Review) May 19, 2006

Teens Services Advisory Council

Meeting Notes

January 13, 2006

At

Upper Hudson Library System

12:00 noon – 1:00 pm

Attendance: Maureen Delaugter (William K. Sanford Town Library) Darlene Miller (Castleton Public Library) Trevor Oakley (Guilderland Public Library) Jane Chirgwin (Sand Lake Town Library/Brunswick Community Library) Ann-Marie Cicchinelli (William K. Sanford Town Library) Mary Fellows (UHLS) Diane Riganti (UHLS)

Books

The extraordinary adventures of Alfred Kropp by Rick Yancey

375 pages ISBN 1582346933 Bloomsbury USA Children's Books

From School Library Journal

Grade 6-8--Astonishingly tall 15-year-old Alfred is plunged into a world of adventure, assassination, and Arthurian legend when he agrees to help his uncle filch an ancient sword from the office of a CEO who just happens to be a descendent of the Knights of the Round Table. Of course the sword turns out to be none other than Excalibur, and the guy Alfred swiped it for is Mogart, a knight-gone-bad who hopes to use its magical powers to take over the world. Enter Bennacio, another descendant of the Round Table, who then takes Alfred under his wing on a quest across the Atlantic to rescue the sword from Mogart. The descriptions of minor bits of blood and gore leave much to the imagination and will make *Kropp* especially appealing to fans of Anthony Horowitz's Alex Rider books (Philomel), Geoffrey Huntington's *Sorcerers of the Nightwing* (ReganBooks, 2002), and even Darren Shan's The Saga of Darren Shan series (Little, Brown). True to its action-adventure genre, the story is lighthearted, entertaining, occasionally half-witted, but by and large fun.--*Hillias J. Martin, New York Public Library*

Across the Wall by Garth Nix

320 pages ISBN 006074713 Eros

From Booklist

Gr. 7-10. The jacket of this short story collection features Leo Dillon and Diane Dillon's representations of Lirael and Nick--the same Ancelstierran who unwittingly served as the Destroyer's pawn in book three of the Abhorsen Trilogy. The image corresponds to the opening novella, in which Nick encounters a bloodsucking Free Magic monster during a visit to Ancelstierre's top-secret intelligence agency. The story teasingly refers to British mysteries and spy fiction, parodic elements that will appeal most to Nix's adult fans. Even less-experienced readers, though, will enjoy getting to know Nick on his own terms, unhampered by the evil influences of a body-stealing demon. The remaining 11 stories (all unrelated to Nix's best-known alternate reality) include selections clearly intended for middle-graders as well as more sophisticated offerings containing frank references to sex and violence spattered with "blood and brains and urine." Buy this with the understanding that the packaging will attract the full spectrum of fans, but that younger ones may get more than they bargained for. Jennifer Mattson

The whispering road by Livi Michael

328 p. ISBN 0399243577 Putnam Pub Group

In Victorian England, poverty-stricken, orphaned siblings Joe and Annie escape from the abusive farmer they work for and try to survive in Manchester, with help from a friendly tramp, a mysterious dog-woman, and a renegade printer who supports the rights of the poor.

From [Booklist](#)

Gr. 5-8. With a Dickensian flair, Michael follows Joe and his little sister, Annie, on the long and winding road in search of their mother, who abandoned them at a workhouse with a promise that she would return. But Mother is a long time coming, and the children are farmed out to an abusive master. Their escape from his clutches makes for a rousing beginning to the story, and their initial contacts, including one with strange Dogwoman, who runs with a canine pack, are hair-raising. But while the writing style remains vivid throughout and the odd assortment of characters piques interest, the story loses steam somewhere in the middle. By then, however, readers may be hooked, especially after Annie's gift of seeing spirits reveals their mother's whereabouts. Give this picaresque tale, which is not quite fantasy, to children who like long sagas; they will respond to the parade of people Joe meets, whose fragilities are hidden by their bravado.

The last domino by Adam Meyer.

229 p. 0399243321 G.P. Putnam's Sons

Vulnerable following his brother's suicide, a high school boy comes under the thrall of a darkly violent classmate and events at home and at school go chillingly out of control.

From School Library Journal

Grade 9 Up—Most of the dominoes have already fallen when Travis places the barrel of the gun in his mouth in the opening scene of this horrific story. But realizing that, unlike his older brother Richie, he lacks the courage to kill himself, Travis stalks across the field to his high school to exact revenge on those he perceives as his tormentors. Flashing back 16 days, readers then meet Travis's dysfunctional parents and various schoolmates whose taunts and threats lead to the tragic, climactic carnage. Two voices drive the teen crazy: in his head he hears Richie, and in almost daily encounters he grows dependent on Daniel, a new kid who revels in manipulating him. There is no sugarcoating, no surprise turns or twists in the plot, just an all-too-familiar sequence of events portraying the tragedy of school violence, punctuated by realistically nasty language ranging from the rude to the obscene. The violence is detailed, with victims pleading for their lives, tumbling bodies, and blood-slicked floors. So is the aftermath, as Travis is sentenced to life in prison for the murders—including those of his parents'—he doesn't remember committing. Chapters are interspersed with documentary items such as transcripts of police interviews, journal entries, and letters that add depth to the characterizations and complexity to the plot. Meyer clearly communicates that insane crimes have reasons, and that the only sad certainty is that they can happen anywhere. This book does for school gun-violence what Alex Flinn did for dating violence in *Breathing Underwater* (HarperCollins, 2001).—Joel Shoemaker, Southeast Junior High School, Iowa City, IA

Fax from Sarajevo: story of survival by Joe Kubert

207 pages 1569711437 Dark Horse Comics, Inc.

From Publishers Weekly

In March 1992 Ervin Rustemagic, a well-regarded European comics agent, faxed a message from his Dutch office to the New Jersey home of his American friend and client, distinguished comics artist Kubert (Sgt. Rock; *The Green Berets*), detailing his plans to return to his home in the Sarajevo suburb of Dobrinja. Once back, relentless Serb bombardment trapped Rustemagic and his family, destroying their home and possessions. The family took shelter in a ruined building. For the next two and a half years Rustemagic communicated with Kubert and supporters in Europe via sporadically functioning fax machines, recounting the city's destruction, the Serb brutality, inadequate multinational peacekeeping force, and the physical and spiritual deprivations of life in a war zone. Kubert has used Rustemagic's faxed messages to recreate the family's experiences: a heartstopping nighttime dash across Sarajevo airport under fire; the deadly gauntlet

of Serb snipers on the route between Dobrinja and Sarajevo?in a black-and-white, book-length comics work that brilliantly documents a family's wartime survival and escape against unbelievable odds. Kubert's mainstream comics narrative style can at times be heavyhanded, but his signature graphic style?brisk, precisely rendered, emotionally charged linework in dramatically composed panels?marks him as one of mainstream comics' most talented and celebrated interpreters of the horrors of war.

Blankets :an illustrated novel by Craig Thompson.

582 p. 1891830430 Top Shelf Productions

From School Library Journal

Adult/High School-Thompson's *Good-bye, Chunkie Rice* (Top Shelf, 1999) offered readers well-realized but fantastic characters in a tale that nicely combined sentiment with adventure. This second, much longer work shares the acuity for character development and dynamic sensitivity that makes the author so compulsively readable. In *Blankets*, however, realism reigns supreme in both the story arc and in the humanity of its characters. Thompson himself is the protagonist, and this is his tale of growing up, falling in love (and realizing the physical and moral complications that can imply), discovering the texture and limits of his faith, and arriving at a point from which he can look back at those experiences. The snowy Midwest, peopled by overweight parents, hairy youths, and lovingly depicted younger siblings-including a respectfully and realistically treated minor character with Down syndrome-is energetically realized in Thompson's expressive lines and inking. Much of the story occurs when Craig and his brother Phil are young boys and includes images of such boyish pranks as peeing on one another. Older high school students who have reached an age when nostalgia is possible will warm to Thompson's own wistfulness. This is a big graphic novel, in concept and successful execution

Paul has a summer job by Michel Rabagliati.

1896597548 Drawn & Quarterly Books

From School Library Journal

Adult/High School-In 1979, Paul, 18, lands an unexpected job at a camp for underprivileged children. Accustomed neither to roughing it nor to youngsters, he knows that he is unprepared but falls to with a will and an open heart. Over the course of the summer on a Quebec lake, he learns about his own strengths, discovers the unaffected charms of 9- to 14-year-olds, and falls in love with a co-counselor. Subplots involve overcoming physical and emotional fears and the reality of shepherding a blind child through camp experiences. The ending brings the protagonist back to the site of the camp 20 years later. Paul and his fellow teens act responsibly with the children but are prone to partying between sessions; they are able to cope with emergencies, and they experience the death of one counselor's parent. The story unfolds with quirky black-ink drawings and natural-sounding dialogue. The images bounce with physical energy and depict the brightness and darkness of the teen's moods. Endnotes offer readers in the U.S. helpful information for interpreting Quebecois swearing and references to pop idols of the place and time. Anyone who has gone to camp, or taken on a job with the knowledge that it seems unworkable, will recognize Paul's plight and the sense of achievement he gets to taste.

Inexcusable by Chris Lynch.

165 p. 0689847890 Atheneum Books for Young Readers

High school senior and football player Keir sets out to enjoy himself on graduation night, but when he attempts to comfort a friend whose date has left her stranded, things go terribly wrong.

From School Library Journal

Starred Review. Grade 9 Up—Keir is a senior who fancies himself a lovable rogue. So do his widowed father, his older sisters, and his classmates. He likes being liked; he just doesn't do well with *involvement*. Keir would never do anything to hurt anyone intentionally—or would he? When he tackles and cripples a member of an opposing football team, it's determined to be an accident—one that earns him the good-humored nickname, Killer. When he and his buddies destroy a town statue, they consider it a high-

spirited, funny prank. When he gets drunk, the alcohol abuse is dismissed as silly, harmless drinks, and drugs at parties are strictly recreational. And when he date rapes the girl he thinks he loves, at first he convinces himself that the way it looks is not the way it is. Keir's first-person narrative chillingly exposes the rationalization process that the troubled teen goes through to persuade himself and those around him of his innocence. Characters are clearly developed through immediately post-rape chapters that alternate with flashbacks of Keir's experiences and perceptions leading up to that point. As compelling as Laurie Halse Anderson's *Speak* (Farrar, 1999), though with a different point of view, this finely crafted and thought-provoking page-turner carefully conveys that it is simply inexcusable to whitewash wrongs, and that those responsible should (and hopefully will) pay the price.—*Diane P. Tuccillo, City of Mesa Library, AZ*

SERVICES

Traveling programs-- Four Square

Would anyone like to get a group of teens together?

Program idea:

Bubble program, older teens helping smaller children.

Discussed the new Blog

Discuss books with touchy topics in health class and character development class.

TEENS 'N US (Blog)

- ☀ Review books age group 12-18 and grade 6-12 on the Blog site.
- ☀ We will try the Blog for 6 months and see how it works.
- ☀ Only the best of the best and worst of the worst listed on site.
- ☀ General program announcement on the Blog